
AUSTRALIANA

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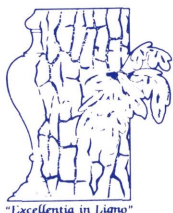


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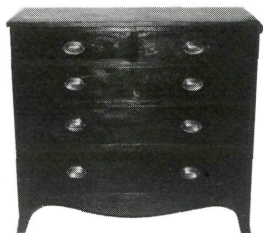


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CONTENTS

32 SOCIETY PROGRAMME 1994

33 SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT — Literary Award Prize

ARTICLES

34 Australian Dictionary of Biography

36 Quo Vadis Toona australia — David Bedford

37 Cattai Homestead — Caressa Crouch

38 Robert Prenzel — His Life and Work — Terence Lane

42 The Carpenter's Workshop and Furniture Making at the Sydney Lumber Yard in 1821 and 1822 — R.A. Crosbie

49 The Elizabeth Rouse Mourning Brooch — Scott Carlin

53 From the Editor's Desk

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Cover: Koala panel, 1917, by Robert Prenzel. Mountain ash, 77.0 cm H. Private collection.

THE AUSTRALIANA SOCIETY

25 TERRY STREET, BLAKEHURST 2221



— SOCIETY PROGRAMME —

MEETINGS — 1994

THURSDAY,
2 JUNE

Expert Panel and Discussion: Convened and Chaired by
Mr Kevin Fahy
FURNITURE CONSERVATION PANEL – To include:
Mr JULIAN BICKERSTETH – Managing Director of
International Conservation Services, Chatswood NSW.
Mr PAUL GREGSON – Director of Restoration and
Conservation – Gregson's Conservation of Antique Furniture,
Thornleigh NSW.
Ms ANNE WATSON – Curator of Decorative Arts and Design,
Powerhouse Museum, Sydney NSW.
NOTE: 8pm start for Panel Discussion (No 'Australiana Showcase')

THURSDAY,
4 AUGUST

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and "Australiana Showcase"
– "Show and Tell".

THURSDAY,
6 OCTOBER

Guest Speaker to be announced.

THURSDAY,
1 DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS PARTY.

Society meetings are held at 7.30pm at the Glover Cottage Hall,
124 Kent Street, Sydney. Convenient street parking.
Drinks served 7.30 - 8.00 pm, followed by Australiana Showcase
(bring your Australian treasures for general discussion).
Lectures will commence at 8.30 pm.

Special Announcement

THE POWERHOUSE PRIZE FOR 'AUSTRALIANA'

The Australiana Society and the Powerhouse Museum announce that the POWERHOUSE PRIZE FOR AUSTRALIANA, sponsored by Simpsons Antiques, for 1993 was awarded to **Dr Dorothy Erickson** for her article, "English and the

Australian Eastern Colonies' Involvement in Jewellery and Silver-smithing in Western Australia", which was published in *Australiana*, Vol 15, No 1 (February 1993).

The overall quality of the articles considered by the judges made their task difficult.

Entries for the **1994 Award**

must be submitted prior to 1 December, 1994 and entries are invited from members of the Society as well as non-members.

Articles published in the Society's journal during 1994 will be eligible, however previous entries (which might be published in 1994) are excluded.

Rules for Literary Award Prize

1. All entries are to be typed in double spacing; must reach the Editor no later than Thursday, 1 December 1994, and can be submitted by members and non-members (other than judges).
2. To be eligible all entries must be on a subject relating to Australiana and preferably be an item of original research. All illustrations for articles are to be supplied.
3. The authors for all articles submitted for the prize agree that the Society can publish those articles in the Society's journal whether or not a prize is awarded.
4. Articles previously published other than in the Society's journal during 1994, will not be considered.
5. The winning article will receive a prize of \$250 to be presented at the Society's Australia Day Dinner in 1995.
6. The judges will be appointed by the Society's Committee.
7. The judges' decision will be final and no correspondence will be entered into. The judges reserve the right not to award the prize if, in their opinion, the entries are not of a sufficiently high standard.
8. Articles received after Thursday, 1 December 1994 will be eligible for the 1995 award.

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A small sculpture of a draped woman in silver metal in the form of a trophy, by the Australian sculptor Stanely Hammond who was born in Victoria in 1913, and awarded an M.B.E. for sculpture and services to the Arts in 1974.

