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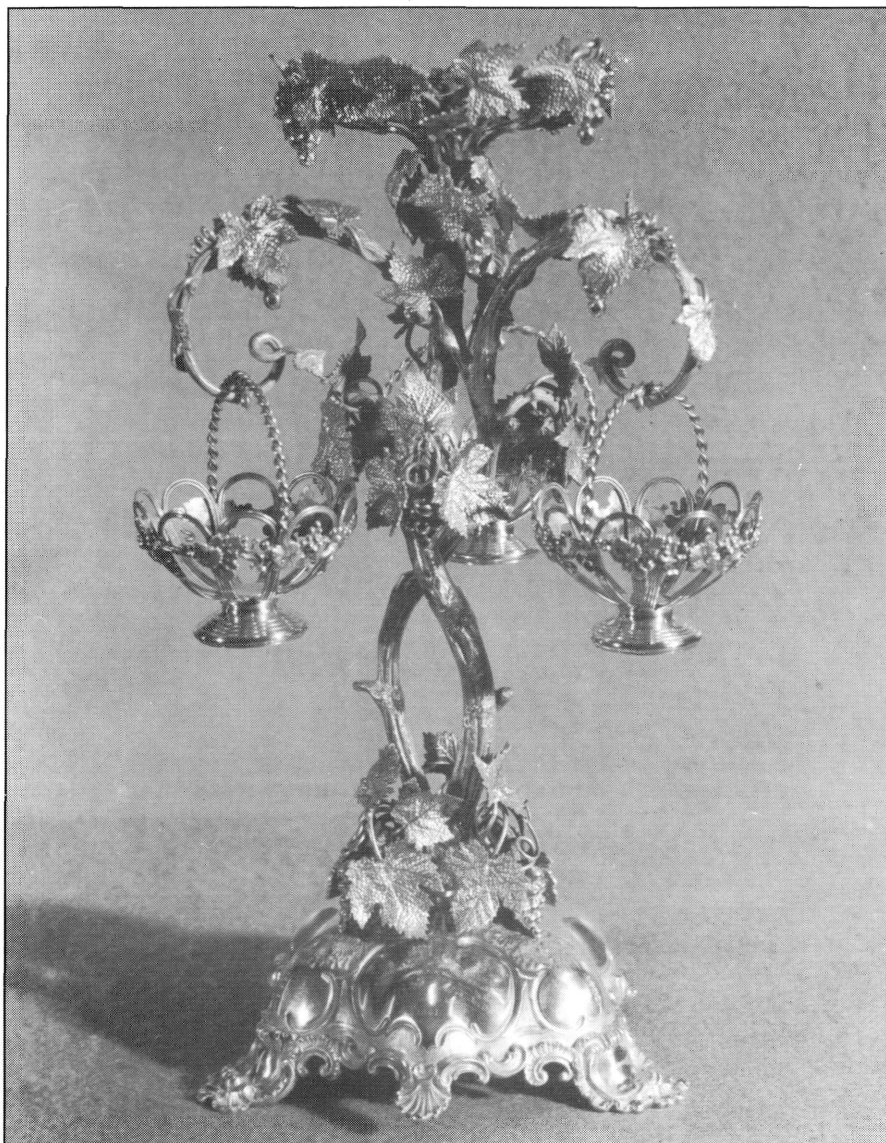
# AUSTRALIANA

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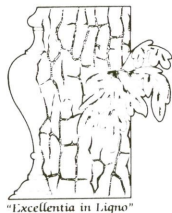


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# THE AUSTRALIANA SOCIETY

PO BOX 322, ROSEVILLE 2069



## SOCIETY PROGRAMME

### MEETINGS

1991

THURSDAY,  
6 JUNE

#### GAVIN FRY

*An introduction to the Australian National Maritime Museum.*

*Gavin Fry is the Deputy Director of the Australian National Maritime Museum which will open to the public towards the end of the year. This will be a unique opportunity for members to meet Mr Fry and hear first hand of Australia's newest and most exciting museum.*

THURSDAY,  
1 AUGUST

#### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

*together with a talk by Dr David Bedford, Aspects of Australian Colonial Furniture and its Timbers.*

THURSDAY,  
3 OCTOBER

#### ANNE SCHOFIELD

*Australian Jewellery*

*Anne Schofield and Kevin Fahy are the authors of the recently published 'Australian Jewellery of the 19th and Early 20th Century'.*

THURSDAY,  
5 DECEMBER

#### CHRISTMAS PARTY

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### HOUSE INSPECTIONS

DATE TO BE  
ANNOUNCED

*Visit to two Sydney private house collections.*

Society meetings are held at  
7.30pm at the Glover Cottage Hall, 124 Kent Street, Sydney.  
Convenient street parking.



# Nineteenth Century Light

Michael Bogle

"I can't stand a naked light bulb any more than I can a rude remark or a vulgar action." Blanche DuBois in Tennessee Williams' play *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

Blanche is complaining about the harsh, unfiltered glare of electric light but the nature of that light troubles her. Not its source. Most historic reviews of domestic illumination don't look at Blanche's problem, they simply attempt to identify lighting types. That is, *what* it is rather than *how* it is. This analysis seeks to explore some of the essential character of pre-electric light by looking at contemporary descriptions from 19th and 20th century literature.

The most universal light source of the 18th and 19th century, the candle, scarcely needs an introduction to the 20th century Australian home. They are still favoured for romantic dinners and electrical storms. Modern candles are cast from paraffin (a petroleum-based wax) while beeswax candles are uncommon.

Tallow candles (made from animal fats) are largely extinct. In the 19th century, there were considerable social and economic distinctions between tallow and beeswax candles. The sputter and smell of burning tallow was quite a contrast to the silent fragrance of a graceful beeswax taper. Tallow was for the cottage, beeswax was for the manor.

In Louisa Atkinson's mid-19th century novel *Gertrude*, she describes an Australian country wedding, followed by a candle-lit woolshed dance: "Scarlet and yellow handkerchiefs fluttered on poles for flags and old shawls were spread out as streamers. When evening came, tallow candles, stuck in the necks of bottles illuminated the scene..."<sup>1</sup> But, as Charles

Dickens writes, tallow candles spread more than illumination. "A smell as of unwholesome sheep, blending with the smell of must and dust, is preferable to the nightly (and often daily) consumption of mutton fat in candles..."<sup>2</sup> But no greater contrast could be made between tallow and beeswax than the parvenu Mrs Elton's boast in Jane Austen's novel *Emma* of 1816. "Every body was anxious to be in Mrs Bragg's entourage ... She moves in the first circle. Wax candles in the schoolroom! You may imagine how desirable!"<sup>3</sup>

For those to whom it mattered, it was not only crucial to possess the right light but to dispose it properly as well. The Australian immigrant Rachel Henning noticed a gaff aboard the sailing ship *Great Britain* in 1861. She complains, "The first evening was sure to be dull and dismal ... (W)e got books and set around a candle in the saloon where they have candles in dishes rather than lamps..."<sup>4</sup>

No such mistake was made by the over-cultivated Mrs Elton in *Emma*. She knew how to set out candles. "... (O)ne very superior party in which her card tables should be set out with their separate candles and unbroken packs in the true style".<sup>5</sup>

By the end of the century, the Australian novelist Ada Cambridge describes a similar setting for cards that is quite different: "A card table stood open near the gaily-aproned hearth, with two candlesticks at opposite ends, and packs of cards..."<sup>6</sup> The price of candles had fallen or a shift in style?

Candles had little competition from the early vegetable oil lamps of the 18th century. They created an unimpressive yellow light, accompanied by dark smoke and the smell

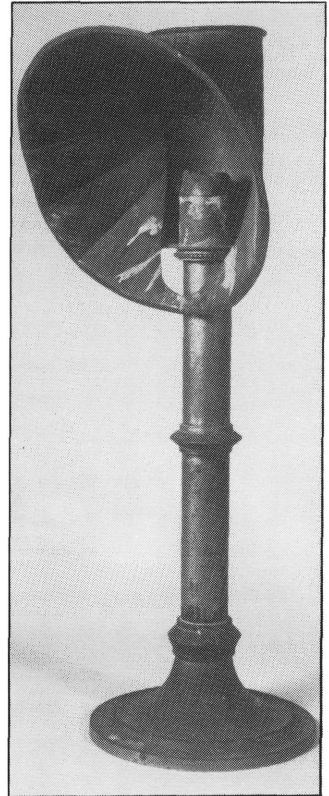


Plate 1. Candlestick and reflector. The stand is spring-loaded, forcing the candle up as it burns.

of oils like olive, peanut or colza (kale) seed. More common animal oils and fats like tallow or lard were certainly no improvement unless efficiently refined.

Only whale oil ('sperm oil', 'elephant oil') proved a popular animal oil and the strength of its appeal can be measured by the breadth of the 19th century whaling industry. There is no better description of whale oil than Herman Melville's famous chapter 'The

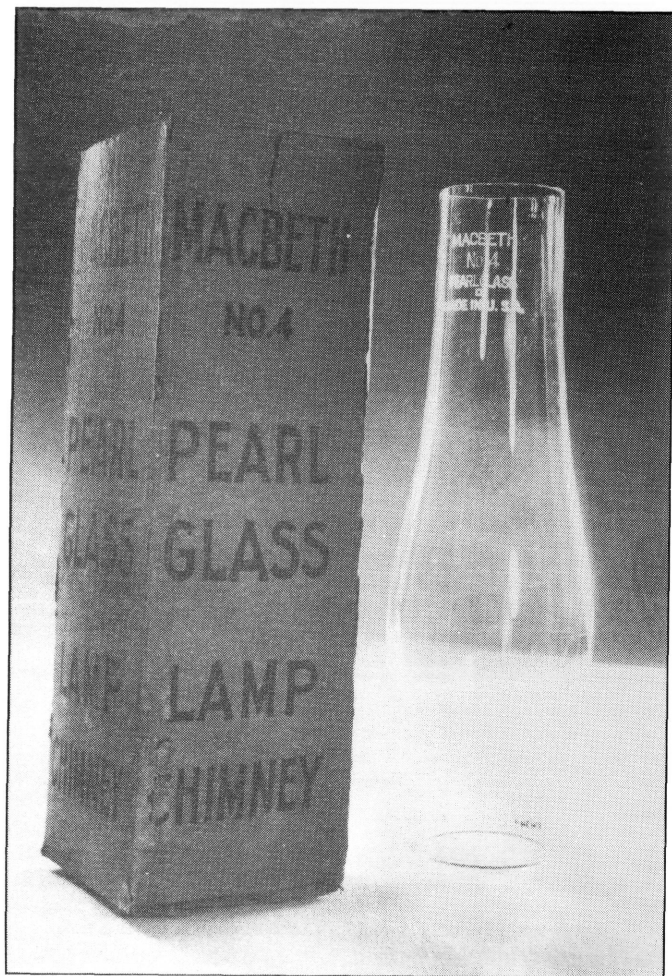


Plate 2. Lamp chimney and original box.

