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AUGUST 2004 Vol. 26 No. 3







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# Australiana

August 2004 Vol. 26 No. 3 ISSN 0814-107X

## The Australiana Society

[www.australiana.org](http://www.australiana.org)

[info@australiana.org](mailto:info@australiana.org)

ABN 13 402 033 474

*Australiana*, the magazine of  
The Australiana Society Inc., is published in  
February, May, August and November.

Editors: Kevin Fahy AM and John Wade

## Subscriptions 2004

Household .....\$55  
Institutions .....\$60  
Life .....\$550

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An index to *Australiana* is available on the website

## Gifts

The Australiana Society is listed on the Australian  
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recognised as a Deductible Gift Recipient. Gifts to  
the Society are tax-deductible.

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*Australiana* preferably by e-mail or on disc or CD to

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BONDI JUNCTION NSW 2022

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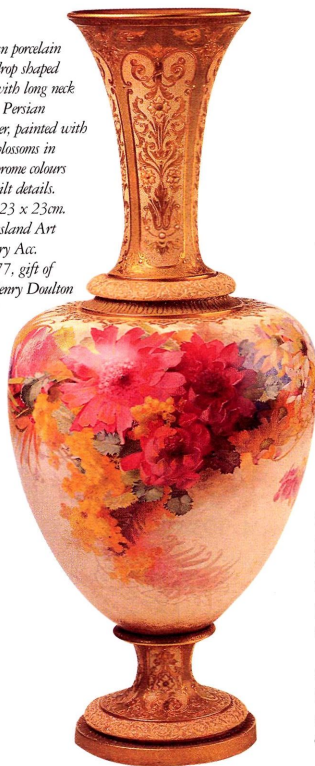
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**COVER:** *Edward Baker Boulton (1812-1895), Rose Bay from Cranbrook, 1886. The gate lodge to Woollabra House is now the Rose Bay police station*



# Louis Bilton and Australian flora

*Parian porcelain  
tear-drop shaped  
vase with long neck  
in the Persian  
manner, painted with  
gum blossoms in  
polychrome colours  
and gilt details.  
50 x 23 x 23cm.  
Queensland Art  
Gallery Acc.  
4:0077, gift of  
Sir Henry Doulton  
1892*



## GLENN R. COOKE

Sir Henry Doulton (1820-1897), the director of the famous pottery, Doulton & Company, decided to deposit a selection of the best of his factory's products throughout the British Commonwealth with the view of encouraging appreciation of English ceramics as well as inspiring emulation for the nascent industries of England's far flung colonies. Thus, in 1892, he presented a selection of some dozen items to the Queensland Museum. A much larger group of works was presented to the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney.

When the Queensland Art Gallery was established three years later, they were transferred to the new organisation as fine examples of 'art industry'. In effect, the decorative arts were one of the first aspects

to be represented in the collection.

The Doulton Pottery and Porcelain Company was established by John Doulton (1793-1873) at Lambeth, South London, in 1815 as 'Doulton & Watts' and was known as such until 1858, when it became Doulton & Co. It specialised in stoneware sanitary, domestic, laboratory and other useful articles. In about 1860 it began to revive earlier types of stoneware, notably copies of 18th century brown stoneware vessels, and from 1862 onwards it produced salt-glazed stonewares with blue decoration.

From 1866 the pottery was closely associated with the Lambeth School of Art, then directed by the progressive John Sparkes, who trained such famous potters as the Martin brothers and George Tinworth.

In 1870 the French painter J.C. Cazin joined Doulton and introduced sgraffito techniques, which were taken up by Hannah Barlow and her sister Florence, who worked for Doulton from the 1870s

## APPLIED ART.



*Doulton & Co  
(Burslem),  
manufacturers,  
England  
Louis Bilton, painter,  
England  
(c.1860-1910),  
Ever c.1890 bone  
china with elaborate  
jewelling and  
hand-painted with  
metallure, ht 35 cm.  
Private collection  
Queensland*



A Waratah Plaque.

Painted from living specimens by Doulton's artist, LOUIS BILTON when visiting Australia in the Eighties.

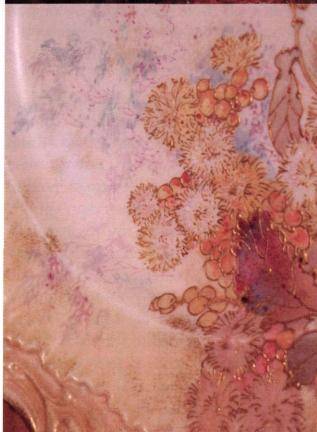
Fig. 25.

*Illustration of the Plaque  
decorated by Bilton from  
Richard T. Baker: The  
Australian Flora in Applied  
Art, Sydney, 1915, fig. 25*





Two 'Spanish ware' plates c. 1890s. The subjects, 'Dwarf eucalyptus' (23.5cm diam.) and 'Australian daisy' (32 x 23.5cm), are named on the back. Bilton's signature is visible on the detail at left. Private Collection, Brisbane



## English decorator Louis Bilton visited Australia in the 1880s and later painted Australian flora on Doulton porcelain

onwards, decorating wares with animal and other scenes. By the early 1870s, Continental collectors and even museums had begun buying Doulton's 'artistic' products, and the extraordinary and rapid success of these was reflected in the steep increase in the number of 'art potters' employed at the Lambeth works: six in 1873, 44 in 1875, 345 in 1890.

In 1878, after revelling in the success of the salt glaze work, Henry Doulton decided to expand into manufacturing art earthenware. His established a partnership with Shadford, Pinter at Burslem in Staffordshire but the production was a failure and the partnership dissolved. However John Slater, the manager at Burslem, appreciated the potential of developing bone china for the factory and was sent to France to study the famous collections at Sèvres and Limoges. His campaign led to the establishment of a bone china works at Burslem, and soon the

factory was producing some of the finest decorated bone china tableware and artware in England.

Doulton's exhibit of over 200 pieces at the 1893 Chicago International Exhibition reaffirmed the international reputation of their art stonewares, and established the success of their bone china wares, decorated by such artists as David Dewsberry, Fred Hancock, Harry Piper, John Slater and Louis Bilton. The firm became known as Royal Doulton from 1902 and in the ensuing century has remained a major force in the manufacture of fine china, ornaments and sanitary ware.

Fine and typical examples by Florence and Hannah Barlow, Eliza Simmance and George Tinworth were included in Sir Henry Doulton's 1892 donation to the Queensland Art Gallery. One of the most striking objects in this group is a porcelain vase in teardrop shape with the long neck moulded in the Persian manner, decorated by Louis Bilton with gum blossoms in polychrome colours and fine gilt detail.

We know surprisingly little about the life of Louis Bilton (c. 1860-1910). According to Desmond Eyles, the authority on Doulton, Louis Bilton trained under William Mussill (1828-1906), a gifted painter of flowers and birds at Mintons. The 1881 British Census



Doulton & Co (Burslem) manufacturer, England, Louis Bilton (c. 1860-1910) decorator, England, c. 1892. Vase c. 1892, painted decoration on bone china and gilt, 80.5 x 33 cm diam. Collection Art Gallery of South Australia, Gift of George Broekman 1899. Almost certainly this vase was exhibited in the World's Columbian Exhibition, Chicago, 1893



revealed that Bilton was living in Stoke-on-Trent, aged 21 years, and described him as a china-painter. As this famous ceramics firm was established at Stoke-on-Trent in 1796 and Mussill was active there from c. 1870 until his death, Eyles' suggestion seems likely. The Census reveals a close connection to the ceramic industry, as his father John was listed as a pottery manager, and his older brother Ernest was his assistant. Perhaps they also worked at Mintons.

We don't know how the connection between Bilton and *The Picturesque Atlas of Australasia* was established, but he travelled to Sydney in 1885 to work on the project and returned to England in 1887 after its completion. The *Atlas*, published in three volumes 1883-86, provided a comprehensive coverage of the discovery, geography and development of the Australian colonies written by the most authoritative writers available. Leading artists such as Julian Ashton, W.C. Piguenit, Henry Fullwood, Tom Roberts and Marian Ellis Rowan (who provided designs of Australian flora for the rival firm of Worcester) engraved the illustrations.

The *Atlas*, an artistic but not financial success, greatly assisted the development of the Australian black and white school of illustration clustered around the Sydney *Bulletin*. Bilton's role in this venture was to provide decorative frames of Australian flowers and foliage for some of the scenic panels and vignettes of Australian flora.

Interest in the decorative use of native and Australian flora can be attributed largely to one man, Lucien Henry (1850-96). Henry trained in Paris at the Ecole des Beaux Arts and came to Sydney in the late 1870s via New Caledonia where he had served a prison sentence for his political activities in the Paris Commune of 1871. He became heavily involved with the Sydney International Exhibition in 1879 and was the first instructor of modelling at the Sydney Mechanics School of Arts (the first in Australia). Later in 1883, when it became the School of Arts, Henry was appointed the first lecturer in art and his influence permeated throughout the artistic community until the 1930s.

Bilton did not involve himself much in Sydney's artistic activity while he resided here. In the catalogue of the Royal Art Society of New South Wales' annual exhibition in 1886, Louis Bilton was listed as a member of the society and his address was given as 382 George Street, Sydney. His

only exhibit was in the eighth annual exhibition the following year. Bilton exhibited No. 196 Bush beauties (described as an 'original from nature') in the category of decorated plaques; by this time, however, he had returned to London. Bilton's was one of eleven entries in this category. Whereas the others were in the range three to five guineas his plaque was priced at £26/5/-, which gives an indication of the value that Bilton attached to his work.

When Bilton took up employment with Doultons in 1892 (where he stayed for almost 20 years), he brought with him a splendid portfolio of Australian flowers he had sketched in situ: wattle, waratah, wild fuchsia, Sturt's desert pea, flannel flower, bottle brush, etc. His paintings of some of these motifs on vases were displayed at the 1893 Chicago Exhibition and won worldwide acclaim.

But did he actually produce any china painting in Australia? In 1915, Richard T. Baker, then the Curator of the Technological Museum (later the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences and subsequently the Powerhouse Museum) in his *The Australian Flora in Applied Art*, included an illustration of a plaque decorated by Bilton with waratah and the cream flowers of the Wonga Vine (*Pandorea pandorana*). It was owned by John Shorter of Parramatta, the Australian representative of the Doulton factory. The inscription 'Painted from living specimens by Doulton's artist, Louis Bilton, when visiting Australia in the 1880s', suggests the plaque was painted in Sydney rather than after his return to England. But was it a ceramic plaque? Its size was exceptional, 40 cm across, and one wonders what kiln was available in Sydney where the plaque could have been fired to fix the glazes. The illustration does not suggest china painting; perhaps it was a painted metal plaque, as records of these being exhibited in contemporary exhibitions are not uncommon.

John Shorter's family collection does, in fact, have a tile by Bilton which was a record of a trip that he and Louis took to the Blue Mountains. A work of such small dimensions could have easily been fired in Sydney.

At Doultons, Bilton produced some excellent pieces decorated with English flowers such as the primroses and daffodil. A two-handled Luscian Ware vase decorated with chrysanthemums on a green ground with raised gilt flowers around the neck, dating to c. 1895 is only one example of his work in

the collection of the Sir Henry Doulton Gallery at Royal Doulton. Further, we should not assume that the rather feathery china painting with the outlines enhanced with gilt is confined to Bilton's hand. Other Doulton decorators such as Fred Hancock, Fred Walklate and Harry Price produced accomplished works in this manner.

The illustration of the plaque in Baker's publication reduces the Queensland Art Gallery's vase decorated with gum-blossoms to more modest significance. The most famous Bilton piece in Australia is, of course, the large urn in the collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, with its even more spectacular decoration of waratah. It has a rival, however, in the vase in the collection of the Art Gallery of South Australia.

Despite the assumptions we find in publications on Australian motifs, Bilton's pieces with Australian floral motifs are rare. The Powerhouse Museum has the greatest representation of Bilton's work in Australian public collections. The most impressive is a ewer in the Neo-Renaissance taste decorated with panels of waratah and wattle. This Museum possesses a vase painted with native clematis (*Clematis aristata*), a jug decorated in cobalt with native flowers, and plates decorated with lilli-pilli, kunzea and purple acacia (the last from the Slater Collection). Examples of Bilton's ceramics painted with Australian wildflowers, such as those included with this article, are found in some private collections.

Doultons was in the forefront of suppliers of art ceramics to Australian markets. Indeed, the Powerhouse Museum also possesses several Lambeth faience vases, painted by Katherine Smallfield with Australian wildflower designs supplied by Miss Margaret Rutherford of Bathurst, NSW. Although Bilton's handpainted wares are scarce, his designs were later adapted for transfer prints such as the 'Rose and waratah' design from the turn of the century. They will be found to be the commonest examples of Bilton's decorative skills in Australia.

Glenn R. Cooke is Research Curator, Queensland Heritage, at the Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane.



# Editorial

**T**wenty-six years ago a small group of idealistic young people established the Australiana Society. Off and on it has been called elitist or a closed shop, but since then it has nevertheless grown to over 400 members. Its members include every important cultural institution that collects Australian decorative arts, many Australiana dealers and auction houses across Australia, and most serious private collectors.

In 1978, we were inspired partly by people such as President John F. Kennedy and Jacqueline Kennedy in the United States. Kennedy had displayed prominently in the Oval Office examples of American scrimshaw, part of the seafaring heritage of his home state of Massachusetts. The First Lady had pursued a policy of furnishing the White House with examples of American craftsmanship – the inspiration for Tamie Fraser's Australiana Fund, also founded in 1978.