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Australian Dictionary of Biography

The April meeting of the Australiana Society was addressed by Dr John Ritchie, General Editor of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. He spoke enthusiastically of that publication which must be the greatest publishing undertaking in Australia to date. Its thirteen volumes with three yet to come will bring us up to 1980. They are essential reading for everyone interested in Australia's history and those included individuals who have contributed to it.

THE PUBLICATION

Following the precedents of the *British Dictionary of National Biography* and the *Dictionary of American Biography*, nearly twenty countries are engaged in building similar memorials to their 'mighty dead'. The *Australian Dictionary of Biography* comprises twelve volumes of lives of the more important figures in Australian history during the period 1788 to 1939. The 12th volume in the series was published in 1990. The twelve volumes are divided into three time slabs. Volumes 1 and 2 contain articles about people prominent between 1788-1850; Volumes 3-6, the period 1851-1890; and Volumes 7-12, the years 1891-1939. An Index Volume was produced in 1991 covering the seven thousand articles which the twelve volumes contain. Planning has already commenced for a fourth series which will cover the 1940-1980 period in four volumes, 13 to 16. Volume 13, A-De, was published in 1993.

The *Australian Dictionary of Biography* had its beginnings in 1957 when a conference in Canberra of representatives of university history departments throughout the country supported the concept of a large-scale biographical project.

From this meeting there developed a national committee; an editorial board chaired successively by Professors Sir Keith Hancock, J.A. La Nauze and K.S. Inglis, all of the Australian National University's Research School of Social Sciences; State and specialist working parties; and a small central staff. Professor Douglas Pike was appointed founding general editor in 1962; on his death in 1974, Mr N.B. Nairn was appointed to produce Volume 6, and next year he and Dr A.G. Serle were made joint general editors. Mr Nairn retired in 1984 and Dr Serle in 1987. In 1988 Dr John Ritchie succeeded Serle as general editor. The RSSS at ANU has financed the project almost entirely. About 2500 authors from every State, by no means all academics, have contributed, while countless local and overseas advisers in learned and professional societies, archives, libraries, public offices and elsewhere have given cordial assistance.

The ADB is a standard work of reference and a research tool consulted by hundreds of scholars, students and the general public. It has to be as accurate as possible, given the complexity of biographical research; it also has to be readable. It has consolidated knowledge of the most important figures in Australian history and sharply etched in many who previously were shadowy or unknown. Through its close scrutiny of the lives of those who have played a significant part in Australia's past, it has been at the cutting edge of Australian historical research, pioneering new interpretations or reappraisals or previous historical writing. As the director of Melbourne University Press, Mr John Iremonger, has said, the ADB has 'quietly reshaped the way Australian history is written'. In addition, the ADB's accumula-

tion of information has stimulated research in many areas of Australian history where access was difficult. Above all, the ADB is a national, co-operative enterprise of a kind which fulfils one of the original purposes of the Australian National University.

Reflecting the realities of Australian regionalism, the ADB is a highly decentralised organisation. Working on such a large scale, no general editor or central editorial group could possibly choose which of the minor figures is worthy of inclusion or judge the relative importance of these entries. The State working parties, who are allotted a quota based on demographical analysis, select their State lists and give advice on appropriate contributors. Since work began on the 1891-1939 period, an Armed Services and a Commonwealth working party have carried out similar functions. The recommendations for inclusion and for authors are checked, on a national level, by advice from experts in specialised areas such as business-historians, art-historians or sport-historians. Few important figures in Australia's past escape the net.

In each appropriate volume the great people in Australian history receive up-to-date judgements in articles of 2,000 to 6,000 words; another one hundred or so are covered in entries that range in length from 1,000 to 2,000 words. Yet the ADB does not pretend to be setting up a pantheon of immortals. While our volumes cover the orthodox fields of politics, business, religion, the land and the professions, they also attempt to reflect the rich variety of Australian life by including representatives of almost every occupation — shearers, drovers, governesses, nurses, undertakers, marine engineers, bag-pipers, circus

proprietors, axemen, trumpeters, ballroom-dancers, murderers, bush-rangers and confidence-men. The 'lives' of such people are usually given 500 to 750 words. The ADB prides itself on its blend of elitism and egalitarianism. Where else could one find between one set of covers a scholarly essay on Sir John Monash (by his biographer) and a rollicking account of the adventures of Herbert Dyce Murphy who travelled the French railways as a spy in the guise of a woman? Launching Volume 10 in 1986, Sir Keith Hancock, judged that the ADB had surpassed its British counterpart; it was more scholarly in its greater use of primary sources and more adventurous in its inclusion of people 'widely representative of endeavour and achievement on every front of our experience as an emergent nation'.