Lamp' in the novel *Moby Dick*. "It was our business to squeeze these lumps [of congealed whale oil] back into liquid ... a sweet and unctuous duty ... such a clarifier, such a sweetener; such a delicious mollifier! ... I sniffed up that uncontaminated aroma – literally and truly like the smell of spring violets ... In thoughts of the visions of the night, I saw long rows of angels in paradise, each with his hands in a jar of spermaceti."<sup>7</sup> As for its flame

(who could consume such a substance?), it is described as emitting a lemon yellow light and a sweet aroma of 'early grass butter'.

While whale oil was considered to yield a superior light than the early 'rock oil' and its kerosene derivatives that appeared in mid-century, rapid technical developments in kerosene lamps soon overtook sperm oil's advantages. Although refining was introduced, kerosene retained its smell. Ada Cambridge's novel *Sisters* (1904) notes an Australian bush house

with the unsympathetic odours of "wreaths of homely evergreens and smelly kerosene lamps".<sup>8</sup>

These oil lamps had their own methods of deployment too – usually at the centre of a room. The best middle-class parlour, described by Ada Cambridge at 'full dress': "A moderator lamp stood on a beaded mat in the middle of a highly polished centre table, round which books and shells and other ornaments were disposed in the fashion of a wheel of fortune at a fair."<sup>9</sup>

Flaubert, the French novelist, described a similar European setting in his 1869 *Sentimental Education*: "There was a white circle of light on the ceiling above the oil lamp, while in the corners of the room, shadow gathered like black gauze."<sup>10</sup>

These dark corners seem a feature of many 19th century parlours and they could be dangerous as this passage illustrates: "we have lost nearly an hour, he said in an impassioned undertone. 'Why didn't you come before?' He whirled her into the room and down to the far dark corners – growing darker and darker as one after another, the candles burnt out in their dripping sockets."<sup>11</sup>

It was the role of gaslight to disperse these romantic shadows and gas proved to be the next innovation in lighting. And while it was efficient, it had its detractors. As Thomas Edison is often quoted: "It was dirty and it smelt." This pungent observation seems true of all the gas illumination sources like coal gas, acetylene and natural gas. As Graham MacInnes writes of a western districts property in Victoria in his autobiography *The Road to Gundagi*: "...[A] fireplace like a cave and two long windows festooned with cretonne curtains. On the bed-table was a paperback copy of *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*; in the room hung the faint odour of acetylene gas from the home light plant..."<sup>12</sup>



Plate 3. "Wee-Fairy" Lights with Burmese glass diffusers. Candles are in their original box.



Plate 4. Box of wicks for circular oil lamps.



Not everyone welcomed the new-found brightness of gas flame as another character from Ada Cambridge illustrates: "Mrs Ewing ... with a quick flirt of the hand, extinguished the two pink lamps. They were old fashioned gas lamps too. 'We don't want lights to talk by ... the firelight is enough. I think firelight at this hour is so much the pleasantest, don't you?'"<sup>13</sup>

Very few Australian novelists gave their fictional characters the ability to meet this new intense light. J. Courveur's fictional Sara had difficulties too. For example: "Her pure skin gave the fullest value to the peculiar richness of colour in eye and lip – more beautiful in the searching morning sunlight than under the brilliant gas candelabra."<sup>14</sup>

By quoting these passages concerning gas light, one senses an unspoken dissatisfaction with gaslight – its odours; and with the arrival of improved incandescent gaslights in the late 19th century, its glare. This attitude also helps explain the extraordinary energy that

was directed toward the development and improvement of the incandescent electric light bulb.

The earliest forms of electric light were very intense arc illumination (think of electric welding) giving a brilliant, almost blue hue. But when T.A. Edison presented his electric lamp sealed in a globe at the 1881 Exposition Internationale d'Electricite in Paris, his contemporaries noted that he had moderated its brightness and colour. There was a discernible difference in the quality of light that electricity produced. And it was noted in the literature of the period. One of Ada Cambridge's most evocative passages from *A Marked Man* (1890) notes the notable differences in colour and clarity. The scene is Sydney Harbour:

"The placid bay spread into the mystical distance, gleaming like quicksilver where it appeared open to the sky ... (T)ravelling ferry boats set with a thousand stars, that spilled little trickles of fire upon the water here and there – yellow as topazes against the cool blue-white

brilliance of the few electric lights."<sup>15</sup>

Novelists like Cambridge, the Jane Austen of the South Seas, have provided us with the best witnesses for the true nature of 19th century illumination. While painters, engravers and sketchers can portray the light source and the spread of its light, their palette prevents them from telling us precisely how it looked or felt. As these selected examples illustrate, words can be precise.

That cool, white brilliance of electric light was slow to appear in many communities; the transition to electricity was not a rapid one in most countries. For example, Rouse Hill House (built near Windsor, NSW in 1813-1818), where I have worked for the past two years, wasn't commercially electrified until the 1960s. And in some households, this new light source was poorly understood. In the Melbourne memoir of Kathleen Fitzpatrick, *Solid Bluestone Foundations*, Ms Fitzpatrick explains that her family's domestic help took down the electric globes every week for cleaning and polishing.

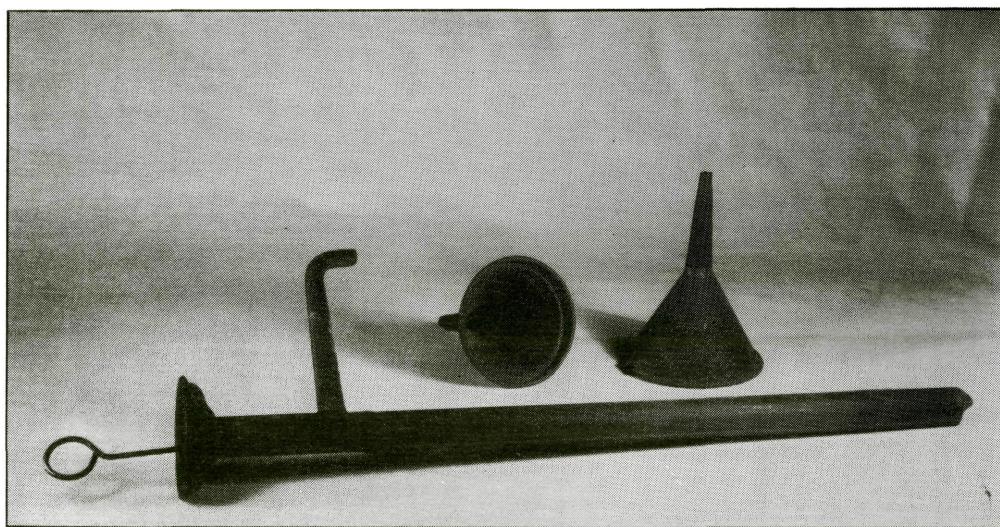


Plate 5. Pump and funnels for filling lamps. These were kept in the Rouse Hill pantry.





Plate 6. "Ever Ready" hand torch with oak case and silver coated reflector.

Although it has taken several decades, the adaptability of electric light now allows it to mimic the colour and intensity of many of the early light sources. Even the sickly green hue of the early fluoros have been replaced with a more humane spectrum.

At Rouse Hill House every room was fitted with a single overhead bulb and a pull-switch. Table and standard lamps are rare. As a result, many of the house's earlier furniture arrangements, originally governed by the low light intensities of oil, gas and candles, remain. In keeping with pre-electric light sources,

small portable tables, mirrored over-mantels, reflective sconces and lustrous decorations are present in the rooms in abundance.

As the Rouse Hill families used oil and gas light until very recently, many of the lights, fittings and accessories remain intact in the store-rooms and pantries. This makes the property a case study of Australian domestic lighting in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

To present some of the house's lighting assets, a study day was organised at the Historic Houses Trust of NSW property in 1990, with another planned for late 1991.

For further information about this event, access to the collections or other activities at Rouse Hill House, please contact the Historic Houses Trust of NSW, 61 Darghan Street, Glebe, NSW 3037. (02) 692-8366.

• Michael Bogle is the curator of Rouse Hill House, a country house with a history of unbroken family occupancy from 1825 to the present. The extensive collections are open to researchers and the public by appointment. Some restrictions may apply to aspects of the collection.

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All illustrations courtesy of the Historic Houses Trust, Rouse Hill.