The collecting of Australiana however has suffered in recent years, along with the decline in interest and the value of antiques generally. *The Australiana Fund itself was diminished by the famous 'Thai table' affair and the machinations of Prime Minister Keating,* with his personal agenda to promote his own French Empire taste over the agreed bipartisan policy of furnishing with Australiana.

So in the present situation, while we have a Society at its highest membership level ever, we are not attracting enough new members. Our representation outside New South Wales is disproportionately low. Specifically, we have a generational problem; the members are getting older and we are not attracting anywhere near enough young people, with a few notable and energetic exceptions.

Another worrying trend is the absence of Australian decorative arts in our museums. Museums should be in the forefront of displaying, researching and publishing our own heritage, but they are conspicuously missing. The new

National Gallery of Victoria at Federation Square has minimal Australian decorative arts on display, the Powerhouse Museum and the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney have virtually none at all. The National Gallery of Australia has a new dynamic Director in Ron Radford, who may shift resources to this area. Fortunately, the collection of the Historic Houses Trust of NSW, ably led by Peter Walts has been bolstered by the rich gift of the Caroline Simpson collection at Clyde Bank, and we look forward to seeing some of it on display again.

*It is a perennial struggle to attract articles for this magazine,* and to gather articles that cover the broad collecting spectrum. While we do not want to denigrate our present authors, where are the stories on Depression furniture, cake decorating, pokerwork or garden ornaments cut out of car tyres? We don't mind short articles that touch on these and other subjects; you do not have to present an encyclopaedic, all-encompassing story (though they are useful too); make it interesting and well illustrated, and we'll consider it.

Some of our readers will find this editorial all too familiar. But it is our job to continue to point out the need for more and unrelenting action. It is not enough merely to collect and admire in secret, or to store things away in the dungeons. That is why we are very grateful to the public and private collectors who have recently made their collections available to our members. Some of these visits have been truly inspirational, and we hope that others will come forward to allow us to enjoy and be inspired by their efforts ■

John Wade  
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[info@australiana.org](mailto:info@australiana.org)





Plate 1. Charles Giugni (attr.) 18ct gold necklace. Giugni family collection



Plate 2. Charles Giugni (attr.) 18ct gold pendant with rubies and diamonds. Giugni family collection



Plate 3. Charles Giugni (attr.) Silver bracelet (3cm wide) inscribed, with matching earrings. Giugni family collection

# Italian jewellers in New South Wales

ROSLYN MAGUIRE

The Italian involvement in most branches of the arts during the latter half of the 19th century in New South Wales is particularly evident in painting, music and sculpture. Jewellers too – perhaps fewer in number – have been identified, and though a rarity of marked

examples of their work means definitive attribution may be difficult, the extent of their professional activity nevertheless deserves examination.

Charles Brentani (c. 1817–1853), the first Italo-Australian silversmith, had been transported to Tasmania from England in 1834. Born near Lake Como in the village of Cadennabia, he is the first among many craftsmen from northern Italy to work here and two major pieces, made when he was

living and working in Melbourne – the Suggden silver box and the Flemington Cup<sup>1</sup> – are held in public collections. Known to have spent only a short period in Sydney, as the only Italian-born silversmith of the early colonial period to be represented in major collections, his place is firmly fixed in the history of Australian silver.

Italian migration to Sydney commenced around 1855, as groups large and small made their way here. This was a period



when gold discoveries 'enhanced the bespoke trade in Sydney, enabling jewellers and goldsmiths to prosper'.<sup>2</sup> This is also true of smaller commercial areas close to the goldfields, where we find the first Italian jewellers from the late 1850s.

The Hungarian Adolphus Blau had been one of the first Sydney jewellers to advertise the melting and assaying of gold and manufacture of what became known as 'goldfields' jewellery, when in 1853 he offered original designs made by 'several superior and skilful workmen from some of the first houses in Europe'.<sup>3</sup>

When watchmaker-jeweller Charles Andreoni was in Orange by August 1859 it boasted 400 inhabitants, a lively commercial centre serving the surrounding goldfields.<sup>4</sup> Baldassare Franca, a Swiss-Italian who arrived in Victoria in 1855, came to NSW in 1863 and by 1867 opened a jewellery business at Mudgee; he married, raised a family and apparently continued the business until he died there in 1891.

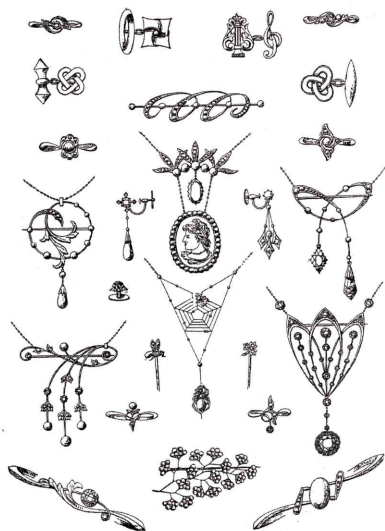
Little distinction was made in the colonies between Italians and Swiss Italians. They shared a common language, travelled together as groups to Victoria and NSW from 1854-6, and formed mining partnerships which often moved freely from goldfield to goldfield. The tradition of men in neighbouring Swiss villages finding seasonal employment in Lombardy and Piedmont resulted in craftsmen training and working in cities like Milan and Turin.

A family of three named Giugni worked as jewellers in rural towns of NSW from around 1861. Two arrived on the same ship in 1855: Pietro Giugni and his 14-year-old brother Michael. Peter is listed as a jeweller-watchmaker in Orange by May 1861 – possibly in association with Charles Andreoni – then by 1872 according to the Post Office Directory was a jeweller at Lachlan Street, Forbes. The brothers probably went gold seeking before establishing individual businesses. Michael Giugni, who stated his occupation as jeweller in June 1860,<sup>5</sup> married in 1867 and became naturalised in 1869 in order to purchase land at Orange 'to erect a shop thereon'. A third member of the family, Charles Giugni (born c.1840 at Locarno, on the Swiss/Italian border) arrived in 1868, and on 28 September 1871 advertised as a watchmaker and jeweller in the *Gulgong Advertiser*. Around 1875-6 he moved to Parkes, and in 1878 was a jeweller in Macquarie Street, Dubbo.

Periods of financial difficulty often brought professional change and just as we



Plate 4  
Gold mounted opal brooch  
stamped 'PRIORA', c. 1900  
Private collection



*These original illustrations have been designed and manufactured by me, from old jewellery supplied by customers... Ernesto Priora.*

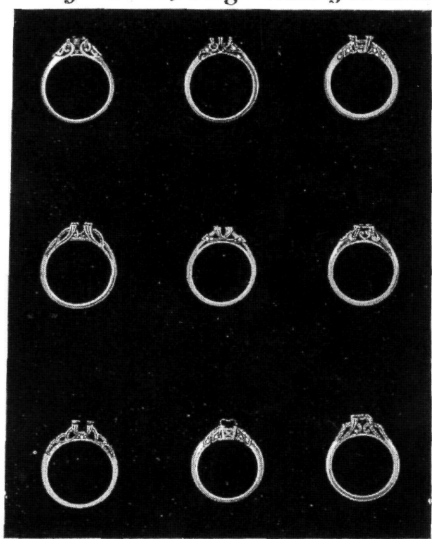
Plate 5. Page from  
catalogue stating 'These  
original illustrations have  
been designed and  
manufactured by me, from  
old jewellery supplied by  
customers... Ernesto Priora'

find Italian carver and gilder John Bernasconi in Sydney briefly becoming a coffin maker, so Charles Giugni in the 1880s, with a family to support, was temporarily described as 'jeweller, watchmaker, hairdresser and tobacconist'. By the 1890s he retired to Sydney and his descendants own a small collection of jewellery – some

inscribed with personal sentiments – which they believe to be exclusively his work: a wide gold bracelet, a pendant, rings and necklaces.<sup>6</sup>

In Sydney around 1860, Hunter Street was the one of the main focal points of jewellery retailing,<sup>7</sup> and in windows next to Skinner's Hotel on the corner of Hunter and George

Creations by ———  
J. Cotto, High-class Jeweller



HARDY'S CHAMBERS, 5 Hunter Street, SYDNEY.

From top  
Plate 4. Advertisement of Joseph Cotto from  
The Commonwealth Jeweller and  
Watchmaker, 1936

Plate 5. Advertisement of Joseph Cotto from  
The Commonwealth Jeweller and  
Watchmaker, 1939

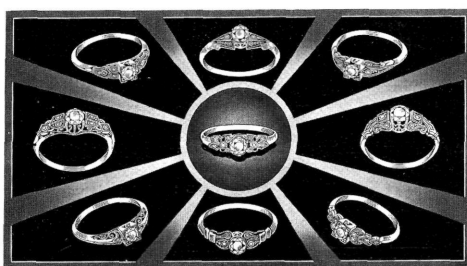
Plate 6. Advertisement of Joseph Cotto from  
The Commonwealth Jeweller and  
Watchmaker, 1940

Creations by — J. COTTO, High-class Jeweller



HARDY'S CHAMBERS, 5 HUNTER STREET, SYDNEY

Creations by — J. COTTO, High-class Jeweller



HARDY'S CHAMBERS, 5 HUNTER STREET, SYDNEY

Phone: B 4551

Streets, the Milanese-born Angelo Tornaghi<sup>8</sup> displayed watches, brooches, Masonic jewels, bracelets, earrings, lockets, malachite earrings and signet rings. Prominent as a mathematical instrument maker, Tornaghi also displayed showcases containing clocks, compasses, barometers and theodolites.<sup>9</sup> He remained one of Sydney's most conspicuous Italians for over a quarter of a century, playing an active role in the care and control of new Italian immigrants, and on one occasion persuaded well-known jeweller Hippolyte Felix Delarue to co-sponsor a group for naturalisation in 1866.

Although no evidence has been found of jewellery being manufactured within his workshop, Tornaghi's documented 1866 dealings with neighbouring firms such as Adolphus Blau, Hardy Bros. and Brush & MacDonnell, as well as Levi and Seligmann and Flavelle Bros. confirm a direct involvement in jewellery retailing. Detail in documents prepared for a Tornaghi bankruptcy – apparently averted – provide clear comparisons with those of the 1861 bankruptcy of Julius Hogarth discussed by John Hawkins in *Australiana*.<sup>10</sup>

With no commercial jewellers with

overtly Italian names to be found in directories between 1865 and 1880, the arrival of Ernesto and John Priora from Milan announced the first major talent of Italian origin to work in Sydney in the 19th century. First to arrive in 1878 were Ernesto and father Giuseppe, a gunsmith whose family business included an ammunition workshop, which may explain the distinctive style and techniques raised regarding manufacture of the Riverview Cup.<sup>11</sup> In 1878, Sydney was in the throes of preparing the first International Exhibition of the southern hemisphere and goods from

Italy – along with Germany, France, Belgium, England, America and Japan – were about to go on exhibition, inspiring Sydney with an astonishing array of goods. It is likely that Giuseppe and Ernesto Priora made contact with Sydney's well-known Swiss Italian gunsmith John Modini<sup>12</sup> – like Angelo Tomaghi, closely involved with Sydney's Italian community – and the influential organiser and representative of exhibits for the Italian court, Milanese Otto Meyer, who later oversaw numerous acquisitions by Sir Henry Parkes, some still in the Colonial Secretary's offices in Macquarie Street.<sup>13</sup>

For seven months colonial craftsmen and the public could examine an unprecedented assortment of items of international design on a bold scale. The Sydney International Exhibition building – named by Parkes the 'Garden Palace' – aroused new optimism among city retailers; Anthony Hordern, for example, developed 'their expensive [jewellery] retailing and manufacturing activities...by 1879,<sup>14</sup> adopting the name Palace Emporium and Palace Warehouse for their new premises in the Haymarket. In the American court, the Waltham Watch Company exhibit attracted great attention, and as watches grew in popularity – along with the watch chain – they would form a more substantial part of a jeweller's business, for retail and repair.

John Priora accompanied his mother and brothers to Sydney around 1881<sup>15</sup> and until 1885 when the Priora Brothers business was established, there is no knowledge of any professional activity. First listed as watchmakers at 48½ Park St, from 1889 they are described as jewellers at the same address. They then moved to George Street and in 1904 are listed as manufacturing jewellers – later 'artistic jewellers' – at 134 Pitt St. When the partnership of Ernesto and John Priora ended each operated separate businesses, Ernesto taking rooms in the Strand Arcade, John in the Sydney Arcade. How closely they continued to collaborate however is unknown so that accurate attribution of individual items stamped PRIORA could prove difficult. Appraisal of two signed pieces confirms the Prioras' place among Sydney jewellers – a remarkable opal brooch with applied gold decoration marked 'PRIORA'<sup>16</sup> and a pectoral cross of gold with 'vine leaf and scrolling motifs, set with six rubies and thirteen diamonds' belonging to St Mary's Cathedral, Hobart and marked 'Ernesto Priora'.<sup>17</sup>

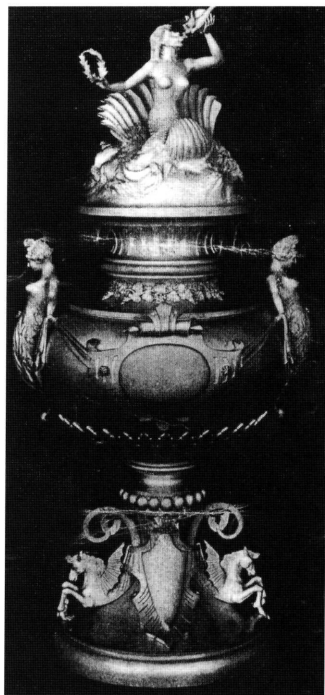
Family-held records, a business card

noting 'precious metal worker and gem moulder' and newspaper reports mentioning the work of John Priora, help convey the extent of their work. Each prospered as a designer and maker of ecclesiastical items like monstrances and chalices, often set with precious stones and decorated with elaborate relief work. A 1913 [?] catalogue of Ernesto Priora, demonstrating the diversity of design and manufacture undertaken in those years, specifies pieces including a solid silver tabernacle door at the chapel of the Sacred Heart Hospice of the Dying at Darlinghurst, a sterling silver sanctuary lamp and altar lamp decorated with vines for the chapel of Lewisham Private Hospital and a 15ct gold crosier designed in 1887 for the Sisters of St Joseph at Lismore.

