

# Australiana

February 2020 vol 42 no 1

RESEARCHING, PRESERVING AND COLLECTING AUSTRALIA'S HERITAGE



*Ch. Rodina del.*  
*Feb 1835*

*Utari Chief*  
*of Otargo*  
*New Zealand*



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# Australiana

RESEARCHING, PRESERVING AND COLLECTING  
AUSTRALIA'S HERITAGE

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## THE AUSTRALIANA SOCIETY

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### COVER

Charles Rodius (1802–1860), *Atay, Chief of Otargo, New Zealand*, 1835, charcoal graphite and watercolour on tinted wove paper, 20.5 x 10.5 cm, signed and dated lower left "Ch Rodius del Feb 1835", inscribed lower right "Atay Chief of Otargo [sic] New Zealand". Hocken Collections, Uare Taoka o Hākena, University of Otago V2018.06.1 Photograph courtesy Webb's, sold at Webb's *Important Paintings & Contemporary Art* auction 29 November 2017

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JOHN GLOVER (1767–1849), Patterdale Farm (c.1840s), watercolour on paper, 40 x 62cm.  
Lot 453 (A448) Nov 2019 – Result: \$10,930.50 inc BP against estimate: \$5,000–7,500.

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HENRY YOUNG Australian silver trophy stamped "H. YOUNG, Stg. SILVER", Melbourne, circa 1880. Lot 307 (A448) Nov 2019 – Result: \$4,858.00 inc BP against estimate: \$1,000–1,500.



# Social media and the Australiana Society



The Australiana Society has launched social media campaigns across several platforms including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Our presence on these platforms will diversify the ways we reach members and broaden our audiences. This will generate new interest in the Society for ongoing generations to recruit for membership succession. These important steps bring the society into line with many organisations, such as The Australiana Fund and The National Trust, ensuring we are viewed as relevant and up to date.

You as a member of the Australiana Society can get involved by liking and sharing our posts across these platforms. This will promote the work of the society and engage new audiences through our respective networks and associations.

You can follow us to keep up to date with the latest information including all the upcoming events that the Australiana Society hosts. To find us across any of the three platforms simply search 'Australiana Society.'

As a member of the Australiana Society, you are eligible to join the Closed Facebook Members' Forum. This forum is for financial Society members only and is a private space where members can post images of objects and discuss relevant topics around Australiana. Here you may ask the group's advice, share events, ask opinions on objects etc. While this group is private and is strictly monitored by our administration, please keep in mind that anything posted to social media can become part of the public domain.

I encourage every member to make the most of the new and exciting opportunities to network and benefit from the presence of The Australiana Society on social media.

**Katrina Banyai**  
Social Media Coordinator



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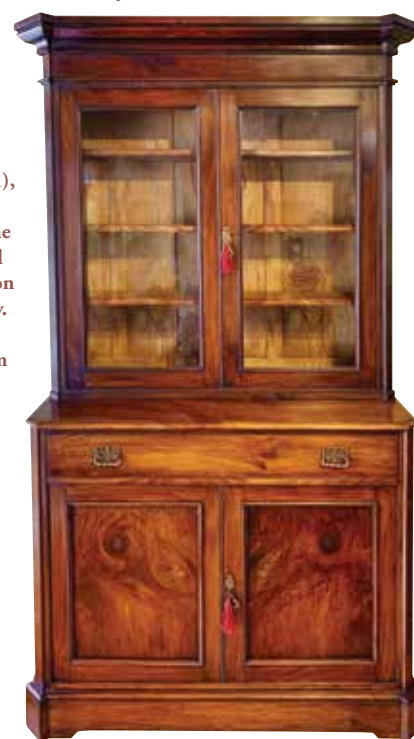
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Wilhelm (William)  
A T Voges (1813–1901),  
Stone Pine Bookcase,  
c 1887, exhibited at the  
1888 Great Centennial  
Intercolonial Exhibition  
in Moore Park, Sydney.

H 213 W 124 D 51 cm

Its owner, the nurseryman John Baptist of Redfern, exhibited the bookcase at the Centennial Intercolonial Exhibition in January 1888. Voges was a German cabinetmaker of Riley St, Surry Hills, who had previously exhibited a "French etagere" at the 1870 Intercolonial Exhibition.

An Exhibitor's Certificate of Entry which accompanies the bookcase reads: *This Book Case was made specially for the Exhibitor by Mr W. Voges of No 236 Riley Street Surry Hills. The timber of which it is constructed is wholly Pinus pinea (Stone Pine) indigenous to South Europe and was obtained from some of the trees which stood on part of Bridge Street Sydney, N.S.W, formerly included in the grounds of the old Government House overlooking Sydney Cove, which was superseded by the present Vice Regal residence. They were cut down about 4 years ago being then probably over 70 years old. The wood is very heavy and extremely hard.*

It is very rare to find an Australian antique with such good documentation. See Fahy, Simpson & Simpson *Nineteenth Century Australian Furniture* p 71f and Fahy & Simpson, *Australian Furniture Pictorial History and Dictionary 1788–1938* p 129f.

# The founding years of Harvey School pottery 1916–1922: completing the story

Australiana is often defined by the combination of local materials, local motifs and local skills to create art that is distinctively and recognisably Australian. The Harvey School of pottery making, which flourished at the Central Technical College in Brisbane from 1916 for more than thirty years is one of the best-known examples. Almost 40 years ago, Glenn Cooke began researching the Brisbane woodcarver L J Harvey (1871–1949), who taught himself pottery making and established the school, which mainly attracted well-bred young ladies. New evidence emerged in 2019 to reveal developments in the early years.

## GLENN R. COOKE

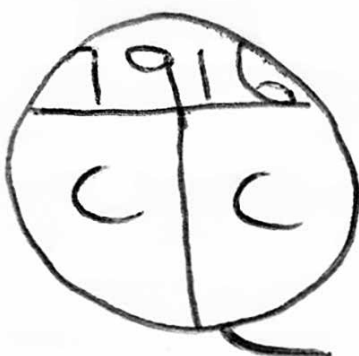
It is always difficult to make the definitive statement about any art activity. Even with the substantial 2018 publication *With Heart and Hand: Art pottery in Queensland 1900–1950*<sup>1</sup> and exhibition of the same name at the Griffith University

Art Museum (GUAM) in Brisbane, knowledge of the founding years of what became known as the Harvey School was limited.

Harvey had introduced pottery into the curriculum of the Central Technical College (CTC) in 1916, beyond living memory and when Australia was deeply engaged in World War I. Reports of

the international conflicts in which Australians were involved dominated the local press, so there is only scant mention in contemporary newspapers of this innovation at the College. Further, relevant records of the College (now Griffith University) at that time do not survive in the Queensland State Archives. Hence, documentation largely depends on the physical evidence provided by the surviving ceramics and their inscribed dates.

We know Harvey's students were young women but we have virtually no idea of their identities. When I undertook interviews during my research for the exhibition and book *L.J. Harvey and his School* held at the Queensland



### 1.

Harvey and his students in the daytime classes. The woman in the right foreground is Katherine Edith Green. *Daily Mail*, 16 September 1916

### 2.

Incised pottery mark incorporating the College's initials CTC within a Q, 1916

### 3.

Incised JMW mark of Jessica Mary (Jessie) Woodroffe, 1918



Art Gallery in 1983,<sup>2</sup> I met the frail Miss Woodroffe in the H.M. Weller Garden Settlement, Chermside in 1982. To my knowledge, Jessica Mary (Jessie) Woodroffe (1897–1990) was the only surviving member of the first pottery classes at the CTC. As she worked for a living, Jessie had been enrolled as a part-time student of the College, so Harvey asked her to make up the numbers for the night class; she did and became a prominent member of the early Harvey School. Not surprisingly, when I interviewed the octogenarian Miss Woodroffe, she could not recall the names of her classmates.

Brisbane's *Daily Mail* of 16 September 1916 published two photographs showing Harvey and his students in the daytime classes (**plate 1**).<sup>3</sup> Through a series of connections, documented in "Who was Edith? The Identification of the Makers of Harvey School Pottery" on the GUAM web site linked to *With Heart and Hand*, I was able to identify the young woman in the right foreground as Katherine Edith Green (1896–1919). She had a *very* brief connection with pottery, as she enrolled at the newly established University of Queensland to study French and English in 1917.

Clearly the young women who were able to attend the daytime classes belonged to a higher social echelon. The students and their work generated

interest, especially for their development of Queensland's natural and human resources. The vice-regal couple, Sir Hamilton and Lady Goold-Adams, visited the art department on 15 November 1916, within months of its establishment, when

#### TECHNICAL COLLEGE ARTS DEPARTMENT.

His Excellency the Governor and Lady Goold-Adams yesterday afternoon visited the arts department of the Technical College with the special object of inspecting the pottery instruction class which was inaugurated by the Arts and Crafts Society, but is now being carried on by the college authorities. Sir Hamilton and Lady Goold-Adams were received by Mr. Martyn Roberts (superintendent of the arts department) and Mr[s].

#### 6.

L.J. Harvey (1871–1949), *Butterfly vase* 1918. Earthenware, hand-built cylindrical form incised with butterfly motifs and glazed deep blue, 20 x 5.5 cm (diam.). Incised under base: THE GREAT WAR/ L.J. HARVEY/ 1918. Collection: Harvey family, Brisbane Photo: Carl Warner



#### 4.

L.J. Harvey (1871–1949), *Onion shaped vase with slip decoration*, 1917. Former Elvin Harvey collection

#### 5.

L.J. Harvey (1871–1949), *Two-handled vase with deep plum-coloured glaze*, 1917, CTC mark. Collection: Stephen Mahoney, Brisbane





Lucy] Pearson (vice-president of the Arts and Crafts Society), and after inspecting the work being carried on his Excellency expressed his special pleasure in finding that something was being done to further develop the resources which Brisbane possesses in the nature of beds of pottery clay, to which he recently drew attention after his inspection of the various manufacturing firms in the city.<sup>4</sup>

In the “Development and Character of the Harvey School” chapter, I documented the political and social context but was not able to establish the sequence of trials which led to the establishment of Harvey’s series of exercises which became such a distinctive feature of the School itself. I recorded:

The earliest example of the Slab vase (no. 5) so far identified is dated 1919 (by unknown maker S.L.F.). A piece very similar to the tobacco-jar exercise (no. 1) was introduced in 1919 and Nell Bott’s tea-set exercise dates to as early as 1921.<sup>5</sup>

Harvey himself, who trained as a wood carver, had only recently been experimenting with ceramics. His initial efforts are seen in the foreground so it is obvious his teaching methods were developing in parallel with his experience in the medium. The initial class was most basic: the students were told simply to make what they could

from a lump of clay: Miss Woodroffe made an ashtray. Works from 1916 are the rarest survivors as they were produced in the space of a few months after Harvey’s appointment to the staff on 1 August, and probably rather crude. Miss Woodroffe made the only example known to date: a simple jug with an uneven streaked green glaze and marked it with the distinctive monogram of the early years of the School which incorporates the College’s initials CTC enclosed within a Q together with her name (**plate 2**).

I confess that at the beginning of my research I was looking for significant examples rather those of an early date and at that stage, unfortunately I didn’t ‘waste’ images on such ‘minor’ objects as this jug. Woodroffe is unusual in that she signed her early works and had a distinctive triangular mark (**plate 3**). Even more unfortunately, most of the output of the School until the 1930s is marked with initials or monograms which make it even more difficult to identify the maker.

It was the Arts and Crafts Society of Brisbane (A&CSB) which promoted the study of pottery and barely two months after the classes were instituted, the Society held a sale of work at the Queensland Art Society’s rooms instead of the 4th annual exhibition; then the Society went into recess. The first display of pottery by CTC students and Society members was held there and we can be certain that the examples

### 7.

L.J. Harvey (1871–1949), *Terracotta vase with scraffito slip decoration*, 1918. Collection: Harvey family, Brisbane

### 8.

Jessica Mary (Jessie) Woodroffe (1897–1990), *Footed bowl* 1918. Earthenware, hand built circular bowl on four feet. Repeat pattern on wattle blossoms and leaves in gold and brown beneath clear glaze. 6 x 17.8cm (diam). Collection Tim Roberts, Brisbane

### 9.

Beatrice Barnes (1883–?), *Covered jar* (Honey pot exercise) 1919. Collection: Rod Jensen, Brisbane

10.

Elsie Byth (1890–1988)  
*Bowl* with a deep red glaze  
c 1919. Griffith University  
Art Collection. Gift of Rod  
Jensen 2019.



11.

Elsie Byth (1890–1988)  
*Vase*, brown glazed with  
impressed decoration 1918.  
Griffith University Art Collection.  
Gift of Rod Jensen 2019.



shown were as modest as the 1916 jug by Jessie Woodroffe. We have no further evidence of an exhibition of ceramics from the classes until November 1919, when at the 31st annual exhibition of the Queensland Art Society (which at that time had incorporated the A&CSB) L. J. Harvey, Miss Jessie Woodroffe, Miss (Milly) Connah, Mrs W. P. (Bessie) Devereux and Mrs T. B. (Josephine) Aird exhibited pottery.<sup>6</sup>

Very little, however, survives of the years between. The only examples of ceramics dateable to 1917 are by L. J. Harvey himself: an *Onion shaped vase* with slip decoration (**plate 4**) presaging a popular form and decorative technique

in the 1920s, and a curious *Ash tray* like the gaping mouth of a hippo in the Queensland Art Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA) collection. Harvey's *Two handled vase* with deep plum-coloured glaze and CTC mark (**plate 5**), his *Butterfly vase* to commemorate the end of the 'The Great War' (**plate 6**) and a *Terracotta vase* with what appears to be his first effort in scraffito slip decoration are the only examples dated 1918 so far located (**plate 7**). The only 1918 student work located was a *Footed bowl* by Jessie Woodroffe (**plate 8**), included in the 1983 retrospective exhibition.

After World War I ended on 11 November 1918, 1919 brought forward



12.

Elsie Byth (1890–1988) *Vase*, slab built with blue-green glaze and impressed decoration 1919. Griffith University Art Collection. Gift of Rod Jensen 2019. Photo: Carl Warner

13.

Elsie Byth (1890–1988), *Three-piece coffee service*, slab-built with red glaze 1918-1919. Collection Griffith University Art Collection. Gift of Rod Jensen 2019. Photo: Carl Warner





**14.**

EVD, *Milk jug*, with salmon rose glaze c 1919.  
Griffith University Art Collection. Gift of Glenn R. Cooke 2019

**15.**

NJ, *Milk jug*, with salmon rose glaze, 1919.  
Griffith University Art Collection. Proposed gift, 2020

**16.**

Elsie Byth (1890–1988), *Oval bowl*, with applied ball feet, unmarked  
c 1919. Griffith University Art Collection. Gift of Rod Jensen 2019



a rash of surviving works, suggesting a significant increase in activity among the students. Among them was the cylindrical *Covered jar* by Beatrice Barnes (**plate 9**), which is the first known example of what was to become the *Honey Pot* exercise. The creation of the Harvey School exercises and the seeds for developing the forms and designs of the School were still unclear.

**17.**

Dorrie Williams (1895–1987), *Honey pots, waisted vase, sugar bowl and tea pot*, dated 1920. Collection: Williams family, Brisbane. Photo: Graham Hesse

The shift towards a fuller understanding of the early years of the Harvey School occurred only six months after *With Heart and Hand* opened on 13 September 2018. Brisbane dealer and enthusiastic Harvey School collector, Rod Jensen, advised me in early 2019 that he had discovered a group of 16 early pieces plus a slab-built *Three piece coffee service* by a maker identified as E.F.B. The group included works made between 1918 and 1919 and another series completed in 1922.

Jensen works with a firm of estate managers and provides an assessment of the worth of household furnishings. He was discreet about the source but did mention that the house was in

Brisbane's western suburbs so I had a romantic vision of one of Queensland's iconic timber houses veering towards dereliction. Jensen found examples of the potter's work scattered between the kitchen, bathroom, bedrooms and garage so there was clearly no value placed on them. Selvedge from a block of stamps stuck on the base of two of the three pieces of the 1919 coffee service is inscribed 'Mrs Byth'.

The potter involved was Elsie Frances Byth (1890–1988) née Gasteen. I had not previously seen an example of her work but knew that Byth exhibited work in the first display of pottery at the Royal National Agricultural and Industrial Association (RNA)





in 1921. She must have been a forceful, independent character as she exhibited under her own first initials and not those of her husband. Byth is documented in “Who is Edith?” as one of the figures whose significance was established elsewhere. She was a community worker, prominent women’s rights activist and women’s rights organiser, with her biography recorded in *The Australian Women’s Register* at Melbourne University.<sup>7</sup>

I expressed my opinion that this group provides an important documentary role in the institutional history of the CTC and its successor, GUAM. As a result Jensen, to demonstrate his appreciation of the 2018 exhibition at GUAM, decided to donate the group to its collection.

Harvey’s instruction to make what one could out of a lump of clay obviously continued with Byth, as her earliest example is a fairly wonky *Bowl* with a deep red glaze (**plate 10**). The group is significant as it shows that Harvey’s emphasis on slab-building techniques was being developed. Her brown-glazed *Vase* (**plate 11**) is dated 1918 and one has only to turn the piece upside down to see the form that became familiar as Exercise 5. This is the first use of the simplified impressed decoration that embellished many of the early School exercises.

I was surprised to see the small slab-built vase with the obviously experimental blue-green glaze as it is dated 1919 (**plate 12**). In my early investigations I had seen this bulging square shape only in a coffee

set made by Val McMaster in 1936,<sup>8</sup> and assumed the form dated to the 1930s but here it is 17 years earlier.

The most important work was a beautifully crafted *Three-piece coffee service* made between 1918 and 1919 (**plate 13**). The coffee-pot shows a finely incised butterfly motif similar to Harvey’s own *Butterfly vase* (**plate 6**); the pieces are incised “BRISBANE” beneath the base. This is the first service ware recorded and is so far a unique example, apart from a slab-built coffee-pot (missing its lid) with a cobalt glaze made by an unknown student Cragg and dated 1922 in a Melbourne private collection.

When Harvey fired his students’ works – before they gained access to the kilns at Stone’s Pottery – the lead-based glaze colours were quite restricted: usually a deep red, a cobalt blue and a lighter blue. With Harvey’s limited resources at the CTC he would not have had vats of glaze colours to hand and his students had to be satisfied with the ‘glaze du jour’. This is no more apparent than the exceptional pinkish-brown glaze shown



## 18.

Nell Bott (1870–1943), *Tea set (coffee pot, tea pot and stand, milk jug and sugar bowl)* 1921. Earthenware, slab and hand-built with carved pea-pod decoration and deep red glaze. Coffee pot: 20.8 x 18 x 12.8 cm. Collection: Museum of Brisbane. Photo: Carl Warner

## 19.

Lesley Love (1886–1955), *Potpourri jar*, dated 1923. Private collection, Atherton. Photo: David Hollingworth

## 20.

Jessie Massy (1865–1923), *Three unfired ceramics*, 1919. Griffith University Art Collection. Gift of Glenn R Cooke 2019





## 21.

L.J. Harvey (1871–1949), *Rose bowl* 1919. Earthenware, hand built with three apertures and modelled with four roses and leaves. Green and blue glazes 9.5 x 16 cm (diam.). Collection: Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, gift of the Reverends David and Bruce Noble in memory of their mother Elsie Harvey Noble through the Queensland Art Gallery Foundation 2008. Photo: Natasha Harth

## 22.

Elsie Byth (1890–1988), *Jug with applied irises* c 1922. Griffith University Art Collection. Gift of Rod Jensen 2019

which was identified as “salmon rose” by the inscription incised beneath the base to the *Milk jug* made by EVD (**plate 14**). “Salmon rose” was also used on the jug made by NJ dated 1919 (**plate 15**), the *Honey pot* (**plate 9**) by Beatrice Barnes and several other surviving examples, so we can safely date the EVD jug (**plate 14**) to this period.

This EVD jug exhibits the square bulging shape used by Byth also dated 1919 (**plate 12**) and is probably the first example of the angular handle with

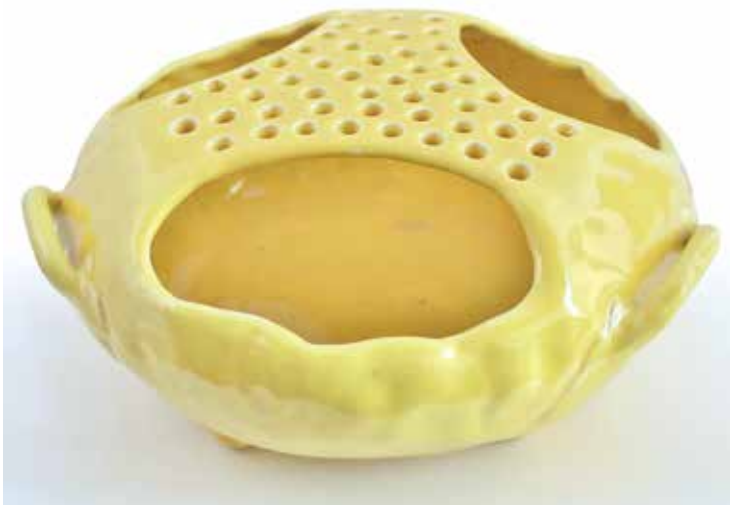
projecting lug which was to become a key element in recognising the School style. The simple tapering profile of the NJ *Jug* (**plate 15**) was the basic form of that in the tea-set exercise. Byth’s unmarked *Oval bowl* (**plate 16**) would be of similar date: the ball feet on this and the Barnes *Honey pot* are probably the first examples of a feature used consistently throughout the duration of the School.