# The Arrest of Governor Bligh

## Pictures and Politics

Richard Neville

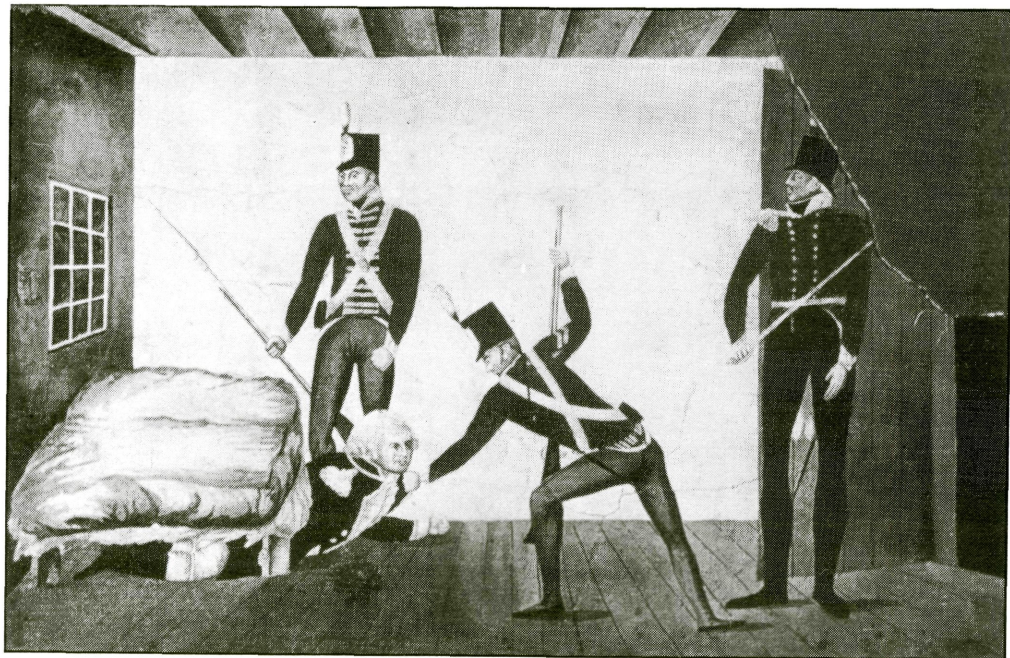
This article is about one watercolour, depicting the arrest of William Bligh, governor of the colony of New South Wales from August 1806 till 26 January 1808. It is certainly not a grand drawing, but the circumstances surrounding its creation – the very fact that it was allowed to be made at all – are particularly illuminating about colonial art. It is easy to see colonial art as only something apolitical and charmingly naive; rather the making of art in the early colonial period was strictly controlled by government and the powerful sections of colonial society. None of

the early governors ever condoned the distribution of images critical of their regimes. Indeed until Governor Darling's administration the colony was under fairly strict censorship.

The watercolour, now in the Mitchell Library, has a direct Johnston provenance. In 1898 Mrs Fanny Johnston gave a number of Johnston family papers and paintings to the Art Gallery of New South Wales. These were transferred to the Mitchell Library in April 1934, amongst which was "1 small caricature of arrest."<sup>1</sup> In the 1890s the New South Wales Government

Printer photo-lithographed the watercolour (which was then hand-coloured), and the manuscript documents which accompanied it, and issued it as a kind of facsimile. These facsimiles are often confused with the original.

Our story begins at around 6 o'clock on the 26th of January 1808, in the warm evening sun, when 400 soldiers of the New South Wales Corps – under the command of Colonel George Johnston – marched from their Barrack along Bridge Street to Government House, watched by Sydneysiders including the natural history



*Arrest of Governor Bligh, 26 January 1808. This libellous watercolour by an unknown artist, portraying Bligh as a coward, was exhibited in Sydney just after Bligh's overthrow. It was in the possession of the family of George Johnston, the man who arrested Bligh, until 1888 and is now one of the treasures of the Mitchell Library. Courtesy of the Mitchell Library.*



painter John Lewin and his wife Maria, who were chatting to the horticulturalist George Suttor.<sup>2</sup> A band played 'The British Grenadiers'. A group of soldiers entered the grounds of Government House:

Bligh's daughter Mary Putland angrily attempted to deny them entry. The soldiers came to arrest Bligh: their actions – now misleadingly remembered as the Rum Rebellion – constituted a mutiny against his imperially sanctioned authority.

It took an hour and a half to find Bligh who had concealed himself in an upstairs servants room, in full dress uniform, destroying, he maintained, documents he did not want to fall into enemy hands. His situation when eventually found was hotly debated: according to his enemies Bligh was hiding under a bed.<sup>3</sup> Bligh, of course, denied the charge, claiming that he simply hid himself in the servants room – he said a sympathetic soldier had earlier found him but did not report him – to buy time to effect an escape.<sup>4</sup>

The rebels' version of the moment of arrest has been a persistent one. At the court martial of Colonel Johnston for his part in the mutiny, held in London in 1811, Lieut. Minchin remembered that when called to the servants room the Governor was then standing up, there were two or three soldiers in the room, two, I recall perfectly. His bosom was open, his shirt frill out, and he appeared to be in the act of putting it into his waistcoat at the time I went into the room ... I then ordered the soldiers away, and said to the Governor, that I was extremely sorry he suffered himself to be found in that manner, that he had not come forward in the first instance to meet the officers. A corporal who was in the room ... said, as he was going out "We found him there, sir, (pointing under the bedstead). The fore-part of his coat, the lapels (sic), were full of dust, and the back-part full of

feather: he appeared to be very much agitated; indeed I never saw a man so much frightened in my life, in appearance.<sup>5</sup>

Sergeant Major Thomas Whittle was one of the soldiers who searched for Bligh. He was asked, in what situation did you first see Governor Bligh:

Just come from under a bed, sir, all dirty with feathers and cobwebs, one stuff and another ... I did not find him myself, at last, but Corporal Marlborough called out that he was found under the bed.<sup>6</sup>

This evidence was corroborated by Sergeant John Sutherland who, with Michael Marlborough and William Wilford, found Bligh. He described the situation in which he first saw Bligh:

He was under the bed, supporting himself forward upon his two hands, with one foot placed against each of the two posts, either on one side or at the bottom of the bed (the witness did not say which), with his back pressed upwards against the bottom of the bed.<sup>7</sup>

It was clearly in the interests of the rebels to portray Bounty Bligh as a coward, amongst all the other failings they attributed to him. Some versions of the story had Bligh standing on the bed when found, or being helped over the bed.<sup>8</sup> Yet Bligh's servant, John Dunn, testified that the bed was only a foot high at its highest – in the middle it sagged to four inches high.<sup>9</sup> It is hard to imagine Bligh hiding under the bed from cowardice, and indeed even his enemies conceded that he may have simply been hiding papers under the bed, although evidence was taken that no papers were found in the room.<sup>10</sup>

Bligh himself appears to have been guilty of elaboration, he alleged that twelve or more excited soldiers crowded into the room, who found him "a little confused in fixing and arranging my papers withinside my waistcoat" and

threatened him with their bayonets.<sup>11</sup> Bligh claimed Lieutenant Minchin had to crawl on his hands and knees through the melee to reach him.

The real story most likely will never be known. Bligh's humiliation, illustrated in the famous watercolour, was probably an invention on the part of the rebels. After all it was in their interests, having taken such a momentous action, to present Bligh in the worst possible light.

It is ironic that for all the fear of convict uprisings by colonial governments, the only time a colonial government was actually overthrown by force was at the instigation of sections of the colonial elite – by elements of the civil and military officers of Sydney. The events of 1808 are still the subject of conjecture. John Macarthur was surely the main instigator and manipulator of the rebellion, but it is clear that he had the support of the officers of the New South Wales Corps. Without their compliance the mutiny could not have taken place. Bligh's contribution to his own downfall was substantial: his intemperate language and autocratic behaviour was obvious to all in the small Sydney community.

It was not a rebellion over the control of the sale of rum. In the cauldron of emotions smouldering in the months preceding 26 January 1808, small incidents erupted into major issues. A dispute over town leases was one simmering complaint. The immediate cause of the mutiny was more likely the imminent arrest of six of the Corps officers, which would have left the soldiers essentially leaderless. Facing a situation of leaderless troops, Macarthur's friends contrived to, or perhaps genuinely did, panic and convinced themselves that only the arrest of Bligh would avert bloodshed and revolution. Johnston claimed that on 26 January he detected terror and consternation on the faces of Sydney's citizens.<sup>12</sup>

Both sides drew on the spectre of the French revolution: Bligh compared Macarthur's rhetoric, which complained of Bligh's 'tyranny' and his threat to 'liberty', as the revolutionary phraseology of France, while the rebels were compared to a Robespierrean party, or a revolutionary tribunal.<sup>13</sup> Macarthur characterised Johnston's actions as "a rescue from an order of things, that threatened the destruction of all which men can hold dear. We hail you Sir, as the Protector of our Property-Liberty-Lives-and Reputations."<sup>14</sup>

Sydney was then a very small town. Of the 7600 Europeans in N.S.W. at the time, 4000 lived in Sydney and of those 490 were rank and file soldiers. Politics was, by virtue of the size of the community, a very personal thing. Bligh did not have a mediating bureaucracy in his dealings with people. Consequently everyone knew of his angry tongue. Yet the extent to which the rebellion had popular support is still really not known.<sup>15</sup>

The genesis of the watercolour of Bligh's arrest appears to have been a dispute that blew up between Bligh and Sergeant Major Whittle. While the facts were disputed it does seem that Bligh personally asked Whittle to pull down, or at least remove, his house because it stood in the way of town improvements. Whittle protested and Bligh angrily abused him.

After Bligh had been deposed, Whittle, who supposedly saw Bligh just after his arrest, and possibly in a spirit of revenge commissioned or had made a drawing of the Governor being pulled from underneath his bed by soldiers. The artist is still unknown, but it is unlikely to be Whittle who could neither read nor write.<sup>16</sup> The water colour accords closely to the description of the arrest given by John Sutherland. Another soldier recalled that Whittle said at the time "that he had gold the old tyrant and old villain's picture drawn in the proper manner and that he would expose it."<sup>17</sup>

Whittle apparently organised a little shrine for what is probably the first public exhibition of art in Sydney, either on the 26 or more likely 27 January. The drawing was placed in a room at his house, "with a lamp on each side, for the public inspection of any person who thought it proper to go there ... I saw a great number of people going in and out as they pleased."<sup>18</sup> Thomas Finnegan, although confused about the medium and nature of the drawing, did see "an effigy; I think it was on canvas; it was representing the Governor being dragged from under the bed by two privates." Some months after, George Caley recalled

On the illumination, the Sergeant-Major of the Corps was spoken of as having a transparent figure representing a soldier dragging His Excellency from under a bed. Some windows were said to have the motto of "Johnston for ever!" "Down with the tyrant" &c.<sup>19</sup>

Although Caley called it a transparency, a very different thing to a watercolour drawing, he was probably confused about terminology.

This was not the only celebratory image produced immediately after the arrest of Bligh. Undoubtedly celebrations – which included the burning of effigies, transparencies and illuminations – did take place (neither side denied this), probably encouraged by the military and most likely displayed on the night of 27 January. Transparencies were commonly used in England to celebrate national events and victories: Nelson's defeat of the French at the Nile, or the apparent return of peace in 1814 for instance, bought forth fireworks, bonfires (a feature of the 1808 Sydney celebrations), coloured lights and transparencies.