The ADB staff has also created a Biographical Register, designed to provide a pool from which names could be drawn for use in the ADB. Since its establishment they have examined hundreds of different historical sources seeking biographical evidence. This evidence, drawn from newspapers, magazines, books, parliamentary papers and many other publications, is recorded in a card index which now contains an estimated 300,000 cards. The indexes are freely available to any researcher. They are consulted by academic workers throughout Australia, by government departments and by private citizens pursuing their own interests. Some consult the register personally, some write and some telephone.

The wide potential public interest in the register was recognised soon after the ADB unit was established. In 1959 and 1963 duplicated publications, called biographical register short lists, were issued containing abbreviated versions of a selection of the register cards. The public approval of and demand for these publications made it obvious that an extended list would have to be published; this work is now completed, covering about 8,000 entries each of about 50 words, including people from all over Australia who are *not* in the main ADB project: H.J. Gibbney and Ann G. Smith (eds), *A Biographical Register 1788-1939*, 2 vols, is priced at \$27.80 the set (p+p included) and available from Bibliotech, ANU, GPO Box 4, Canberra, ACT, 2601.

COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ADB

Who is in it?

Men and women who have made a significant contribution to Australian history, and others chosen as samples of the Australian experience. No living person is included.

How are they selected?

Working parties in each State choose the names to be included.

Who writes the entries?

About 2,500 voluntary contributors, including professional and amateur historians, and many others with special knowledge.

What do we do in Canberra?

We edit the articles (particularly

for length) and check important details, such as dates and proper names. We also write some of the entries ourselves.

How do you use the ADB?

There are four time slabs in which articles are arranged alphabetically. Within each time slab people are chosen for when they did their most important work. Thus in Volumes 1 and 2 are articles, in alphabetical order, about people who flourished between 1788-1850; Volumes 3, 4, 5 and 6 are on people who flourished between 1851-1890; Volumes 7 to 12 cover the period 1891-1939; and Volumes 13 to 16 the years 1940-1980.

Does it have pictures?

No.

How often is it published?

Approximately one volume every two years. Volume 13 was published in 1993.

Where can you read it or buy it?

Major public libraries have the series on their reference shelves, and it can be bought from all good booksellers or from Melbourne University Press.

For further information and inquiries please contact:

Australian Dictionary of Biography
Research School of Social Sciences
Australian National University
GPO Box 4,
Canberra City, ACT 2601
Telephone: (06) 249 2676
Telex: AA 62694 SOPAC
Fax: (06) 257 1893

Contributions Please ...

We require articles urgently for our *Australiana* journal.

We would appreciate if our members doing research into aspects of *Australiana* "would put pen to paper and let us have the fruits of your labours for publication".

Please forward your submissions to: The Editor, *Australiana*, PO Box 322, Roseville NSW 2069.
Fax (02) 416 7143.



Quo vadis *Toona australis*?

David Bedford

Toona australis, Australian Red Cedar, is now regarded as the same species as one of the Indian cedars!

Australian Red Cedars has for many years been known by the botanical name *Toona australis*. That is, it is in the genus *Toona* and was named *australis*, by the botanist Ferdinand von Mueller. This statement is actually a simplification, as Red Cedar used to be regarded as belonging to the genus *Cedrela*, and von Mueller described it as *Cedrela australis* in 1858 (see also end note 1). Another botanist, Hermann Harms, decided in 1897 that Australian Red Cedar was quite different to species that really belonged in the genus *Cedrela* (the real cedrelas), so he moved it into the genus *Toona*, which had been named in 1846 by Roemer. Botanists therefore put the author and history of authorship after the name as *Toona australis* (F. von Muell.) Harms.

To understand what has happened we need a little bit of background into why botanical names can change.

Botanists do not change names on whim, they have to have good reasons, and follow a code of botanical naming rules. However, plant names can change for a number of reasons. To oversimplify a very complex situation I will divide the reasons into three categories or principles: 'historical principles', 'misidentifications' and 'new knowledge'.