More recently, I was shown an image of a group of exercises dated 1920 by Dorrie Williams (**plate 17**). The handles of the sugar bowl haven’t yet taken on the form of the EDV *Milk jug* to match the en suite teapot; note the alternative and more complicated treatment of the feet of the *Honey pot* and *Concave sided vase* in this group. The *Tea and coffee set* made by Nell Bott the following year is probably the most impressive and complete of what developed as the *Tea set exercise* (**plate 18**). The decoration of the Williams bowl and teapot is simply incised and the ‘pea pod’ decoration in Bott’s set reflects the shallow carving that we first saw in 1919 and which became the consistent form of decoration of the exercise.



## 23.

Gloria Lovelock (1906–1995), *Lemon squash jug* c1930s. Earthenware, hand-built and modelled with iris and leaves, glazed pink and blue, 18.5 x 15.3 x 18.5 cm. Collection: Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, gift of Elizabeth Moores, the artist’s niece 1995. Photo: Natasha Harth



In *With Heart and Hand*, I had determined that the initial list of 20 exercises documented in 1983 was too extensive and that, because of the number of surviving examples that the initial group of exercises was probably:

- No. 1 Tobacco jar
- No. 2 Honey pot
- No. 3 Concave-sided vase
- No. 4 Potpourri jar
- No. 5 Slab-built vase
- No. 6 Tea set exercise

The only example I have not discussed so far is No. 4 Potpourri jar which is also missing from Dorrie Williams' group. It may have been a slightly later inclusion into the set of exercises, as the earliest example I have discovered is by Lesley Love (1886–1955) from 1923 (**plate 19**).

A rage for pottery developed and the numbers of students enrolled in the course became too much for the College's small muffle kiln,<sup>9</sup> so arrangements were made for the students' work to be fired at Stone's Bristol Pottery at Stone's Corner. This had clearly happened by 1923 as the varicoloured glazing of Love's *Potpourri jar* is distinctly different from any glazes seen before. Mulberry was one of the recognisable glazes used at Stone's Pottery during the 1920s; it was frequently blended with other colours such as yellow shown here or blue.

1919 was a key year in the development of the Harvey School in other ways.

Some remarkable survivors are three unfired pieces made by Jessie Massy (**plate 20**). Together they demonstrate modelling skills which are considerably superior to those shown in the exercises of the same period and clearly rely directly on Harvey's input. The low bowl with a motif of a modelled rose with three pendant leaves is very similar to Harvey's *Rose bowl* of 1919 (**plate 21**).

The iris shown on the *Jug* (**plate 20, centre**) became a popular decorative motif and reappears in works from 1922 made by Elsie Byth (**plate 22**). The motif was well sustained, utilised again by Gloria Lovelock in her superb *Lemonade jug* dating to the 1930s (**plate 23**).

Of the nine known works Byth produced in 1922, seven are in this



## 24.

Elsie Byth (1890–1988), *Rose bowl* with lemon yellow glaze c 1922. Griffith University Art Collection. Gift of Rod Jensen 2029.

## 25.

Fanny Brett (1860–1949), *Rose bowl*, 1923. Collection: Rod Jensen, Brisbane.

## 26.

L.J. Harvey (1871–1949), *Figure-of-eight dish*, with applied naturalistically modelled gum leaves and gum nuts, mulberry glaze. 1921. Collection: Harvey family, Brisbane



## 27.

Nelly Southwick (1884–1936)  
*Slab vase* (exercise no 5) with  
*scraffito* pendant gum leaves, 1922  
Collection: Ed Kisala, Melbourne

## 28.

Jessie Woodroffe (1897–1990), *Lotus bowl* 1922, earthenware, hand-built low bowl formed with eight petals interspersed with smaller petals. Glazed mulberry and yellow. 7.5 x 19 cm (diam). Griffith University Art Collection, donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Glenn R. Cooke 2012. Photo: Carl Warner



intense yellow 'glaze du jour' including Byth's *Rose bowl* which is one of the distinctive forms of the Harvey School (**plate 24**). Like Harvey's 1919 example, they were used for the short-stemmed garden roses. This form became simplified during the 1920s, as in the 1923 example by Fanny Brett (**plate 25**).

In response to the growing enthusiasm for pottery, the RNA instituted an award for "Original Design" in the craft section of the 1921 "Ekka" (as Brisbane's annual agricultural exhibition came to be known). Of the three contributors, Jessie Woodroffe was awarded first prize, Elsie Byth second and Lilian Irving also exhibited.

The RNA Exhibition in 1922 was of special significance as, apart from the entries submitted by Beatrice Barnes, Bessie Devereux, Daisy Hutchison, (Miss) Mervyn Jones and Isabel Scriven, it included a separate display of works selected as a contribution for the British Empire Exhibition, Wembley Stadium, London in 1924. This included examples from the Warwick Technical College by Charles Astley, Gladys Fell and Mrs A. L. Flower and from Harvey, Dorothy Brennan, Fanny Brett, Mary Lawrence, Daisy Nosworthy, Maud O'Reilly and Jessie Woodroffe at the CTC.

Naturalistically modelled gum leaves and gum nuts that were introduced to embellish ceramic forms during the

1920s had their origins in Harvey's inspiration as demonstrated by his figure-of-eight dish of 1921 (**plate 26**) although it wasn't integrated as a more developed exercise until the late 1920s. Pendant gum leaves in *scraffito* started to become the standard form of decoration of the Slab-built vase (exercise no 5) such as in the example by Nelly Southwick (**plate 27**). Other familiar forms such as the hexagonal box and the two-handled vase were soon introduced. Essentially the forms and styles of decoration in the School had already been established by 1922 and became more elaborate with the passing years: shallow carving developed into pierced forms and *scraffito* incising doubled its effect.

We can define the formative stage of the Harvey School as the period from 1916 to 1922. On 21 July 1922 the Arts and Crafts Society was reformed in Harvey's rooms at the CTC, then in October the first A&CSB exhibition after World War I opened at the Sheldon Gallery, Queen Street. Further, on 7–14 December 1922, Jessie Woodroffe held the first solo show of pottery in Brisbane at the Sheldon Gallery in Queen Street, when it was reported that very few of the more than 100 items on display were left unsold. The Governor visited on the first day.<sup>10</sup> An unidentified review among Miss Woodroffe press cuttings remarked that:

... bowls, jars, plates etc. in rich glowing colours and artistic designs abound. The various articles, which have been appropriately arranged in separate groups which include a simply delightful float bowl with a most artistic bird ornament, a dull blue plate with a latticed edge, a jade casket with a quaint fish design, and a white jar distinctively patterned in blue. Distinctly novel also is the hen eggcup. Many of the bowls display fluted edges and floral effect, and in several instances colours have been blended with the most happy results. The whole exhibition is noteworthy for its sound craftsmanship and exquisite finish.<sup>11</sup>



# Colonial Rarities



## COLONIAL CEDAR CAMPAIGN SECRETAIRE-CHEST MID-19TH CENTURY

H 110 W 119 D 49 cm

See website for more photos and full description.

By appointment Philip Wheatley, Newcastle NSW

02 4957 0165 | 0417 205 298 | [bpw@colonialrarities.com](mailto:bpw@colonialrarities.com) | [www.colonialrarities.com](http://www.colonialrarities.com)

As Woodroffe contributed examples of her work to the Queensland Art Society's annual exhibitions in 1920 and 1921, she could be considered Harvey's most exemplary student and her exhibition the summation of the simplified forms and styles of the first phase of the Harvey School. As the reviewer described the range of works in her exhibition, there would be many more examples of her work to be discovered, but for now it may be represented by the delightfully restrained *Lotus bowl* of that year (**plate 28**).

We may never know the names of the many women who were engaged even in a peripheral manner with the Harvey School, but they all contributed to the significance of the art pottery movement in Queensland – a movement which now clearly can be asserted as the most significant art pottery school in Australia in the first half of the 20th century. More examples both by known and (largely) unidentified makers are coming

to light to reinforce this assertion. Consequently there is a considerable degree of satisfaction in being able to frame the early history of the Harvey School through the surviving examples.



**Glenn Cooke** was appointed to the Queensland Art Gallery as its first (and only) curator of Decorative Arts in 1981

and later the first (and only) Research Curator, Queensland Heritage from 1999 until he retired in 2013. He maintains his fervent interest in researching the development of art and decorative arts in Queensland, as well as being an enthusiastic gardener and dancer.

## NOTES

1. Angela Goddard (ed.), *With Heart & Hand Art Pottery in Queensland 1900–1950*, Griffith University Art Museum, Brisbane, 2018.
2. Janet Hogan (ed.), *L. J. Harvey & his School*, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane 1983.
3. This issue of the newspaper is not currently available on Trove.
4. *Brisbane Courier* 18 Nov 1916 p 15.
5. *With Heart & Hand* p 27.
6. Social etiquette in those days meant married women were known formally by their husband's initials.
7. <http://www.womenaustralia.info/biogs/AWE0598b.htm>. She married solicitor G L Byth in 1917.
8. *L.J. Harvey & his School* p 43.
9. In 1924, 153 students enrolled.
10. *Courier* 8 Dec 1922 p 14; *Daily Mail* 8 Dec 1922 p 10.
11. For more reviews, see *Daily Standard* 7 Dec 1922 p 6; *Telegraph* 8 Dec 1922 p 3; *Courier* 8 Dec 1922 p 12.

# Exploring early Queensland art

The Harry Gentle Resource Centre, Griffith University has welcomed specialist in Australian art heritage, decorative arts and material culture to 1945 and contributor to *Australiana* Timothy Roberts as the centre's 2019 Visiting Fellow. The centre was established by Griffith University in 2016 following a generous legacy left by Robert (Harry) Gentle, a signal master during the Second World War, public servant and, in his retirement, graduate of the University in 1984. The centre aims to facilitate access to published and unpublished information for the period up to the 1850s, and to collate an inventory of the diversity and claims on country that made up the early colonial period.

Tim's project, *Picturing the North: Representing Queensland before 1859*, is the first major exploration of the art and artists of pre-separation Queensland. This project seeks to create an index of artworks created before 1859 that depict the people, places and events in the geographical region now known as Queensland; uncover biographical details of the artists who created the works; and provide a historical context to frame the art heritage during this formative period of Queensland's development.

Tim's research to date has sourced over 200 works ranging from sketches of early life in the Darling Downs by Domville Taylor to the work of artists Conrad Martens, Oswald Brierly and Silvester Diggles. Other aspects of his research will include early photographers in Queensland and the art produced as a result of the *Endeavour* voyage along the east coast of Australia.

Previous projects by the Harry Gentle Resource Centre have explored police in the colony; frontier conflict in South-east Queensland, and Crown Lands Commissioners in Moreton Bay. *Picturing the North* is the first project supported by the centre that analyses the visual art and material culture of the region.

Artists working in the southern Australian colonies below the 29th parallel south have historically enjoyed a certain prominence in Australian art history – monographs have been produced on the work of Joseph Lycett, Thomas Bock and Benjamin Duterreau among others, and examples of art produced in that region have received recognition in art historical texts. Conversely, artists who worked in the north of Australia in this early period of colonisation are significantly less prominent in surveys of Australian art, and so have not received due recognition of their work in the region.

This paucity of research on early art in Queensland presents a unique opportunity to examine artwork created during the period, document the artists who were working in and responding to the region, and investigate the social and political environments in which these works were created. *Picturing the North* will connect audiences with Queensland's early art by mapping the artistic development of the region and telling the stories of artists who worked in the region.

**On completion, *Picturing the North* will feature as a project on the Harry Gentle Resource Centre website, [harrygentle.com.au](http://harrygentle.com.au).**

**Tim would like to hear from *Australiana* Society members who have work produced in the region prior to Queensland's separation from New South Wales in 1859. You can contact him via email at [timothyjroberts@hotmail.com](mailto:timothyjroberts@hotmail.com), or through the editor.**



**1.** Robert Henry (Harry) Gentle (1920–2015), benefactor of the Harry Gentle Research Centre, Griffith University, Brisbane

**2.** Tim Roberts, researcher

# Charles Rodius, convict artist

Charles Rodius began his prolific art career in Paris and London. Convicted of thefts in 1829, he was transported to Sydney, where the convict artist produced landscapes, portraits of leading Sydney settlers as well as notable portraits of Aboriginal people, many translated into lithographs. Rodius had a good singing voice. From 1839, aged about 37, he began to suffer a series of strokes that severely affected his ability to draw. To compete with the new technique of popular, cheap but generally unsympathetic photographic portraits, in 1850 he travelled through NSW and Victoria offering his emotive hand-drawn portraits. Robert Stevens analyses his career in more detail than previously, alongside a selection of images from his large output.



## ROBERT STEVENS

Charles Rodius (b 1802, arrived 1829, d 1860) was one of the most gifted artists of colonial Australia, a talented painter, draftsman, lithographer, architect and singer. Rodius was multi-lingual, using English as the main language, teaching his native French and German, inscribing art works in French, and being paid as a German translator in court.<sup>1</sup>

A self-portrait painted in 1849, originally from the collection of one of his great grandchildren (**plate 1**), shows

Rodius as a middle-aged gent, the plump and proud face suggesting

his education and charm as well as providing ample proof of his delicacy and abilities.<sup>2</sup>

He signed his name “Rodius” which was the spelling on his certificates of exemption, leave and freedom. “Rhodius” was frequently – almost interchangeably – used in newspaper notices and in communications in the Department of Public Works.<sup>3</sup>

### Early life in Europe

Charles was born in Cologne in 1802, now in Germany but occupied by

### 1.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860), *Self-portrait* c 1849. Sydney, pen, pastel and charcoal on paper, 29.3 x 24 cm (sheet). Collection: National Portrait Gallery. Acc No 2009-125

French armies from 1794 to 1814; from 1801 all its citizens held French citizenship. The State Archive of North Rhine-Westphalia: Duisburg, West German Society of Family Studies, and Historical Archive of the



**2.**

Charles Rodius (1802–1860), *Cour de ma demeure Hotel Suisse* [Courtyard of my residence Hotel Suisse] 1823. Paris, watercolour on pencil, 24 x 16 cm, signed Chas Rodius del 1823. Collection: State Library of NSW a709020

**3.**

Charles Rodius (1802–1860) *M Mingaud* 1827. Paris, lithograph. 15.5 x 11.3 cm (sheet), signed C Rodius 1827. Instructions for the printer are inscribed in red ink around the image. Inscribed in pencil “M Mingaud inventor of Billiard Cue tip”. Collection: National Library of Australia, Rex Nan Kivell Collection NK6985

Archbishopric of Cologne were unable to confirm his birth or family details but did find a Crétian [Christian] Rodius who was born in Cologne in 1802.<sup>4</sup>

He spent several years in Paris where he was “occupied by the French Government in engraving some of the edifices”. At his trial he claimed to have been a student at the “Academy in Paris” for eight years.<sup>5</sup> He repeated the claim decades later in advertisements in 1843:<sup>6</sup>

**DRAWING AND PERSPECTIVE. CHARLES RODIUS**, formerly pupil of the Royal Academy of Paris, and many years Teacher of Drawing and Perspective in this colony, begs to acquaint his friends and the public that he continues to give lessons in the above mentioned branches of his profession. C. R. also continues to take portraits in the style of the French Crayon, in which he has hitherto proved so successful. CHARLES RODIUS, Hunter street,

Opposite Elizabeth street. Letters to be left at Mr. Ellard’s, Music Saloon, George-street.

Paris’ painting, sculpture, music and architecture academies were merged to form the Académie des Beaux-Arts in 1816. Madame Alice Thomine-Berrada, curator in charge of paintings, sculptures and objects at Les Beaux-Arts de Paris (Paris Academy), could not find any trace of Rodius or Rhodius, neither in its collection nor in the archives of the 19th-century student files. She concluded that he was probably never a student at the Academy but attended one of the numerous studios which were preparing people for the entrance competition.<sup>7</sup>

In 1823 aged 21, and likely in Paris, he painted a delightful watercolour titled *Cour de ma demeure Hotel Suisse* 1823 which conveys his painting and architectural drawing skills (plate 2). It is likely that Rodius produced other works in Paris.

In 1827, he produced a lithograph of *M. Mingaud inventor of Billiard Cue tip* (**plate 3**). François Mingaud (1771–1847) invented the leather billiard cue tip which revolutionised the game, allowing the ball to be manipulated by spin. Mingaud was known as the “great master of the game”.<sup>8</sup> The quality of this image, produced when Rodius was 25, indicates proficiency and experience with lithography. This work may have been drawn in Paris but printed in England, as it is titled in English and dated 1827.

### England 1826–1829

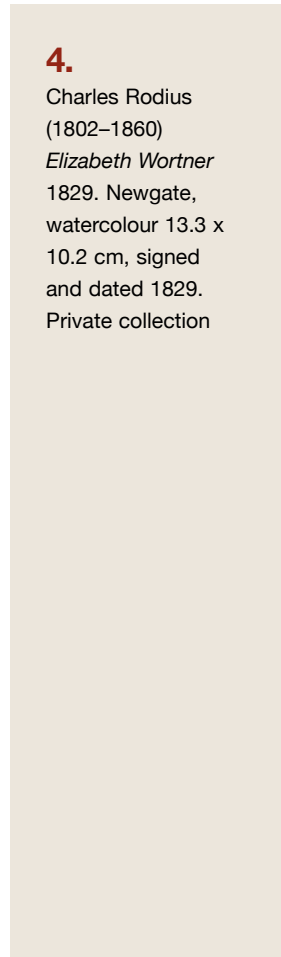
About 1826 or 1827, he moved to London where in 1826 he sketched some of the Elgin Marbles from the Parthenon in Athens, displayed in the British Museum since 1817.<sup>9</sup>

In February 1829, Rodius was charged with stealing a reticule from Lady Laura Meyrick, daughter of the Duke of Cleveland and wife of Lt-Col William Meyrick, as she was leaving King’s Theatre. *The Times* called him a “young foreigner ... who was dressed very fashionably”. He described himself in court as:<sup>10</sup>

German ... and taught music, painting, drawing and languages in families of the first distinction, and also architecture ... and had been a pupil at the Academy at Paris for eight years.

Lady Laura discovered her loss, and suspecting the man who had followed her, sought the assistance of Handley, an officer, who arrested Rodius while trying to rob another lady. The contents of the reticule were found in his possession, and he had a penknife in his hand. A ring, bracelet and a purse containing a half sovereign and six shillings were found in his pocket, and at his residence, ladies’ handkerchiefs, opera glasses, pieces of purses, the clasps of reticules and a purse containing four sovereigns. Rodius protested his innocence, claiming the items were presents from his female pupils.<sup>11</sup>

Rodius was also charged with robbing Mrs Heatley of Hertford St, Mayfair as she was coming out of Drury Lane Theatre. Mr Heatley identified his wife’s



**4.**  
Charles Rodius  
(1802–1860)  
*Elizabeth Wortner*  
1829. Newgate,  
watercolour 13.3 x  
10.2 cm, signed  
and dated 1829.  
Private collection

property which Handley had found at the prisoner’s dwelling. Handley declared that there would more charges, as further articles hadn’t yet been claimed. The prisoner was remanded for final examinations.<sup>12</sup>

Charles Rodius, who had represented himself in court, was sentenced at Westminster Sessions to seven years’ transportation.<sup>13</sup> While incarcerated at Newgate Prison, he painted Elizabeth Wortner (**plate 4**), daughter of prison governor John Wortner who later became Marshall of His Majesty’s Gaols.<sup>14</sup> This portrait highlights the sensitivity and delicacy of Rodius’s portraiture and infers the persuasive charm of his personality which was to serve him well in Australia.

On 7 July 1829, aged 27, Rodius was transferred from Newgate Prison to the hulk HMS *York* in Portsmouth Harbour.<sup>15</sup> HMS *York*, a 74-gun Third Rate was launched at Rotherhithe in 1807 and converted into a prison hulk in 1819. She served from 1820 until 1848 and housed about 500 convicts

until taken out of service and broken up in 1854.<sup>16</sup> An engraving of the *York* was produced in 1828, the year before Rodius was imprisoned there (**plate 5**).

Rodius painted a harbour scene in 1829, likely just before his arrest but possibly while in prison or being transported (**plate 6**). This luminous scene highlights an ability to capture the aesthetics of natural scenery.