A disgruntled William Lockerby, smarting from a run in with Bligh, was on his ship on the night of the rebellion, he recalled that the town was illuminated, "It was a fine, calm evening, and I expended a

whole box of candles, in the lighting the ship, fore and aft."<sup>20</sup> Others remembered

I saw an effigy, said to be a representation of Gov. Bligh; and also another said to be a representation of the Provost Marshal: I saw a transparency, I don't recollect the words, but I think that they were, 'No Gore.' 'No Tyranny.' 'Johnston for ever!' Something of that kind.<sup>21</sup>

George Suttor saw a sign outside a pub representing

the figure of a Highland soldier, with his sword drawn, standing with a snake under his feet, and the Genius of Liberty presenting him with her cap: on the other side of the sign was written, 'The ever-memorable 26th January 1808.'<sup>22</sup>

The Highland soldier represented Johnston, while the snake is Bligh. The sign drew on popular, well-established imagery, (Liberty for instance was always a woman) that could be easily read by most citizens.

Indeed public house sign-boards appear to have been popular vehicles for anti-Bligh images, if Bligh himself can be believed. Bligh claimed that many of the publicans to whom Macarthur had issued liquor licenses after the rebellion erected anti-Bligh sign-boards

Daniel McKay ... erected one having on one side a Highland officer emblematic of Major Johnston with one foot on a snake and his Sword through it, to whom a female figure is in the attitude of presenting a cap of Liberty: on the reverse of this is printed, in large characters, 'the ever memorable 26th of January, 1808.'

In the house of one John Driver is painted, on one side of his Hall, in large characters, 'Success to Major George Johnston; may he live for ever! Our Deliverer and the suppressor of Tyrants.'

One John Beddington, a disaffected Irishman, has the sign of the Harp without the crown, and one Wm Evans ... erected a sign representing King Charles the second in the Oak on one side, and on the other is painted, in large characters, 'the ever memorable 26th Jan'y 1808.'<sup>23</sup>

This flurry of artistic activity by artists unknown, which so infuriated Bligh, was perhaps the first time that the imperially sanctioned government lost control of the making of art in the colony.

Georgian politics took place very much in the public eye: the vigorous caricatures of the period were particularly robust – ministers and even kings were shown in all sorts of the most indelicate and explicit situations. Rumour, innuendo and the facts about the private lives of Kings, Prince-Regents, politicians, their affairs and lovers were subjected to the scrutiny of caricatures.

Why then is there not more evidence of a similar pattern in Australia, given its, rancorous political climate? Firstly, and obviously, there was simply not the technical infrastructure available to make the production of any kind of print a regular and easy affair. The necessary equipment simply was not available either publicly or privately. Secondly the making of art in the colony was well controlled. Those in power or with powerful positions, and those in government – governors – did not relish the prospect of a critical press in such an insular and volatile community.

It is the second – and hardly surprising point that needs elaboration. The idea that the colony might be lost to (an Irish) convict uprising was a significant policy determinant. The spectre of the French Revolution hung over the colony, as did the ogre of the radical Thomas Paine. Consequently it is easy to see that in an isolated penal colony seditious behaviour, or even critical words and drawings were harshly treated.

But obviously it was not only convicts who threatened the authority of governors: disaffected officers and soldiers were considered similarly dangerous. When Governor King became aware of pipes, or verse lampoons, and drawings circulating in the barracks critical of his regime, he was furious, and immediately set up an inquiry to establish the identity of the culprits. It is unlikely that King would have seen these drawings as endangering his regime, but his anger is indicative of his concern to control the expression of dissent in the colony.

Governor Macquarie, too, arguing with officers of the 46th Regiment, became the subject for a full length chalk or charcoal "caricature of Myself in a position of ignominy, with indecent scurrilous labels" underneath which was drawn on the Regiment's Guard room wall.

It is in this framework that *The Arrest of Governor Bligh* should be seen. Bligh's overthrow was not an act of revolution, but rather the displacement of one entrenched power by another. *The Arrest of Bligh*, therefore is not a revolutionary image, but rather one of propaganda, capitalising on the humiliating allegations made against Bligh. It was one of a number of anti-Bligh images made quickly, and displayed briefly, after the rebellion. Once order was restored, and the rebel government securely installed, this type of imagery became unnecessary. Only during brief periods of absolute unrest was such imagery acceptable.

Governments actively sought a very strict control over seditious images. Yet the standard fare of colonial art of this period – topographic, ethnographic and natural history – did not exist in an ideological vacuum, and its general thrusts were shaped, though not so directly, by the interests of the ruling classes who were of course the patrons of nearly all early colonial art. That such images had value as

propaganda – albeit more subtle and complex than *The Arrest of Governor Bligh* – was well understood. The merchant Alexander Riley wrote to his brother.

It has long been a subject of our conversation in this Country that a Panorama exhibited in London of the Town of Sydney and surrounding Scenery would create much public interest and ultimately be of service to the colony by drawing towards it public consideration and attention.<sup>24</sup>

The state of the bricks and mortar of the town was considered an important and accurate indicator of the state of the colony, and therefore any view of the colony was always read as providing information not only about the physical condition of the colony but its moral situation as well. The presence of a church, for instance, suggested that the spiritual welfare of the town was being suitably accommodated. Indeed one of the criticisms that the rebels consistently made about Bligh was that he allowed public buildings in the colony to fall into disrepair.

The true story behind the arrest of Governor Bligh will probably never be unravelled. As we have seen the only surviving visual account of the event, *The Arrest of Governor Bligh* must be treated with scepticism. Yet from this quite blatant piece of propaganda can be drawn important lessons about early colonial art generally – firstly the creation of art in the colony was carefully controlled, and secondly the images made were not neutral. While colonial art today often seems charmingly naive, to its contemporaries it was very much about the promotion of the colony.

• Richard Neville is Curator, Pictures Research, Mitchell Library, Sydney.

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3. *Proceedings of a General Court-Martial for the Trial of Lieut.-Col. Geo. Johnston on a Charge of Mutiny*, London 1811, p.153. John Ritchie edited a reprint of this book, entitled *A Charge of Mutiny*, which was published by the National Library of Australia in 1988.
4. *Trial*, p.23.
5. *Trial*, p.242-43.
6. *Trial*, p.369.
7. *Trial*, p.371-72.
8. *Trial*, p.117.
9. *Trial*, p.380.
10. *Trial*, p.262 & 369.
11. *Trial*, p.26.
12. *Trial*, p.151. See also Ross Fitzgerald & Mark Hearn, *Bligh, Macarthur and the Rum Rebellion*, Kangaroo Press, Sydney 1988; Paul Brunton "Arresting Bligh" in *Mutiny on the Bounty*, State Library of New South Wales, 1991; M.H. Ellis, *John Macarthur*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1955; George Mackaness, *The Life of Vice-Admiral Bligh*, Angus & Robertson, London 1951; H.V. Evatt, *The Rum Rebellion*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney 1938.
13. *Trial*, p.35.
14. HRNSW, vol.vi p.375. See the photo-lithographed copy of this petition published by the NSW Government Printer in the 1890s. See also Brunton, "Arresting Bligh", p.88.
15. See Brian Fletcher, "The Hawkesbury Settlers and the Rum Rebellion", *RAHS Journal*, vol.54, Sept. 1968, p.217-237. John Lewin, for example, generally considered a Bligh supporter, signed four petitions during Bligh's time in New South Wales – two pro-Bligh and two pro-rebel.
16. *Trial*, p.370. There is no reason, either, for attributions to William Minchin.
17. *Trial*, p.114.
18. *Trial*
19. HRNSW vol.vi p.692.
20. The Hakluyt Society, *The Journal of William Lockerby*, Second Series no.LII, 1922 p.8. Thanks to John Wade for drawing this reference to my attention.
21. *Trial*, p.137.
22. *Trial*, p.120.
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# France en Australie:

## The Père Receveur Documentation Collection

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F.R.L. Carleton

The Conventual Franciscan priest, Claude Francois Joseph (Laurent) Receveur (1757-1788) died on 17th February, 1788 and was buried during the Lapérouse Expedition's sojourn in Botany Bay. In the course of the voyage Père Receveur had been engaged in meteorological and astronomical observations at sea and in natural history research on land in addition to his clerical duties on the *Astrolabe*. His death has usually been presumed to have resulted from wounds received in the savage affray on Tutuila on 11th December, 1787 when twelve members of the Expedition, including, Fleuriot de l'Angle, the captain of the *Astrolabe* were brutally massacred.

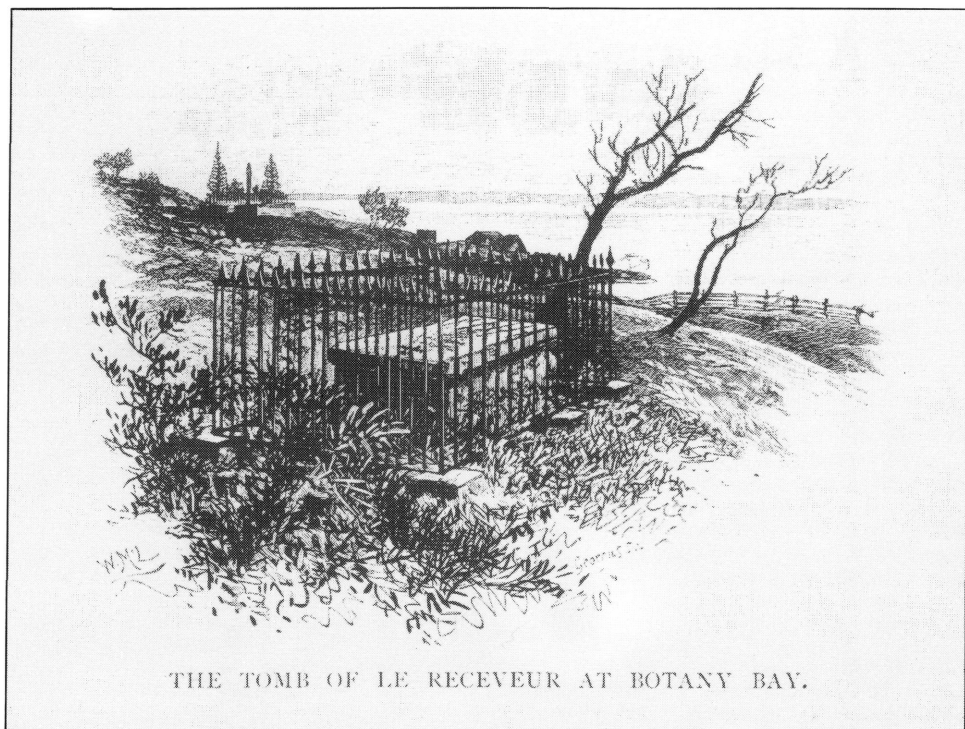
Capitaine Bellec has, however, raised the two other possibilities of sickness or a violent death at Botany Bay:

Le naturaliste, aumônier de l'*Astrolabe* avait été blessé à l'œil lors du massacre de Tutuila ... Malade ou mortellement blessé par un naturel, le premier prêtre mort en terre australienne a emporté l'un des humbles et terribles secrets de l'expédition Lapérouse.<sup>1</sup>

The association of Père Receveur's death with the last accounts of the Expedition and the earliest known manifestations of Catholicism on Australian soil has lent a numinous quality to his grave. The replacement of the

defaced notice over the grave following the Expedition's departure by order of Governor Phillip, the inscription carved in a nearby eucalyptus tree<sup>2</sup> by a party from Duperrey's *Coquille* in 1824, the erection of an altar tomb in 1829, its refurbishment after 1865 by the Cistercian Father Norbert Woolfrey of Waverley and the celebration of Mass on the site in the presence of officers and men of the French warship *Rhin* by Irish Franciscan friars in 1879 are chronological *points d'appui* in its historic significance.

The Père Receveur Documentation Collection was conceived and begun with the inception, in late 1986, of the Committee formed to



THE TOMB OF LE RECEVEUR AT BOTANY BAY.

commemorate the bicentenary of his death in February, 1988. This collection, which is intended for ultimate deposit in the Laperouse Museum, currently consists of 128 items which attest the life and work of Père Receveur in the context of the Laperouse Expedition. It includes books, journal articles, typescripts, pictorial items, a microfilm and numismatic items with the following areas of coverage:

- the biography of Père Receveur and the nature of Franciscan religious life under the ancient regime
- his work as priest and scientist in the course of the Lapérouse Expedition and in conjunction with that of his clerical confrere and fellow savant, the Abbé Jean Andre Mongez (1751-1788), Canon Regular of Ste. Genevieve
- the history of the grave site, including past commemorative events in its environs and the association of the Franciscan Order with the site since the arrival of the Irish Franciscans in Sydney in 1879
- a sufficient selection of data to delineate the purposes and voyage of the Lapérouse Expedition and the role and reputation of its commander
- references in the First Fleet journals to Père Receveur and the grave
- the physical and reference bibliography of printed and manuscript sources of all of the above – the contemporary condition of France during the term of the Lapérouse Expedition

Since the typescript catalogue of the collection was compiled and issued in 1988, five supplements of further accessions have been issued

to interested persons and bodies. Following an offer to process all this data under the auspices of the Lapérouse Museum for a published catalogue of the collection the consolidated text of all the entries, with an index of donors to the collection, was delivered to the Museum in late April.

Subject to the speed of processing it is intended to publish the catalogue in a limited and numbered edition in due course.

#### Notes

1. Francois Bellec 'Rendez-vous à Botany Bay' *Neptunia* no. 170 juin 1988 p.5
2. "Pres de cet arbre reposent les centres due Père Le Receveur, visite en mars 1824" quoted *ibid* p.6
- F.R.L Carleton, Convenor Père Receveur Commemoration Committee November, 1990

# A Masonic Medal of Historical Significance to Tasmania

*Peter Mercer*

This beautiful colonial medal is a recent acquisition for the collection of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery. It is both handsome in design and proportions, being made from 9-carat yellow gold and weighing 50.77 grams, a generous presentation piece by anyone's standards.

It is a Masonic medal or "Jewel" as they are referred to in Masonic circles, and a really outstanding example of its type. It is also of considerable historical significance because it is the first Past Master's medal ever presented in Tasmania to the retiring Master of a Freemason's Lodge.

Of all the various types of medals issued in the Australian colonies, Masonic "Jewels" are amongst the finest and this particular piece is without doubt among the best ever produced. It is of excellent quality, being expertly struck, engraved and enamelled. The fact that it has no visible goldsmith's marks raises the distinct possibility that it could have been the work of a local craftsman. Perhaps one of David Barclay's silversmiths? If it can be proved that it was indeed made in Hobart and the artisan confirmed, then, numismatically speaking, this medal is extremely important.

What makes this Past Master's medal even more interesting is that Leo Susman, its recipient, was not an Englishman but a German immigrant who, by August 1867, when it was presented to him, had achieved honour in a Freemason's Lodge and won the wide respect of the community of Hobart Town, only thirteen years after his arrival.

When Susman received his Past Master's medal, he had served two

years as Worshipful Master of the Tasmanian Union Lodge number 536 in the English Constitution. Founded in 1844, it was the oldest English Constitution Lodge in the Colony.

For the rest of his life Susman devoted much of his non-business time to Freemasonry, playing a prominent part in Masonic affairs. An officer in the English Constitution District Grand lodge, he eventually became Grand Treasurer and Past Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Tasmania which was founded on 26th June 1890. He was also chairman for 25 years of the Tasmanian Masonic Benevolent Fund and for a number of years chairman of the Masonic Hall Company. Leo Susman was born at Altona, now a part of Hamburg, a major port on the Elbe, in 1832. Educated in Hamburg, at the tender age of 13 he went into the counting house of Andrew Israel and Company. There he remained, earning a living and learning the necessary business skills he needed until he turned 21.

Like many other young men seeking the opportunity to prosper, Susman saw the best possibilities for a bright future in the young and rapidly growing, gold-rich British Colonies of faraway Australia.

In September 1853, full of hope, he left his native Germany on the British vessel, *Howard*, bound for Australia and arrived in Sydney the following January after a long passage lasting 137 days.

Unlike many of the young immigrants, Susman did not go to the gold fields but looked at the opportunities open to him to set

himself up as a merchant in one of the thriving coastal centres of eastern Australia. Soon after his arrival he visited the small but rapidly growing centre of Moreton Bay, now Brisbane, but the uncomfortable humidity of both Moreton Bay and Sydney in mid-summer made him seriously doubt the desirability of permanent residence in either place.

By September 1854, in partnership with a fellow countryman, he was on his way to Tasmania to start a general merchandising business in the not so thriving Hobart Town. Liking the climate, the people and the way of life, he stayed, bought out his partner, and spent the remaining 49 years of his life as one of Hobart's leading businessmen.

Leo Susman's first small shop was in Liverpool Street, and even though the economy of Hobart Town was becoming increasingly depressed, he prospered to the extent that in 1867 he saw fit to build and move into larger premises in Murray Street. His new shop was



*Leo Susman c. 1890.  
Cyclopaedia of Tasmania.*





on the site of the present Tasmania Bank Building next to the present Centrepont Arcade. Susman and his wife and their ten children lived for many years in the residential area above the shop. This was a common practice for the city storekeepers until other security measures came into use in the early years of this century. Many of the city shop owners had gardens at the rear of their premises and the Susmans had what was reputed to be one of the largest and best gardens in central Hobart.

Leo Susman died at his home above his store on 1st September 1903, 49 years to the day after his arrival in Tasmania.

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*Cyclopaedia of Tasmania*, Volume 1, Hobart, 1900, pp. 315-6.

*Freemasonry in Tasmania*, 1828-1935, Launceston, 1935.

*Mercury*, 2.9.1903, Obituary.

- Peter Mercer is Curator of History at the Tasmanian Art Gallery, Hobart.

PRESENTED  
TO  
Br Leo Susman  
as a mark of  
appreciation for his valuable services  
as  
WORSHIPFUL MASTER  
of the  
TASMANIAN UNION LODGE  
No. 536 E.C.  
during the past two years  
HOBART TOWN TASMANIA  
August 1863-1867

*The medal and inscription on the reverse.*

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# William Holford Master Mould-maker and Designer

## The Football Jug Revisited

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*Noris Ioannou*

I was recently privileged to be the first to learn of a remarkable discovery which recently came to light in Adelaide – a ceramic jug bearing decorative friezes depicting a game between two of the state's best known football teams. This jug, as I will detail, is an important documentary example, significantly extending our knowledge of one of South Australia's most interesting commercial potteries. It also vividly manifests the melding of early industrial British ceramic traditions, with the emerging Australian identity and culture of the 19th century.

It has now been four years since my history of the ceramics in this state was published.<sup>1</sup> In that text I detailed the case history of William Holford, journeyman potter extraordinaire. To contemporary historians and collectors of early Australian pottery he is, perhaps, one of Australia's best known 19th-century commercial potters.<sup>2</sup>

Briefly, Holford was born in the English pottery town of Hanley in 1841, and after his apprenticeship and spell as a journeyman potter, left England with his son and wife in 1874 for New Zealand. After working in a pottery there for 18 months the Holford family travelled to the colony of Melbourne, 6 years later on to Sydney, then Lithgow, and again to Sydney.

In each of these places, William Holford either worked in his own pottery or was employed by various pottery firms. As a master mould-maker and designer, his services were much in demand in these 19th-century potteries which all tended to produce very much the same range of wares based on the



*Football jug. Height 20.5cm, diameter of base 12cm.*

English pottery industry and as he had practised in Hanley.

By 1887, the restless Holford decided to move his family again. This time he chose Adelaide, where he was to settle until his death. After a brief spell working at Trewenack's pottery in Magill, he left and established, together with his now trained son Thomas, a pottery in the nearby suburb of Maylands. This pottery was established in a time of economic recession, and was to suffer from a lack of adequate capital over its existence of some 20 years.

Originally named the London Pottery Works, it changed names over the years to The Adelaide Pottery Company and the Federal Pottery Company.