John Priora's Riverview Gold Cup manufactured for the retail jeweller Edward Butcher has been well researched.<sup>18</sup> He is credited with designing and manufacturing a black opal necklet and pendant for Bertha Krupp (before World War I), a 22ct gold brooch 'the Harp of Erin', a monstrance for St Patrick's Church Hill and a commemorative monstrance for Sydney's 1928 Eucharistic Congress.<sup>19</sup> Other attributed pieces include chalices for St Mary's Cathedral Sydney, and indeed among his last incomplete pieces was a 'golden chalice...set with large diamonds in Crucifix design...of Florentine pattern [inscribed] at its base "Ora Pro Me JOHN PRIORA"'.<sup>20</sup>

In 1912, Sir Walter Marks commissioned a yachting trophy for a Sydney–Auckland Yacht race from W.J. Proud; in 1946 it was bought for the Sydney–Hobart race and is now in the collection of the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia, Sydney. A bangle worn on the upper arm for the singer Nellie Stewart was made from '25 sovereigns presented to her by a grateful audience, melted down... so that they might see their generosity to her'. It was said that John Priora considered a gold statuette of Queen Victoria (15.9 cm high) as his masterpiece.

Following the 1879 Exhibition, Sydney acquired the new jewellery firms Fairfax & Roberts, A. Saunders and Edward Sansome. An extraordinary 1881 photograph showing a group of 35 women employed at the Government Printing Office in Sydney, clearly conveys the current fashion of wearing multiple pieces of jewellery, particularly heavy necklaces, bracelets and brooches.<sup>21</sup> Associated with such an increase in popularity and number of retailers, a new group of jewellers with



*John Priora, silver yachting trophy 1912, later used as the Sydney-Hobart Yacht Trophy. Cruising Yacht Club of Australia*

Italian names appeared in 1880s directories. Their number alone signifies a shift in the Sydney jewellery scene: Giuseppe Lammoglia at 246½ Pitt Street, Antonio Pugliese at 58 Park Street, Luigi Favianti at 68 King Street, the Lotinga Brothers at 234 Castlereagh Street (by 1889 next to the Metropole Hotel) and Alexander Margoschi at 41 Regent Street, Redfern in 1886. Whether watchmaking, jewellery retailing, designing and manufacturing formed the principal part of their individual businesses remains unknown.

More retail jewellery firms were established by 1910 – Percy Marks, W.J. Proud and Angus & Coote. By the 1930s when Ernesto (1931) and John Priora (1938) died, a number of new Italian jewellers had already commenced businesses of their own, all of which would survive wartime difficulties to last more than 30 years.

While possibly the most thoroughly documented of all was Joseph Cotto (b. Turin), he is not known to have used a mark. He spent three years with John Priora and then with Hardy Bros. before





*John Prior, Riverview  
Gold Cup 1893.  
Saint Ignatius' College, Riverview.  
Photographs Andrew Frolous*

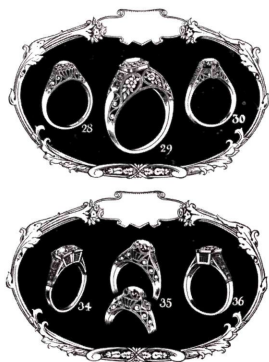


Plate 10. Matteo Martire, 1930s designs shown on advertising blocks. Martire collection



Plate 11. Matteo Martire, the Harbour Bridge pattern ring 1932. Martire collection

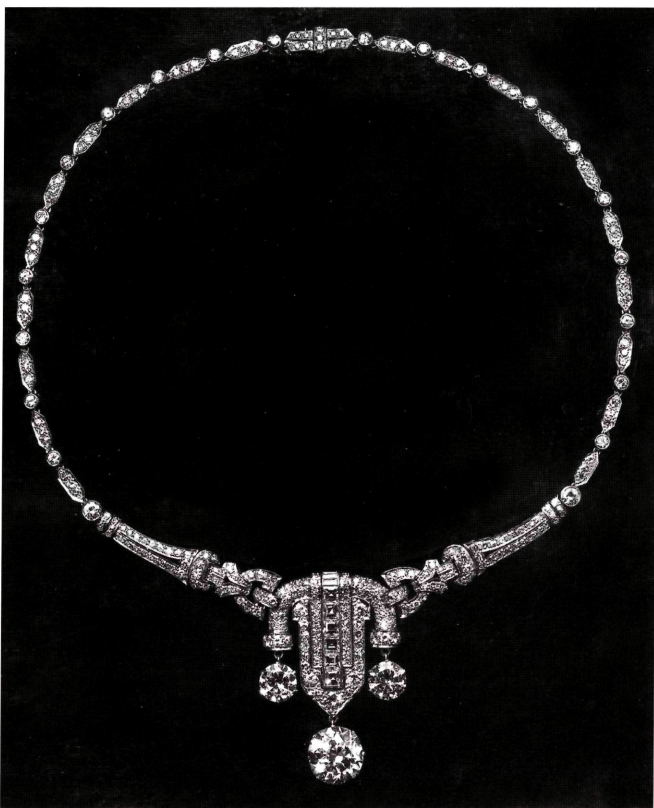


Plate 12. Matteo Martire, diamond necklace, centre diamond 6.65cts. Designed and manufactured for the Retail Jewellers Association annual exhibition 1959

commencing his own manufacturing business in 1927, taking two rooms on the fourth floor of 310 George Street. Five years later he moved to larger premises in Hardy Chambers, 5 Hunter Street, where Hardy Bros had been from 1861–1872.

Between 1936–1945, illustrated advertisements and reports of Cotto's professional activity appeared in the *Commonwealth Jeweller and Watchmaker*; he would employ more than 20 workers and became one of Prouds' principal suppliers. Described as 'one of the largest Diamond Ring manufacturers in the Commonwealth'<sup>22</sup>, he is said to have made hand-painted sketches for 'pendants, necklaces, tiaras...one a cascading fountain of gems' and made diamond-set watches, brooches, clips and 'a diamond

orchid...fully studded with diamonds'.<sup>23</sup> The early advertisements (1936–38) illustrate rings of 'lace and filigree types', while those shown from 1939–1946 are jewel set 'solitaire or two and three stone rings of larger pattern'.

Cotto's advertised designs and use of distinctive motifs like a 'True Lovers Knot', or the Paris-inspired 'door knocker' and New York-inspired 'scroll or curl' could provide a reference point for identification. Small diamonds came into general use and from July 1942 until after the War, the Commonwealth Government put restrictions on diamond importation. A long-term Cotto associate was L.G. McKee, whose father had been foreman of Wendts in Adelaide for over 60 years.

Cotto possessed hundreds of

stamping dies and his techniques were thought technologically advanced for the time,<sup>24</sup> yet his advertisements in the *Commonwealth Jeweller* remain unchanged from 1939 to 1947. The Cotto business closed in the late 1950s.

Cotto's work was spoken of highly by Frank Martire (1900–1989), one of three brothers who came from Molfetta, a town near Bari on the east coast of Puglia in southern Italy. Frank later established his own jewellery business in Melbourne, supplying filigree rings to the large retailer Dunkling's for almost 30 years. Another brother, Giuseppe Martire, also worked for Joe Cotto, then with Manzo Brothers in Park Street and eventually began a small business of his own.

Matteo Martire (1902–1983) in 1929

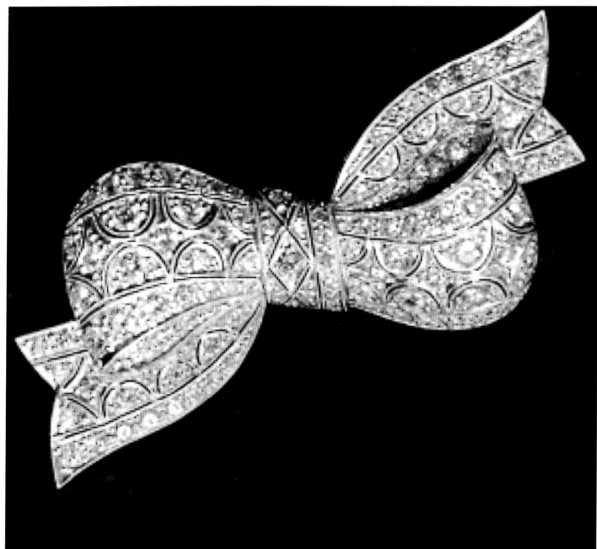


Plate 13. Matteo Martire, diamond brooch made for one of Sydney's major retailers, c.1950

## Kerba Palladium

—today's metal  
for fine jewellery

Here are two classic examples of really fine jewellery produced from Kerba Palladium. The lightness, strength and whiteness, and the fact that Kerba Palladium never tarnishes, makes it the favourite precious metal for this kind of jewellery. Add to this the fact that Kerba Palladium is a most economical metal, and you realise why it is becoming so very popular.



Jade Australian Distributors:

*Matteo Martire Pty Ltd*  
15 PARK STREET, SYDNEY, N.S.W. PHONE MA 3511

Melbourne Representative for Kerba Palladium:

**CLOVER & GOODE PTY. LTD.**  
188 Little Collins Street, Melbourne  
Phone Central 5284

August 10, 1953

THE COMMONWEALTH JEWELLER AND WATCHMAKER

Page 141

Plate 14. Matteo Martire, advertisement of August 1953. The Commonwealth Jeweller & Watchmaker, diamond set watch with silk cordate band, and diamond brooch

WE STOCK +  
SET AND UNSET  
ENGAGEMENT RINGS  
WEDDINGS RINGS  
ETERNITY RINGS  
COCKTAIL RINGS  
BROOCHES  
BRACELETS  
WATCHES

IN  
PLATINUM, PALLADIUM, WHITE AND YELLOW GOLD

**M. MARTIRE LTD.**

WHOLESALE MANUFACTURER  
GEM AND DIAMOND MERCHANT

15 PARK STREET  
SYDNEY

Melbourne Office:  
P. BLASHKI & SONS  
110-112 LITTLE COLLINS STREET  
CARROLL HOUSE  
109 SWANSTON STREET  
Telephone 100-1000

TELEPHONE MA 3511

Page 140 THE COMMONWEALTH JEWELLER AND WATCHMAKER August 10, 1953

Plate 15. Matteo Martire, advertisement of August 1953. The Commonwealth Jeweller & Watchmaker



Plate 16. Martire marks of 1930s, 1947 and 1981

opened what would become a prosperous jewellery business in Park Street, Sydney.<sup>25</sup> During the 1930s his Manufacturing Jewellery Supply Co. specialised in filigree rings, engraved platinum watchcases for the wholesaler Hoffnig's, and larger and better pieces – which may bear Martire's MM mark – to firms like Fairfax & Roberts, Hardy Bros and Prouds. Martire employed 10–12 on the benches in 1932, during wartime only five or six, but from 1949–1951 – before imports and a government sales tax of 66% adversely affected local jewellers – he had 28 staff, a similar number to the workshop of Frank Martire in Melbourne. Both firms kept on file illustrations from the inspirational New York publication Gem Creations as a principal source of modern jewellery designs, the American influence remaining apparent in Australian jewellery until around 1960.

'M. Martire Wholesale Manufacturer of all Diamond Jewellery...Platinum, 18ct. White and Yellow Gold Rings' took large advertisements, from 1946–1951 when he became sole Australian distributor for a new metal introduced by a London firm Bakar. Known as 'Kerba Palladium', a sister metal to platinum but lighter in weight, less liable to tarnish and able to be worked to a very fine gauge, Martire used it for a diamond set

bracelet, brooch and watch which illustrate advertisements from 1952. In 1956 – prior to adopting casting as a technique – more than 4,200 handmade eternity rings were produced. Although a new 1947 mark might occasionally be used, retail firms usually insisted on their brand mark alone. An example of Matteo Martire's most exciting work was a diamond necklace made for a 1959 exhibition, at Sydney Town Hall, sponsored annually by the Retail Jewellers Association to encourage new daring designs from Australian manufacturers.

A friend of the Martire brothers, Luigi Sasso (born 1905),<sup>26</sup> arrived around 1926 and worked at different jobs during the Depression years, until he met quite by accident one Sunday night at an orchestral concert in Hyde Park, Matteo Martire with whom he had gone to school in Molfetta. Martire took Sasso on as an apprentice until he left to join Riddington & Brogan, manufacturers of diamond rings with rooms on the second floor of the Sydney Arcade in King Street.