On 15 August 1829, Rodius was one of 200 male convicts who embarked on the *Sarah*, 100 from the *York* and 100 from the *Leviathan*.<sup>17</sup> The *Sarah*, built in London in 1819, of 488 tons, departed London on 29 August 1829 bound for Sydney.<sup>18</sup> It had a quick passage of 100 days and touched at the islands of Tristan Da Cunha and St Paul’s.<sup>19</sup> The weather was fine for most of the voyage, allowing the prisoners to be on deck all day.<sup>20</sup>

The prisons were kept clean and dry with stoves lighted all day, and only the oldest men suffered any scurvy.



Rodius, as were other convicts with artistic ability, was assigned to the Department of Public Works as “an artist and architect”, working as a draughtsman for the Government to draw up building plans and train civil and military officers in the art of drawing and perspective.<sup>22</sup>

At this time, the position of Colonial Architect did not exist. George Cookney had held it until April 1826 when he was dismissed, and his replacement Ambrose Hallen wasn't appointed until 28 April 1832. Hallen had been appointed Town Surveyor in December 1827, and by 1829 had advanced to the position of “Architect and Town Planner” under Charles Wilson, Director of Public Works.

Wilson was dismissed on 13 March 1832 and the Department of Public Works ceased to function. Out of this disarray, Hallen emerged with increased power and in charge of the remnants of the department on 1 April 1832, and on 28 April 1832 was given the title of Colonial Architect. Rodius worked under Hallen prior to his “Exemption from Government Labour” on 10 July 1832.<sup>23</sup> The “Petition for Exemption” was initially supported by the Department of Public Works, a spokesman stating that the petitioner had been employed as a draughtsman and that his attendance had been very regular.

Perhaps because of the disarray in the Department of Public Works, he seems to have had considerable freedom. Rodius was also teaching drawing privately to the children of prominent Sydney citizens, such as Chief Justice Forbes, who authorised his wife, having observed Rodius's conduct, to write in support of the petition:

*We think him deserving of any indulgence which His Excellency the Governor can extend to him.*

Rodius later sketched a posthumous portrait of Forbes (**plate 7**). Others who supported the petition included James Laidley, Deputy Commissary General; William Foster, Chairman of the Courts of Quarter Session and

## 5.

*The York. Prison Ship in Portsmouth Harbour, convicts going aboard.* 1828. Drawn and etched by Edw. Wm. Cooke, hand coloured 16 x 24 cm. Collection: National Library of Australia, Rex Nan Kivell Collection NK4656

## 6.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860) [Unidentified harbour scene with fishermen], 1829. Pencil and watercolour on paper, 20.3 x 31.7 cm, signed and dated C. Rodius 1829 l.r. Private collection

Bark and wine were used as an effective prophylactic treatment.

### A convict in Sydney 1829–32

Rodius had a harmonious and quick journey. The *Sarah* arrived on 6 December 1829 and it was reported that<sup>21</sup>

*The prisoners' state and condition was such, as to show that every attention must have been paid to their health and comfort ... the appearance of the prisoners ... was seldom equalled, never excelled ...*



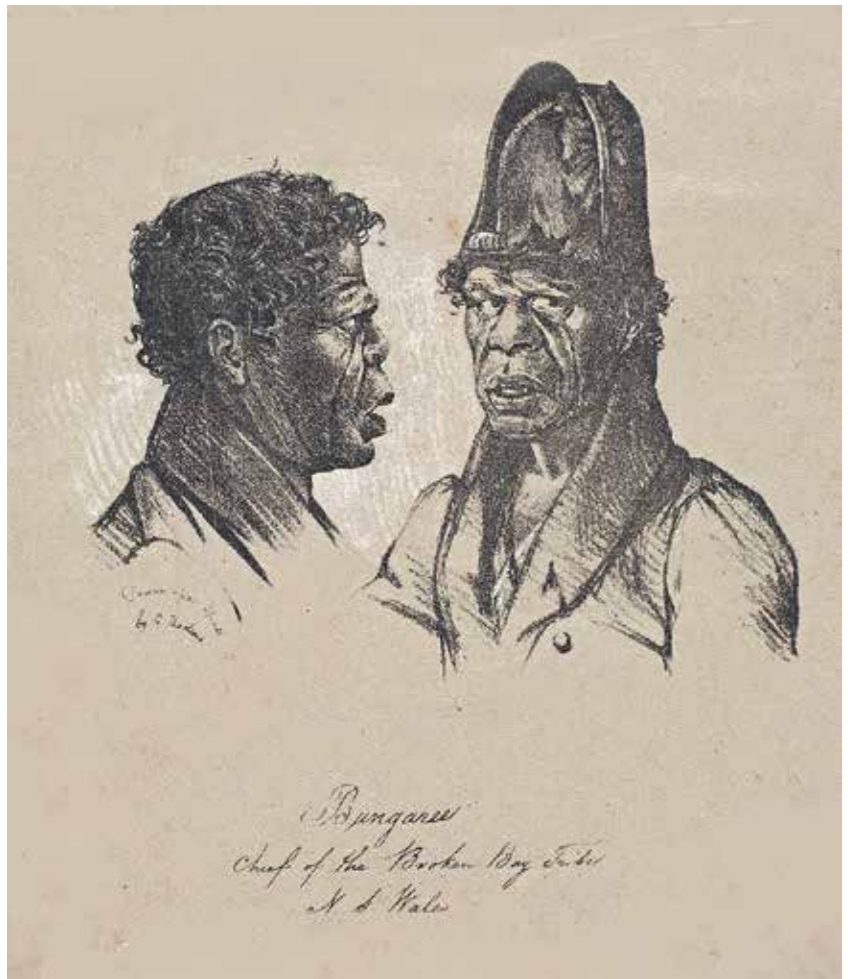
**7.**  
Charles Rodius (1802–1860) *Sir Francis Forbes*. 1852. Sydney, charcoal and crayon 29 x 23 cm, signed and dated 1852 l.l. Collection: State Library of NSW a1528031u

**8.**  
Charles Rodius (1802–1860) *Bungaree*. Two images – at right & a profile, 1829. Pencil on paper, cut out and pasted on paper. Collection: State Library of NSW ML A615 f17

John Edye Manning, Registrar of the Supreme Court.<sup>24</sup> His social connections combined with his charm and talent overshadowed his convict status, enabling him to secure the patronage and support of the colony's citizens.

Almost immediately on arrival in 1829 he began sketching and took a particular interest in portraits of the Aborigines. He sketched Bungaree and produced lithographs dated 1829, using either Earle's or Carmichael's press (**plates 8–9**). These lithographs were available by March 1830, as a newspaper reported on 6 March that:<sup>25</sup>

Mr. C. Rhodius uses the lithographic Press with great skill. He has executed front and profile likenesses of Bungaree, in a most superior style.



**9.**  
Charles Rodius (1802–1860). *Bungaree*. Two images – at left and a profile. 1829, Lithograph. Inscribed "Drawn on stone by C. Rodius" and "Bungaree. Chief of the Broken Bay Tribe". Collection: State Library of NSW a6169001u



## 10.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860) *Government House Stables from the Domain looking North*, 1830. Sydney, pencil on paper 15 x 7.5 cm, signed and dated, C Rodius del. Sydney 1830. Collection: State Library of NSW a1120020

## 11.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860) *William Cox*, 1830. Sydney, miniature portrait, pencil and metalpoint drawing on prepared scratchboard. Collection: State Library of NSW ref code 447441 dig order no Album ID 843715

## 12.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860) *Anna Cox*. 1830. Sydney, miniature portrait, pencil and metalpoint drawing on prepared scratchboard. Collection: State Library of NSW ML 1380 ref code 447441 dig order no 843715

Bungaree was from Broken Bay and moved to Sydney. He was referred to as “King of Port Jackson”, “King of the Blacks”, or “Chief of the Broken Bay Tribe”. He helped settlers by tracking escaped convicts, but was also influential within his own Aboriginal community, and participated in several voyages of Australian coastal exploration.<sup>26</sup> In 1802 he sailed with Matthew Flinders on HMS *Investigator*, becoming the first Australian to circumnavigate the continent, and again in 1815 with Phillip Parker King, who considered him “sharp, intelligent” and of “much service to us in our intercourse with the natives”. Macquarie valued Bungaree as a link between the Aboriginal and British communities and in 1815 allocated land for him and his people. Bungaree was one of Sydney’s most prominent identities.<sup>27</sup>

In 1830, Rodius sketched the Government House Stables (**plate 10**), built by Governor Macquarie to Francis Greenway’s design in 1821, and without British consent, in an effort to kick-start construction of the new Government House. The elaborate Gothic stables are now the NSW Conservatorium of Music.<sup>28</sup>

Rodius drew miniature portraits of William Cox and his second wife Anna in 1830 (**plates 11–12**). By then, Cox was a very successful pastoralist and likely came into contact with Rodius in the course of the latter’s duties at the Department of Public Works. In July 1814 Governor Macquarie had commissioned Cox to build the first road through the Blue Mountains, following the successful crossing by Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth in 1813. His work party, consisting of five free men, 30 convict labourers and eight soldiers, made 101 miles of road through rugged mountain country, building over a dozen bridges and splitting hundreds of posts and rails, in six months without serious accident or loss of life. Macquarie had offered the convicts their freedom if the project was completed on time.<sup>29</sup>

Later, in 1833, Rodius painted a watercolour showing the construction of the road at Lapstone at the eastern edge of the escarpment. This image has come to symbolise the opening up of inland NSW, held up for many years by the mountain barrier, and the subsequent dispersal of the Indigenous people who had lived there for thousands of years (**plate 13**). Rather than a recreation of an earlier scene, this is more likely to be a contemporary view of convict road gangs “completing unfinished sections of road” on the Great Western Highway<sup>30</sup> or creating a deviation to reduce the steepness of the road on the Lapstone escarpment.

In 1831, before his Exemption, he painted a watercolour of Cumberland Street, Sydney including a “Cottage Ornée”, designed by Francis Greenway for Robert Campbell in 1825, and completed in 1828 (**plate 14**).<sup>31</sup> This



was Greenway's last major project and marked the end of his professional life. The accurately delineated images of the buildings highlight Rodius' draftsmanship and architectural skills. Campbell had built the house on the peak of The Rocks, then called Bunker's Hill. Mrs Helenus Scott purchased the house from Campbell, and in 1833 it became the home of Dr James Mitchell, after he married her daughter, Augusta Maria. Their son David Scott Mitchell (1836–1907), the "wealthy, eccentric and reclusive collector of Australiana" bequeathed "the greatest single cultural bequest ever made in Australia" to be housed permanently in the Public Library of NSW on the condition that it be known as The Mitchell Library.<sup>32</sup>

Rodius painted a portrait in oils of Robert Campbell, the prominent merchant, pastoralist, and philanthropist, in 1834 (plate 15).

In 1831 he sketched an informal, idyllic view of the harbour (plate 16). In 1832 he painted Springfield House on Woolloomooloo Hill, built as a "hot climate" building using a "Mediterranean" design, and shown set within its newly planted garden. Again the architectural and perspective drawing skills of Rodius are on display (plate 17).

Some months elapsed before the Petition for Exemption made headway. This delay perhaps indicated a tightening up under the new leadership of Hallen, now the Colonial Architect, or, more likely, the Department's dependence on the skills of Rodius.

In May 1832 Ambrose Hallen, wrote to the Colonial Secretary:<sup>33</sup>

that the services of the prisoner [Rodius] ... were necessary ... as I have been directed to obtain as far as might be possible a plan of every building already standing in the colony as well as those to be erected. I trust I shall not be deprived of his assistance.

In the same month, Mrs Forbes stopped her children's drawing lessons until she could check whether the prisoner's attendance in her



household was an infringement on the Government's orders respecting the employment of convicts.<sup>34</sup> However, on 10 July 1832, he received a Ticket of Exemption from Government Labour which allowed him to practise as an artist so long as he remain in Sydney (plate 18). Later he advertised as a teacher of drawing and perspective and began to earn a living as an artist.<sup>35</sup>

William Romaine Govett is thought to have been one of his pupils. Govett was a painter and Assistant Surveyor in the Surveyor-General's Department of NSW until 1833 when his career ended abruptly on the restructuring of the department. Later in England he published papers and proficiently drawn sketches of NSW.<sup>36</sup>

### 13.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860)  
*[Convicts Building Road at Lapstone over the Blue Mountains, NSW].*  
1833. Watercolour, 17.3 x 28.8 cm, signed & dated "Chs Rodius 1833" (lower right); inscribed top right "... Lapstone" Collection: National Library of Australia CDC10570243

### 14.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860)  
*Cumberland Street.* 1831.  
Watercolour, 19.7 x 35.8 cm, signed and dated lower right "C Rodius 1831 Sydney." Collection: State Library of NSW a128520



## 15.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860) *Copy of a portrait of Robert Campbell*. 1834. Oil, 22 x 18 inches. Collection: State Library of NSW ML 538

### Landscapes lithographed in London

On 26 November 1832 it was reported that:<sup>37</sup>

Mr Rhodius, the artist, has sent to England per Florentia a drawing ... being a view taken from Bunker's Hill ... to the care of Mr Ackerman[n] of The Strand, for the purposes of a plate being engraved from it ...

The *Sydney Monitor* praised Rodius' landscapes:<sup>38</sup>

We have seen some views of Sydney and the surrounding scenery by Mr.

Rhodius; they are beautifully done in pencil, and reflect the greatest credit on the talents of the artist. Mr. Rhodius has sent to London a general view of Sydney, taken from the front of the Archdeacon's present residence on Bunker's Hill, for the purpose of being engraved under the direction of Mr. Ackerman[n]. The splendid specimens of art which, from time to time are published under this gentleman's name, are a sufficient guarantee that the work will be got up in the first style."—This is an extract from the *Sydney Gazette*. We join our contemporary in giving our mood of praise to Mr. Rhodius, whose style of drawing and sketching is perhaps superior to any artist in the Colony. His water coloured landscapes appear to us beautifully executed, but we do not profess to be judges.

The resulting coloured aquatints (**plate 19**) were returned on the same ship, which arrived on 24 January 1834. The *Sydney Gazette* reported their arrival:<sup>39</sup>

We have seen a coloured engraving of Port Jackson, taken from the front of the house at present inhabited by the Archdeacon, on Bunker's Hill. The artist is Mr. Rhodius, one, as most of our readers know, of no mean talent. The view was taken, some time back, and sent to London for the purpose of being engraved by Ackerman[n], from whom it has just returned. It is one of the prettiest efforts of genius we have seen in the Colony, and needs only, we are assured, being seen to secure a place in the folio of every lover of the fine arts.

On 21 February 1834, the *Hobart Town Courier* reported that<sup>40</sup>

Mr. Rhodius, the artist, has received by the Florentia a quantity of beautifully coloured engravings, of a view of Port Jackson, executed under the directions of Messrs. Ackerman[n] and Co. from an original drawing of Mr. R., taken expressly for this purpose, and

forwarded to England about twelve months since. – *Australian*.

That sketches could be drawn and transported to London, and lithographs produced and returned to Sydney, in such a short time is impressive, and that a report appeared so soon in Van Diemen's Land, taken from the Sydney newspaper. This was an event of considerable importance to the colony. Such artistic works were rarely available.

On 10 April 1833 the following notice appeared:<sup>41</sup>

Mr Rodius, the artist, has just completed six beautiful sketches of Sydney and the harbour ... The landscapes which are accurate when compared from the point of view are prettier than could be expected. They are ... to be sent to Mr Ackerman[n].

It is uncertain whether lithographs were produced from these sketches, although they did make it to England, as a UK private collector, Edwin Hitchon, presented them to the Art Gallery of NSW in 1939.<sup>42</sup> Two are shown (plates 20–21).

On 5 October 1833, an inquest heard the sad tale of the death of the German, Johan Rodolph Roering, who swallowed an ounce and a half of arsenic and died as a result:<sup>43</sup>

It appeared from the deposition of Mr Rodius, the artist, that the deceased had met severe losses in the Brazils, and came here to repair his fortunes, but had been disappointed in his hopes.... The Jury returned a verdict, "Died in consequences of having taken poison in a mental state of aberration."

This reminds us of the harshness of life in colonial Sydney and conveys that Rodius, by being referred to as "the artist", had already established a reputation. Roering was a fellow countryman and he probably welcomed an acquaintance so far from Europe.

Rodius received a Ticket of Leave dated 26 February 1834. About this



time, he married seamstress Maria Bryant (plate 18).<sup>44</sup> The Parish of St James recorded the birth of their son, Charles Prosper, on 27 August 1834.<sup>45</sup>

### Native portraits

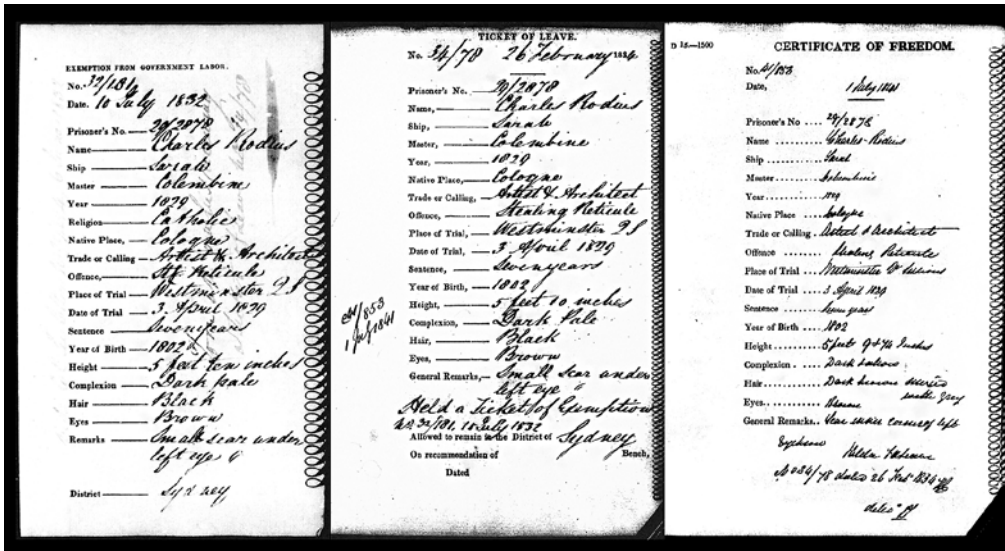
As well as his landscapes and portraits of prominent citizens, Rodius produced many sketches of Aborigines and Maoris, from 1833 to 1835, generally with the view to producing lithographs, for which his French-chalk drawings were eminently suitable. He probably

### 16.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860) *A View of Sydney, NSW*. Pencil on paper, 18.7 x 31.9 cm. Collection National Gallery of Victoria PS 36915 Rodius

### 17.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860) *Springfield House on Woolloomooloo Hill*. 1832. Watercolour, 19 x 24.7 cm, inscribed lower left "Wolloomooloo Ch Rodius 1832". Collection: State Library of NSW a140012



**18.** Charles Rodius. Ticket of Exemption from Government Labour No. 32/181 – 10 July 1832; Ticket of Leave No. 34/78 – 26 February 1834; Certificate of Freedom No. 41/856 – 1 July 1841

sketched the subjects in Sydney.

In 1834, two sets of six lithographs of NSW Indigenous “chiefs” and their wives were printed and published by J. G. Austin (**plates 23–27**), and reported on 7 October 1834 as:<sup>46</sup>

... a well-executed series of lithographic portraits, by Mr Rodius, of several aboriginal chiefs and their wives. The fidelity of the likenesses will at once strike every beholder ...

John Austin, engraver, silversmith and pardoned convict, probably acquired his lithographic press from Augustus Earle when Earle departed in 1829, and having no knowledge of lithography, employed Rodius, now exempt from government service. John Austin set up in the printing business for his relative John Gardener Austin, who had arrived in Sydney in 1834.<sup>47</sup>

Rodius published a second series in 1844. The recording of these accurate, sympathetic and individual images of NSW Indigenous leaders and their wives, was an extremely significant contribution. Many are the only records of these important people.

By the 1830s the Gadigal people, the original clan of the Sydney Cove region, had been decimated, almost half having

died in the smallpox epidemic of 1789. The Gadigal were a clan of the Eora Nation, the collective name given to the clans of the coastal region around Sydney. With the obliteration extending beyond Sydney proper, Aborigines became drawn to Sydney from areas such as Shoalhaven and Five Islands to the South, and Broken Bay and Brisbane Water to the North. These people were the subjects of the Rodius portraits. It has been said that they came because of the attractions of the settlement, or to resist the European expansion and protect their rights to the land. Arranged marriages also brought them.<sup>48</sup>

However, they came largely as a result of their territories having been ruthlessly appropriated. There is no joy in the expressions of Rodius’s sitters, more hopelessness, confusion, distress and anger. It was well understood at the time that the European expansion was leading to the destruction of Indigenous people, and clans were not free to migrate to other areas occupied, in sensitive environmental balance, by neighbouring nations. Resources appropriated by Europeans could not be replaced. The clearing of the land led to a reduction in fauna, the source of food and skins for protection from the cold, and now there was competition with the settlers and their stock for what remained. Wheat and other crops replaced native yam planting, and there

**19.**

Ackerman & Co, drawn by Charles Rodius, engraved by S.G. Hughes, Sydney Cove, Port Jackson. 1833. Coloured aquatint 22.23 x 39.37 cm. Collection: State Library of NSW c046030001



was increased competition for fish, game and even fresh water – plus the impact of debilitating foreign diseases to which they had no immunity. The clans likely moved to Sydney to escape starvation and cold, and because they had no choice. They were compelled to move as it was impossible to adapt to the new circumstances.