Out of this pottery came an astonishing range of decorated household wares. For example, Holford's teapot included strawberry, wheatsheaf, fern and "mother and child" motifs, as well as the perennial favourite "Rebecca at the Well". The latter was not his creation, but had been copied from the original English design and had been utilized during Holford's years in Sydney in the early 1880s.

However, what interests here are the original designs that this apparently thoroughly English potter produced, based on events in his immediate Australian environment.

In my *Ceramics* text I described Holford's Football Jug, a ceramic jug produced in the standard (so called) majolica-glazed earthenware through the press-moulding technique.<sup>3</sup> Each side displays, above the leaping players, a banner identifying the team as either Norwood or the 'Ports', as the Port Adelaide team was then referred to. A wide border of stylised foliage along the rim and base, and two pairs of goal posts beneath the spout and at the handle complete the decorative features. At the time of research (1985), two examples of the football jug had been documented, both in murky tan,

blue and white majolica glaze. Neither of these jugs were marked in any way, but the technique, shards recovered from the pottery site, and family oral tradition regarding another decorated jug (the Oakbank Jug) firmly pointed to Holford as the designer and maker.

The recently discovered example is remarkable in two ways: first, it was produced in caneware, that is the standard yellow glaze over an earthenware body typical of the mixing bowls produced by his pottery; and second, the jug is dated on its base.

Dated examples of 19th-century Australian pottery are particularly rare – even the practice of identifying wares with a pottery factory stamp was generally avoided as colonial wares were generally considered inferior to the imported 'mother country' pottery.

Hand inscribed with a sharp metal tool, the date is entirely in numerals and underlined with a flourish; 3/8/98. This was six years earlier than the date given in the *Ceramics* text as speculated from the two unmarked majolica jugs. These were originally thought to have been made to commemorate the spectacular premiership win for Norwood in their 1904 match against Port Adelaide played on the Adelaide Jubilee Oval. (Holford's pottery adjoined Norwood)

Football historians I have consulted, have pointed out that the jug could possibly have been produced to celebrate the finals match, as 1898 was the first year there had been introduced a system of conducting finals.<sup>4</sup>

Newspaper searches have failed thus far to reveal any other football matches or events for that year. In any case, the jug indicates the high level of interest in football exhibited by the citizens of Adelaide, and specifically by the Holford family – particularly by Thomas, William's son who had worked alongside his father in the pottery for

many years and who was fiercely Australian in his outlook. There may have also been an economic motivation in producing the jug, that is, it was produced with the familiar local imagery in yet another attempt by the pottery to win over sales against the strong colonial prejudice for imported British wares.

Whatever the precise match event that the Football Jug was made to celebrate, it is a particularly important documentary example which, as well as allowing the precise dating of its manufacture, also provides further technical, economic, aesthetic and social data regarding the Holford family of potters and their social context. Even more so than simply providing information, the jug provides a material link effectively recalling aspects of late 19th-century culture in Adelaide. Finally it symbolises the hybridisation of early British ceramic traditions with emerging 19th-century Australian culture and identity.

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2. Ian Evans, *The Lithgow Pottery*, (Flannel Flower Press), Sydney, 1981.
3. Ioannou, op. cit. pp135-136 (and Plate 28).
4. Personal communication with Mr. B. Whimpress, 5/10/90 author of *The South Australian Football Story*, (SANFL), Adelaide, 1983; and Mr. Ian Everett, football historian, 15/10/90.
- Noris Ioannou is an author and freelance writer in the area of Australian material culture. He is currently completing a fellowship awarded by the Visual Arts and Craft Board of the Australia Council. He aims to publish a history of Germanic folk arts and crafts in Australia in 1992.

# Timothy Tillston Jones, Sydney Jeweller

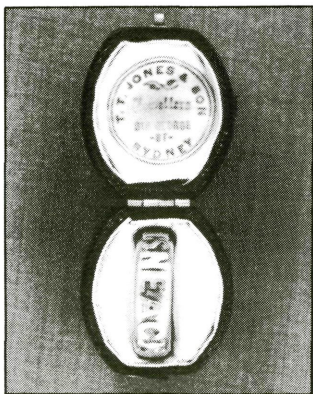
## A Biographical Note

Michel Bernard Raymond

Timothy Tillston Jones was born in London in about 1810 and arrived in Sydney in 1853 where he is said according to Morrison's *Centennial History of New South Wales* (1888), to have established in that year the business of goldsmith, watchmaker and jeweller as an offshoot of "the old firm of T. Jones of Ludgate Hill, London". His father Timothy Jones was a jeweller in London.

Some time after his arrival he apparently went into business with John Walker under the name of Walker & Jones. In the *Sands & Kenny Directory* ("Sands") which was first published for the years 1858/59, he is recorded under the firm name of Walker & Jones. The following advertisement appears in that directory:

**"WALKER & JONES,  
CHRONOMETER,  
WATCH AND CLOCK MAKERS  
GOLDSMITHS & JEWELLERS,  
(NEXT (to) THE BANK ROOMS)  
338, GEORGE STREET, SYDNEY  
Jewellery Manufactured to order on  
the premises in the highest Style of  
Art."**



Ring – 'Misneach', marked 'T.T.J. & Son 18'.

In the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 8 May 1858 the firm's works were described as follows:

### "COLONIAL-MADE

BIJOUTERIE – The other day we had an opportunity of inspecting some very rare and elegant rings, brooches &c; the workmanship of Messrs. Walker & Jones, jewellers, George-Street. They are got up with the greatest skill, the gold used being the product of the New South Wales gold-fields. The diamond rings, in their chasing and setting, display much delicacy and correct taste, and, in all of the minute details, are perfectly unique. But the palm must be awarded to an exquisite revolving brooch, so constituted as, by a very simple and ingenious contrivance, to present, at pleasure, two faces, one displaying a miniature, the other ornamental hair-work. This memorial ornament (for such it is intended to be) is oval shaped, and tastefully encircled with the convolvulus and forget-me-not, in coloured gold, so simple, and yet so true to nature, that nothing could surpass it, except the natural flowers themselves. These articles bear the impress of tasteful originality, and are highly creditable to the talent of the gentlemen by whom they were produced."

Walker & Jones traded at 338 George Street until about 1862, when the partnership was apparently dissolved. In 1863 (there being no Directory published for 1862), Jones is recorded as "T.T. Jones" trading as a jeweller and watchmaker at 330 George Street. He continued at this address until 1875 describing himself variously during this time as "Goldsmith" and "Manufacturing Jeweller". In 1875

he apparently took his son George Frederick D. Jones into partnership for the firm changed its name for 1876 to "T.T. Jones & Son". It continued to trade at 330 George Street until 1879 when the street numbers were changed in the following year to 313 George Street and in 1881 to 316 George Street. The firm continued at this address until about 1917.

According to Morrison the firm "had an extensive establishment in George Street ... A leading feature of the firm is the manufacture of Masonic jewels and regalia, which are turned out on the premises equal in excellence to anything to be obtained in London: in fact, it is not uncommon for the firm to receive orders from the great metropolis of the world. Some exceedingly fine silver plate is manufactured, besides which all the work of a gold and silversmith, watchmaker, and manufacturing jeweller is carried out by twenty-five or thirty hands – in strange contrast with the time when the business occupied the attention of but one."

Subsequently T.T. Jones died at his residence "Langley", 2 Bruce Street, Ashfield on 16 July 1897 survived by his wife Bathsheba Jones and 7 of his 10 children. His son George Frederick D. Jones apparently predeceased him. He left his entire estate to his wife by his will dated 24 February 1863. His estate was valued for probate at the time of his death at 13,299 pounds.

T.T. Jones & Son made large quantities of jewellery. A gold hinged bangle with a central large solid white opal of about 23 carats made in their workshop is illustrated on page 206 of *Australian Jewellery 19th and Early 20th Cen-*

tury by Anne Schofield and Kevin Fahy. This piece has an interesting provenance. It was purchased at an auction held by William S. Ellenden Pty Limited on 28 October 1982 and sold there on behalf of the estate of Madge Reynolds who died in her 96th year on 9 January 1982. The Reynolds were noted sheep and cattle breeders from England. Charles Reynolds accompanied by his younger brother Richard and 2 grooms arrived in Sydney in 1840. After surviving the financial depre-

ssion of 1841, they took a lease of "Tocal" at Patterson in the Hunter Valley. Here they bred prize horses and sheep. After Charles Reynolds' death in 1871 followed by his wife's death in 1900, his son Frank purchased "Tocal" in 1907. Following Frank's death in 1920 his son Darcy (Madge's brother) ran Tocal until it was sold by the Reynolds family in 1926.

Madge Reynolds was a spinster all her life. According to her niece,

who was then in her 70s when Madge died, Madge never wore any jewellery in her lifetime and had inherited this piece from her mother Jeannett Reus Reynolds (whose husband Frank had died in 1920). It is quite likely, therefore, that this bangle was originally purchased from T.T. Jones & Sons shop in George Street at about the time it was made, some time between 1875 and 1879, by one of the Reynolds family.

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## Correspondence

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Dear Editor,

I was most interested to read John Wade's address on the occasion of the tenth Australia day dinner of the Society, on 26th January last year, especially the section describing the portion of the museum - the Maritime Museum - dedicated to memorabilia in connection with Australia-U.S.A. relations.

You may be interested to hear that I recently purchased a miniature edition of an evening newspaper once available in Sydney - *The Evening Gazette*, dated 23rd July, 1925. John mentions in his address, the visit of the American

Fleet to Sydney, 1908. This paper is a commemorative issue, welcoming, once again, the American Fleet to our shores. The headlines are as follows:

### SYDNEY CHEERS AMERICA'S MIGHTY FLEET.

There is a photograph of what appears to be George Street, with an enormous "WELCOME" sign stretched from one side of it to the other. There is much more of course, and many photographs, and many of the advertisements dotted here and there throughout the newspaper, carry messages of welcome to the Fleet. For example, The Dunlop Rubber Company's

advertisement says: "The Dunlop Rubber Company of Australia, Ltd. and their thousands of patrons - tender their cordial welcome to the officers and men of the American Fleet - and wish them a "Bumping" good time.

This advertisement is flanked by the American and Australian flags.

My mother's cousin, who lives in California, is sending me my great grandfather's compass, as she has no children, and thinks that I would be the logical member of the family to have it. My great grandfather was a sea captain.

