



Harold Livingstone Tapley was the founder of what was to become Dunedin's leading locally-based shipping agency. The eldest son of Edward Charles Tapley, a merchant, and Mary Harriet, nee Brock, HL Tapley arrived in Dunedin from Adelaide in 1893. He initially worked for the Queensland Insurance Co and later W.E. Reynolds & Co before starting his own business as a commission agent in 1900 at the age of 25.

H. Livingstone Tapley, as he signed his name, was a man of substantial stature and presence. His genial personality and friendly style enabled him to secure a number of

important shipping and insurance agencies. These included the Canterbury Steam Shipping Co (1904), Scales Line (1913), Canadian Government Line (1922), Bank Line (1934), Commonwealth and Dominion Line-Port Line (1916), and Blue Star Line (1933). In addition the company developed a significant stevedoring business, undertaking this work not only in Dunedin but Oamaru, Timaru, Lyttleton and Bluff. Tapley and Co also acted as agents for a wide variety of tramp shipping and in 1928-29 and 1934-35 were New Zealand agents for the Byrd Antarctic Expeditions. Admiral Byrd rewarded Harold Tapley and his manager J.H. Duncan by naming the Tapley Plateau and the Duncan Mountains in Antarctica after them.

Tapley and Co were also insurance agents, had a number of merchandise contracts, and developed a wool dumping business with Donald Reid & Co.

On his arrival in Dunedin in 1893 Tapley resumed an interest in the army cadet corps by joining the Dunedin Naval Artillery. He rose through the ranks to command the battery and retired with the rank of Captain. From 1913 to 1920 he was a member of the Otago Harbour Board, and Chairman 1919-20. He was also active in civic and community affairs being a member of the Otago Hospital Board 1908-11, and Dunedin City Council 1907-11, 1921-23, and 1929-32.

After an unsuccessful attempt at the mayoralty in 1910 he was elected mayor of Dunedin 1923-27. Prominently involved in the NZ and South Seas Exhibition in 1925, he was awarded the CMG in 1926. He briefly entered politics as member for Dunedin North 1925-28.

In 1900 he married Jean Brodie Burt, a daughter of one of the founders of A & T Burt Ltd and they had a family of five sons and one daughter. On his death in 1932 his eldest son Guy succeeded him as head of the company.

In 1949 H. L. Tapley and Co merged with Dunedin wool buyer and shipping agent J.W.Swift & Co to form Tapley Swift Shipping Agencies Ltd. In 1955 Guy Tapley died and the Tapley family sold their interest in the business to D.C Turnbull & Co of Timaru.

Harold Livingstone Tapley is buried in Dunedin's Andersons Bay Cemetery with his wife Jean Brodie (who died in 1927) son Guy, and other family members.