Sasso would visit John Priora in his lunch hour and recalls that Priora was then working on his own, his showroom full of chalices of every shape and size. Sasso then went into partnership with Aldo Rusconi – who had worked for Martire too – the



Rusconi and Sasso partnership commencing in 1936 in the same Bank of New South Wales building in Pitt Street where diamond cutter Jules Joris had offices. Joris helped Sasso find work on instruments at Warburton Franki during the War, before Sasso rejoined Rusconi for a few more years; apart from an occasional private client in those years they 'did manufacturing work for Percy Marks, Fairfax & Roberts, Hardy's, Prouds and especially for Angus & Coote'.

Aldo Rusconi (1891–1964), a Milanese, appears to have had more European experience than other 20th century Italian jewellers working in Sydney, having been employed at Garrards in London after early apprenticeships in Milan and Paris. Rusconi was a 'master', his work 'exceptional' Sasso believes, and although 'very little designing was done by them – instructions for designs coming from the retailer-client' the level of craftsmanship was high. Like Joe Cotto, Aldo Rusconi registered no mark, but the 99-year-old Sasso has verified a diamond set watch attributed to Rusconi illustrated in Anne Schofield & Kevin Fahy's *Australian Jewellers*.<sup>27</sup> Rusconi continued his business through the 1950s and '60s with only one assistant, Noel Wilson, to whom the company passed.

Recognition of the high standards met by the 20th century Italian jewellers and the prosperity and endurance of their businesses will increase as collectors move into the field and research continues. A greater appreciation, of not only their work but their place in the diverse history of decorative arts in NSW, seems assured.



Plate 17. Matteo Martire, die filigree ring 1930s. Martire collection

Roslyn Maguire is a researcher and former editor of the *Australian Antique Collector*.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> The Flemington Cup, in National Gallery of Victoria, the Sugden box in National Gallery of Australia. See Judith O'Callaghan, 'The Flemington Cup' *Art Bulletin of Victoria* no 26, 1986, pp 23–25; B.Y. O'Driscoll, 'Charles Brentani, Man of sterling convictions', *Australian Antique Collector*, 39th Edition, January–June 1990, pp 82–84.
- <sup>2</sup> John Hawkins, 'Julius Hogarth Behind the Shop Front, Part I The First Bankruptcy', *Australiana*, May 2000, p 36.
- <sup>3</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 March 1853 p 6.
- <sup>4</sup> Andreoni died Sydney 1892, buried at St Charles Church, Ryde.
- <sup>5</sup> Signature Book of Commercial Banking Co. of Sydney, Orange.
- <sup>6</sup> Collection of Jacinta Holden who supplied illustrations.
- <sup>7</sup> See 'By "An Old Timer"', Sydney in the 'Fifties', *Commonwealth Jeweller and Watchmaker*, 2 September 1918, p 35 and 2 December 1918, p 54, (reprinted *Australiana* 14.2 May 1992); Ted Butcher, 'Old Sydney Jewellers', 10 July 1942, pp 28–30; plan of George/Hunter Street compiled by John Hawkins, 'Julius Hogarth Behind the Shop Front, Part II', *Australiana*, August 2000, p 78.
- <sup>8</sup> Roslyn Maguire, 'Angelo Tornaghi, an inventive Italian', *Australian Antique Collector*, 29th Edition, January–June 1985, pp 42–46.
- <sup>9</sup> Old Systems Title, Book 99, No 786 13 August 1866, Land Titles Office.
- <sup>10</sup> John Hawkins, 'Julius Hogarth...' Part I, pp 36–48.
- <sup>11</sup> Raymond Stebbins, 'The Riverview Gold Cup, a technical and stylistic enigma', *Australiana*, February 2001, pp 44–46.
- <sup>12</sup> Giovanni Battista Modini of George Street won prizes at the Sydney Exhibition for colonial made cutlery.
- <sup>13</sup> Collection was shown to Australiana Society members at Government House conference in 2001; see also Ann Toy, 'Politics and Patronage, Sir Henry Parkes's Exhibition Legacies', in Peter Proudfoot, Roslyn Maguire, Robert Freestone, *Colonial City Global City*, Crossing Press 2000, pp 189–205.
- <sup>14</sup> Kenneth Cavill, Graham Cocks, Jack Grace, *Australian Jewellers Gold and Silversmiths Makers & Marks*, CGC Gold, Roseville 1992.
- <sup>15</sup> Shirley Tully, *Daughters of Time, a tapestry of Australian Women 1809–2001*, self published 2004, p 91–2.
- <sup>16</sup> Ann Schofield & Kevin Fahy, *Australian Jewellery, Nineteenth and Early 20th Century*, David Ell Press, Sydney, 1990, p 70.
- <sup>17</sup> See Judith O'Callaghan, *Treasures from Australian Churches*, (catalogue) National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne 1985.
- <sup>18</sup> Kenneth Cavill, 'Genesis of the Riverview Gold Cup', *Australiana*, 23.1, February 2001, pp12–14; Raymond Stebbins, *op cit*.
- <sup>19</sup> 'Late John Priora', *Commonwealth Jeweller and Watchmaker*, 10 September 1938, pp 51–53.
- <sup>20</sup> Made for a young friend, a student at the Ecclesiastical College Manly, it was completed by a Mr Brogan, see *Commonwealth Jeweller and Watchmaker* 10 August 1940, p 56; Luigi Sasso remembers visiting John Priora's room 'full of chalices of all sizes'.
- <sup>21</sup> Anne Schofield & Kevin Fahy, *op.cit.*, p 76.
- <sup>22</sup> *Commonwealth Jeweller*, 10 September 1938, p 53.
- <sup>23</sup> *op.cit.*, 11 March 1940 pp 52–63.
- <sup>24</sup> *op.cit.*, 10 June 1941 pp 49–52.
- <sup>25</sup> In 1968 they moved from Park Street to Surry Hills; son Tony carried on the business, son Michele left in 1965. Martire family papers include records of Matteo Martire as well as some from Frank Martire.
- <sup>26</sup> Author's notes were taken in conversation with Mr Luigi Sasso in October 1989, and again, just prior to his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday during March and April 2004.
- <sup>27</sup> p. 120

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

An early version of this paper was originally presented with Tony Martire at the Royal Australian Historical Society on 1 November 1989. I would like to thank Luigi Sasso for his remarkable memory, Tony Martire, Leo Martire, and Jacinta Holden, as well as the Late Frank Martire and Joseph Cotto whom I interviewed in 1989. Thanks to Kevin Fahy whose notes provided valuable background and whose ideas aided this research.



*Edward Baker Boulton (1812-1895), Up the Lane Cove River, c. 1886. It is hard to believe that Sydney was once so rural but the building appears to be Saint Ignatius College, Riverview, constructed in 1885*

# Edward Baker Boulton

## (1812-1895): a watercolourist rediscovered

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JOHN EDWARDS

As a child, I eagerly devoured the wonderful *Swallows and Amazons* series of children's books by the quintessentially English writer Arthur Ransome (1884-1967). The children in his books were so real and their adventures so exciting that the remoteness of the settings –

the Lakes District and East Anglia – seemed of little consequence.

Naturally I was pleased that their mother had grown up on the shores of Sydney Harbour and was therefore an Aussie, but I never imagined that there could be any other connection between this faraway world and my own.

Later I discovered that there was far more to Ransome than the classic children's books

for which he is best remembered. He had produced a large range of adult fiction and non-fiction. As a journalist, he was arguably the West's most important first-hand chronicler of the Russian Revolution. He had played chess with Lenin and married Trotsky's secretary.

From the late 1980s, Ransome began to receive proper recognition in Britain with the publication of a spate of critical works



and articles and the formation of a society devoted to the promotion of his works. Three of these books contained brief references to his 'Australian' grandfather – to me this was an astonishing discovery. One had a copy of the marriage certificate of Ransome's parents, which described his mother's father, Edward Baker Boulton, as 'Squatter, NSW'.<sup>1</sup>

The two biographies available gave very little information about Boulton and their approach differed totally.<sup>2</sup> Hugh Brogan's snuffy dismissal of Boulton as a dilettante was not borne out by Ransome's own glowing memories of his grandfather in his *Autobiography*, and it soon became clear that the Boulton family was extraordinarily gifted. This grandfather was no mere sheep farmer but an artist of some distinction, without whose genetic endowment it is unlikely that Ransome or his mother, brother and sister would have all become artists and writers.

In Australia, Boulton has suffered from undervaluation due to one of those quirks of fashion and neglect, and due to the orthodox view that Boulton was an amateur painter. However, my research shows that his presentation of pictures for exhibition was often accompanied by efforts to obtain

sales, but unlike, say, Conrad Martens, he did not have to rely mostly on painting for an income. The misconception regarding his status stems from the 19th century practice of labelling artists in an arbitrary manner as either 'artist' or 'amateur'. For example, the 1879 Sydney International

Exhibition Catalogue lists Conrad's daughter Rebecca as 'Miss Martens, Artist, St Leonards', while Boulton is described as an 'Amateur', but also as an 'Associate of Liverpool Society of Water Colour Artists', which is surely a truer indication of his worth.



*Portrait of the artist Edward Baker Boulton*

*Edward Baker Boulton (1812-1895), Sydney Heads – a hasty sketch the morning after the loss of the Catherine Adamson, 1857. This is painted from near The Gap where the Dunbar had been lost nine weeks earlier*





*Right: Edward Baker Boulton (1812-1895),  
The Boulton farm Bergen op Zoom, c. 1890.  
The old homestead was demolished about 1907*



*Below: Edward Baker Boulton (1812-1895),  
Mountain Scene, Snowdonia, Wales, probably The  
Sychnant Pass, 1870s. Although not the first  
Australian international artist, Boulton was one of the  
early ones. A few of his British and Italian pictures have  
survived, but he even visited India in 1874 and painted  
The Cave Temple of Ellora, now sadly lost*



While Conrad Martens had to rely on the sale of lithographs of his 1837 painting Sydney from the North Shore to sustain him through the depression years of the 1840s, when Boulton had lithographs made from his 1882 picture of the same popular subject, he thought big. He wrote to his daughter Edith (Arthur Ransome's mother), proposing to have 1,000 lithographs made. However many were actually put up for sale, this is not the statement of some timorous amateur lacking in artistic confidence.

The other cliché which Boulton failed to

fit was that of the artist starving in a garret. He was a wealthy man, a squatter and a member of the elite. He was a founding member of the Australian Club, but was said to have left when he felt the Club was becoming 'too commercial'. His parents both had both amassed considerable wealth in his native Shropshire and, when young Edward arrived in Sydney in 1836, he did not come empty-handed. His family was said to be related to anyone who was anyone back to Charlemagne. But we do not judge the music of Mendelssohn or the

writing of Henry James on the basis of their families' wealth and privilege.

After more than two decades in NSW (1836-59), Boulton took his first wife and family of six back to England. A seventh child was born at Dublin during a visit by his wife Mary to her mother. Unfortunately Mary died, and Edward married again, this time to a Shropshire woman, Rachel Gwynn. He stayed in Shropshire until 1873, fathering another 10 children.

Together with most of his first family, he returned to NSW to take over the running of



his property at Walcha in New England and remained on the farm for some years. In his 'retirement' he became something of a commuter between Australia and England, with side journeys to Italy, Malta, France and so on. He died at Walcha in 1895.

In the 1870s, Boulton became active with a number of artistic organisations: the Liverpool Society for Watercolour Artists (England), the NSW Academy of Art and the Victorian Academy of Arts. It is a measure of Boulton's stature in the artistic community at the time that, of the four pictures he submitted to the NSW Academy of Art in the years 1874 and 1875, three won Certificates of Merit. Put another way, in 1875 only thirteen such Certificates were presented for around 100 pictures entered in the Watercolour and Miscellaneous categories. Boulton won two of them.

What then happened to Boulton's reputation? This neglect was partly a matter of access: many of his best pictures remained in private collections, principally those of various branches of the Boulton family in Australia, New Zealand and the

*Right: Edward Baker Boulton (1812-1895), In the heart of the Blue Mountains, six miles from Wentworth Falls, c. 1880*



*Below: Edward Baker Boulton (1812-1895), Rose Bay from Cranbrook, 1886.*

*The gate lodge to Woollabra House is now the Rose Bay police station*







*Above: Edward Baker Boulton  
(1812-1895),  
New England scene, n.d.*



*Left: Edward Baker Boulton  
(1812-1895), The Church  
of San Giorgio at  
Castagnola near Lugano,  
29 April 1889. Although  
never intended for publication,  
Boulton's sketch book contains  
many fine drawings*





*Edward Baker Boulton (1812-1895),  
Italian scene, probably The Old Fort at  
Brindisi, 1890*

UK. I have written a biography to attempt to remedy this neglect. Apart from his fascinating life (17 children, two suicides...), my research shows Boulton as a master of technique in both watercolours and drawing.

The pencil drawings he made as a young man of 24 arriving at Hobart Town and Sydney show that he was already a fully competent artist. Evidence that he worked in a business in Liverpool before emigrating to Australia makes it likely that any formal training he had was undertaken there. This training either did not include oil painting, or he failed to master that technique, as he obviously took a conscious decision that the watercolour medium suited his delicate touch and he stuck to it. This lack of versatility may be a valid criticism of his limitations as an artist.