Yours Faithfully,  
(Mrs) Juliet Cook.

Dear Editor,

The following extract may be of use as an amusing filler for *Australiana*. The book is a good basic guide, and is American, very. Never know where you'll find new information on Australian history do you!

In 1750, in New South Wales, Australia, a settler was trying to find new supplies of tin that he needed to mend pans and to make utensils for his home. Instead of tin, he found a fabulous supply of silver at Broken Hills, a place so named because of its strange shape. His discovery soon made Australia an important producer of silver.

from *SILVER a first book* by Sara Hannum Chase, Franklin Watts, London & New York 1969, this edition 1971.

Yours sincerely,  
Dick Phillips



# Correspondence (Cont)

Dear Editor,

I write to you on two matters. The first is to say how great the article on W.F. Cole was – in fact every issue of the magazine excels. One of the reasons why that particular article was of interest relates to the picture on the front cover on which the photographs of the members of the Manufacturing Jewellers and Silversmiths Association of Queensland appear. That of W. Bishop is Wallace Bishop, who founded the company of that name and that of C. Bishop, (listed as 'Auditor') I suggest is that of Carl Bishop who ran the company after Wallace (and whose son Wallace Jnr took over in the 70s). Carl Bishop (and his wife Jess) were friends of mine through Rotary, both of us having served as President of the Rotary Club of Brisbane. Carl, of course, was much senior to me and he was a past District Governor of Rotary. To hear Carl talk of the jewellers craft over the dinner table (which needed a great deal of urging I might add) was nothing less than spell-binding. Those who have guided the destiny of the jewellers Wallace Bishop have given a great deal not only to the business community in Brisbane but to the community at large.

Before his death Carl gave me a silver teaspoon bearing the Rotary emblem which will be of interest to others only due to the marks punched on the back of the stem. I illustrate them here so that, if others find silver items bearing these marks they may know from whence they emanate (fig 1):

STG. SIL.  W.B.

Figure 1

The second matter on which I write both gives information and seeks it. (I sometimes think our Society should be used more by members needing information for their researches because, whilst one member seeks information another may have it but not realise its significance.) I have discovered a teaspoon by Robert Broad. Whilst this is hardly earth-shattering careful checking uncovers less than a dozen items of flatware bearing this makers mark which would suggest that they are much more scarce than items by Alexander Dick. This may be untrue as the known items seem to come from different canteens the assumption must be that 'there are more out there somewhere'! Mine is of special interest because its provenance is known. It came from the Luke family. Here is the story.

In 1826 James White arrived from England with his wife Sarah and in 1824 they took up property at Bloomfield, Scone which he named Edenglassie.

They had ten children of which William Edward White became the 4th Rector of Muswellbrook; Jane White who married Rev. Skinner Wilson; a son who became Archdeacon White and who built 'The Cottage' which later became the Rectory for St. Albans at Muswellbrook; Francis who married Mary Hannah Cobb; and Sarah who married John Ponsford Luke.

'Meanwhile back at the ranch' on 12th July 1833 John Luke, his wife and two sons (John Ponsford Luke then aged 5 and William Luke then aged 3) arrived in Port Jackson

from England on the *Ester* of 358 tons and which had left England on 21st February of that year.

John Ponsford Luke married Sarah White (see above) and they had three children; Amy Rose (who died aged 5), Lillian who remained unmarried (and who became the companion to her aunt Jane after the death of her uncle Rev. Skinner Wilson); and John William Luke who was born in 1876 and who, in 1899 married into Henry Lawson's family.

In 1898 John William Luke began to manage the property Balandean for Edward White and, 8 years later, bought it and owned it until 1927. John William Luke had 7 children, of whom Viva Sarah Luke was born on 3rd December 1904. She married Franklin James Brown on 21st March 1935 and it is from her that the spoon passed into my possession. She states that it belonged to her great grandfather John Luke who arrived here in 1833. The spoon bears the initial 'L' on the fiddle (as I illustrate in fig 2):



Figure 2

The same engraved mark is on London-made tablespoons bearing the date letter for 1857 so it is possible that the teaspoon by Broad might not have been engraved when purchased but this is conjecture. Broad is not recorded as business until 1833 – the year John Luke arrived. Is this significant? I only ask this because so little is known about Broad, the information published in *Australian Silver 1800-1900* (1973) being virtually repeated in John Hawkins recent



volumes. Presumably this teaspoon is not the only one the Lukes possessed and so more from the canteen probably exist. If so maybe the present owners do not know what the engraved initial 'L' signifies. Although one cannot be sure without proper magnified comparison, there seems a likelihood that the Broad punches were all punched in one go (that is, the spacing and positioning seems the same on all specimens I have noted) and this suggests that, if he prepared such a punch, he probably produced flatware in some quantity. But where has it all gone? The other question

concerns the 'date letter' 'W' which appears among his punches. Did it have some special significance like Dick's 'D' and 'E'? To me it appears to be an attempt by an honest man to give his silver the standing of London-made products. An honest man because, if he wished to imitate London marks he would hardly have used one letter which is not used by the London Assay Office neither would he have put the lion passant round the wrong way. But this all presumes that he was familiar with the London marks. Did he, in fact, come from London?

Maybe, with discovery of more Broad items, we may get further clues. My belief is that there are many pieces of Broad flatware out there waiting to be discovered. Let's hope, when they are unearthed, that their provenance can be preserved. Maybe I'm just an old romantic. To me a spoon is just a spoon, but one with a history among the pastoral families of this country is something else.

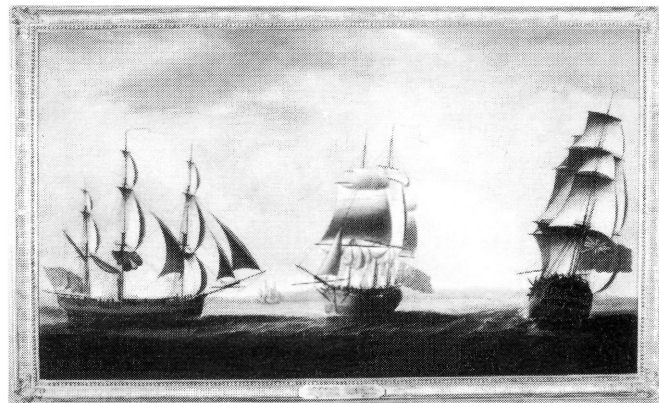
Personal regards,  
Brian Eggleton

## Rare First Fleet Ship Portrait

The Australian National Maritime Museum recently acquired an oil painting of considerable importance to Australian maritime history, a depiction of the First Fleet storeship *Borrowdale* by an important 18th century English maritime painter, Francis Holman. The acquisition was made public shortly before Australia Day, when the arrival of the First Fleet at Sydney Cove is celebrated.

The painting, measuring approximately 735 x 1170mm, was purchased from the Parker Gallery in London. It features the *Borrowdale* depicted from three angles – broadside, bow and stern views – a convention used for the accurate depiction of vessels at a time when their recording in technical drawings was rare. A naval pennant suggests that the painting of the *Borrowdale* is from the period when it was a storeship prior to and during the First Fleet voyage. *Borrowdale* was built at Sunderland, England, in 1785. Lloyds Register lists the ship at 340 tons, rated A1 for 10 years, owned by Leighton and commanded by H Reed.

There are no known detailed depictions of the ship in any collec-



tion in the world. While other First Fleet vessels appear as details in some topographical views (such as the George Raper painting of the wreck of the *Sirius* published in the last issue of *Signals*), only one detailed contemporary image of another First Fleet ship is known to exist. This is believed to be the *Alexander*, and is held by the Port of London Authority.

*Francis Holman, one of the major marine painters of the 18th century,*

*was born in Cornwall and was active from 1760 until his death in 1790. He exhibited at the Free Society and the Royal Academy and was a prolific artist known for his views of shipyards, sea actions and ship portraits. The largest collection of his work is at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich.*

- The Australian National Maritime Museum, Darling Harbour, Sydney will open to the public towards the end of the year.

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# A Vice-Regal Connection with a Piece of Grand Victoriana

Lady Young's Presentation Epergne

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*Peter Mercer*

Early in October last year Dr. A.W.O. Young of Howrah, an Eastern Shore Suburb of Hobart, gave the Tasmanian museum and Art Gallery a piece of significant Australian history which is a reminder of an important period of change in the history of Tasmania.

This object is an elaborate centrepiece for a banquet table on a formal occasion and is referred to as an epergne. Strangely enough the word "epergne" is not French at all but a bogus French name that was given to this particular type of centrepiece in the 18th century to enhance its popularity amongst the middle and upper classes of Great Britain and its Empire.

From their origin in the early 18th century, epergnes rapidly gained popularity as table ornaments for dinner parties and banquets. Although varying greatly in design and character, they were essentially decorative pieces designed to hold fruit, sweetmeats and other delights and decorations in an elevated position at the centre of the table. When complemented with candelabra interspersed with comports and arrangements of flowers they created an impressive and hospitable atmosphere of opulence emphasising that there was indeed in this establishment full and plenty.

Perhaps the pinnacle of popularity of epergnes as centrepieces was in the mid-19th century when this particular example was made. This period in history was one of extraordinary optimism, invention, innovation and general creativity. Artisans, stimulated by the intense competition for perfection created

and generated by this age of the great international exhibitions, were competing vigorously with each other to produce elaborate and superb examples of their craftsmanship. Great pride was taken in the copying of botanical details, such as the entwined grapevines that form the body of this centrepiece, in precise and accurate detail. With this eager pursuit of excellence it is no accident that during this period some of the most flamboyant examples of silversmithing ever conceived by designers were expertly and enthusiastically made by craftsmen in different parts of the western world.

Of course, taste in fashion alters insidiously with the passage of time. Today these organic Victorian extravaganzas celebrating the beauty of nature, such as this centrepiece, may not be to everyone's taste, but they were in their day considered splendid creations and were much admired and treasured. All things considered, these objects are undeniably works of art requiring skill and patience in their execution and must be always recognised as such.

The manufacturer of this excellent example from the high Victorian period of fashion was the old and respected firm of Thomas Bradbury and Sons, a company associated with Sheffield Plating since 1750. Bradburys was actively engaged in the manufacture of silver and plate at Sheffield until just a few years ago.