**Rodius, a sensitive, artistic man, captures this calamity in the sympathetically portrayed faces of his subjects. By recording these images Rodius has preserved for posterity an understanding of this tragedy.**

Others were not so sympathetic. Governor-General Sir William Denison advised Bulwer Lytton, then Secretary for the Colonies:

The physical peculiarities of the race, their want of stamina to resist the slightest access of disease, seem to render their gradual extinction a matter almost of necessity when coupled with the unproductiveness of the females.

In reply, Lytton chided Denison, reminding him sternly of “our duty ... not to relax our efforts in despair”.<sup>49</sup> Supreme Court Judge Barron Field felt that because Aborigines were of no use to Europeans.<sup>50</sup>

It was better that their name should pass away from the earth.

By the 1820s, the Indigenous people had become fringe-dwellers. These were the people Rodius painted. Remnants of different clans banded together in mixed groups, ignoring old enmities and origins. With official encouragement, they could obtain some of the benefits of “civilisation”, such as blankets, clothing, iron hatchets, fish-hooks, bread, flour, sugar, tea, tobacco and alcohol.<sup>51</sup>

The area near Richmond on the Hawkesbury River had both bark huts and colonial mansions in 1830. There were corn fields, peach and orange orchards, pumpkin and cabbage patches, pigs rummaging on wheat stubble, and in the upper reaches of the river, sheep



and cattle grazed. Aborigines were still found on the river in more isolated areas, and when going about their previously normal activities of hunting, fishing and burning off grass, were considered a curiosity. By this time their presence on the Hawkesbury, as recorded by diarists, was greatly reduced and reflected the extent of the dislocation of Indigenous communities.<sup>52</sup>

In 1835 Rodius painted a picturesque miniature landscape, thought to depict the flood plain of the MacDonald River Valley, near the Hawkesbury, which indicates the extent of European clearing and settlement, and its concentration along the riverbanks (**plate 22**). Although his employment with the Department of Public Works had ceased three years earlier, this tiny image may be an official record of this development.

## 20.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860)  
*View from the Government Domain Sydney*. 1833. Pencil, 14 x 26 cm approx. Collection: State Library of NSW a635002

## 21.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860)  
*View of the Government House Parramatta from the Bridge over the River*. 1833. Pencil, 14 x 26 cm approx. Collection: State Library of NSW a635006



## 22.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860) *The MacDonald River Valley, NSW 1835*. Watercolour on paper, 7.5 x 11.5 cm. Private collection

Despite dispossession, dispersal and decimation from smallpox, traditional groups continued to live in sparsely settled areas around Port Jackson for more than a century after European settlement. They lived in the Mulgoa Valley, Emu Plains, Plumpton, Manly, La Perouse, Salt Pan Creek and Campbelltown until at least the mid-1800s.<sup>53</sup>

Examples illustrated are sketches of Culuba and his wife Punch (**plates 23–24**); Sangrado and his wife Morirang (**plates 25–26**); Jacko (**plate 27**); and a lithograph of Bidy Salamander, Bulkabra and Gooseberry (**plate 28**).

Little is known of many of these people. Culuba was from Five Island tribe of the Illawarra district. Punch came from Brisbane Water or Broken Bay; Brisbane Water was recorded as her former home in a petition from Captain John Piper to Governor Sir Thomas Brisbane, on behalf of a group of Aborigines, requesting clothes and blankets; Rodius's inscription on Punch's portrait stated nearby Broken Bay.<sup>54</sup> Sangrado was the chief of Shoalhaven and Morirang his wife. Jacko was chief of Mooloomong. Bidy Salamander was from

the Broken Bay tribe. Bulkabra was King of Botany. Cora Gooseberry was wife to King Bungaree and an identity in Sydney for 20 years after his death. She was known as "Queen of Sydney and Botany" and "Queen of Sydney to South Head".<sup>55</sup>

Many of the Indigenous leaders sketched by Rodius wore named breastplates or gorgets which were modified replicas of those worn as badges by British infantry officers. They became symbols of cultural dispossession, or the imposition of the social system of one culture on another but had little lasting impact on Indigenous society. The breastplates included in Rodius's portraits have helped to identify some of the leaders.

In 1834 he drew a beautifully sympathetic portrait of King Jack Waterman, from the Shoalhaven, likely befriended in Sydney and given the European name by a Mr Waterman and described by a descendant, John C Waterman, as overseer of the Domain in Sydney (**plate 32**). John Waterman wrote that the Sydney Aborigines:<sup>56</sup>

*roamed about the city during the day, and camped in the south-east corner of the Domain, near Centipede Rock, south-western side of Wallah-Mallah [Woolloomooloo] Bay, at night.*

An inscription in French on the reverse indicates that the portrait

was sketched for Mrs Betsy Abell née Balcombe, the French-speaking daughter of NSW Colonial Treasurer William Balcombe (1778–1829).

*Mr Rodius presente ses profonds Respects a Madame Abel et prie qu'elle receive ce joli garcon un nombre de ses souvenirs de la Nouvelle Holland.*

Mr Rodius offers his sincere respects to Madame Abel and hopes that she accepts [from] this gentleman a number of his souvenirs of New Holland.

After her father's death, Betsy returned to London in 1834 with her mother. As a young girl, she had befriended Napoleon Bonaparte on St Helena while the Balcombe family was living on the island.<sup>57</sup> The exiled Bonaparte had lodged with the Balcombes at The Briars while his permanent quarters were being prepared. Later in her memoirs Betsy recalled how she had learned to appreciate Napoleon's<sup>58</sup>

*... fascinating smile and kind manner ... His manner was indeed so unaffectedly kind and amiable ... that in a few days I felt perfectly at ease in his society.*

Correspondence from Mr W H Hargraves to Sir William Dixon, written in 1917, 57 years after the death of Rodius, confirms that he was well acquainted with the Balcombes.<sup>59</sup>

*About the year 1858 I occasionally met Mr Rodius at Mr [Thomas] Balcombe's residence. He was at that time paralysed on one side. His intellect was clear.*

Betsy's brother Thomas Balcombe (1810–1861) was also a fine artist and it is likely their mutual interest in art drew the two men together. Balcombe shot himself dead at his Paddington home, Napoleon Cottage.<sup>60</sup>

### Māori portraits

In 1834 Rodius sketched a portrait of the young Māori chief Atay, which is now in the British Museum; a second



portrait of “Atay/ Chief of Otargo/ New Zealand” and dated “Febr 1835” was sold in 2018 and is now in the Hocken Collections, University of Otago Library. The true identity of Atay is unknown however the drawing (**plate 29**)<sup>61</sup>

... shows the character of his subject by the strength of his gaze and jut of his jaw. A full moko, ... recorded with care and respect on such a youthful chief, suggests he was well known ... even more significant is that it depicts a young Māori chief in the years before the Treaty of Waitangi was signed.

There is no evidence that Rodius visited New Zealand. However, many Māoris visited Sydney as a result of the large volume of shipping between the two countries. In *A Narrative of a Nine Months' Residence in New Zealand in 1827*, Augustus Earle tells of Māoris sailing back with him on the brig

*Governor Macquarie*, “they being always anxious to see the colony”.<sup>62</sup>

Rodius sketched other Māoris in 1834, for example *Taghi from Nangango*, also with a full moko (**plate 30**) and *Adodoo, a New Zealand Chief's Daughter* (**plate 31**).

#### Established artist 1835–

Having received his Ticket of Leave, Rodius could now purchase land.<sup>63</sup> On 23 May 1835 Rodius purchased three allotments, paying £45 for a block in Campbell Street and £39 18s and £38 19s respectively for two blocks in John Street.<sup>64</sup> This indicates he was making a reasonable living and benefitting from the sale of his prints of Aborigines and views of Sydney. The Act requiring property buyers to be British subjects, or naturalised, wasn't legislated until 1849.

Other artists called upon Rodius to transform their portraits into editions of lithographs, as in this example, probably by Richard Read Jr.:<sup>65</sup>

#### 23.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860) *Culoba*, 1834. Black chalk with stump on paper, 22.4 x 15.1 cm, inscribed in black chalk, dated lower left “Sydney le 20 July 1834”. Inscribed lower right “Culoba 5 l'land tribe NSW”. British Museum Collection, reg. mo. MN 1840.1114.65. Purchased from J F Clarkson 1840

#### 24.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860) *Punch*, 1834. Black chalk with stump, touched with red and white chalk, on paper 21.7 x 15 cm, inscribed in black chalk, dated lower left “Sept 1834”, inscribed lower right “Punch Ginno (wife) of Culoba”. British Museum Collection, reg. no. MN 1840.1114.66. Purchased from J F Clarkson 1840



## 25.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860)  
*Sangrado, Pilot of Shoalhaven,*  
 1834. Pencil and charcoal, 26.9 x  
 18.7 cm, signed lower right Chs  
 Rodius / Aug... 1834 / Sydney  
 NSW, inscribed Cabignow lower left.  
 Collection: State Library of NSW  
 a1155008u

## 26.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860)  
*Morirang – The lady of Sangrado,*  
*Chief of Shoalhaven Tribe,* 1834.  
 Crayon, 28 x 18.8 cm, inscribed  
 lower right. Collection National  
 Library of Australia CDC106443060

Rodius, from a painting by Mr. Reid,  
 the artist, and printed by Mr. J. G.  
 Austin. It is one of the best colonial  
 attempts in the Lithographic line of art  
 which we have yet witnessed. A more  
 striking resemblance it would not be  
 easy to pourtray.

In 1836 he painted a fine watercolour  
 of the first Government House,  
 “commonly accepted as the most  
 accurate portrayal” (**plate 33**). Governor  
 Phillip’s initial six-room structure,  
 with skillion additions, was repaired,  
 altered and extended by successive  
 Governors, as they complained  
 bitterly that it was damp, unsuitable,  
 too small, inconvenient and in poor  
 condition. Dilapidated, defective,  
 too costly to repair and obstructing  
 Sydney’s development, it was gradually  
 demolished, and by December 1846 had  
 almost disappeared.<sup>66</sup>

His architectural drawing skills  
 were recognised in 1837, when he was

awarded second prize of £50 for “some  
 splendid drawings of architectural  
 beauty” of a proposed building for the  
 Sydney Exchange Company.<sup>67</sup> The  
*Sydney Herald* considered “Mr Rhodius’s  
 drawings are beautifully executed—they  
 are perfect pictures.”<sup>68</sup>

In September 1837 E. D. Barlow  
 had announced that he had taken over  
 and re-opened J. G. Austin’s “Original  
 Zincographic Printing Establishment”,  
 Austin having retired to the country.  
 Barlow employed William Nicholas to  
 produce portraits including Aborigines.  
 In October 1840, when Nicholas  
 was his manager, Barlow sold most  
 of his business to William Baker,  
 who continued to print portraits of  
 Aborigines by Nicholas into the mid-  
 1840s. Baker’s purchase of Barlow’s  
 equipment secured the rights to publish  
 works originally issued by J. G. Austin  
 and Barlow. He published the portraits  
 of William Fernyhough and Rodius,  
 adding his own studies of Aborigines.

### LATE REV. RICHARD HILL.

We have just been favoured with a  
 very correct likeness of this lamented  
 gentleman, drawn on stone by Mr.

## Musical performances

Rodius was a respected music performer and sang a song by Weber at a concert at the Theatre Royal (Royal Hotel) on 31 August 1836, his soft voice giving “universal delight”.<sup>69</sup> Then on 14 September 1836 he sang again at the Theatre Royal, his performance applauded.<sup>70</sup>

*The Amateur, Mr Rhodius, was an object of some attraction ... He sung a pleasing little French song, by Boildeau, in a very plaintive style, without any attempt at display, either of compass of voice or power of execution, and was rapturously encored.*

Levey’s Theatre Royal (1833–38), previously Royal Assembly Rooms (1829–32) and Saloon of the Royal Hotel (1832–33), was the first continuously licensed permanent theatre in Australia. Built by London-born Barnett Levey (1798–1837), the first free Jewish settler in the colony, in 1829 behind the Royal Hotel, the venue was not licensed until 1832. While being fitted out Levey used a saloon of the hotel for the first performances. It closed in September 1838 and was destroyed by fire in 1840. Levey is regarded as the “Father of Australian Theatre”. He ran the theatre until his death in 1837.<sup>71</sup>

Rodius was a soloist at the colony’s first Oratorio held at St Mary’s Cathedral on 21 September 1836, consisting of Handel’s *Messiah* and Haydn’s *The Creation*.<sup>72</sup> Macquarie had laid the foundation stone of the first St Mary’s Chapel, blessed by Father Therry, in 1821. In 1835, not long before the Oratorio, Bishop John Bede Polding was installed as the first Catholic Archbishop of Sydney and St Mary’s Chapel was elevated to Cathedral status. In 1865 the Cathedral was destroyed by fire.

The Oratorio was assessed on 29 September 1836:<sup>73</sup>

*Taking everything into consideration, the Oratorio, being the first attempted in the colony, cannot fail to be spoken of with feelings of delight: it speaks as to the advancement of the fine arts, and the cultivated taste of the inhabitants.*

## 27.

Charles Rodius  
(1802–1860)  
*Jacko, Chief of Mooloomong, 1834.*  
Pencil and charcoal  
on paper, 18.5 x  
13.9 cm, inscribed  
lower right “Ch  
Rodius. del Sydney  
30 May 1834”.  
Collection: State  
Library of NSW  
a1155003 DLPd40



This was a major event for the colony and Rodius’s performance was reported extensively in the Sydney press. On 23 September 1836:<sup>74</sup>

*“He was despised and rejected of men” (The Messiah) was sung with great sweetness by Mr Rodius. His cadences were soft and sweet, and quite delightful. He possesses more power than he displayed: and were he to sing more boldly he would sing more successfully. In the duet of “Graceful consort by thy side” (The Creation), with Mrs Chester, he evinced the correctness of his taste and judgement ...*

Other assessments were equally complimentary:

*“there is a delicacy of intonation in Mr R’s voice which is universally admired.”<sup>75</sup>  
“Mr Rodius, we are glad to see, is*

*appearing oftener in public ... The gentleman has no male competitor in the colony.”<sup>76</sup>*

*“The manner in which Mr Rodius sang “He was despised”, with his usual sweet and tasteful style and baritone voice, made a great impression.”<sup>77</sup>*

*“Mr Rodius stands preeminent amongst his brethren in the profession”<sup>78</sup>*

Rodius performed again on 1 February 1837<sup>79</sup> and once more at the Theatre Royal on 29 September 1837, in the presence of Governor Bourke.<sup>80</sup>

This was the last evidence of Rodius performing. His declining health was reported in 1838 and his first stroke in 1839. The death of Barnett Levey in 1837, the closure of the Theatre Royal in 1838, and then its destruction in 1840, had likely left Sydney without musical leadership and a suitable musical venue. Rodius’s continuing commitment was shown when he exhibited a portrait of the eminent musician and composer



## 28.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860) (print after), J G Austin (printer), *Biddy Salamander, Bulkabra and Gooseberry*, 1834. Lithograph, Drawn from nature and on stone, 17.7 x 12 cm. Titled: Biddy Salamander, Broken Bay Tribe; Bulkabra, Chief of Botany; Gooseberry, Queen of Bungaree. Collection National Library of Australia CDC10643056

Joseph Gutrot in the 1849 Exhibition of the Society for the Promotion of Fine Art, and in 1851, his acclaimed portrait of the celebrated singer, Sara Flower.

### Declining health and wives' deaths

On 4 July 1838 advertisements advised the sale of his effects:<sup>81</sup>

Household Furniture, Drawings, Engravings, Books, &c, TO BE

SOLD BY AUCTION, BY W. HEBBLEWHITE, TO-MORROW, the 5th July, at Eleven o'Clock, at the residence of Mr. RHODIUS, Elizabeth street, three doors from Liverpool street, the whole of that Gentleman's Household Furniture, Works of Art, &c., &c. COMPRISING – CHESTS of DRAWERS, Dining Tables, and Dressing Room ditto, Cheffioneer, Elegant Liqueur Case, A few choice Books of Literatu[r]e and the Arts, Specimens of Drawings, Engravings, &c., &c., and the usual assortment of Kitchen Utensils &c., &c. The above will be positively sold in consequence of Mr. Rhodius leaving Sydney for the benefit of his health.

In 1838 Rodius married young Harriet Taylor, indicating that his first wife Maria, whom he had married about 1833, had died. Just months later, Harriet, aged 17 or 18 years

(notices vary) after a four-day illness, died of influenza at her home in Elizabeth Street, and was buried in the old Sandhills Cemetery in Devonshire Street, Sydney. Charles was bereft; he inserted death notices in at least five newspapers,<sup>82</sup> and personally designed and carved her headstone.<sup>83</sup>

Sacred to the memory of Harriet Rodius, who died on 14 December, 1838, aged eighteen years. After a short illness of four days. This inscription is sculptured by her afflicted husband; as a last tribute his affection can offer to her memory.

Shortly afterwards in 1839, Rodius suffered a paralytic stroke but fortunately recovered.<sup>84</sup> This was the first of his recorded strokes, perhaps induced from the anguish of the loss of his two wives. By December 1839, Rodius was well enough to resume his teaching:<sup>85</sup>



Mr C Rodius, who for some time past has suffered under paralytic attack, begs to notify, that being now recovered, he intends to resume his occupation as Teacher of Drawing and Perspective, in which capacity he has been engaged in this colony for the past 9 years. 99 Elizabeth St.

Out of necessity, Rodius continued to work as a teacher and portraitist, in spite of his affliction, advertising on 12 May 1840:<sup>86</sup>

Mr Rodius who has been sometimes successful in his French Chalk Drawings in Portraits, will be happy to resume his work in this style.

On 1 April 1841, he married for the third time. Harriet Elizabeth Allen was the daughter of Josiah Allen, also an artist, transported to Sydney for forgery, and Mary Ann née Nichols, transported for uttering forged notes. They were wed

at St Phillip's Church, Sydney by Rev. W. Cowper.<sup>87</sup> That Rodius had married three times in seven years indicates desideratum for female company and support. In 1849 they had a daughter Theresa. His self-portrait (**plate 1**) passed to Theresa and then from her along four generations.<sup>88</sup>

In July 1841 he received a Certificate of Freedom, and, on 13 July, sailed for Port Phillip. The length and purpose of his stay is not known (**plate 18**) but was probably to seek new commissions.<sup>89</sup> The next year he was back in Sydney, and exhibited a portrait of the colonial poet William Beverley Suttor (1805/6–1882):<sup>90</sup>

THE POET — At Tegg's Fancy Bazaar, is now on view, the portrait of Beverly Suttor, Esq., by Rhodius.

In June 1843 he advertised giving lessons and taking portraits.<sup>91</sup> A little later, he tried to capitalise on

## 29.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860), *Atay, Chief of Otargo, New Zealand*, 1835. Charcoal graphite and watercolour on tinted wove paper, 20.5 x 10.5 cm, signed and dated lower left "Ch Rodius del Feb 1835", inscribed lower right "Atay Chief of Otargo [sic] New Zealand". Hocken Collections, Uare Taoka o Hākena, University of Otago V2018.06.1

## 30.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860), *Taghi from Nangango*, 1834. Charcoal and pencil, 18.4 x 13.3 cm, signed Ch's Rodius. Collection: State Library of NSW DLPd49



### 31.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860) *Adodoo*, 1834. Pencil and charcoal on paper, 18.1 x 13.9 cm, signed and dated lower left “Ch Rodius 1834”, inscribed lower centre “Adodoo, New Zealand Chiefs Daughter.” Collection: State Library of NSW DLPd51

### 32.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860) *King Jack Waterman*, 1834. Crayon, charcoal and watercolour on brown paper further tinted by the artist, 18.5 x 12.5 cm, signed and dated lower left “Ch Rodius 1834”, inscribed lower centre “King (Jack Water)man”, inscribed lower right (illeg.), inscribed along top of verso support. Private collection

the notoriety of the murderer John Knatchbull. Rodius had advertised in January 1844 the pending production of a lithograph of the notorious villain:<sup>92</sup>

**CHARLES RODIUS** respectfully  
begs to acquaint the public that he is

preparing and will shortly publish, a lithograph likeness of John Knatchbull, convicted of the murder of Ellen Jamieson, of whom a likeness in profile will in the same drawing be subjoined.

By 3 February 1844, Baker’s Hibernian Press had produced the lithographs:<sup>93</sup>

Mr Baker, zealous to satisfy all tastes, has published two works of very dissimilar character. The first is a book of Psalm Tunes for the Presbyterian Church ... The second is a portrait of the murderer Knatchbull, drawn by Rodius ...

Rodius and Baker were profiting from the infamy of Knatchbull whose lurid crimes engendered “ghoulish curiosity” in his trial; his execution at Darlinghurst Gaol on 13 February 1844 attracted 10,000 spectators.<sup>94</sup> Also in 1844, Charles Rodius drew John Ahern, murderer of Mary Anne Clarke. These notorious characters attracted great public interest and business for Rodius.