Another limitation was his narrow choice of subject matter. He produced no portraits or indeed pictures in which the human figures are more than tiny details in the landscape. And unlike, say, S.T. Gill, his pictures show nothing of the social life of his times. They are a perfect reflection of the concerns and pleasures of his social class – beautiful landscapes and seascapes, grand houses and notable buildings such as forts and castles. In their own way, they give as much

pleasure as any of the esteemed works of Buvelot, von Guérard or Martens. The State Library of NSW holds a substantial collection of his watercolours and photographs of most of Boulton's privately owned originals.

Upon Boulton's death, the Melbourne magazine *Table Talk* published an obituary which contained the following astute assessment:<sup>3</sup>

Mr E.B. Boulton...was not only a pioneer squatter...but was no mean artist...He excelled...in reproducing the sombre, yet sunlit, effects of the characteristic Australian landscape and the softness of his distances and the accuracy of his colouring may be noted in the favourable examples of his style acquired by the New South Wales National Art Gallery.

## NOTES

1 C. E. Alexander, *Ransome At Home*, UK, Amazon Publications, 1996

2 Hugh Brogan, *The Life Of Arthur Ransome*, London, Pimlico, 1992. Arthur Ransome, *The Autobiography Of Arthur Ransome*, London, Jonathan Cape, 1976

3 *Table Talk*, 1 November, 1895

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*Thanks to the private collectors who allowed illustration of their works to be used in this article.*

John H. Edwards, *Edward Baker Boulton: Australia's Forgotten Artist*

Norrong Press will publish this lavishly illustrated book, retailing for about \$45, this year. For orders and enquiries, contact [norrongpress@hotmail.com](mailto:norrongpress@hotmail.com)

Born in 1945 at Cowra, NSW, John Edwards grew up in the Coffs Harbour area and Brisbane. He came to Sydney in 1966 and became involved in poetry and theatre, founding a poetry magazine with Rae Desmond Jones. He went to London in 1971, where he studied for his Arts degree. Returning to Australia in 1977, he put together a volume of collected poems *Salt*. He now indulges his passion for historical research and writing.

# James Oatley and his Long Case Clocks

KEVIN FAHY

James Oatley (c. 1770-1839) is the best known of Australia's early clock and watchmakers. A native of Stafford, England, he was sentenced at the Hampshire Assizes in 1814 to transportation for life as a result of his prosecution for stealing sundry bed linen and other items:



*Oakley Clock No. 15, Throsby Park, Moss Vale.  
Photograph Andrew Simpson*



*Oakley Clock No. 16, 1822*



*No.16 dial*





*Clock No. 25, Courtesy Sotheby's*

Hampshire Lent Assizes... James Oatley was indicted for privately and feloniously stealing in the dwelling house of William Love, Esq., at Portsea, two feather beds, and various other articles. Guilty – Death.<sup>1</sup>

His sentence was commuted to transportation. On 27 January 1815, he arrived on the Marquis of Wellington at Sydney, where Governor Macquarie later appointed him as successor to Henry Lane and John Austin as Keeper of the Town Clock, a position he held until 1822, when James Robertson replaced him.

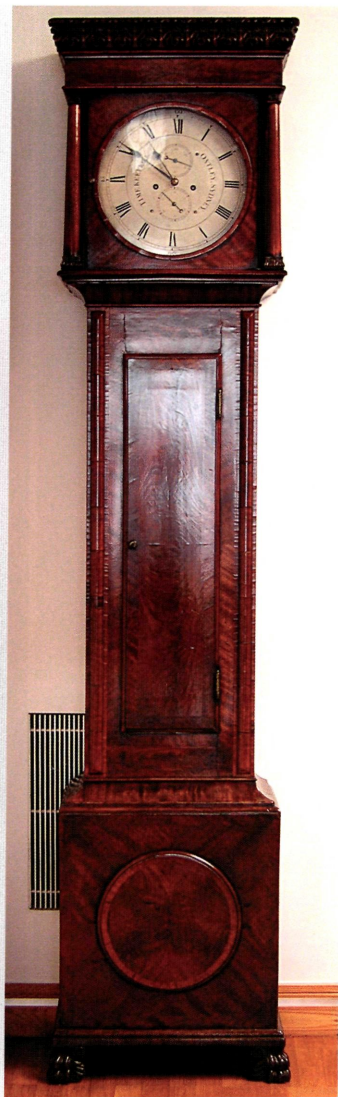
His first recorded address in Sydney was in 1816 when he acquired land at Cockle Bay (Darling Harbour). By about 1817 he had moved to premises in George Street, which he purchased in 1822, opposite the site of the present Town Hall. On his death in 1839, his son Frederick Oatley (1819-



*Clock No. 19, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, purchased 1957*

1890) briefly continued the business. The premises were leased out, later being occupied by the well-known Sydney jeweller and silversmith William Kerr, and eventually purchased by Kerr's sons in 1922.

In June 1819 James Oatley was paid £75 for installing a turret clock manufactured by



*Timekeeper by Oatley, private collection, Sydney*

Vuilliamy, the well-known firm of London clockmakers, in the gable of the Hyde Park Barracks. This together with his official position of Keeper of the Town Clock no doubt contributed to his conditional pardon, which was granted on 25 October 1821.

The New South Wales Census of 1828 lists





*Clock No. 27, Courtesy Cooper's of Epping*



*Clock No. 31, Australian Find*

With accelerating prices and interest in Oatley long case clocks (1957, \$300; 2003, \$310,000), Kevin Fahy updates his article and list published in *Australiana* in February 1992.

Oatley's assigned convict employees. They were the clockmaker William Harboun (arr. 1818), the watchmakers John Wilson (arr. 1821), William Kay (arr. 1826) and Cooper Broderick (arr. 1827), and the jeweller William Hanson (arr. 1826).

Harboun (or Harban) was previously listed in the General Muster and Land and Stock Muster of New South Wales 1822 as a Government Servant with James Oatley, together with the watchmaker Henry Smith who by 1828 was employed by the watchmaker Joseph Davis. Wilson and Broderick were still in Oatley's employ in 1837. Henry Smith opened business on his own account by 1833 and William Kay, who received a conditional pardon in 1840, was by 1844 likewise employed.

The General Return of Convicts in New South Wales 1837 also lists William Johnson (arr. 1832), Patrick Francis (arr. 1835), Nathaniel James (arr. 1836), and Thomas Page (arr. 1836) with James Oatley, but no indication is given of their actual occupations. A Richard Johnson, clockmaker, is listed in Sydney Directories 1835-39. The name 'Johnson' is inscribed on the dial of a long case clock originally from the Weston property Horsley at Fairfield, NSW.

## OATLEY'S CLOCKS

The following list of sighted, recorded and illustrated examples of James Oatley's long case clocks provide important documentation of early Australian technological skill and craftsmanship.

The clock components of all Oatley's long case clocks appear to have been made and certainly assembled by James Oatley or his workshop. They are not merely imported units installed in locally made cases, as is to be found in a number of examples of long case clocks carrying the name on the dial of several Sydney clockmakers active from the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Dennis Eccles, a leading Sydney horologist, who has sighted and repaired a number of Oatley long case clocks, considers that their movements were made locally.

In an article in *Australian Antique Trader* Kornelia Vidler and Graeme Dodd, noted:

Dennis Eccles, a horologist, has worked on more than 12 long case clocks and in his opinion all the movements were built by Oatley in the colony. Four of these were regulators, which are timekeepers, clocks to set other clocks by, with deadbeat escapements and maintaining power (even while they are being wound). Most have a seconds dial beneath the twelve and a calendar dial above the six. They have eight-day weight-driven movements with a long seconds pendulum.

While the dwarf long case clock, definitely of American style, made for Major Henry Antill is predominantly of stained pine, all the others are predominantly of red cedar, *Toona ciliata*. Most of the recorded examples, featuring she-oak or casuarina cross-banding and pine stringing decoration, reflect considerable cabinet making skill, together with the use of likely imported decorative inlays.

The identity of the skilled case makers is as yet unknown but it would seem likely that they are in the main from the one hand or workshop. John Hawkins has suggested that some of the cases with 'quilled on the cann' decoration were made by Scottish cabinet makers, specifically Alexander Hart, a convict who arrived at Sydney in May 1821.

All the silvered copper dials of recorded examples are inscribed with Oatley's name. Dated inscriptions range from 1818 to 1827. Those that are numbered (Nos. 5-51) are dated from 1820 to 1827.



*Clock by David Jones of Cowbridge, England, case attributed to Oatley's workshop. Courtesy Sotbely's*

At present, there is no firm documentation as to the original purchasers of long case clocks from James Oatley. Apart from those of unquestionable family provenance, only an undated newspaper article c. 1904 held in the Mitchell Library (Q991/Np 88) notes several of their purchasers at £40 each. They include Governor Macquarie, Mrs Throsby, the Rev.



*Clock attributed to James Oatley. Mitchell Library, Small Picture File*

Cartwright, Major Druitt, William Hutchinson and the Rev. Fulton. A clock allegedly made for Governor Macquarie and later owned by the Moran family at Bathurst was destroyed by fire in the 1950s.

Several clock parts and a dial from James Oatley's workshop are believed to be held by his descendants. An Australian cedar Oatley long case clock with an English

movement, originally owned by his second son James Oatley, was offered at Sotheby's on 26 August 2003.

An early photograph in the Mitchell Library (Small Picture File – Clocks) accompanied by no further information illustrates what would appear to be one of his long case clocks, although it does not relate to any sighted example.

The following list of Oatley's long case clocks has been compiled with the grateful assistance of Dennis Eccles and W.F. Bradshaw, and includes all those known or reported to this author.

## NOTES

1. *Hampshire Chronicle* 14 March 1814
2. John Hawkins "Quilled on the Cann". Alexander Hart, Glaswegian, Scottish Radical and Cart. *Australiana* Vol 23, No 4, November 2001, PP 100-109 esp p.103f

Kevin Fahy AM is a foundation member of the Australian Society and author of books on Australian jewellery, furniture and ceramics

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## Peter R Walker Australiana Writing Award

Peter R. Walker Pty Ltd, Dealers in Fine Art, generously continue to sponsor a cash award of \$250 for the best article submitted to *Australiana* this year.

All articles appearing in *Australiana* Volume 26 are eligible for the 2004 award.

## Australiana Encouragement Award

To encourage new writers, an award of \$100 will be given for the best article by a first-time writer or collector published in *Australiana* this year. Dealers, curators and those who earn income from antiques or decorative arts are ineligible.

Articles do not have to be lengthy but should be illustrated. A Style Guide is on the website or available from the editors.

We welcome contributions to *Australiana*.  
Contact the Co-Editor John Wade  
johnwade@iprimus.com.au  
0408 212 242

## EVENTS PROGRAM

Check our website [www.australiana.org](http://www.australiana.org) regularly for our event program, which is often augmented with new events. Members and guests are welcome to meetings, but some visits are restricted to Members only.

### SATURDAY 9 OCTOBER, 2 PM: SYDNEY

Visit the furniture restoration workshop of Christian Da Silva and Dianne Damjanovic at Brookvale and pick up some practical tips on buying, restoring and conserving furniture. Sorry, no children due to the nature of the machinery. Small charge for refreshments, booking essential 02 9974 1353.

### FRIDAY 5 NOVEMBER, FROM 5.30 PM: SYDNEY

Visit to Sculpture by the Sea along the cliff walk at Bondi, Tamarama and Bronte beaches. Twilight inspection of the 2004 Sculpture by the Sea exhibition, a fun event for all the family and companion animals; bring an informal picnic or a barbecue, or buy fish and chips from the famous Bronte Chippa, at historic Nelson Bay. Sculpture by the Sea runs from 28 October till 14 November. Call 02 9974 1353 details.