Engraved at the base of the epergne is the inscription: "Presented/as a fairwell gift to/Lady Young by the Ladies of Tasmania/in

evidence of their warm regard/and as a tribute of their esteem won by the/actions of her public and private life/November 28th, 1861."

Lady (Augusta Sophia) Young was the young wife of Sir Henry Edward Fox Young, a bewiskered, kindly, middle-aged gentleman with a long record of efficient service in public administration in the British Colonial Service. He and his wife arrived in the colony on 6th January 1855 to succeed Lieutenant Governor William Denison who had been appointed Governor of New South Wales, Young was the first Vice-Regal representative to be made Governor-in-Chief of Van Diemen's Land and had come from South Australia where he had been Lieutenant Governor since 1848.<sup>1</sup> Later in his term of office in Tasmania he had the distinction and pleasure of achieving a long held ambition amongst governors and that was of moving from the ramshackle and decaying Vice-Regal residence on the shore of Sullivan's Cove to the grand new neo-gothic building on the Queen's Domain, incomplete as it then was. This took place on 2 January 1858.<sup>2</sup>

When Sir Henry and Lady Young arrived in Van Diemen's Land the colony was enjoying a period of prosperity generated by the boom conditions of the gold rush in Victoria. Since the close of the 1840s depression and widespread unemployment had been replaced by a renewed optimism in the future brought about by the gold rush in the territory of California across the other side of the Pacific. At one stage shipments of food, equipment and even livestock were leaving

Hobart Town each week for, what had become almost overnight, a lucrative and insatiable market.<sup>3</sup>

In 1851 the frenzy of "gold fever" turned rapidly from California to Australia as the eyes of the world focussed on the glittering finds in Victoria. For the farmers and pastoralists of Van Diemen's Land the huge market that they had at their doorstep, across the Straight, to exploit was a bonanza. But it also had repercussions that were less fortunate. While the market for almost every commodity that Van Diemians were able to produce was practically limitless the labour force needed to produce these products had rapidly disappeared. During the first year of the Victorian gold rush no less than 33 per cent of the adult male population left the island leaving far too few hands to till the fields and harvest the crops. When land under cultivation should have dramatically increased to meet demands it actually declined alarmingly. Farm labour, formerly cheap and plentiful, became scarce and costly setting in action an inflationary trend in prices over which there was little control. Conditions were, to a lesser degree, much the same on the mainland. As prices for basic goods soared to hitherto unknown heights, poverty and drunkenness, particularly in the underprivileged inner urban centres of Hobart Town and Launceston, reached worrying proportions. For those of the unskilled working classes who had not the opportunity or means to get to the goldfields it became almost impossible to make ends meet and deserted wives with families to support were a particular problem. Solace was to be had in the public houses of which Hobart Town at the time was very well endowed.<sup>4</sup>

By 1855, when the Youngs arrived, the depopulation that had been taking place over the past four years had taken its toll. Although there were some developments in the public sector empty houses and

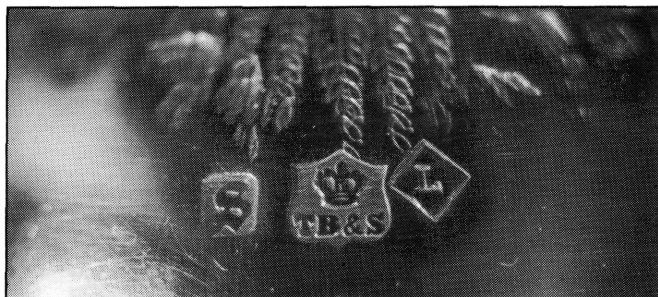
closed shops were commonplace. To add to this rather depressing scenario of underpopulation, scars were still visible from catastrophes that had struck less than a year before, bushfire followed by flood had created havoc, partially destroying the city centre particularly affecting the densely populated and squalid area along the rivulet.<sup>5</sup>

Lady Young soon became deeply concerned and involved in efforts to right some of the inequities of the social structure of Hobart Town. She saw the widening of the gap that was currently taking place between the wealthy and the poor as a particularly unhealthy social trend. The moral tone of the community was fearfully low and there was a spirit of intense selfishness and distrust pervading. Current conditions were polarising further the pronounced social divisions that had existed for many years between the free settlers and the emancipist class, as the ex-convicts were called.<sup>6</sup> There were, of course, people who cared about the inequities of Tasmanian society and tried to do something about it. One was the Governor's lady. During her husband's term of office Lady Young earned wide respect for the energetic support and patronage that she gave to charitable organisations such as the Hobart Benevolent Society and the Hobart Maternal and Dorcas Society whose members were actively involved in trying to assist those in need.<sup>7</sup>

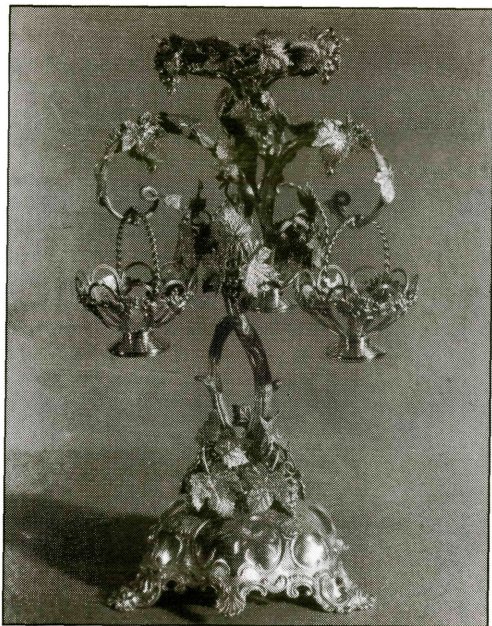
Politically exciting times were ahead for the island colony. Van Diemen's Land was on the threshold of momentous change. The transition from a police state and penal colony to a free self-governing embryonic nation was underway.

Only two years before in 1853 Van Diemen's Land had the ignominious distinction of being the sole destination for all the convicts transported from Great Britain. Now in 1855 the cessation of transportation had left a community that was also divided politically but, as Van Diemen's Land was no longer a penal colony, the mechanism was firmly in place for responsible government, with a constitution framed by the colonists to suit local conditions and aspirations, albeit modelled on the British system. The structure of colonial society was changing rapidly with the old order of civil servants and landed gentry giving way to a nouveau riche artisan and merchant class.

Less than seven months than after his arrival, Sir Henry Young, to the joy of the entire population, received advice from the Secretary of State for the Colonies that the long preferred unofficial name of Tasmania was to be officially substituted for the despised name of Van Diemen's Land, which carried the stigma of a sordid and sinister past. Fifteen months later the first fully elected parliament in Tasmania was opened by the Governor on 1 November 1856.<sup>8</sup>



Makers mark for Thos. Bradbury & Sons.



The Epergne. Height 49.5cm

Young then had the task of installing one of the newly elected politicians as Premier and seeing that the new system worked. He had to take care to choose someone who had some idea of the machinery of responsible government and public finances and who was popular enough amongst his colleagues to form a ministry. After three short and turbulent ministries stability was achieved.<sup>9</sup> In May 1857 Francis Smith presided over a strong government which lasted until 1860. Young at last felt that he could withdraw from politics and become a figurehead, assuming more or less the role and responsibilities that the governor of an Australian State still has today.

In 1861 Sir Henry Young resigned the office of Governor of Tasmania. Towards the end of the year, as his departure for England drew near, he and Lady Young attended farewell events in both the southern and northern regions of Tasmania.

The epergne is the result of a grand farewell event that was held in the new Government House ballroom at 4 p.m. on Thursday, 28 November 1861. Between 200-300 people were present, including the Chief Justice Sir Valentine Fleming, and Archdeacon Davies. This event was in honour of Lady Young and in particular to thank her for her supportiveness of the charitable work of the Ladies of the Colony.

The *Mercury*<sup>10</sup> reported that "Mrs Knight, president of the committee, presented the roll and a purse containing 216 pounds. She said, "Lady Young, I present this in the name of the Ladies signing the address. With it we wish you to buy a piece of plate in remembrance of this day."

Lady Young responded and concluded by saying, "With your generous gift I shall have much pleasure in procuring a valuable souvenir of this day though I shall need nothing to remind me of the many kind friends I have here or of the seven happy years I have passed in Tasmania."

The ladies of the committee and finally all the ladies in the room shook hands with Lady Young and said their last goodbye.

Lady Young returned to England with her handsome gift, bought the "piece of plate" as requested and had it engraved with the same words which were dictated by Mrs Knight in the address.

After the death of Lady Young in 1913 it was handed down through her family<sup>11</sup> and Dr. A.W.O. Young, her great grandson, presented it to the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.

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11. Dr. Young's grandfather was born at Government House in Adelaide in 1849 and returned to England with his parents in 1861. Some years later, as an adult, he returned to Adelaide, South Australia, to live. The epergne was sent out to him with other items of property after the death of Lady Young.

Photographs: Jan Stanczyk.





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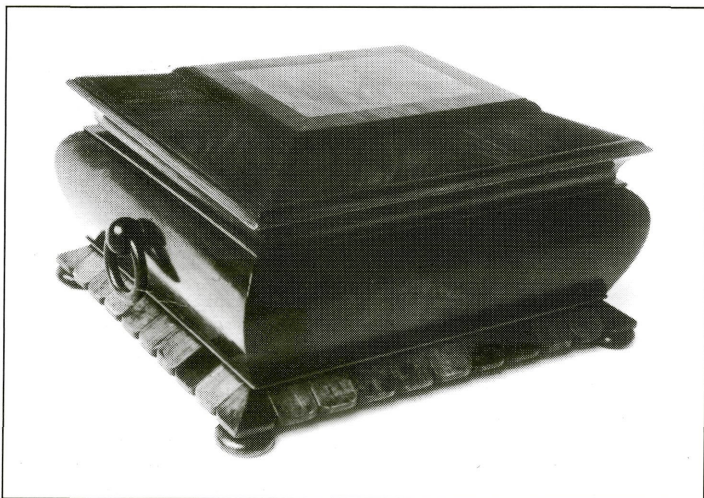


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