### Looking for work

In 1844 Rodius produced further sketches and lithographs of Aborigines. An example of these later works is a sketch of Ricketty Dick, from Broken Bay (**plate 34**). Ricketty Dick was also known as Warrah Warrah or William (Bill) Warrah, Worrell or Worrall. After Bungaree he is the most portrayed Indigenous man of early Sydney. Both of his legs became paralysed as he became old, hence his nickname which rhymed with “walking stick”. He lived in various Aboriginal camps in eastern Sydney. The Danish-born silversmith and jeweller Julius Hogarth produced two small statuettes in silver and gold, a walking stick – his head in silver and gold as the handle, medals and tokens with his image in profile. These are often seen as a tribute.<sup>95</sup>

At about this time, Rodius sketched Hamilton Collins Sempill (**plate 35**). Sempill immigrated to Australia in 1830 and received a 2,560-acre land grant at Belltrees in the Hunter Valley. In 1831/1832 he built a sandstock



dwelling, The White Cottage, with convict labour. The cottage still stands and offers farmstay accommodation.<sup>96</sup>

In 1846 Rodius sketched a portrait of “Dr” Friedrich Wilhelm Ludwig Leichhardt (1813–c 1848) and had lithographs produced (**plate 36**). Leichhardt completed an overland journey of almost 4,800 km from Jimbour on the Darling Downs to Port Essington on the Cobourg Peninsula, NT. Believed to have perished, his unexpected arrival back in Sydney in March 1846 was greeted with great rejoicing. Leichhardt was hailed “Prince of Explorers” and his party as national heroes.<sup>97</sup> The *Australian* published a report with a map of the route and offered a Rodius lithograph for inclusion.<sup>98</sup> Rodius was profiting from the hero status of Leichhardt. The famous, like the infamous, attracted considerable public interest.

In 1846 he sketched Williamina Bradley, known as Minna (**plate 37**). Minna was the granddaughter of William Bradley, first lieutenant on HMS *Sirius* which sailed with the First Fleet in 1787. He surveyed Sydney Harbour on the *Sirius* with John Hunter in 1788 and Bradley’s Head is named after him. About this time, Rodius painted a young boy on a pony; on the

back of the frame Rodius has inscribed: “Charles Rodius pinxit Sydney” (**plate 38**).

On 26 July 1847, the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported that Rodius’s landscape works were displayed at the First Exhibition of the Society for the Promotion of Fine Art in Australia. He was in good company; exhibitors included C Martens, J S Prout, W Nicholas, G E Peacock, J Backler, S Elyard, O W Brierley, J Janssen, T Balcombe, F Garling, H S Melville and J Fowles. One of his works “Church of Cologne on the Rhine” was a reminder of his probable birthplace.

William Baker published an illustrated weekly journal, *Heads of the People*, during 1847 and 1848. William Nicholas drew most of the portraits, with a few by Rodius, such as the basic portrait of the orator Robert Lowe (1811–1892), later Viscount Sherbrooke, Chancellor of the Exchequer (**plate 39**). Prior to this Rodius had concentrated on highly finished portraits and lithographs such as those of Sempill and Leichhardt (**plates 35–36**).<sup>99</sup>

In 1849 Rodius and his father-in-law Josiah Allen combined to produce a lithograph of Jackey Jackey, the Indigenous guide known for his faithful devotion to the explorer Edmund Kennedy.<sup>100</sup> Kennedy had

### 33.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860)  
*Government House, Sydney*. 1836.  
 Watercolour 19.3 x 38.4 cm signed  
 lower left “Chas Rodius delt 1836”.  
 Collection: State Library of NSW  
 a918088

died in his arms in 1848, speared by hostile Aborigines, while exploring Cape York Peninsula. Jackey Jackey was the only survivor of this expedition. The lithograph was praised in the contemporary press as an “excellent likeness” (**plate 40**).<sup>101</sup>

Rodius planned to supplement his income by teaching drawing at the Mechanics School of Arts. On 18 December 1848 the School of Arts had announced that:<sup>102</sup>

We are happy to state that the drawing class of the School of Arts is now fully constituted, and that the plan of instruction proposed by Mr Rodius having been approved by the Committee, that talented gentleman has been appointed to the Superintendence of the Class.

However, students became dissatisfied and “dropped out”, the blame



### 34.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860) 1844. *Ricketty Dick*. Charcoal on paper. 20.3 x 18.1 cm, signed and dated lower left “Ch Rodius 1844”, inscribed along lower edge, partly cut off “Broken Bay Tribe”. Collection: State Library of NSW PXA1005

### 35.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860) *Hamilton Collins Sempill*. 1827. This date is incorrect (neither Rodius nor Sempill was in the colony in 1827), more likely 1840s. Charcoal and crayon, 25 x 20 cm, signed lower left “Chas Rodius delt 1827”. Collection: State Library of NSW a5563001

The second exhibition of The Society for the Promotion of Fine Art in Australia was reported on 2 June 1849.<sup>104</sup> Rodius exhibited a portrait of Monsieur Gautrot, since lost, which was described as “a free, light, loose sketch, full of artistical talent, and a very striking likeness.” Joseph Gautrot, the eminent violinist, composer and professor of music, produced many original Australian works; only one, his *Josephian Hymn*, has survived.<sup>105</sup>

On 3 August 1849 Rodius received a payment of one guinea for acting as a German interpreter in the Supreme Court.<sup>106</sup>

#### Likeness after death

On 30 March 1850 Rodius advertised with a new twist:<sup>107</sup>

Mr Charles Rodius has the honor of announcing to the public, that he still continues to take Portraits in Chalk and Colours. Mr R. also undertakes, in the event of the loss of deceased friends or relatives, to produce a likeness after death capable of supplying affection’s

broken link in the memory of the survivors.

He developed this notion – which photographers could not match – in an advertisement in the *People’s Advocate*.<sup>108</sup>

CHARLES RODIUS has the honour to announce to the Patrons of Art, that he still continues to take portraits in chalk and in colour; and also ventures to remind those who may have been, unhappily, suddenly bereaved of some dear relative or friend, of his success in procuring a likeness after death, to supply a broken link in the chain of memory. Also teacher of Drawing in its different branches, and Practical Perspective. Apply at Messrs. MADER and KERN, Hunter-street.

Rodius, still a foreigner, was granted a Certificate of Naturalisation on 18 June 1850. This enabled him to obtain legal title to land, a privilege denied foreigners.<sup>109</sup>

laid on the “absence of anything like a system of teaching on the part of the master”. As a result his class was disbanded and he was later dismissed. It was said that he was concentrating his attention on a small number of students, perhaps the more talented.<sup>103</sup>



### Peripatetic artist

Late in 1850, Rodius travelled wider afield looking for new clients. He toured to the Hunter Valley; from 7 October he was staying and working for “about a fortnight” in Maitland.<sup>110</sup>

MR. CHARLES RHODIUS, Artist, presents his respects to the lovers of Art, and begs to acquaint the inhabitants of Maitland and its environs that he will be in Maitland on the 7th October, where he will remain about a fortnight, and will take LIKENESSES in his style of French chalk. Specimens may be seen at Mr. Ikin's, or at Mr. P. Green's, West Maitland. Any communications will be punctually attended to at Mr. Yeomans's, “Northumberland Hotel.”

Then he was off to Melbourne, on 29 November sailing from Sydney on the small schooner *Hirondelle*, arriving in Melbourne on 9 December.<sup>111</sup> A report in the *Melbourne Morning Herald*, reproduced in *Bell's Life in Sydney*, noticed a lithograph of G.R. Nichols and his drawing of Melbourne artist, hotelier and historian Wilbraham Frederick Evelyn Liardet:<sup>112</sup>

Another excellent likeness of a character better known in Melbourne, “Liardet”, – is admirable: the drawing *perfect*.

In January 1851, he was plying his trade in Geelong, and as he had in Maitland, staying at one of the city's hotels.<sup>113</sup>

PORTRAIT DRAWING. –We have had the pleasure of inspecting several excellent portraits from the crayon of Mr. Rodius, an old and respected citizen of Sydney, who has paid Geelong a visit, and may be seen professionally, at the Commercial Hotel. His drawings are marked by accuracy and characteristic force.

Rodius, probably still in Victoria, advertised his Sydney stock of lithographs in March 1851, when he announced<sup>114</sup>

CHARLES RODIUS RESPECTFULLY acquaints the public that he has still on hand about forty copies of the Likeness of the Rev. J. C. Sumner, which

### 36.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860) 1846. *Dr Leich[h]ardt*. Charcoal on paper, 88.5 x 38.3 cm, signed lower left “Dr Leich[h]ardt 1846”. Collection: National Library of Australia CDC10570248

### 37.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860) *Minna Bradley*, 1846. Watercolour over pencil, 28 x 23 cm, signed and dated lower left “Cha Rodius 1846”, inscribed on label attached to back in another hand “Minna Bradley aged 2, Goulburn and Sydney NSW, 1844–1881”. Private collection

may be had at Kern & Mader's, Hunter-street, and at Mr. Clayton's, King-street East. Any person wishing to purchase the original drawing upon stone, may have the same by applying to Messrs. Mader and Kern. P. S.— Likenesses taken in the French Chalk style, from 30s to £2 2. Apply at Mader & Kern.



### 38.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860),  
*[Young boy on a Pony]*, oil on canvas,  
 30 x 40 cm. Private collection

and guarantees to make a correct likeness by chalk and smoke; and if not satisfactory to the friends Mr Rodius will forfeit the payment of his exertions, of 3 guineas with frame. Castlereagh St, corner of gateway to the circus ...

Changes of address and his offer of a refund indicate declining circumstances. The advent of photography which enabled multiple copies of accurate images, was impacting his business. In 1853, he was trying to resist the new, cheap but inferior technology:<sup>123</sup>

In May he again advertises that he will be taking portraits in Sydney<sup>115</sup>

CHARLES RODIUS has the honour to announce to the Patrons of Art, that he still continues to take portraits in chalk and in colour; and also ventures to remind those who may have been, unhappily, suddenly bereaved, of some dear relative or friend, of his success in procuring a likeness after death, to supply a broken link in the chain of memory. Also teacher of Drawing in its different branches and Practical Perspective. Apply at Messrs. MADER and KERN, Hunter-street.

By June, he's definitely back in Sydney, supposedly "for a short period"<sup>116</sup>

MR. CHARLES RODIUS, having returned from Melbourne, begs to offer his services to any lovers of Art desirous of obtaining correct Portraits in his style of French Crayon. Mr. Rodius' stay in Sydney will be but for a short period. No. 9, Colonnade, Bridge-street, at Mr. Blunt's.

After his "artistic exploration of Port Phillip", the following "Fine Arts" review was published:<sup>117</sup>

We have been favoured with the review of a portrait of Miss Sara Flower, from the pencil of Mr Charles Rodius, who has lately returned from an artistic exploration of Port Phillip. The likeness of the celebrated *cantatrice* is admirable ...

Sara, a celebrated contralto vocalist and teacher of singing, settled in Sydney 15 April 1850 after first arriving in Melbourne 13 February 1850.<sup>118</sup>

The Electoral Rolls for 1851–52 list Rodius's residence as a dwelling house in Riley Street.<sup>119</sup> In 1852 he sketched Edward Smith Hall, the outstanding, passionate editor, possibly the greatest name of the struggle for the freedom of the press during Darling's governorship (**plate 41**). Hall vigorously attacked the despotic measures of Government House, the tyranny of country magistrates, and the oppression of the convicts.<sup>120</sup>

On 5 October 1852 an advertisement gave his address as 31 Bridge-street, Sydney.<sup>121</sup>

The following was recorded on 31 May 1853:<sup>122</sup>

Mr Charles Rodius presents his respects to the inhabitants of Sydney in general

Another Novelty – Daguerre types and Photographs and a dozen other startling inventions of modern science are now familiar to us, and the likenesses of half the Sydney folks taken by those means look at us in every house we enter. But Mr Charles Rodius, ... guarantees to produce faithful portraits by the means of – Crayons and Smoke ...

In 1854 he sketched Henry Parkes, who became the longest non-consecutively serving Premier of the Colony of NSW, known as the "Father of Federation" due to his promotion for the federation of the six colonies of Australia, as a critic of British convict transportation, and as a proponent for the expansion of the Australian continental rail network (**plate 42**).<sup>124</sup>

On 14 April 1855 another advertisement reiterated the deleterious impact of photography on his livelihood:<sup>125</sup>

Mr Rodius, Artist, respectfully acquaints the public of Sydney and its environs, that he will guarantee a correct likeness, in his style and at the same expense as a Daguerreotype or Photograph, and depicting the brilliancy of eye, and avoiding the stiffness which detracts so much from correctness of expression in the latter.

## Affliction

In 1856 he suffered a second, debilitating stroke:<sup>126</sup>

MR. RODIUS, who has been for twenty-six years teacher of drawing, having been afflicted with a severe attack of paralysis, which completely prevents him from following his profession, now begs leave to appeal to his former pupils and friends, for such kind assistance as they may be pleased to afford him in his present very reduced circumstances. Any contribution or communication left to the care of Mr. MADER, Repository of Arts, George-Street, will be thankfully received.

This was followed by several increasingly strident appeals for help.

Mr. Rodius, the well known and talented artist is afflicted with paralysis which utterly incapacitates him from following his profession ...

In March 1858 he offered a wider range of skills:<sup>127</sup>

MR RODIUS begs to intimate that, having been unfortunately afflicted with a severe attack of paralysis, which prevented him pursuing his usual avocation as a teacher of Drawing—his profession for some twenty-six years, is now prepared to give reading lessons in the French and German languages; and would be happy to wait upon any family, lady, or gentleman requiring his services. Any communication addressed to the care of Mr Mader, Repository of Arts, George-street Sydney, will be attended to.

Donations to the Australian Museum during September 1858 included “A series of thirteen elaborate drawings, made by Mr. Rhodius from the Elgin marbles, in 1826, by Mr. Charles Rhodius”<sup>128</sup> perhaps a benevolent gesture as he approached the end of his life. If the date is right, it shows Rodius was in London in 1826 and sketching like an art student.

## 39.

Charles Rodius del.  
Published W Baker.  
Robert Lowe. 1847.  
Lithograph, 27.9  
x 22.5 cm, signed  
lower left “Rodius  
del 1847”, inscribed  
lower right “Robert  
Lowe The Orator”.  
Collection: National  
Library of Australia  
Rex Nan Kivell  
Collection NK720/28  
CDC10643058



The donation was prior to administrative records and there is no correspondence either incoming or outgoing with Rodius. A search carried out by the Archivist of the Australian Museum was unable to locate them in either the archives or the library.<sup>129</sup> A set of minutes contain a copy of the newspaper article with a handwritten annotation “books”. At various times, material deemed inappropriate to the Museum’s collection, was sent to other institutions such as the SLNSW and MAAS. What happened to the drawings remains a mystery.

Rodius died in the Liverpool Hospital (for paupers) on 7 April 1860, presumably survived by his third wife Harriet Elizabeth, who would have inserted the death notices:<sup>130</sup>

On the 7th of April, aged 56 years, after a long and lingering illness, at his late residence, Mr. Charles Rodius, artist, for many years a resident in this colony.

He died in a Greenway-designed building, fitting as he had recorded so many of the architect’s buildings while employed at the Department of Public Works, and in his sketches and watercolours. He was buried at Devonshire Street Cemetery, since removed for Central Railway Station.<sup>131</sup>

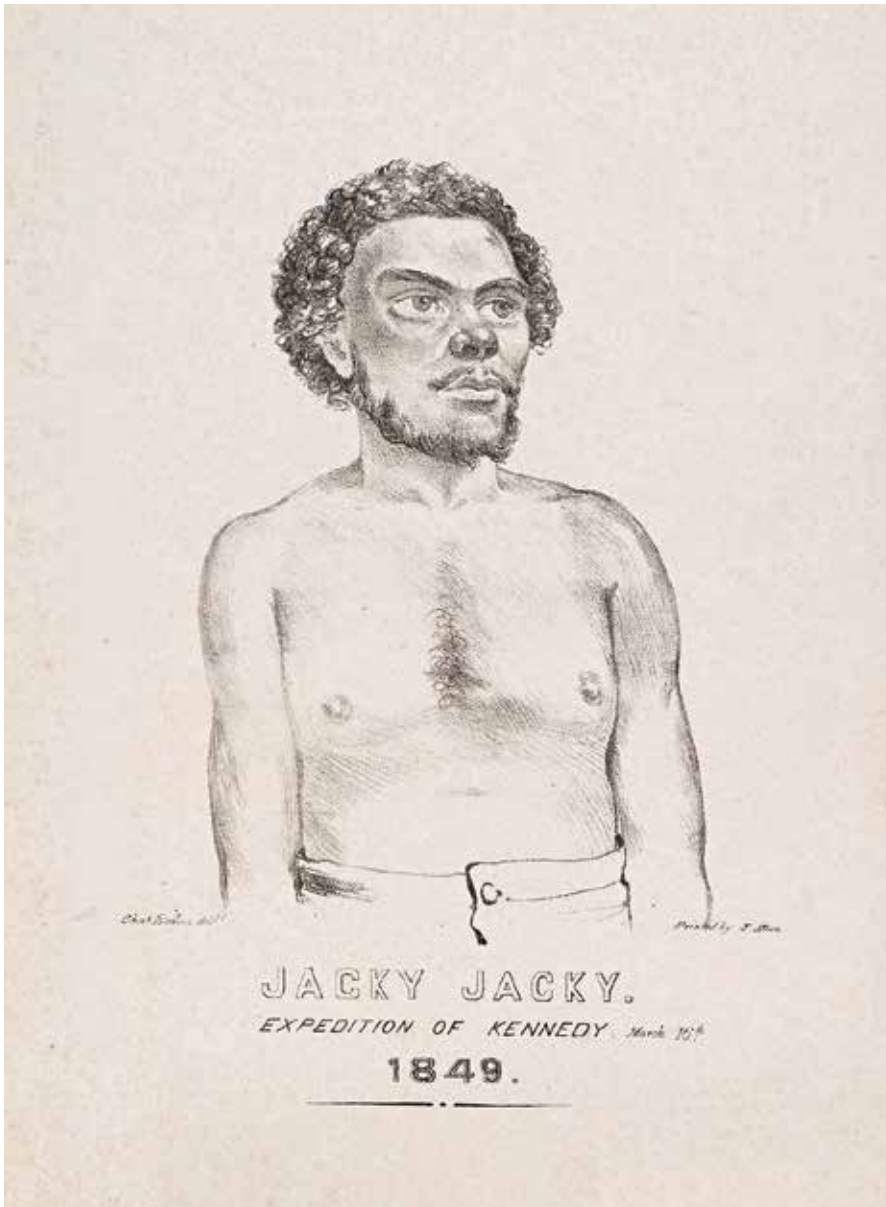
## His art

Joanna Gilmour:<sup>132</sup>

“While perhaps less lauded or well known, the work of Charles Rodius parallels and sometimes surpasses that of other artists whose Australian careers originated in convictism ... ”  
“... some of his images of aboriginals were towards caricatures but others such as the men and women of the Shoalhaven District are disarming in their softness, rendered with an effortless but assured use of line”.

Joan Kerr’s assessment:<sup>133</sup>

“Rodius’s pencil and watercolour views of Sydney are smoothly proficient according to topographical conventions, and reaffirm his early training as a



## 40.

Charles Rodius (1802–1860) Del't, Printed by J Allen. Titled: *Jacky Jacky Expedition of Kennedy March 16<sup>th</sup>, 1849*. Lithograph, 33.7 x 25 cm. Collection: State Library of NSW PXA615 f38

buildings and recorded the growth of Sydney in delicate sketches and watercolours. His poignant image of convicts building the road over the Blue Mountains has come to symbolise the expansion of the colony, held up for many years by the mountain barrier, and the subsequent effect on the Indigenous tribes who had lived there for thousands of years.

He received an architectural award and was a lead singer at the first Oratorio held in Colonial Sydney. His singing ability was summed up by the press quotation: “The gentleman has no male competitor in the colony”. Indeed, Rodius had very special talents.

Today his works are held by the British Museum, National Portrait Gallery of Australia, National Library of Australia, National Gallery of Australia, National Gallery of Victoria, State Library of NSW, State Library of Victoria, Hocken Collection University of Otago New Zealand and in private collections.

draughtsman. It was his crayon portraits however, which were particularly acclaimed by contemporary critics.”

Regarding his portraits of the famous:

“His sketches of Leichhardt and other public figures such as Henry Parkes are characterised by their swift grasp of character, assured handling and economy of line and informality.”

With respect to his portraits of Aboriginals:

“These portraits have a penetrating intensity which arises out of the artist’s wish to portray the natives exactly as they appeared – somewhat wretched after living side by side with white colonists.”

## Conclusion

Rodius was one of the most talented residents of colonial Australia. A highly skilled artist, lithographer, architect and singer, he made a major contribution to Australian art and social history.