### DECEMBER

Christmas drinks by the Harbour at Balmain

### WEDNESDAY 26 JANUARY 2005, 6.30PM: SYDNEY

Australia Day Dinner, Axi's Restaurant, Alexandra St, Hunter's Hill NSW



NO., DATE & ORIGINAL OWNER		KNOWN PROVENANCE	ILLUSTRATED
INSCRIBED, NOT NUMBERED OR DATED			
Major H.C. Antill h. 114 cm	Mrs T.H. Headlam, Longford Tas; G.K. Gray auction 1981; Robert Oatley		<i>ECF</i> pl. 69 p. 93
Timekeeper, h. 250 c. 1830	Sydney, p.c.		<i>NCAF</i> pl. 19, p. 255
h. 240 cm	Mrs N. Steele-Park, Merriwa NSW; Caroline Simpson OAM; Historic Houses Trust of NSW		Lawsons 24/11/93; <i>Australiana</i> 15:4, cover
	Storey family		
INSCRIBED AND DATED			
1818, Regulator			
1820, James Badgery	Badgery family		B. Hardy, <i>From the Hawkesbury Monaro</i> p. 64
	to the		
1820, movement only	Oatley family		
INSCRIBED NUMBERED AND DATED			
No. 5, 1820, h. 223 cm	Tasmania, p.c.		<i>AFPHD</i> pl. 245, p. 292
No. 7, 1820, John Brush	Brush family, Sydney		
No. 9, 1821, Thomas West h. 250 cm	West family; Government House Parramatta, National Trust NSW		<i>Reflections</i> Aug-Oct 2002 p. 23; Broadbent & Hughes, <i>Age of Macquarie</i> p. 126
No. 15, 1822, Timekeeper, h. 266 cm Mrs Throsby	<i>Throsby Park</i> , Moss Vale, National Parks & Wildlife Service NSW		<i>NCAF</i> pl. 18, p. 254; <i>Australiana</i> 23:4, p. 103
No. 16, 1822 h. 261.5 cm	W.F. Bradshaw; Denham Court collection		<i>ECF</i> pl. 72 p. 95; <i>Australiana</i> 23:4, p. 104
No. 17, 1822,	Kelly family; Sydney p.c.		<i>AAC</i> July-Dec 1985 p. 90
No. 19, 1822 h. 258	W.F. Bradshaw; Powerhouse Museum, purchased 1957		<i>ECF</i> pl. 70 p. 94; <i>Australiana</i> 14:1 p. 6.
No. 20, 1822, George Hall	Hall family		
No. 21, 1822 Timekeeper, h. 239 cm	Roche family; Lord McAlpine; Sydney, p.c.		<i>AFPHD</i> pl. 246; <i>Australiana</i> 14:1; 17:2 p. 49; G. Cornell, <i>Memories</i> p. 202; <i>Rustic Charm</i> <i>cat.</i> 1988, pls. 5a-b; <i>WAA</i> 56 Dec 1998 p. 154
No. 22, 1822	White family; Graeme Dodd Antiques		<i>Aust. Antique Trader</i> Dec 1986- Jan 87 p. 2; <i>Australiana</i> 23:4, p. 104
No. 23, 1822, h. 233 cm	Simpson's Antiques; Sydney, p.c.		
No. 25, 1823 William Cape h. 220 cm	Mrs W. Stephens; Simpson's Antiques; Dr Kenneth Neale; Robert Oatley		Sotheby's 27/8/2002 lot 28
No. 27 1823 h. 244 cm	Pye family; Coopers of Epping 2003; Robert Purves		Antiques in NSW Oct 2003 p. 77
No. 29, 1825	Taylor family		
No. 30, 1826, William Roberts h. 225 cm	Roberts family		
No. 31, 1827, Thomas Rose	Clocks of Distinction; Australiana Fund, 1988		<i>Australian Business Collectors</i> <i>Annual</i> 1988; <i>The Australiana</i> <i>Collection</i> , p. 48, pl. 51; <i>Australiana</i> 14:1 p. 6
No. 32, 1827			
No. 51, 1827, George Durham	Durham family		
CLOCKS BY OATLEY'S SONS			
Clock case, English movement h 228 cm	James Oatley Jr, 2nd son of James Oatley		Sotheby's 26/8/03 lot 32
'Oatley 1840'	Frederick Oatley (sold Lawson's)		

ECF: Craig, Fahy & [Frederick Oatley] Roberson, Early Colonial Furniture of NSW & VDL, 1972  
NCAF: Fahy, Simpson & Simpson, 19th Century Australian Furniture, 1985  
AFPHD: Fahy & Simpson, Australian Furniture, Pictorial History and Dictionary, 1998

# Collector's Corner

A new section of our magazine, talking about things that people collect



## Glove Stretcher

This glove stretcher seemed too good to be true when we came across it in Orange, NSW. It looked like whalebone, and it is stamped 'LLOYD & COLLINS 306 GEORGE ST SYDNEY'.

Ladies used these to stretch kid gloves to fit their delicate little hands and fingers, and I guessed it might date between 1880 and 1920 – which coincided with a period of prosperity for Orange, as the houses attest. It might have been bone, or whale bone, or elephant ivory, or a plastic such as casein, or xylonite, a thermoplastic based on cellulose nitrate.

Under a magnifying glass at home, the texture looked like whalebone. So off to the Mitchell Library to check the dates of Lloyd & Collins in Sands' *Directories*. This turned out to be an anticlimax, as the Directories showed Lloyd & Collins first listed in the Directory for 1880 at 306 George Street, expanding to include no. 308, and then disappearing during the Great War, in 1917. My guess had proved pretty accurate. They might or might not have bothered to change their stamp to accommodate the bigger premises, so the research refined the possible date of the glove stretchers marginally to between 1880 and 1917.

A scrimshaw collector told me that glove stretchers turn up an awful lot and are passed off as whale ivory from the US, but the name of a local retailer adds interest. Some are made from elephant

ivory, which has a zigzag pattern in the grain. The only bone used from the whale was the jaw bone which has a heavy, tight grain and was used for walking sticks.

## Kangaroo teapots

The teapot moulded in the shape of a kangaroo and covered with monochrome glazes is a favourite Australian design, produced by Abraham James of Coorparoo Pottery at Coorparoo in Brisbane.

Collectors should beware of recent imitations. Cast from the original teapot (not the moulds) in the last 10 years, they were made just out of Brisbane and marketed at an antique shop in Newcastle for about \$120-150 each in green, brown and blue glazes. The reproductions are about 10 per cent smaller than the originals, due to shrinkage of the clay in firing. An original kangaroo teapot is 14 cm across the base and 15 cm high, with the reproductions 13 cm across the base and 13.5 cm high.

## Colonial Spoons

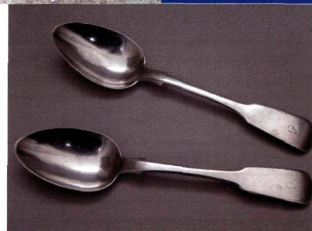
A nice young couple from New Zealand came into the auction house with a large collection of silver that her father had gathered in Australia. Teapots, coffee pots, candelabra were unpacked, and they plonked down a shoebox full of tableware.

'Any colonial silver?', I asked hopefully.

'No, Dad only collected English and Scottish silver', she replied.



A genuine Kangaroo teapot with three smaller copies in different glazes



Pair of silver table spoons by Alexander Dick, Sydney c. 1830-40, courtesy of Stanley & Co.

We set about cataloguing the collection and putting estimates on each lot. Silver is pretty much undervalued these days, so the tableware that tumbled out of the shoebox would not be expensive, except for the 18th century pieces.

Two table spoons however stood apart from the rest. Turning them over revealed some crisp punch marks – the date letter E and the maker's stamp DICK. After all, two colonial spoons had sneaked into the collection, a pair from the Sydney silversmith Alexander Dick. Both were also engraved with the letter B. The owners were pleased and surprised when they sold at auction for \$3,838, roughly 50 times what a pair of English spoons of the same date would fetch.

We welcome your contributions to this section of the magazine.



Joan Kerr. Photograph © by Sandy Edwards

## Eleanor Joan Kerr AM, 1938-2004

JOHN WADE

In 2004, Australia lost a great and much-loved arts scholar when Professor Joan Kerr died on 22 February. Typically, she held out long enough to celebrate her 66th birthday, with her family gathered around her, the day before.

Sandy Edwards' evocative photograph of Joan shows her as many, especially her hundreds of students, will always remember her: relaxed, warm, smiling, welcoming, diminutive but with an enormous personal presence backed by a solid wall of scholarship. Peter Watts, Director of the Historic Houses Trust of NSW, captured it in his Eulogy:

If ever there was a face that betrayed a wicked thought it was Joan's. You could sense the witticism, the intellectual trap or the subtlest of put-downs just before it struck. Her wry smile would slowly emerge, the eyes would twinkle a little more than usual, the mouth turn up – or down –

depending on the circumstances – she would tweek her huge spectacles and look over the top of them – as if to become serious – the elbows would go onto the table with her hands supporting the chin, head to one side, and, if it was a joke, then the chuckle would emerge – turn to a giggle – then to full bellied laughter. Listen and you will probably hear her laughing at us now. Joan was always laughing. It was her signature. It should have been bottled and preserved in the National Archives.

Joan Lyndon was born in Sydney in 1938 but she was brought up mostly in Brisbane. From childhood, her life was bedevilled by asthma, though she rarely spoke and never complained about it. She studied at the University of Queensland, where she was hyperactive in drama and literary activities. After a series of illnesses that caused her to miss lectures, she was able to borrow the notes of a gentle, athletic fellow student who rowed in the Queensland Eight and was roughly twice her height, Jim Kerr.

Geographically separated after graduating, and with Joan troubled by doubts (which evaporated), they eventually married in 1960. When Jim was transferred to Switzerland in 1963, they began a six-year stint in Europe. No opportunity was lost to pursue the study of European art and architecture with the best, in London at the Courtauld Institute and at Birkbeck College with Sir Nikolaus Pevsner.

Back in Sydney, both enrolled in Fine Arts at the University of Sydney. Joan, with two young children, topped the course. Jim, who was working full-time with Qantas, came second. After she worked for five years as a tutor, the then Professor declined to offer her a junior lectureship, pointing out that real academics go overseas and get a PhD. The Kerrs both enrolled at the University of York, both receiving their PhD on the same day in 1977. As Peter Watts remarked, the two 'Dr J. Kerrs became a nightmare for databases in institutions around the country. Both are recognised as leaders in their fields, and crusaders for heritage preservation.'



Joan's subsequent academic career at Sydney, NSW and the Australian National University was marked by an extraordinary ability to inspire her students and harness their efforts in major projects. Joan did not choose to pursue narrow areas of research where no one bothered to criticise, but to address big, neglected issues relating to Australian art and architecture. She promoted the resurrection of the work of Australian women artists, who ever since have been the subject of exhibition after exhibition.

The hefty and invaluable *Dictionary of Australian Artists to 1870* appeared in 1992, and *Heritage: The National Women's Art Book* three years later. Each has over 100 contributors, a measure of Joan's tireless networking skills and capacity to generate enthusiasm among academics, students and amateurs. She produced mountains of scholarly articles, prefaces and reviews. To get her messages across to the broader population, she was enthusiastic about radio and TV interviews too, not to mention exhibitions. She was not a person to hide away in the universities where she worked, but always on the telephone or out in the real world. To counterbalance this, she ploughed through her serious academic

work in the early hours of the morning.

Her interests extended to all forms of art and architecture, men and women, black and white, young and old. She moved on from early interests in the architects John Verge and Edmund Blacket to explore the work of the artists in other media – cake decorators and emu-egg carvers, for example. Her all-encompassing tastes in art and architecture were matched in other areas, such as politics and friends. As a result, she was never constrained, pigeonholed or sidelined.

When it became known that Joan was terminally ill with cancer, the Historic Houses Trust organised a dinner for her at Government House, Sydney in June 2003, attended by 150 devoted friends and colleagues. In March this year, 250 people joined her family for Joan's funeral at her favourite Blacket church, St Stephen's at Camperdown. They came to celebrate the life of a remarkable person, and it seemed odd that she did not leave in the ute that she and Jim always drove.

As well as her devoted family, Joan's greatest legacies are her students, her publications, her colleagues and friends, whom she imbued with enthusiasm, a quest for greater understanding and the will to

pursue all matters of lasting significance, no matter how unfashionable they might be at the time.

Jim and Joan's obsession with heritage and teaching was underscored when a visitor wandered innocently into the historic church after the service, and asked about reason for the plaques on the pews. Jim Kerr knew the reason better than anyone, so he explained the custom. 'The Beast', as Jim affectionately called Joan, would have approved of this random act of kindness to a stranger.

Joan Kerr was honoured posthumously in the Queen's Birthday Honours List as a Member of the Order of Australia, 'for service to education and to the arts, particularly through research in architecture and art history, and through encouraging the study and recognition of Australian women artists.'

*This tribute to Australian Society member Dr Joan Kerr was originally published in the World of Antiques and Art 67, August 2004.*

## NEWS

### From a Little Acorn

The Society of Arts and Crafts of New South Wales is approaching its centenary in 2006. It is mounting the first of three exhibitions, *From a Little Acorn*, from 7-31 October at its headquarters, 86 George Street, The Rocks.

The exhibition will explore the changing influences of the early part of the 20th century, interpreted in glass, clay, fibre, wood, silver, enamel and other materials. Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC, Governor of New South Wales and the Society's Patron, will open the exhibition at 6 pm on 7 October.

Around 1900, great changes were afoot in the decorative arts worldwide. Australian artists and craftspeople strove to find their own uniquely Australian identity, heavily influenced by their British, European and American colleagues, and especially by the bold strides made by artists such as Lucien Henry here and William Morris in England.

In 1906, five women and two men came together in Raglan Street, Mosman to form an association to promote Australian flora and fauna, and so the Society of Arts and Crafts of NSW was born.

Members met in each other's homes or studios and produced high quality handmade items, showcasing the colours and motifs that they found around them, and exhibiting in premises in Pitt, King and Rowe Streets. They were gifted artists and in 1907 the women members excelled at the First Australian Exhibition of Women's Work in Melbourne. At the Third Annual Exhibition, the National Gallery of NSW acquired works by 18 members, such as Eirene Mort and Elisabeth Soderberg. The poet Dorothea Mackellar was a member too. Today, membership of the Society has grown to around 100, but the charter is the same, promotion of the wonderful motifs and materials of Australia.

The second exhibition will be *A Great Gum Grows* in 2005. Works will reflect the deepening sense of place, image and



*Nell and Wyn Holden potting in 1931*

identity of a more inclusive Australian society and its art. In the forties, Margaret Preston led the new style along with Grace Seccombe and Nell Holden (see *Australiana* February 2003).



Grace Seccombe koala

*Branching Out* in August 2006 will complete the trilogy and run concurrently with the major celebration at Manly Art Gallery and Museum. This exhibition will have two parts. The first will show work lent by the National Gallery of Australia, the Art Gallery of NSW, the Powerhouse Museum, private collectors and pieces from the Society's archives. The second part will present new works created by today's artists. Some will use the very latest Space Age materials, some will use our great raw materials. All will draw on the experiences of today, always expressed in beautiful, quality, hand made craftwork.