Historical principles may be simplified to the matter of priority. This means that the first validly given name for a species is usually regarded as being the correct name for that species. This is a vast over-

simplification, but will do for the present context. The 'misidentification' category covers the situation where a plant may have been misidentified, that is, given an inappropriate name, a long time ago. When this is discovered, the original (correct) name that should have been applied all along is used from then on. In the 'new knowledge' category modern research may discover perhaps that there are more than one species included under a single name. In this case, one of the original species keeps the old name, and new names are applied to the other entities. The other application of this principle arises when modern research finds that there is really only one species being given more than one name. This has sometimes happened when a species is found in more than one region or country. Before modern communication developed it often happened that each country's botanists recognised their own species (as native), but either did not look at, or did not consider, species from other countries to see if they were the same. When another botanist looks at all the species in a group, in all the countries they occur, they may find that two or more names are used for the one species. When this happens the historical principle comes into play: the oldest valid name replaces all the other names.

Back to *Toona australis*. Researchers David Mabberley and co-workers in Oxford in England have been looking at all the genera and species in the plant Family Meliaceae, the family that includes Australian Red Cedar. They found, to their surprise, that Australian Red Cedar is botanically indistinguishable from a species of cedar growing in India, *Toona ciliata*.

Furthermore, *Toona ciliata* was named first, in 1846, by a botanist called Max Roemer. Under the principle of priority the name *Toona ciliata* takes precedence and replaces *Toona australis*.

So much for the botany and nomenclature. What does this really mean for collectors of Australian furniture? Fortunately, not as much as might be feared.

Clearly, the prospect of Indian furniture made with *Toona ciliata* being sold as Australian furniture is a threatening thing for Australian buffs. There are a number of critical questions: How much Anglo-Indian furniture was made using *Toona ciliata*? How much Anglo-Indian furniture is there in Australia? Are there other characteristics of Anglo-Indian furniture that distinguish it from Australian furniture?

The answer to the first question is difficult. There does not appear to be much information available about Anglo-Indian furniture or its manufacture. It is clear that much Anglo-Indian furniture was made in other timbers such as Teak, and in some other species of *Toona* that occur in India. David Mabberley has told me that he believes that *Toona ciliata* was not a favoured timber in India, as it was softer, and being less aromatic, is less insect repellent than some of its relatives. However, one must presume that at least some of their furniture may have been made in *Toona ciliata*.

The second question is also difficult, although information concerning Australia's historical connections with India does exist and more information is now coming to light. In particular, research by James Broadbent, and a recent article by

Jessie Serle in *Fabrications* (June 1993) has provided evidence of ample opportunities and of some particular pieces of Anglo-Indian furniture that were imported in the early 1800s (personal communication J. Broadbent).

Fortunately, the answer to the last question is much more positive than to the first two. Known examples of Anglo-Indian furniture are quite distinctive in their decoration compared to Australian furniture. In general, Anglo-Indian furniture seems to be more highly decorated than Australian furniture of the same period. Solid timber furniture often has distinctive plant motif and floral embellishment in raised carving. Veneered or inlaid work may have similar motifs inlaid.

Veneered furniture where the carcase is cedar, and the veneer is a different Australian timber is cer-

tainly of Australian manufacture, but cedar pieces veneered with non-Australian timbers must be suspect unless style, decoration or labels declare them to be Australian.

ENDNOTE 1

Another complication arises with the name *Cedrela toona*, described by Roxburgh in 1803 from India. Maiden (1902) noted "Bentham looks upon our Red Cedar as identical with *C. toona*" – Mueller disagreed with this assessment. Casimire de Candolle agreed with Mueller that Red cedar should be kept as distinct from *Cedrela toona*.

Thus four names have been used to describe the one species:

Cedrela australis F. von Muell.
Toona australis Harms
Cedrela toona Roxb.
Toona ciliata Roem.

However, most people followed Mueller, so *Toona australis* became the generally accepted name.

References

- Ferdinand von Mueller (1858), *Fragmenta phytographiae Australiae* vi no 4. [Named it *Cedrela australis* (Sect..) *Toona*.]
Hermann Harms (1897) In A. Engler Die *Naturl. Pflanzenfamilien* edn 1 3(4): 270. Leipzig. (Separated Australian red cedar from the genus *Toona* and put it into *Cedrela*.)
Roemer, M.J. (1846) *Familiarum naturalium regni vegetabilis synopses Monographicae Hesperidum* 1: 139. Weimar.