His accurate, sympathetic and beautiful sketches of NSW Indigenous leaders and their wives are his greatest legacy. The hopelessness, confusion, distress and anger of their expressions tells the story of the ruthless appropriation of lands and destruction of culture, by European settlers. He sketched, with equal skill, many of the famous and infamous settlers of early Colonial Sydney.

In addition, he painted important

In 1925, Rose Browne, the daughter of Thomas Alexander Browne (1825–1915) – better known as the novelist Rolf Boldrewood – reported her father’s recollections of his schoolmasters at the Sydney College about 1840:<sup>134</sup>

Our drawing master, Mr Rodius, a German artist, was a painter in water colour, and a limner of likenesses in crayon. In our family scrap album several water colour sketches are to be seen bearing the signature “C Rodius,” also a portrait of the once celebrated aborigine Fisherman, Billy Blue, after whom Blue’s Point in Sydney was named.



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- Rodius née Wolffe, residing at 3889 Komadien Strasse Crue de la Comedie, in Cologne. Accessible No: 885/Anx. Perhaps Rodius changed his name from Chrétien to Charles. He sometimes signed "Ch. Rodius". His two known French works are signed "C Rodius" and "Ch'as Rodius". The West German Society of Family Studies stated that Charles Rodius was not born in Cologne, and, as French was obviously his mother tongue, he may have been born in France and gone to Cologne with his parents as a young child about 1802 or soon after. At that time, Cologne was occupied by Napoleon's Army and some thousand French soldiers and government officials lived with their families in Cologne.
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Charles Rodius (1802–1860), *Edward Smith Hall*. Charcoal with crayon on paper, 14 x 11.2 cm, signed and dated lower left "Chas Rodius del 1852", inscribed in pencil on reverse "Edwd Smith Hall. Editor of one of the first papers in NSW." Collection: State Library of NSW a1528136u

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Charles Rodius (1802–1860), *Sir Henry Parkes*. Sydney, 1854, charcoal on paper, 18.4 x 13 cm, signed lower left "Chas Rodius 13 Jan'y 1854", inscribed bottom of image "Printers Conspiracy Police Officer". Collection: State Library of NSW a1528136u

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## *The Buck Jumper,* an early sculpture by Harold Parker

Previously thought lost, this iconic Australian image – a large double-sided painted timber carving of a buck jumper made in 1893/4 by renowned Queensland sculptor Harold Parker – was made as an advertising sign for the Brisbane saddlery of R.E. Jarman. After it re-emerged in 2011 at a Sydney auction, Adam Free’s research has revealed an intriguing background story.

### ADAM FREE

Young Brisbane wood carver Harold Parker was probably commissioned to carve this timber signboard to adorn the new retail premises of R.E. Jarman’s Saddlery (**plate 1**), which opened on the corner of Adelaide and Edward Streets in Brisbane in December 1893.<sup>1</sup> A damaged photograph survives of the establishment showing the completed signboard in situ at the intersection<sup>2</sup> – it is suspended from a pole above the awning, while several males pose outside the shop, Jarman himself in the centre and possibly his son Harry on his right (**plate 2**).

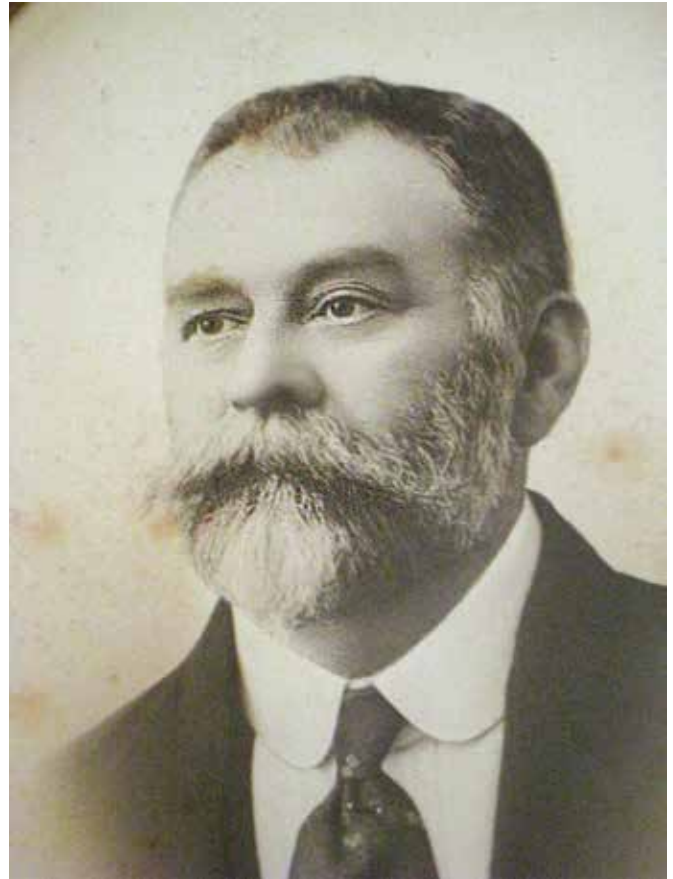
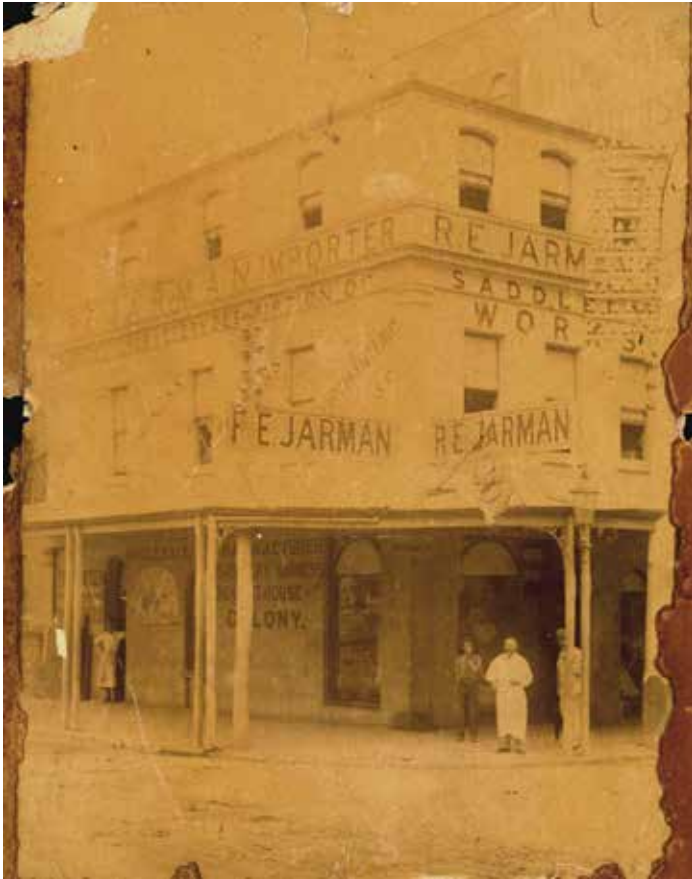
Jarman had relocated from Queen Street<sup>3</sup> to the more prominent corner site. Newspapers reported the appearance of the sign in early 1894:<sup>4</sup>

#### NOVEL ADVERTISING.

*It is of course well-known by most people that Mr. R.E. Jarman the premier saddler, & c., has removed his business to the corner of Adelaide and Edward-streets but it may not be known to many that Mr. Jarman has lately hung up outsidies his new premises a signboard representing his well-known trade mark, “The Buck Jumper” which is in itself worthy of inspection, being really a work of*

#### 1a-b.

Harold Parker (1873–1962), carver, Mr Collins, painter, *The Buck Jumper*, carved signboard for R.E. Jarman’s new saddlery shop, corner Adelaide & Edward Sts, Brisbane, 1894, painted wood bas relief, 109 (118.5 with hook) x 91.5 x 12cm (double sided), Signed on both sides lower centre. Provenance: R.E. Jarman’s Saddlery, corner Adelaide and Edward Sts, Brisbane; Michael Hunt’s Saddlery, Inverell; private collection, Newcastle (acquired from the Grafton area in the 1960s, according to the subsequent auctioneers); auction sale, Sydney, August 2011; private collection, Sydney. Photograph Jenni Carter



## 2.

Unknown photographer, *R E Jarman's Saddlery*, corner of Adelaide and Edward Streets, Brisbane, c 1894. The signboard is seen hanging above the verandah, directly above the youth on the left of the group. Queensland Museum. R E Jarman collection

## 3.

Unknown photographer, *Richard Edward Jarman* (c 1846–1907). Courtesy Jarman family

art and reflecting the highest credit on the carver, Mr. H. Parker, a lad of about 18 years of age. The painting is also of a high-class, and was done by Mr Collins, who is well known for his works of art. Altogether, this unique signboard should repay Mr Jarman for the outlay, and prove an attractive advertising medium. Enterprising businessmen like Mr. Jarman thoroughly understand the necessity of advertising in order to keep their names continually before the public.

### Harold Parker, the carver

Harold Parker was actually 21 years old when he carved the signboard, having returned to Brisbane from a year working in Sydney to carve floral designs on Australian timber furniture for the NSW forestry exhibit at the World Columbian Exposition, which was held in Chicago from 1 May to 20 October 1893.

Parker (1873–1962) was born in England and came to Brisbane with his family as a child.<sup>5</sup> He studied drawing, modelling and carving at Brisbane's Technical College, and began exhibiting at the Queensland National Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition in Brisbane in 1889, alongside another apprentice, L. J. Harvey, who decades later gained fame as both a potter and a woodcarver:

Among the exhibits in the sub-section for apprentices not over 21 years of age, three carved cedar panels made by Messrs. G. Ockelford [Ockelford],<sup>6</sup> L. Harvey, and Harold Parker respectively, are conspicuous, that of the first having been his own design.<sup>7</sup>

Parker continued to exhibit in the subsequent annual exhibitions, winning prizes for his work. For instance, in 1895 he “entered three carved panels, two of which were awarded a first order of merit”.<sup>8</sup> R. E. Jarman exhibited and won prizes for his saddles and other work in several of the same Brisbane annual agricultural shows as Parker, where it is likely that the saddler saw Harold Parker's carvings.

In 1896, Parker departed for London, where ‘The New Sculpture’ movement of the 1880s and 1890s had given fresh impetus to the art of sculpture in Britain. His sculpting career would flourish, first as a student at the City and Guilds South London Technical Art School and then as a successful exhibitor at the Royal Academy and the Paris *Salon*. At the pinnacle of his career, he received commissions for two colossal allegorical groups for Australia House, London, working alongside his contemporary expatriate artist Bertram McKennal. Parker returned to Australia in 1930, initially to Melbourne and from 1934 he lived in Brisbane. Judith



McKay curated a retrospective exhibition of his work at the Queensland Art Gallery in 1993.<sup>9</sup>

Mr Collins, the painter of the 1894 signboard “well known for his works of art”, has not been identified but may have been a fellow student at the Technical College.

### **R E Jarman, saddler, NSW 1868–1878**

Richard Edward Jarman (c 1846–1907) was born in Ramsgate, Kent, son of bootmaker Richard Henry Jarman (c 1820–1904)<sup>10</sup> and his wife Mary Rosa, and arrived in Sydney aged 11 with his father, mother and five siblings on 3 February 1858.<sup>11</sup> He became a prominent local businessman who well understood the importance of advertising and promotion (**plate 3**). Throughout his life, he stays ‘on message’ by meticulously advertising “R.E. Jarman, saddler” with little variation.

He records becoming an apprentice aged 16, c 1863, spending several more years in the country, including six years

working as a travelling saddler, “with a large spring-van fitted up so as to hold as large a stock as that of any shop outside the metropolis, and which was drawn by four horses.”<sup>12</sup>

He first comes to press notice in 1868 at “Mr. William Collier’s, saddler, &c., George-street South”<sup>13</sup> in Sydney; by August 1868 he is out on his own at 25 Park Street: “R. E. Jarman, late Myers, saddler seeking a boy”.<sup>14</sup> The next year, he was advertising as a maker and repairer of saddles and harness in Park Street, Sydney.<sup>15</sup> In February 1870, Richard, described as a saddler, married Elizabeth Ellis George (**plate 4**), the daughter of Newtown bootmaker John J. George, at her Redfern home.<sup>16</sup>

When their first child Ernest John (1871–1889) was born at Elizabeth’s father’s house, Richard was developing his skills and knowledge, and developing a reputation and customer base, while working as a saddler based in Goulburn.<sup>17</sup> By 1872, Jarman was an expert saddle maker, employed by Carey & Beuke in Cooma<sup>18</sup>

#### **4.**

Unknown photographer, *Elizabeth Ellis Jarman* (c 1848–1931). Courtesy Jarman family

#### **5.**

Unknown photographer, *R E Jarman’s saddlery*, Queen Street, Brisbane, 1878–1893. Queensland Museum. R E Jarman collection

Important Notice to the Manaro Public. CAREY & BEUKE BEG to acquaint their numerous Friends and the Public generally that they have secured the services of MR. R. E. JARMAN whom they can confidently recommend as a really FIRST-CLASS WORKMAN, whose several years’ experience in Manaro and many other Districts in this Colony, combined with the advantage arising from his having worked with the Best Workmen in the country, enables him to turn-out



## 6.

North Queensland P & A Association medal, Townsville, 1883, awarded to R.E. Jarman for "Collection Saddlery Imported 1<sup>st</sup> Prize". Metal: bronze, diam 44 mm. Engraver Robert Capner, Brisbane. Queensland Museum, R E Jarman collection N6618

ALL KINDS OF SADDLERY AND HARNESS in a manner NEVER before EQUALLED by ANY ONE in the District.

Cooma proved cold and bad for his health, so in 1876 he moved to Hay in the Riverina, where he went into partnership with Robert Cassin, and began to flaunt the prize medals he had already won for his work.<sup>19</sup>

Saddlery,— As may be seen by advertisement in this issue, Mr Cassin, saddler, has taken into partnership in his business at Hay, Wagga, and Narrandera, Mr R. E. Jarman, lately of Cooma, Manero [sic], where he occupied the leading position as saddler, but finding that district too cold he determined to try our milder Riverine climate, and has settled in Hay. Mr Jarman took three prizes at the Sydney Intercolonial Exhibition of 1875 and he is going to exhibit his models and

certificates in his window in a few days. ... Messrs Cassin and Jarman have secured a central business site opposite Tattersall's Hotel, on which they are about to erect handsome and commodious premises ...

### R E Jarman, saddler, Qld 1878–1899

The Cassin-Jarman partnership was dissolved by mutual consent on 23 May 1878, as Jarman fled a drought and eyed new opportunities.<sup>20</sup> He had made an exploratory trip to Brisbane, returning to Sydney on the *Balclutha* on 4 April. Elizabeth Jarman and three children arrived in Brisbane on the steamer *City of Brisbane* on 30 May.<sup>21</sup> Jarman had purchased T.A. Costin's existing Queen Street, Brisbane saddlery (**plate 5**) and was soon advertising for staff.<sup>22</sup>

In Brisbane, from June 1878 he described himself in business change notices as:

Prize Saddle Maker of New South Wales, Successor to the late T. A. Costin, Queen-Street, Brisbane, (Late of the Celebrated Firm of Cassin & Jarman, of Wagga Wagga, Hay, and Narrandra, [sic] and formerly of Cooma, Manaro [sic].<sup>23</sup>

Jarman soon ramped up the advertising of his prize medals (**plates 6–8**)<sup>24</sup>

AWARDED FIRST PRIZE MEDAL, SYDNEY EXHIBITION, 1875, SPECIAL PRIZE, BOMBALA, 1875, and FIRST PRIZE (Silver Medal) for BEST COLLECTION, SADDLERY and HARNESS, BRISBANE EXHIBITION, this year, 1878. R. E. JARMAN, QUEEN-STREET. BRISBANE, WHOLESALE and RETAIL IMPORTER and MANUFACTURER of Every Description of SADDLERY and HARNESS. The Largest, Cheapest, and Best Assorted Stock in Queensland Squatters, Storekeepers, and Trade supplied at Lowest Wholesale Prices. All retail orders received per post forwarded to any port of call. or railway station in the colony, CARRIAGE FREE.

Jarman was quick to exhibit in the 1878 Brisbane exhibition, winning many awards. But we should not be beguiled by his advertising hype. Many other saddlers – J Ruddle, J Hill, G Carter, H T Michael, N Lade and C Arnold – all won more than one award, and the judges noted "The collection of Saddlery and harness is first-class, and the jurors had great difficulty in awarding prizes."<sup>25</sup>

The business expanded and Jarman was clearly on his way as prominent burgher – cricket captain, Freemason, minor magistrate (he was a JP) with political ambitions, a vocal soloist and a founding



member of the Brisbane Liedertafel.<sup>26</sup>

He helped promote his own business by writing a testimonial for St. Jacobs Oil. Dozens of ads promoting him – “the largest saddlery and harness manufacturer in Queensland” – and St. Jacobs Oil appeared in 1884 and 1885.<sup>27</sup>

In 1890 Jarman, possibly expanding too quickly with a shop in Queen St, a workshop in Adelaide St, and branches at various times at Mackay, Roma, Bowen, Maryborough, Charters Towers, Townsville and Beaudesert, was in financial trouble. The firm’s total liabilities of £11,123 1s. 6d exceeded its total assets of £7,677 0s. 9d, but he avoided insolvency.<sup>28</sup> Advertisements thanked customers for:<sup>29</sup>

the numerous expressions of sympathy for me since my late financial troubles so unexpectedly brought about by the sudden pressure of a single creditor ... I have completed the repurchase of the whole of the BUSINESS ASSETS in my Estate.

Jarman exhibited annually at the Brisbane Exhibitions and gained press cover to promote his business, which by now was approaching 100 employees. The photographs of saddles taken in the studio of Thomas Mathewson would be useful for his salesmen (**plates 9–12**). In 1889, his miniature saddles, presumably

made as traveller’s samples (probably those donated to the Queensland Museum) gained a first order of merit:<sup>30</sup>

#### Jarman’s Triumph.

Some interesting model work has been done by Mr. R. E. Jarman, of Queen street, consisting of two miniature saddles. One is a model of a Wagga saddle, complete in every detail, and executed with a high standard of finish. It weighs only 9 ounces, and which the maker avers would be found to fit accurately any horse sufficiently small, and suit any rider diminutive enough to use it. The other is a side saddle, executed with the same finish and correctness, and which weighs only 13½ ounces. Every part of the saddles is made in exact proportion to the full-sized class, and there is not even a line of stitching in the large saddles, but is represented on a smaller scale in the models. The difficulty of finishing these saddles in a thoroughly workmanlike manner may be gauged from the fact that the horns of the side saddle, an article barely one inch long, is covered with the same number of pieces as a large one, all of which have to be sewn on the inside and then turned inside out. The closest inspection cannot, however, discover the slightest fault in the work, and the maker may well be proud of his achievement in having constructed two of the smallest

#### 7.

Towers Pastoral Agricultural and Mining Association, Charters Towers, bronze medal 1884, diam 48 mm, rev. engraved “1<sup>st</sup> Prize Awarded to RE. E. JARMAU [sic], for a collection of saddlery & harness June 1884.” Maker: Hardy Bros. London and Sydney. Queensland Museum, R E Jarman collection N6628

and most complete saddlery models in Australia. The models are to be mounted and will be exhibited at the approaching exhibition, where they should attract considerable attention and admiration.

It was clearly a priority for Jarman to defend his public claims in respect to his prizes for saddlery.<sup>31</sup> His advertising cover (**plate 17**) proclaims “Largest Prize Winner in Australia”, and he went to great lengths to defend his key advertising claims:<sup>32</sup>

BIGGEST Score on Record. What is likely to stand as the permanent record for all time has just been made by R. E. Jarman, Premier Saddler, who was awarded Seventeen First Prizes for Seventeen Exhibits, or a first prize for every exhibit besides two specials. This requires no comment further than to remark the impossibility of beating this score.



**8.**

Colonial and Indian Exhibition London 1886 medal. Metal: bronze, 52 mm. Mint: Heaton & Sons, Birmingham, England. Medallist: Leonard C. Wyon, Royal Mint, London, England Queensland Museum, R E Jarman collection N6653

In 1893 he sold the Townsville business to his former manager F J Walker.<sup>33</sup> Two years later, Mrs Jarman sold the family house at Toowong and its “superior household furniture”, listed in detail, was auctioned.<sup>34</sup>

**R E Jarman, saddler, WA 1896–1897**

From 29 March to 9 April he began a series of one-line teaser ads in the *West Australian* – “JARMAN”, “What is JARMAN”, “Who is JARMAN” etc. The *Daily News* soon carried a full-page advertisement for R E Jarman Premier Saddler of Brisbane and Hay Street, Perth, with medals, testimonial letters and his buck jumper registered trademark.<sup>35</sup> This was followed with editorial:<sup>36</sup>

Mr. R. E. Jarman, the well-known Saddler of Queensland, who has opened a branch business in Hay-street, is offering the public good material and workmanship combined.