Wembley Ware eagle ashtray

## Wembley Ware

Australiana Society member Paul Bisby has published a book on Wembley Ware, the 'art pottery' produced in Perth, Western Australia

from just after World War II until production ceased due to competition from imports in 1961. The Subiaco factory, then H.L.Brisbane & Wunderlich, continued to operate and manufactures 'Australian Fine China' today. It preserves its traditional focus with its own museum.

Paul's limited edition book has 64 pages illustrating in colour 228 examples of Wembley Ware from his and other collections. Each is listed with a broad indication of price, based on actual retail transactions. Copies are available at \$50 from Paul Bisby, Box 684, Hagley Tas 7292.



Victorian murals revealed at Mandeville Hall

## Stripping in Toorak

Careful chemistry has peeled back two layers of house paint to unveil a rich world of Victorian murals at Mandeville Hall, now part of Loreto Girls School in Toorak. Called the Indian Room, the walls were decorated in the 1870s with paintings of lush green foliage and vegetation, bordered with red draperies and golden architectural detail.

For the past 50 years, the exotic artworks have been buried under a shroud of thick paint. Stripping the overlying paint without eating into the murals beneath presented a challenge.

'Overpaint—where the original paint layer of an art-work or mural is covered by later paint like house-paint—is a common problem in conservation,' says art conservator and applied chemist Jocelyn Evans from Melbourne University's Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation. 'The difficulty lies in trying to remove the overpaint without damaging the original. Most chemical systems that attack the overpaint also

harm the original paint.'

Evans had to develop her own paint removal system, based around a slow-acting paint stripper called a dibasic ester. 'Dibasic esters have a strong softening effect on paint films. But unlike other chemicals commonly used in paint-strippers, they penetrate quite slowly, allowing us to remove the upper paint layer before they can reach the original layer underneath.'

While conservators have already used commercial paint strippers based on dibasic esters to remove non-original paint in a variety of contexts, the idea that they could be used to remove overpaint, leaving the original paint layer intact, had not been fully explored. Commercial paint strippers based on dibasic esters were withdrawn from the Australian market, apparently due to poor sales.

Evans looked at how dibasic esters act on paint layers, and how conservators could use them to remove non-original paint. This involved devising (and testing) a range of formulations from materials that Australian conservators would have ready access to. The end result was the paint-removal system used successfully at Mandeville Hall.

'It's impossible to describe the feeling when uncovering these astonishing murals, and being the first to see them in decades' says Evans. 'Conservation is such an exciting blend of science and art. In this project I was able to apply chemical principles to a real-life problem, with such a visually beautiful result at the end of it all.'

## Caroline Simpson's gift to the Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales

Caroline Simpson OAM (1930–2003) was one of Australia's greatest collectors of colonial furniture and art, a philanthropist and generous benefactor. She and her brother James were the children of newspaper publisher the late Sir Warwick Fairfax and his first wife, Betty. Caroline's collecting accelerated in the late 1980s after her stepbrother Warwick Fairfax Jr's disastrous takeover of Fairfax & Sons, when he bought out her and James's stake.

In 1992 she purchased *Clyde Bank*, an early Colonial house in Sydney's historic Rocks. Caroline bought almost the entire collection of Australian paintings





belonging to the bankrupt Alan Bond – including many watercolours by Conrad Martens. *Clyde Bank* opened to the public two years later as a ‘living house of a living city’ displaying furniture, paintings, photographs and china from Caroline’s burgeoning collection.

A keen supporter of the State Library of NSW and devoted contributor to preserving the integrity of National Trust buildings, Caroline contributed generously to both organisations. In 2002, she donated to the State Library of NSW a rare collection of Sir Donald Bradman’s letters. Caroline’s philanthropy was usually anonymous. She supported publication of Elizabeth Ellis’s book *Conrad Martens: Life & Art*, the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* and the *Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens*.

Her *Clyde Bank* Collection has more than 1,500 individual items, including paintings, prints, furniture, ceramics, sculpture, clocks and other objets d’art. The 18th and 19th century topographical paintings and drawings are recognised as the premier private

collection of colonial art in Australia. While the works focus on New South Wales, the contents show Caroline’s global perspective, illustrating how trade and colonising went hand-in-hand, spreading architectural and painting styles of late 18th and early 19th century Britain across the Empire.

Caroline Simpson was known for her keen eye, knowledge and passion for her chosen field. She possessed the true spirit of a collector in acquiring paintings and drawings that were not only aesthetically pleasing but added to the scope and coherence of her collection.

In August 2004, her four children – Louise, Alice, Emily and Edward – donated the \$10.5 million collection and a \$1.5 million endowment to the Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales. To acknowledge the donation and her work, the Historic Houses Trust will name its new library and research collection the Caroline Simpson Library and Research Collection which will open at the Mint in Macquarie Street in October.

Many of the works relate to specific properties of the Trust or to their exhibition programs, and will consolidate its position as the premier organisation displaying Australian historical material in New South Wales. Highlights of the collection are

■ Two Wedgwood Sydney Cove Medallions of 1789, made from Sydney clay and designed by Henry Webber with ‘Hope encouraging Art and Labour, under the influence of Peace, to pursue the employments necessary to give security

and happiness to an infant colony’.

■ A chest of drawers c. 1804, attributed to Lawrence Butler, Australia’s first furniture maker of note, veneered in local timbers, including casuarina or ‘beef wood’ and yellow aspen.

■ A silver holey dollar, 1813, introduced by Governor Macquarie to prevent silver coins leaving the colony.

■ The Strathallan Chest c. 1820, intended to hold natural history specimens and once part of the collection of Governor Macquarie. The lid has a painting of a parrot against a backdrop of the Blue Mountains, probably painted by the artist John William Lewin.

■ An early long case clock by James Oatley c. 1822, in a cedar case clock with domed hood and silvered copper dial engraved Oatley Sydney.

■ *The Children of Sir Ralph Darling* c1810, artist unknown, a silhouette of the three children of Sir Ralph Darling (Governor 1825–1831) framed by draperies painted on glass.

■ *The Mountain Pheasant (Lyre Bird)*, a watercolour by convict artist Richard Browne (1776–1824). Richard Browne was convicted in Dublin and arrived in Sydney in 1811. He was sent to Newcastle for a second offence and compiled a folio of drawings of birds, fish, reptiles and butterflies for Lieut. Thomas Skottowe, Commandant of the penal station. He returned to Sydney in 1817. He is well known for his naïve portraits of Australian Aborigines which have the exuberance of this early depiction of the lyrebird, signed ‘drawn by R. Brown No. 27 Philip Street, Sydney, N.S. Wales 1820’.

■ *Port Jackson NSW showing the Observatory*, by George Edwards Peacock (1806–after 1855). This minutely detailed panorama of Miller’s Point and the entrance to Darling Harbour shows a mix of waterfront industry and housing. Scrub on the North Shore appears in the foreground. The Observatory, while part of the title of the work and a symbol of the colony’s architectural and scientific advancement, is shown indistinctly. Peacock has provided us with an image of a working harbour.

■ Cedar breakfront bookcase c. 1835, from the collection of the Australian poet, Dorothea MacKellar (1885–1968). It features single-paned glazed doors and engaged fluted columns of Composite order, combining elements



of the Ionic and Corinthian orders. The bookcase will be displayed at the Historic Houses Trust's new headquarters at The Mint, Macquarie Street Sydney.

■ *Dr Mitchell's residence, Cumberland Place, The Rocks, Sydney, 1842* by Conrad Martens. Caroline Simpson owned a breathtaking collection of works by colonial artist Conrad Martens (1801–1878), most depicting important early colonial houses and gardens, both of which she loved. Built for Robert Campbell Senior in 1825, *Cumberland Place* has been attributed to architect Francis Greenway. This painting was purchased in 1846 by Alexander Walker Scott, son of Augusta Maria Scott who bought the house in 1832. It shows the exotic and eclectic tastes of colonial gardening with plants such as *monstera deliciosa*, *datura*, *arundo donax*, *wisteria* and a *eucalypt*. David Scott Mitchell, whose collection forms the core of the Mitchell Library, grew up at *Cumberland Place* (demolished c. 1914).

■ Shale carvings by John Baird (1810–1878), who based some of his naïve kerosene shale carvings on Sydney landmarks. The statue of Thomas Sutcliffe Mort is in Macquarie Place near the Museum of Sydney while

the statue of Dr John Dunmore Lang is in Wynyard Park.

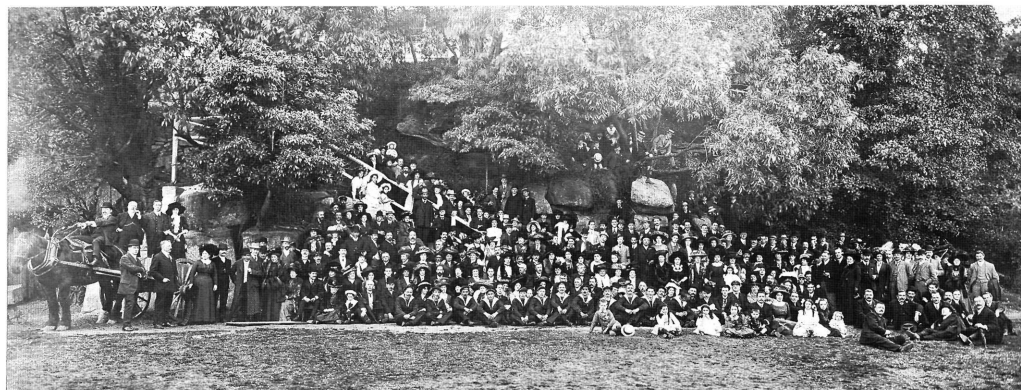
■ Chinese export punch bowl c. 1785, decorated with a continuous view of some of the thirteen hong at Canton, flying the flags of Denmark, France (the Bourbon flag), Spain, Sweden, England and Holland. The hong were ultimately destroyed by the Chinese in December 1856.

■ Twelve Freycinet expedition watercolours, 1818, by the artists of the 1817–1820 expedition under the command of Louis de Freycinet, who was entertained by Governor Macquarie in Sydney in 1819. J. Alphonse Pellion, one of the artists to accompany the expedition, completed an early architectural study of Hyde Park Barracks. Freycinet stayed at Timor in October 1818. Pellion painted Freycinet paying a visit to the Secretary of the Dutch Governor at Coupang, showing a European-style drawing room with adaptations to a tropical colonial environment, such as the hundi lamps, painted chequerboard floor, local musicians and Timorese servants wearing red check sarongs. Views of colonial interiors have long been of interest to the Trust and have directly influenced the recreated interiors of *Elizabeth Bay House*, *Vaughan House* and *Elizabeth Farm*.



■ A series of Staffordshire portrait figures of Australian interest including James Cook.





*The French community on the beach at Clifton Gardens on a 14th July in the Twenties. Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW; gift of the Playoust family*

# Proud to be different: celebrating the 14th of July in Sydney

IVAN BARKO

An exhibition on French settlers in New South Wales, *Vive la différence! The French in NSW*, is on show at the State Library of NSW until 10 October 2004. It brings together items from the Library's rich multicultural collection with exhibits lent by French-Australian families and others. The French Consulate-General lent the first page of its Register of Births, Marriages and Deaths, featuring the first

birth recorded by any foreign consulate in Australia, Jules Joubert's daughter Louise in 1843. Hunters Hill, the 'French Village', is strongly represented.

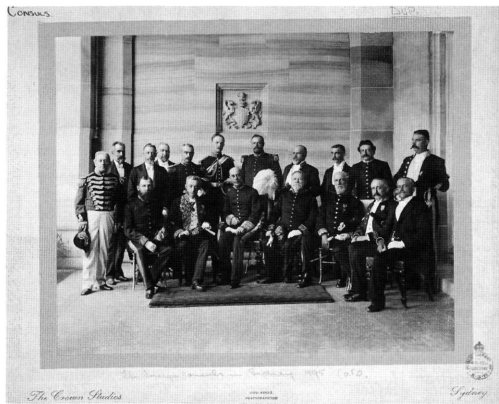
French personalities featured include Francis Barrallier, an explorer, an engineer and aide-de-camp to Governor Philip King; Francis Rossi, Superintendent of the NSW Police Force in the eighteen-twenties; Eugène Nicolle, an inventor of refrigerating and ice-making machines; and the jeweller and clockmaker Hippolyte Delarue.

The exhibition features the ephemeral and tragic 1866 visit to Sydney of the first royal visitor of any nationality to Australia, the young Prince of Condé, grandson of the deposed King Louis-Philippe, who died of a lung disease, probably tuberculosis, in Sydney.

French pioneers' contribution to rural Australia is illustrated through rich material lent by the Reymonds of Forbes. Photographic and other records donated by the Playoust family highlight the contribution of the wool buyers to French-Australian commercial relations, the life of the local French colony and the common cause the French Poilus and the Australian Diggers fought for in the First World War. France and Australia fought together again in World War II, while France contributed to Australian lifestyles through its culture, luxury products, food, fashions and technological achievements.

French restaurants were always highly regarded in Sydney. Paris House in Phillip Street was a renowned eating place from the turn of the century to the 1920s, run by the Liévain family.

Several photographs show the celebration of the French National Day in Australia. Group celebration of the French National Day in Sydney started in 1885 when on 14 July of that year the French colony's doctor,



*The Sydney Consular Corps, with Georges Biard d'Aunet in the first row, second from left photographed at Government House c. 1895. Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW*



Photo: Hall & Co.

Photo: Hall & Co.

Photo: Hall & Co.

*The official party with Governor Sir Harry Rawson, 14 July 1906*

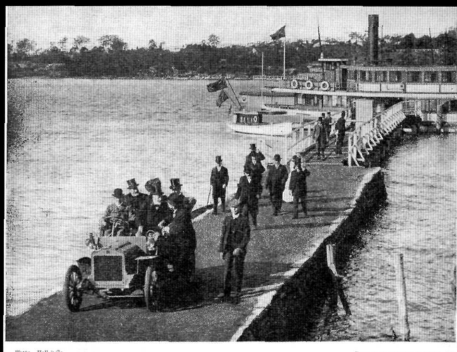


Photo: Hall & Co.

Arrivée de Son Excellence le Gouverneur.

Page: Harcourt, Hyde & Wills.

*An open French Richard Brasier motor car on the Cabarita wharf with the Governor, Sir Harry Rawson, and his daughter being driven from the ferry to the pavilion, 14 July 1906, from the Courrier Australien*

Dr Louis Laure, took the initiative of holding a dinner in a local restaurant.

The first official Fourteenth of July celebration was held four years later, in 1889, when the Consul, Henri-Léon Verleye, organised a function in the grounds of the Sir Joseph Banks Hotel in Botany. In 1892, the official proceedings were followed by a concert given by members of the French community, and a ball.

In 1893 the day began with a reception at the recently upgraded Consulate-General, organised by Consul Verleye's successor, Georges Biard d'Aunet. The Botany function, catered by Mr Landoval, was attended by 300 guests and was followed by a ball. In the evening, a concert of French music was held in the Town Hall, with the participation of the City Organist, Mr Wiegand.

The 1894 celebrations were cancelled because of President Carnot's assassination three weeks earlier.

In 1895 the official reception at the Consulate-General was followed by a function in a new venue, at Corey Gardens in Cabarita, on the Parramatta River. Cabarita remained the venue for the 14 July celebrations for twelve years. The guests reached the site by boat. It was the first time that a Premier of the Colony, George Reid, attended. The future Sir George remained a great friend of Georges Biard d'Aunet throughout the latter's long stay in Australia, and in his short-lived capacity as Prime Minister of the new Commonwealth he was present at the Consul-General's farewell function early in 1905.

Lord Hampden, the Colony's Governor from the mid-1890s was at first a great friend of France. When in 1896 the Consul-General established a French Lending Library in Sydney, sponsored by the Paris Alliance française, the Governor became one of its first Life Members. In the following years, however, relations between France and the Australian colonies as well as Britain became strained, and Lord Hampden no longer attended French functions.

His successor, the last Governor of the Colony, Earl Beauchamp (1899-1900), was at loggerheads with the French Consul-General throughout his short stay at Government House. One of the reasons for their warfare was Earl Beauchamp's decision to ignore the French National Day (against accepted convention) and to snub Georges Biard d'Aunet, who in turn refused to attend functions at Government House.

After the accession of the Francophile Edward VII to the throne in 1901 the relationship improved considerably, marking the beginning of the process which eventually led to the Entente cordiale in 1904. The attendance of Governor Sir Harry Rawson, Lady Rawson and their daughter at the 14 July function at Cabarita in 1903 was a clear sign of a new improved climate.

In 1902, after the official reception in the Library of the now fully-fledged Alliance française at 2 Bond Street, the building which housed the Consulate-General and all the other French institutions, guests walked down to Circular Quay and

boarded one of the ferries provided free of charge by French-Australian ferry operator Numa Joubert. Several ferries took the participants to Cabarita, between 12 noon and 1 pm, bringing them back to Circular Quay between 4 and 5 pm.

In 1906 the Governor, Sir Harry Rawson, accompanied by his daughter, Miss Rawson, was met on the wharf by a French 'Richard Brasier' automobile, driven by Mr Maillard, one of the principals of the importing firm. The vice-regal party and the Consul-General, former Librarian Albert Pinard, were driven in the 'Richard Brasier' to the pavilion where the lunch (sometimes described as a picnic) was to take place. The journalist reporting on the event noted the supreme ease with which the automobile negotiated the steep rise from the wharf to the pavilion.

After 1907 the venue of the Fourteenth of July function shifted from Cabarita on the Parramatta River to Clifton Gardens on the North Shore of the Harbour. In 1909 after the picnic, a banquet was held at the ABC Café in Pitt Street. The following year, in 1910, it was transferred to St James Hall in Phillip Street, with the catering entrusted to Gaston Liévin, the owner of the neighbouring French restaurant, the famous Paris-House.

Clifton Gardens remained the site of the French community's Fourteenth of July celebrations for many years to come.

Ivan Borko is Emeritus Professor of French at the University of Sydney.



# A rum naval trophy

## The Colin Rodgers Cup

KENNETH CAVILL

The Royal Australian Naval Historical Collection housed on Spectacle Island in Sydney Harbour includes a wealth of naval artefacts ranging from vintage uniforms to obsolete equipment, relics, numerous naval mementoes from ships, shore establishments and personnel together with presentations and sporting trophies.<sup>1</sup>

Of the many silver cups, bowls and shields presented to the RAN in the early 20th century, a select number commemorate historical events. An elaborate three-panelled shield of Indian silver presented to HMAS *Sydney* by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce 'In Appreciation' is an outstanding memento of the naval engagement between HMAS *Sydney* and the German cruiser *Emden* off Keeling Island on 9 November 1914 that ended with the destruction of the *Emden*.

The *Emden* had been attacking merchant ships in the Bay of Bengal before heading to the Cocos (Keeling) Islands to destroy the cable and wireless installations. *Sydney* was detached from the escort protecting the first convoy of 30,000 Australian and New Zealand troops, then in the Indian Ocean bound for Egypt, to seek and destroy the raider.<sup>2</sup>

A considerable proportion of the silverware presented to the RAN recalls peacetime events of naval interest. Sporting activities are well to the fore; many trophies were given to encourage team competitiveness between crews of the naval vessels. Trophies for sailing and rowing events are prominent, others record past football, cricket, tennis, cross-country running, boxing and rifle shooting contests.

Plate 1. The Colin Rodgers Cup.  
Photo courtesy W. J. Sanders and Co.



The names of the winning ships – familiar names of Australian cities, towns and rivers – are inscribed on the mementoes. Most of the early 20th century wares are of English origin, manufactured in the workshops of well-known Birmingham, Sheffield and London silversmiths. The designs, typical of the period, include Victorian Neo-classical, Art Nouveau and Art Deco examples.

Although relatively few trophies of Australian manufacture are to be found in the Collection, one is of special interest. In 1921, the Colin Rodgers Cup was presented to the Royal Australian Navy by Mr Colin Rogers Esq. of Sydney<sup>3</sup> as the Annual Fleet Boxing Championship.

On casual sighting this massive cup might be mistaken for a large cooking pot; closer examination would soon show that it is in the form of a one-gallon rum measure as supplied to the Royal Navy in the 1820s. This sporting trophy (plate 1) is unique.

The cup bears the following inscriptions:

THE  
COLIN RODGERS CUP  
14th June 1921  
ANNUAL FLEET BOXING  
CHAMPIONSHIP  
ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY

and on the reverse:

### WON BY

1921	HMAS MELBOURNE
1929	HMAS ALBATROSS
1922	HMAS MELBOURNE
1932	HMAS CANBERRA
1923	HMAS BRISBANE
1934	HMAS AUSTRALIA
1924	HMAS BRISBANE
1937	HMAS CANBERRA
1925	HMAS SYDNEY

The base of the cup is inscribed:

'Silver Copy of a Copper Rum Measure, in use in HM Navy 1823. Imperial Gallon.' and is marked: HARDY BROS STG SILVER.

The choice of an antique rum measure in sterling silver as a trophy, arguably that of the donor, links the championship cup with a three-centuries-old tradition of the Royal Navy – the issue of a rum ration. The issue of rum in lieu of beer began in the West Indies in 1555, when Vice Admiral Penn sailed to Barbados and captured Jamaica. In Jamaica, beer was not readily available but rum was. The rum ration became part of *Regulations relating to His Majesty's Service at Sea* in 1731.

A decade later Vice Admiral Vernon, known as the father of grog,<sup>4,5</sup> ordered the rum issue to be diluted with water to overcome drunkenness and disciplinary problems. The ceremony of 'Up Spirits' – the ritual of issuing grog to the ratings – has been followed for more than two centuries. In 1850 the rum ration was halved to one-eighth of a pint (that is, two and a half standard measures) and the amount of water was increased. Until 1970 the call of 'Up Spirits' has been a social event of the day for naval ratings.<sup>5</sup>

The Colin Rodgers Cup bears the mark of Hardy Bros, one of Sydney's leading jewellery houses; no doubt they were commissioned to supply the trophy. The maker was W.J. Sanders, manufacturing silversmiths and goldsmiths of Sydney, well known for their design and manufacture of sporting cups and trophies throughout the 20th century.<sup>6</sup>

The original drawing for the Cup has been found in W.J. Sanders' pattern books (see plate 2).<sup>7</sup> The amount of £ME/-/- in William Sanders' code is considered to be the maker's price. The final cost to the donor from Hardy Bros, including sales tax, is likely to have been more than £30, that is, some ten times the weekly basic wage of 1921.

The dimensions of the trophy (h 16 cm and diam 21 cm) allow for the required capacity of one imperial gallon (4.55 litres). It is crafted from sterling silver plate, the cylindrical body being strengthened by the applied rims fitted to the top and base. The substantial handles are joined to shaped supporting plates that further strengthen the vessel. The exceptional weight of the trophy stems from the use of silver plate of a thickness corresponding to that of the copper plate in the original measure.

The Colin Rodgers Cup may be compared with the Imperial Gallon measure of 1826 shown in plate 3. It is

Plate 2. Drawing for the Colin Rodgers Cup. 1921 Courtesy W.J. Sanders and Co

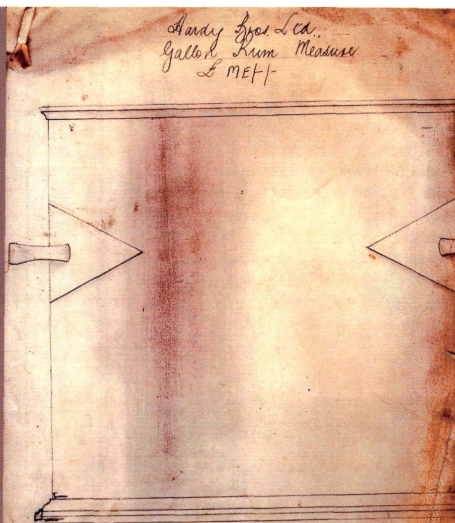


Plate 3. One Gallon Rum measure, Royal Navy, 1826. Photo courtesy Royal Naval Museum, Portsmouth.



from the collection of the Royal Naval Museum, Portsmouth, England. Here the copper vessel is strengthened by rims applied to the top and base, with a further band supporting the shaped handles. This measure was made by Vandome and Co, long established brass smiths and scale makers of London.

The detailed set of rules accompanying the trophy included the

following: 'The Cup will be competed for annually and will be held by the vessel obtaining the highest aggregate of points in proportion to the numbers borne' ... A system of points scoring followed.<sup>8</sup> The Annual Fleet Boxing Championship was intended as a sporting occasion to be enjoyed by the enlisted men.

Despite extensive research, no record has been found of a Colin Rodgers (or



Rogers) serving in the Royal Australian Navy. Further, no reference other than the original listing of the trophy has yet been found in naval records relating to boxing competitions, recreation, training and instruction.

Who was Colin Rodgers? Was he a serving officer of the Royal Navy on loan to the RAN at the time of its formation in 1911. Following the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, senior Royal Navy personnel continued to serve with the RAN.<sup>9</sup> The genesis of the Colin Rodgers Cup lies in the traditions of the Royal Navy.

Dr Kenneth Cavill is a retired academic from the University of New South Wales with a long-standing interest in Australian silver and jewellery.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Commander Shane Moore, Director, Naval Historical Collection and Mr Denis De Muth, Managing Director, W.J. Sanders and Co. are thanked for their considerable help and encouragement. The search continues.

## NOTES

1. *Naval History Lives on Spectacle Island*, Sydney, Navy Public Affairs, Sydney, n.d.
2. *Australian Encyclopaedia*, Vol 9, p. 398, Grolier Society of Australia, Sydney, 1965.
3. The spelling of the surname Rogers for the donor and that inscribed on the Colin Rodgers Cup differ. The former is handwritten in naval records of

- Challenge Cups, Etc.; the latter is engraved on the trophy (see plate 1).
4. Grog: an alcoholic mixture, especially of rum and water; the term is derived from 'Old Grog' the nickname of Admiral Vernon who wore a waterproof cloak made of grogram.
  5. A.J. Pack, *Nelson's Blood. The Story of Naval Rum*, Kenneth Mason, Hampshire, 1982.
  6. Kenneth Cavill, 'W.J. Sanders, Manufacturing Silversmiths, Goldsmiths and Art Metal Workers', *Australiana*, 20 (2), 1998, pp. 33-40.
  7. I am indebted to Denis De Muth for his painstaking search of W.J. Sanders records.
  8. Record of Challenge Cups, Etc., Australian Naval Historical Collection, Spectacle Is, Sydney.
  9. Note 2, Vol 6, p. 263; Vol 9, p.399.

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