A glance at his window, where the medals he has been awarded are exhibited, will bear out this statement. His specialty is saddles— and as they are handmade—like every other article on the premises—their durability is assured. Mr. Jarman has competed with the leading firms of the world at exhibitions, and he has always come out on top. His saddlery has undergone the severest of tests, and in every instance it has been proved to be up to representations. With such unequalled testimonials, Mr. Jarman’s success in this colony is practically assured.

**Tragedy**

The Jarman’s had already lost five of their six eldest children. The eldest survivor Harry was 21 and managing the Brisbane shop while his father was in Perth. In the late afternoon of 12 February 1896, Harry (Henry Archibald) Jarman (1875–1896) was drowned when the Brisbane River passenger ferry *Pearl* collided with the Government steamer *Lucinda* and capsized.<sup>37</sup>

The death of Harry Jarman, eldest surviving son of Mr. R. E. Jarman, will leave a blank in a large circle of estimable young fellows who have done much in the Cadet movement in the Defence Force and in amateur theatricals. He had a lifebuoy when

the steamer went over, but handed it over to his aunt – who was saved, saying to her, “Here, you take this and save yourself, I’ll be alright.” That was the last seen of him. Much sympathy will be felt with his father, Mr. R. E. Jarman, who is at present away in West Australia, and with Mrs. Jarman, who is a resident of Wynnum. Harry Jarman was about 21 years of age, and was in charge of his father’s saddlery business at the corner of Adelaide and Edward Streets.

Jarman, “in consequence of domestic affliction” sold all his stock in Perth,<sup>38</sup> and returned to Brisbane. In June 1896, another child, Florence, was born but died 18 days later.<sup>39</sup> Despite the personal setbacks, Jarman maintained an interest in public life, for instance serving as Chairman of the Wynnum Divisional Board.

In December 1897, “in consequence of the early expiration of his lease” Jarman began selling off “the whole of his first-class stock”.<sup>40</sup> He continued to trade but seems to have pulled back from the business and concentrated on his other activities. In September 1899, trustee T. M. Hall sought tenders for Jarman’s business assets valued at £1,308 9s 5d<sup>41</sup> then decided to put the stock to unreserved auction on 16 October 1899. This extensive inventory<sup>42</sup> (see box) omits the signboard, which Jarman must have retained.

## 9.-10.

Mathewson & Co, Queen St, Brisbane, photographers, *Saddles made by R E Jarman*, c 1879-1898. Queensland Museum, R E Jarman collection



JOHN W. TODD has received instructions to sell by auction, on the Premises, corner of Adelaide and Edward streets, on MONDAY, 10th October, at Ten o'clock sharp, The whole of the Stock In the Above Estate, comprising Rubber and Gold Yankee Pair-horse Furniture, Dozens of Waist, Watch, and other Pouches, Dozens of Knife Sheaths, Lined Breast-plates, Brass Bells, Condamine Bells, Kentucky Bells, Splendid Assortment of Malacca Cart Crops, Leggings of all shapes and sizes, English Heads and Reins, Leather Hatboxes, Thongs of all kinds, Belts, Stirrups, Hunting Crops; Cutting and Buggy Whips, Valises, Saddle Cloths, Girths, Rollers, Bags, Bits, Dog Collars, Harness Polish, Curry Combs, Brushware, Clippers, Softsoap, Sponges, Combs, Buggy Lamps, 1 Set Pair-horse Rubber and Gold-mounted Buggy Harness, 1 Brass-

mounted Black Buggy Harness, 1 Set Jap. Brown Harness, 1 Set Brass Cab Harness, 1 Set Plated Black Harness, 1 Set Pony Harness, with Breastplate, Canvas Water-bags, Spurs, Rugs, Ladles' and Gents' English Bridles, Writing Portfolios ; Saddles - 1 Demi - hogskin Jockey, 1 Extra-high Kneepad Buckjumper, 2 Full-roll Somerset, 1 Demi hogskin Short Shirt, 1 Kangaroo Demi training, 1 Plain Safe Bag-leather Side, 1 Quilted Safe Hogskin Demi, 2 Kangaroo Racers, 1 Doe-seat and pads, 2 Best All-over Hogskin Doe-seat, 2 Ditto, Self-colour Short Skirt, 2 Stained Ditto, 11 Half-cap Stock Saddles, and about 30 other Saddles, all of the Very Best Material and Workmanship, 10 Beautiful Side-saddles and Pilches, some of which obtained first prizes at recent exhibitions ; Buggy Collars, Hobbles, Buckles, Portmanteau Frames. Saddlers' Ironmongery, 1 Set Best

Close-plated Pair-horse Furniture, Locks, Watering Chains, 8 Gross Leading Backbands, Buckles, Staples, Rings, and Chains in profusion, 2 Pair-horse Concord Harness, 6 Cases Mange Cure, 180 Dozen Reels Assorted Thread for black-wax machine, 1 Black-wax Sewing Machine, 1 Ditto Ditto, 2 Singer Sewing Machines, 1 Hogskin Press, with special hand-engraved solid gun-metal Roller, 1 Flock Devil, Grindstone, Yankee Press, Shafting in connection with machinery, Magnificent Showcases in shop, in front window, &c; Centre Showcase, 2 Big Saddle Cases, 2 Smaller Ditto, Whip Case, 2 Work Benches, Cedar Counter, Office Counter, Truck, Horses' Heads in window, Office Desk, Fireproof Iron Safe, Books and Stationery, Lot unused Cheque-books (various banks), Workmen's Bench, Shelving, &c., &c, upstairs, Terms-Cash, No Reserve.



**11–12.**  
Mathewson & Co,  
Queen St,  
Brisbane,  
photographers,  
*Saddles made  
by R E Jarman,*  
c 1879–1898.  
Queensland  
Museum,  
R E Jarman  
collection

On 25 November, “Mrs. R. E. Jarman, on Account of her Leaving Brisbane” put up her “high-class modern household furniture and effects” for auction.<sup>43</sup> The mortgagee put their house “Ellisville” on the Esplanade at Wynnum to auction on 8 January 1900.<sup>44</sup>

From 1900, Jarman was living in Rockhampton and appearing as a magistrate from 1900 until 1903 in the Police Court. By 1903, the Jarmans were back in Fremantle WA, where he did work as a saddler and played bowls. In December 1903, he was a saddler with Stephenson and Thomas, at Saddler’s Corner, South-terrace, Fremantle, where buyers could “Notice Our Windows, See Our Medals, Inspect Our Models.”<sup>45</sup> Both Richard Edward and Elizabeth are listed on the electoral rolls in Bateman Street, Fremantle in 1906. The next year, and having been in poor health for six months, he went back to NSW to visit his sister in Inverell, where he died, apparently of cancer.<sup>46</sup>

Few of those who knew Brisbane back of five or six years ago, did not know R. E. Jarman, who for many years carried on here the business of saddler. Energetic and straight, a man of decided opinions on many matters of public concern, and fearless in the expression of them, he was highly respected. To those who knew him intimately he was ever regarded with esteem. Mr. Jarman was an active member of the Liedertafel Society, an ardent protectionist, and a good tradesman. He died at the residence of his sister, at Inverell, N.S.W. Mrs. Jarman is living in East Fremantle, W.A.

When Mrs Jarman died aged 82 in 1931, she had lost two more of her children – her son Ernest in France in 1916 and her daughter Florence in 1920. Only three of her 12 children – Syd, Reg and Bert – survived her. In 1980, her great grandson gave R E Jarman’s medals, trophies, photographs, documents and miniature saddles to the Queensland Museum, Brisbane.

### The Buck Jumper design

Jarman registered the Buck Jumper as a trade mark in 1889 (**plate 13**) as so prominently announced on the signboard itself.<sup>47</sup> Characteristic features of the buck jumper design are the horse’s front feet firmly on the ground, its head turned back between its front legs, the rider wearing a broad-brimmed hat, leaning back gripping reins in each hand and holding a whip or crop. Jarman also had the design reproduced as a chromolithographed advertising card (**plate 14**).

The black and white depiction of a buck jumper (**plate 15**) in a newspaper advertisement for Jarman’s Townsville branch is the same picture illustrated in the 1889 trademark application (**plate 13**), sometimes mirror-reversed. Jarman himself patented “a buck-jumping saddle, with two horns, which are reversible.”<sup>48</sup>

Parker’s signboard composition elaborates on the subject, situating the buck jumper in a farm landscape with stockyard, and hilly backdrop. While the

rider still appears in control, any trace of a whip is gone and the buck jump now appears to have taken a more violent course – the conspicuous detail of the dislodged hat in the foreground is an evocative note to strike, as illustrated by this 1894 account:

Then up and down went the horse again, my hat flew off, and I fancied my head was about to follow, for if this kind of thing continued much longer my neck must inevitably snap like a carrot. In less than no time I had been once around the big yard, and in every corner of it, and had been bumped against several posts, and was starting for another round, and there was no “go as you please” about it either; so I began to wish for something to happen – anything to break the awful sameness of this horrible up and down motion with a jerk that jinked your back when you rose, and a shock that made you bite your tongue when you landed.<sup>49</sup>

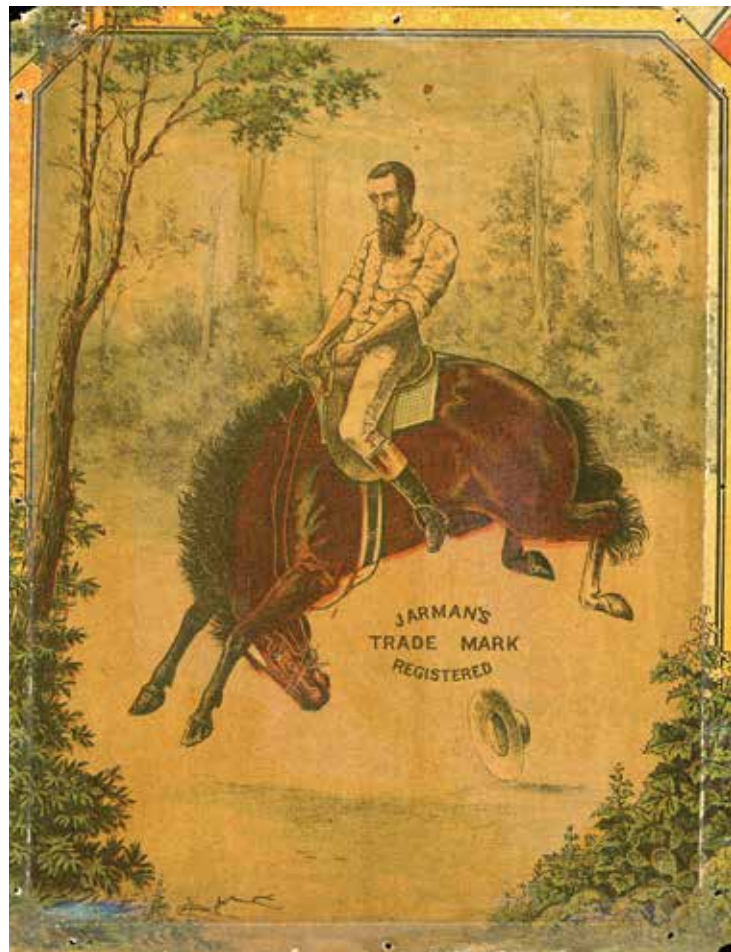
Buck jumping events were a regular feature of Brisbane agricultural shows in the early 1890s, the same shows where Harold Parker exhibited his sculpture, so Parker would have been able to see first-hand buck jumpers in action.<sup>50</sup> Seven years later, the leading British sculptor Thomas Brock would be so impressed with Parker’s modelling of horses he would engage him as an assistant.<sup>51</sup> In *The Buck Jumper*, we have perhaps Parker’s earliest equine subject rendered as part of an iconic Australian image.

All components of the composition are carved in wood, down to and including the distant rolling hills in low relief. The polychrome paint contributed by “Mr Collins” colours and provides shading depth but does not create any pictorial elements of its own.

Along with the re-imagined trademark came other forms of promotion for the new premises. An advertising cover features many elements of Parker’s composition, e.g. the leather belt cartouche, the dislodged hat, again in a landscape although minus the fence

### 13.

Advertising card,  
Jarman’s Trade  
Mark Registered.  
Queensland  
Museum, R E  
Jarman collection



yard and distant hills.<sup>52</sup> Parker’s name, so prominently featured on the signboard, does not appear on the lithographic postal advertising cover, which now can be dated 1894-1897.

A physical examination of the carving suggests that at some point the signboard gained a new life. Close scrutiny reveals that the original design was emblazoned “R.E. JARMAN SADDLERY” in carved lettering in the leather belt cartouche. At some point the lettering was altered for a new establishment, with “R.E. JARMAN” carefully chiselled off and replaced with thick leather lettering affixed with tacks “M. HUNT” with “& Co” added after the SADDLERY (lettering now mostly lost). There is evidence of repainting of the leather belt at this point (there are craquelure indications of previous lettering on one of the sides, where the new paint has dried at a different rate over the fresh timber exposed by chiselling).

### Michael Hunt’s Saddlery, Inverell

Michael “Mick” Hunt had a saddlery in Inverell, NSW which was certainly in operation by January 1899, when the *Inverell Times* began publication.<sup>53</sup> From 1899 on, his newspaper advertisements are illustrated with the buck jumper motif (plate 17). “An artistic celebrity on the local tin fields”, Frederick Ravenswood (c 1840–1918) of Howell, 10 km south of Inverell, painted an advertising card with a buck jumping scene for Hunt in 1905:

The water color painting of a buckjumping scene painted as an advt. card for Mr. M. Hunt, saddler, Inverell, and executed by Mr. F. C. Ravenswood of this village [Howell] ... has caused some talk hereabouts and a life size reproduction would no doubt cause Inverellites to adopt this enterprising mode of advertising, much adopted now in the big metrops.<sup>54</sup>

ESTABLISHED 1879.

# R. E. JARMAN,


WHOLESALE AND RETAIL MANUFACTURER  
AND IMPORTER OF

## All Kinds of Saddlery,

HEAD ESTABLISHMENT—QUEEN-STREET, BRISBANE,  
TOWNSVILLE BRANCH NEAR VICTORIA BRIDGE,  
(Opposite Queensland Hotel.)

THE LARGEST, BEST, AND CHEAPEST STOCK IN  
NORTH QUEENSLAND TO SELECT FROM.

R. E. J. will in future convey  
Free of Cost, all Cattle Orders  
of £5 and over to any Port  
in North Queensland or the  
Railway Station on the  
Northern Zone.



SADDLES and BRIDLES complete from 60s., 5 per cent less on  
Lines of a Half Dozen.

QUOTATIONS FREE BY POST ON APPLICATION.

**R. E. JARMAN, MARKET RESERVE.**  
F. J. WALKER, Local Manager.



**M. HUNT,**  
Saddle. Harness and  
Collar Maker,  
170THO-STREET. INVERELL

14.

Advertisement  
for R E Jarman's  
Townsville branch with  
the buck jumper motif,  
from *North Queensland  
Register* 28 December  
1892 p 39

15.

Buck jumper motif in  
advertisement for Michael  
Hunt's Saddlery, Inverell,  
from *Inverell Times*  
7 January 1899 p 2

A month later, Ravenswood exhibited a companion painting at Mick Hunt's:<sup>55</sup>

Mr. F. C. Ravenswood, of Howell, who is an artist of no mean order, has another picture on view in Mr. M. Hunt's window, Otho-street, viz., a companion one to the "Buck jumper." It is well executed. Mr. Ravenswood is an industrious artist, and his "brush work" invariably commands notice and admiration.

Hunt's shop and residence in Otho Street were part of the row of 19 buildings burnt to the ground in the Inverell fire of 22 April 1902,<sup>56</sup> so if he had the sign at that point, it would have been burned. Hunt also lost stock valued at £800, uninsured.<sup>57</sup> A second fire in November that year – first detected by Jarman's brother-in-law – was started by one of Hunt's competitors, saddler Patrick Davis, who got five years for arson.

Jarman's father Richard had worked as a bootmaker in Queanbeyan, Yass and later Inverell, where Richard's sister Emma Coggan still lived. Hunt had started using the buck jumper motif in 1899 or earlier, of which Jarman must have been aware. It seems likely that the signboard was sold or given to Hunt's Saddlery either during this

period or after R.E. Jarman's death on 24 August 1907, aged 61, at his sister's home in Inverell.<sup>58</sup> The provenance associated with the signboard has it located in Grafton in the 1960s, a short distance from Inverell.

Hunt sold his stock in 1917 and 1920 when he left Inverell for Sydney, but the sign is not listed in the sales. James and Emma Coggan also left for Sydney, where both died in 1946; one son, Albert, was still in Inverell.

One can understand the financial value Jarman would place on the artistic emblematic rendering of his trademark, we can only speculate as to what sentimental attachment might have remained to this reminder of happier times and his deceased son Harry (one might even suggest that the buck jumper is a possible likeness of Harry Jarman). On several previous occasions Jarman had gone into joint venture with saddlery firms around the country, so it may be that in the final stages of his life he took an interest in the local Hunt saddlery operation.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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#### NOTES

- Jarman advertises his "Removal Sale" from 16 November till 8 December *Telegraph* 16 Nov 1893 p 6; 8 Dec p 6; his Queen Street premises is advertised for lease from 22 Nov *Brisbane Courier* 22 Nov p 2; he is in "fresh quarters" by 22 December *Telegraph* 22 Dec 1893 p 5. The electoral roll lists him as aged 48 and living at Ebor, High St, Toowong *Telegraph* 9 Jan 1894 p 8.
- The Adelaide and Edward Street corner premises, seen here at the immediate left in this 1893 photograph, were newly vacated in the aftermath of the 1893 Brisbane Flood: <http://maps.bonzle.com/c/a?a=col&sz=4&fn=xo9c1efo&c=1&col=show&or=3&pg=0&yr=1893>



TRADE MARK.-REGISTERED.



3. *Brisbane Courier* 20 Dec 1893 p 2.
4. *Age* (Brisbane) 14 Apr 1894 p 6.
5. Judith McKay, "Parker, Harold (1873–1962)", *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/parker-harold-7955/text13849>, accessed 15 Dec 2019.
6. George Albert Ockelford (son of carver Albert Ockelford and brother of carver William Ockelford) exhibited at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893 and is represented in MAAS, Sydney, died aged 23 in 1895; *Telegraph* 17 Jun 1895 p 4.
7. *Telegraph* 21 Aug 1889 p 2.
8. *Brisbane Courier* 15 Aug 1895 p 7.
9. Judith McKay, *Harold Parker, Sculptor* Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane 1993.
10. "Death of Mr. Richard Jarman. Mrs. James Coggan has been advised by cable of the death of her father Mr. Richard Jarman, which sad event occurred at Grimsby, Lincolnshire (England), on Monday last. Deceased was well-known to the older residents of Inverell, having started the first Boot Palace here in premises near where Mr. R. H. McNeill's shop now stands, in the year 1881. He went to England 10 years ago. He had reached the advanced age of 84 years, but looked much younger. No word was received of his illness and the sudden news of his death was a shock to Mrs. Coggan and other relatives in Australia." *Inverell Times* 29 Oct 1904 p 2.
11. *SMH* 4 Feb 1858 p 6.
12. F. Morrison, *Aldine History of Queensland*, Brisbane 1888.
13. *SMH* 4 Jan 1868 p 10.
14. *SMH* 25 Aug 1868 p 8. An ad the day before giving his address as 25 York St looks like a mistake, rectified by this ad the next day.
15. R. E. JARMAN, SADDLER, HARNESS MAKER, &c., No. 25, Adjoining the old house in PARK-STREET, Sydney. Store-keepers Supplied. Repairs of every description. *Protestant Standard* (Sydney) 9 Oct 1869 p 15.
16. BDM NSW 1329/1870; *Empire* 16 Feb 1870 p 1.
17. *Empire* 24 Apr 1871 p 1.
18. *Manaro Mercury* 21 Feb 1872 p 1.
19. *Riverine Grazier* 23 Aug 1876 p 2.
20. *Wagga Wagga Advertiser* 1 Jun 1878 p 4.
21. *Telegraph* (Brisbane) 31 May 1878 p 2.
22. *Brisbane Courier* 3 Jun 1878 p 1.
23. *Queenslander* 22 Jun 1878 p 358 and later.
24. *ATCJ* 28 Dec 1878 p 43.
25. *Brisbane Courier* 28 Aug 1878 p 5.
26. *Queenslander* 10 Aug 1878 p 578 lists prizes won since 1875; Jarman becomes an Officer of the Freemasons, Albert Street Brisbane and shows his musical side *Brisbane Courier* 26 Jun 1883; Jarman a keen cricketer and 'C.C.' (cricket captain) (several mentions of good batting); mentions of 'Jarman's club' *Brisbane Courier* 1 Dec 1883 p 7; Jarman soloist in Monday Popular Concerts, Breakfast Creek Pavilion *Brisbane Courier* 27 Mar 1891 p 2; Jarman a founding member of The Brisbane Liedertafel *Brisbane Courier* 27 Aug 1887 p 6.
27. *Eg Brisbane Courier* 13 May 1884 p 3.
28. *Telegraph* 31 Oct 1890 p 2.
29. *Telegraph* 19 Jan 1891 p 6.
30. *Telegraph* 25 Jul 1889 p 5; 21 Aug 1889 p 8.
31. 1884 letter by R E Jarman complaining about mis-reporting of prizes, *Brisbane Courier* 25 Aug 1884, p 6. 'In 1895 and likely earlier, R.E. Jarman ran a small advertisement in the *Brisbane Courier*, as follows: "Biggest Score on Record - What is likely to stand as the permanent record for all time has just been made by R.E. Jarman, Premier Saddler, who was awarded Seventeen First Prizes for Seventeen Exhibits, or a first prize for every exhibit besides two specials. This requires no comment further than to remark the impossibility of beating this score." So this may have been the reason for the "Largest Prize Winner in Australia" on the cover's reverse.' <http://www.auspostalhistory.com/articles/1844.shtml>
32. *Brisbane Courier* 12 Sep 1895 p 8.
33. *NQ Register* 13 Dec 1893 p 41.
34. *Telegraph* 25 May 1895 p 8.
35. *Daily News* 18 April 1896 p 7.
36. *Daily News* 21 Apr 1896 p 2; *West Australian* 2 May 1896 p 2.
37. Funeral notice, *Brisbane Courier* 17 Feb 1896 p 1; inquest, *Brisbane Courier* 21 Feb 1896 p 6; *Queenslander* 22 Feb 1896 p 342. Harry Jarman's theatrical exploits are reviewed in *Brisbane Courier* 18 Mar 1896 p 4.
16. Jarman's "buck jumper" trade mark application of 1889
17. Jarman's advertising cover features many elements of Parker's composition, c 1894-1897. Private collection USA
38. *West Australian* 10 Jun 1896 p 6 & 11 May 97 p 8.
39. Daughter Violet was born on 29 June but died at Wynnum on 16 July.
40. *Brisbane Courier* 8 Dec 1897 p 6.
41. *Brisbane Courier* 21 Sep 1899 p 1.
42. *Brisbane Courier* 13 Oct 1899 p 8.
43. *Brisbane Courier* 17 Nov 1899 p 8.
44. *Brisbane Courier* 25 Dec 1899 p 8.
45. *Fremantle Mail* 5 Dec 1903 p 2.
46. *Qld Figaro* 12 Sep 1907 p 5.
47. Queensland Government Gazette, vol XLVII, no. 86 10 Aug 1889 p 1278. The trademark was registered on 8 August 1889 and includes the black and white picture illustrated.
48. *The Week* 16 Aug 1895 p 7.
49. *Queenslander* 14 Jul 1894 p 75.
50. *Queenslander* 27 Jun 1896 p 1241.
51. Report of the City and Guilds South London Technical Art School, session 1901-02, p.4 in MS 21, 925/1 Guildhall Library, London, cited in Judith McKay, Parker, Harold, 1873-1962 and Queensland Art Gallery *Harold Parker : sculptor*. Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, 1993 p 45.
52. This advertising cover is reproduced at <http://www.auspostalhistory.com/articles/1844.shtml>. Private collection, USA. The crossing out of the Edward St location would indicate postal use after 1897.
53. *Inverell Times* 7 Jan 1899 p 4.
54. *Inverell Times* 16 Mar 1905 p 4.
55. *Inverell Times* 15 Apr 1905 p 4.
56. *Inverell Times* 22 Apr 1902 p 2.
57. *Australian Star* 25 Apr 1902 p 6.
58. *Inverell Times* 27 Aug 1907 p 4. *Australiana* November 2019 p 45.



## From Jennifer Sanders Chair, The Australiana Fund

I am delighted to let you and fellow members of the Australiana Society and The Australiana Fund know that contrary to the view expressed in your November 2019 issue, The Australiana Fund's collection is not "virtually invisible to the outside world"<sup>1</sup> but is increasingly visible to the Australian public and indeed internationally since the publication of our book *Collecting for the Nation*.

As many readers will know, the purpose of The Fund, as advocated initially by Mrs Tamie Fraser, is to collect artworks which are Australian by origin or which are associated with Australia, for use and display in the nation's Official Residences of the Governor-General and the Prime Minister.

I would especially like to acknowledge the contribution of Kevin Fahy AM to the establishment of both our organisations. Kevin was a valued advisor and member of The Fund's inaugural Council as well as the first Committee of the Australiana Society.

The Collection's presence in the reception rooms and public spaces means that objects are viewed by a wide range of visitors, from foreign heads of state to Australian dignitaries, the public visiting on open days, and school groups from across Australia. During Sir Peter Cosgrove's term of office (2014 – 2019), more than a quarter of a million people visited the two vice-regal residences, Government House, Canberra and Admiralty House, Sydney.

On open days, it is immensely gratifying to see the public's enjoyment of and interest in the Houses, their settings and interiors and the artworks on display. The publication of The Fund's book means that the stories of the Houses and The Fund's Collection are there for all to read.

To mark the book's launch in Canberra in 2017 we presented our first Narratives of Nations symposium, a biannual event with the second held in Sydney in 2019, attended by 120 delegates. These symposia, with overseas as well as Australian

### 1.

Public Open Day at Government House, Canberra ©Photographer Wendy McDougall

speakers, are open to the public and the papers explore The Fund's Collection in an international context. The Fund's next symposium will be in Canberra in 2021 and will focus on Ruth Lane Poole, designer of interiors and furniture for Government House and The Lodge, complementing an exhibition curated by Margaret Betteridge on Lane Poole at the Canberra Museum and Art Gallery, partners with The Fund for these two events.

Later this year, The Fund's Collection records will be linked to Trove and as we are steadily adding their research, the scholarship of the book's authors will be accessible on The Fund's upgraded website [www.theaustralianfund.org.au](http://www.theaustralianfund.org.au).

In addition, we lend objects to cultural institutions ranging from the National Portrait Gallery, Vaucluse House, Tamworth Regional Art Gallery to the Museum of Australian Democracy and Parliament House, Canberra. It was very pleasing to see one of The Fund's pair of magnificent Gothic revival bookcases made by Joseph Sly, c1845,

on display in the National Gallery of Victoria's landmark 2018 exhibition, *Colony: Australia 1770-1861*.

To mark our 1978 founding, in 2018 we launched a 40th Anniversary Acquisition Fund and in December purchased a gold medal struck in 1901 to commemorate the opening of Australia's Federal Parliament. With provenance to Princess Victoria Alexandra (1868–1935), a granddaughter of Queen Victoria, it is a significant addition to our holdings of objects linked to Federation.

The Australiana Fund, its members and supporters are very proud of their unique contribution to the wider appreciation of Australia's distinctive cultural heritage as represented in the artworks from its Collection on display in the Official Residences.

We look forward to continuing our mutually beneficial relationship with the Australiana Society, one of the many organisations with whom we collaborate to foster greater understanding and knowledge of Australiana in the context of our history and contemporary creativity. We are indebted to our generous donors and I invite you to

contribute to the work of The Fund by donating funds to support our Collection. And of course, we are always keen to welcome new members and supporters

For more information contact Sonya Abbey, Fine Art Advisor at [austfund@bigpond.net.au](mailto:austfund@bigpond.net.au).

#### NOTE

1. *Australiana* November 2019 p 45.

#### 2.

*Australia, Gold Medal commemorating the Opening of the First Federal Parliament on 9 May 1901*, presented to H.R.H. Princess Victoria Alexandra by the Minister of Public Instruction (Hon W. Gurr M.P.), 8.3 cm, weight 25.6 g.  
© 2019 Christie's Images Limited



### Dr Jim Bertouch, President of the Australiana Society, replies

Thank you for your letter, which clearly details all of the ways in which the Fund's collection of Australiana can be seen, making it unfair to describe the collection as "virtually invisible." The Fund is to be congratulated particularly on producing the publication *Collecting for the Nation* which illustrates and describes in detail the objects included in the collection.

The number of people who have taken the opportunity on open days

to visit Yarralumla in Canberra and Admiralty House in Sydney is very impressive, and a tribute to the members of the Fund who have helped to coordinate the events.

In the future it is to be hoped that there will be more open days at the other official residences, particularly Kirribilli House and the Lodge, to allow more of the collection to be seen 'in the flesh'.

As you have pointed out, the Fund and the Society have the shared ideal of advancing the knowledge, understanding and appreciation of Australian decorative arts. This dialogue does create the opportunity

to consider the idea outlined in my 2019 annual report, of setting up a permanent public collection of Australiana. Ideally this would be in a central location e.g. Canberra and would be accessible to every Australian and overseas visitor. As I mentioned, a perfect example is the Americana collection in the Diplomatic Reception Rooms in Washington, where there are regular, and free, daily tours to see the objects, quite apart from the use of the rooms for carrying out the business of diplomacy.

The committee of the Australiana Society would welcome further discussion with the Fund in this regard.



## Victorian Branch Christmas event

ROBERT STEVENS

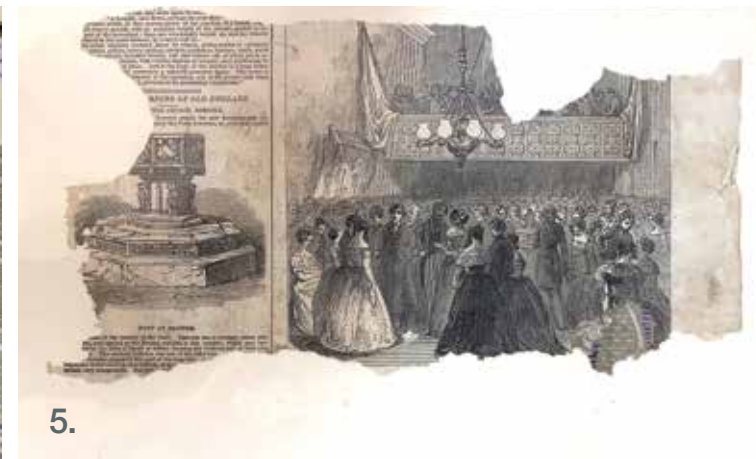
Forty-five members and friends of the Victorian Branch of the Australiana Society attended a highly successful “Show & Tell” at Deutscher and Hackett’s Auction Rooms in South Yarra on 8 December. For his hospitality and generosity, we thank Chris Deutscher for treating attendees to welcoming drinks and afternoon tea (plates 1-3).

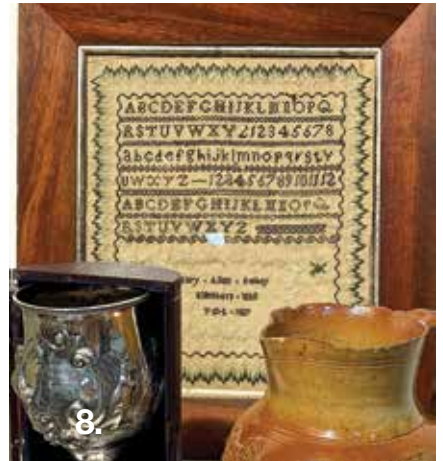
Retired architect Dr Phyllis Murphy, who specialises in the preservation of historical buildings and became particularly well known for her work with wallpaper design and restoration,

brought several historical wallpaper samples for discussion. Of special interest were those from the c 1843 cottage of Port Fairy Harbour Master Captain Mills. A beautiful border and filling was found over a fragment of the *Illustrated London News* of 19 July 1845 which assisted with dating (plates 4 & 5); this was one of over 50 different wallpapers of various periods found in the house. Phyllis explained that wallpapers sometimes had maker’s marks, presenting a sample which bore the “Diamond Mark” of Lightbown, Aspinall & Co. (plate 6). In addition, she displayed a sample of Morrison’s Australian hand-made wallpaper from the 1930s.

Well known collector Bill Cullen showed an early child’s sampler, signed Mary Allen Reibey (b 1818), dated VDL 1827, and most likely wrought by the granddaughter of the famous Sydney businesswoman Mary Reibey (1777–1855) who had secured land grants in Van Diemen’s Land and whose portrait is on the \$20 note (plates 7–8).

Theo Retsinas discussed a small jarrah and sheoak c 1900 Arts & Crafts box made by the Western Australian woodcarver William Howitt (plate 9), and a highly figured blackwood fireside box made c 1920 by C.F. Rojo of Swanston Street, Melbourne, inscribed “Keep the Home Fires Burning”, lyrics





from the popular WWI song “Till the Boys Come Home” (**plate 10**).

We were privileged to view David Sampietro’s magnificent pale blackwood c 1854 hall chair, attributed to Geo. Thwaites & Son, Melbourne. David presented a comparison with a similar chair in the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria and described how the design was a combination of chair and table features from Peter Thomson’s book *The Cabinet Maker’s Assistant*, published in 1851/1853 by Blackie & Son, Glasgow (**plate 11**).

Diana Morgan brought a wonderful array of historical novelty items (**plate 12**). A 1795 English creamware jug, a

vestigial map of the east coast of Australia with “Diemensland” written on the bottom; a Condamine Bullfrog cow bell, audible from 20 miles and useful before paddocks were fenced (**plate 13**); a 15 cm solidified bubble of copper/silver/gold from Mount Morgan; two Bendigo gin bottles, one modelled on Sir Edmund Barton the other Sir Henry Parkes; and a moulded glass dish commemorating the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge in 1932.

Sarah Guest provided three wooden boxes (**plate 14-16**). The first, probably from cowrie and beautifully inlaid with blackwood, with inlaid hex sign decorations, perhaps symbolic of the



# Society News



14.



15.



16.



17.



18.



19.

“warding off of evil spirits”; the second, a Folk Art box, carved with parrots; the third, a c 1850 sarcophagus-shaped tea caddy, veneered in parquetry of bird’s eye Huon pine, blackwood and musk, the escutcheon and knobs possibly whalebone from the Tasmanian-based whaling industry.

Susan Webster, current State President of both U3A and of The Needlework Tool Collectors Society of Australia, provided great variety by presenting an early Huon pine skein winder and swift, and a blackwood reel stand (**plates 17**).

The next highlight was Greg Hill’s ale jug, of distinctly Melbourne 1860s/70s style – salt-glazed stoneware with sprigged decoration of applied moulded shapes, an Australian version of a Derbyshire/Lambeth “hunting jug” (**plate 18**). The maker, William Gordon, a Scottish potter who had worked at Doulton’s Lambeth Pottery is south London, arrived in Melbourne in 1868, working first at Cornwell’s Brunswick Pottery, then in his own Lambeth Pottery, and finally at Dahlke’s Filter & Pottery Works. Gordon’s characteristic sprigged decoration, popular at Doulton’s Lambeth, is found on the wares of all three potteries.

Wendy McRae brought a handsome sterling silver snuff box made in Birmingham in 1839 by the eminent box maker Nathaniel Mills and

inscribed, “Presented to John Edge Manning Esq. as a token of sincere regard by John Hubert Plunkett, Attorney General of NSW, Sydney, March 1841”. Manning was a Registrar of the Supreme Court of NSW (**plate 19**), and Plunkett a distinguished Irish Catholic barrister noted for extending legal rights to emancipists and Aborigines, and for disestablishing the Church of England. In 1838, Plunkett successfully prosecuted seven of the white murderers who slaughtered at least 28 men, women and children in the Myall Creek massacre.

Finally, Relton Leaver spoke about his recently published book on his grandmother, the famous potter, Una Deerbon, as a very convivial and informative day drew to a close.

The Victorian Branch is manning an Australiana Society promotional and membership stall at the AAADA Antiques and Art Fair at the Malvern Town Hall Thursday 30 April to Sunday 3 May 2020. We will also be displaying Australiana items. If you can assist with manning please contact Robert Stevens: robertstevens9@gmail.com or 0412 397546

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Photos courtesy of Felicity Stevens.



## Queensland Branch Christmas Party

DAVID BEDFORD

A convivial group of 33 people enjoyed the Queensland Branch's Christmas Party, held in conjunction with the Queensland Branch of the Australian Garden History Society on 30 November 2019 at the home of David Bedford and Jennifer Stuerzl in one of Brisbane's leafy south western suburbs.

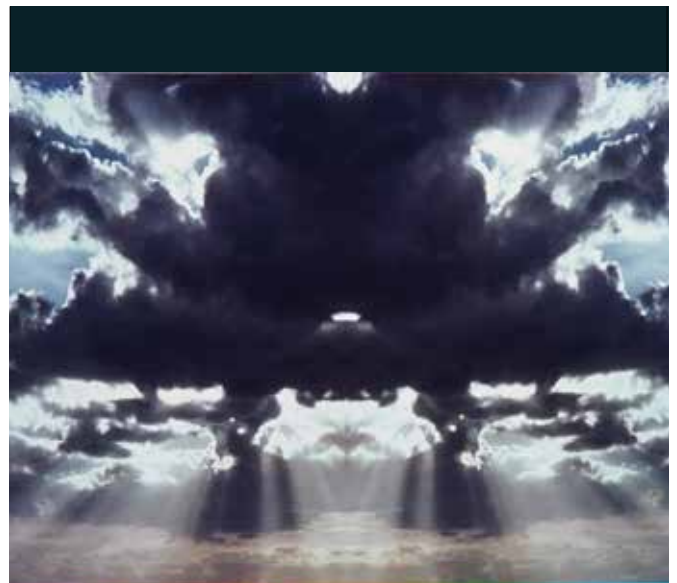
The house is on 2,000 m<sup>2</sup> (half an acre) and sits on the levee bank above the Brisbane River. The house is above flood level but provides easy access to the river front. It is surrounded by large old trees, lush subtropical gardens and has a good collection of mature, flowering *Xanthorrhoea* plants (grasstrees) that botanist David grew from seed.

The weather was very kind on the day, as, although it was quite warm, the sea breeze wafting up the Brisbane River kept us all cool and comfortable. Jennifer welcomed the members of both societies to her home and mentioned how pleased we were to have such a knowledgeable, loyal and dedicated local Australiana membership in attendance. David spoke about the history of their garden, with large trees remaining from the original 1880s house on the site (which had been removed by a previous owner in 1967); the layers added in the 1970s by the previous owners (who were keen gardeners), and the garden design concepts that he and Jennifer had followed in the changes that they had made after their purchase 20 years ago.

Then David spoke about the Australiana Society and explained that he and Jennifer had been collecting for over 40 years. The diverse furniture collection, ranging from early 1800s through to 1930s furniture, and from Tasmania to Queensland, complemented by other Australiana items, provides a good introduction to collecting Australiana.

David showed guests the *Australiana* magazine containing the article that they had written on their personal views and adventures on collecting during the year. Guests showed a keen interest in the garden and were very interested in their Australiana collection, which also reflects David's botanical interests and knowledge. Both David and Jennifer answered many questions.

The catered event was a resounding success with guests staying on beyond the nominal finishing time. As well as providing a good end to the year it introduced many new people to the concept of collecting Australiana.



## ROSEMARY LAING

AUSTRALIAN, BORN 1959

Appearance, 1993 (detail)

Photograph

55.5 x 100 cm

Signed, dated and edition 4/5 verso

PETER WALKER FINE ART  
101 WALKERVILLE TERRACE  
WALKERVILLE, SA 5081

08 8344 4607  
INFO@PETERWALKER.COM.AU  
PETERWALKER.COM.AU

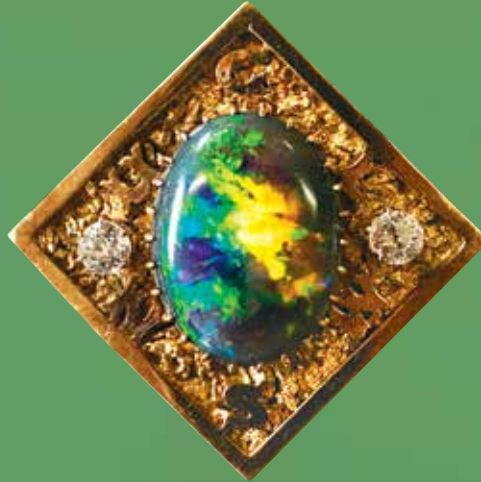




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www.jbhawkinsantiques.com



## THE RAWSON BRACELET

*The Freemasons of N.S.W. presented to Miss Rawson, on the eve of her departure, a bangle made entirely of Australian gold and precious stones. The centre piece is a fine black opal, surrounded by miniature gold nuggets, upon which are the letters U.G.L., N.S.W., showing up in brightly burnished gold, beautifully contrasting with the natural colour of the nuggets. Set amongst the nuggets are Australian diamonds. Surrounding the centrepiece just described are yellow, partly-coloured, blue, and green sapphires, and set at intervals are fire opals, tourmalines, zircons, garnets, and peridots making one succession of our beautiful Australian gems, nicely set in a design unique and original. Made by Percy Marks, Vice-Regal Jeweller and Lapidary, 41 Market Street, Sydney.*

*The bracelet will be on show as 41 Market Street on Monday and Tuesday next.*

*Sunday Sun 21 March 1909 p 3.*

Miss Alice Rawson was the daughter of NSW Governor Admiral Sir Harry Rawson.

On Vice Regal occasions she deputised for her mother, Lady Rawson, who had died on the voyage out from England. This is arguably the finest surviving Australian Federation jewel, indicating a new-found pride in Australian stones and their settings.