Acknowledgment

Anthony Whalen of the National Herbarium of NSW checked numerous references and made helpful suggestions for this paper.

*Written whilst at the Royal Botanical Gardens, Sydney, now at Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens, Hobart Tasmania 7000.

Cattai Homestead

Caressa Crouch

Cattai State Recreation Area, Wisemans Ferry Road, Cattai 2756, tel (045) 72 8404. House opened only Sunday and Public Holiday 11am-4pm. Fee. (Entry fee to the State Park only.)

Thomas Arndell, Assistant Surgeon on the First Fleeter *Friendship* was granted 243 hectares at Cattai by Governor Phillip, and settled the grant with wife Elizabeth around 1803.

The present homestead dates from the 1820s with a sympathetic extension of two wings by architect

Bruce Dellit in the 1930s.

Cattai was the home to seven generations of the Arndell family for over 177 years until being sold by the Arndells to the State Government in 1980.

Although furniture is sparse, with most pieces relating to the 1930s' period of the extension, one or two early pieces remain, along with a "make-do" butterbox cupboard/wardrobe, covered in printed cotton, made by the English housemaid Ada Simpson for her clothes.

The main house, except for the added dormers in the roof is basically original, and combined with family history and photographs gives an insight into the hardships encountered by the generations of Arndell's in their attempts to wrestle a living from the land.

Farming was abandoned in the 1950s when the property was converted to a private recreation park, so a visit to the homestead should be combined with a picnic in the park by the Cattai River.

FORTHCOMING EXHIBITION: Robert Prenzel – His Life and Work

3 JUNE-11 JULY 1994, GROUND FLOOR, SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS GALLERY, NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA, SPONSORED BY THE TIMBER PROMOTION COUNCIL

Sixty years ago J.J. Simons predicted that one day there would be "connoisseurs who will look at a magnificent wood carving and say with conviction 'That's a Prenzel', just as they say now, 'That's a Rembrandt', or 'That's a Corot'." Robert Prenzel (1866-1941) was a brilliant Prussian carver who settled in Melbourne in 1888. In the early

years of this century he had the idea of grafting Australian floral and faunal motifs onto the flowing lines of the international Art Nouveau style. His 'Gum-nut Art Nouveau' furniture captured the mood and aspirations of newly-federated Australia and for ten years, from 1905 to 1915, he was cabinet-maker by appointment to Melbourne and

Western District society.

Prenzel was born at Kittlitz-treben, in south east Prussia on 30 March 1866. During his childhood his family moved to Elbing (now Elblag, Poland), a seaport town near Danzig (now Gdańsk) on the Baltic Sea, Prussia's northern border. It was in Elbing that Prenzel was apprenticed at the age of four-



Plate 1. The 'Welcome' hall seat c.1905, Blackwood, 128.0 cm H. National Gallery of Victoria. Presented through The Art Foundation of Victoria by Mrs Judy Rozner, Governor, 1985.

teen to the town carver, Ernst Gebauer. Prenzel later described Gebauer, who had studied at the Munich Akademie, "as a fine artist and a splendid teacher. He suffered neither fools nor idlers at his benches, so that many fine craftsmen passed through his hands. For four years we worked, six days a week, ten hours a day, studying every phase of the mechanical and technical sides. The art of design, group-placing, massing effects for light and shade. There was no "scuffing" work in those days; "the best all the time" was the slogan. Failing that – out you went!"

After completing his apprenticeship, Prenzel spent the next four years as a journeyman, working his way through Europe. This period of travel exposed him to the works of the masters of his craft, both historical and contemporary, and we know, for example, that he studied Viet Stoss' (c. 1450-1533) famous Gothic retablo of the Life, Death and Assumption of the Virgin in the Frauen Kirche in Cracow. Of contemporary makers he most admired Valentino Besarel (1829-1902) of Venice, and Luigi Frullini (1839-97) of Florence, two of the most celebrated virtuoso carvers of the day.

During the latter part of the 19th century Australia was seen in Germany as a land of opportunity, and several colonial governments actively wooed German settlers through sponsorship and other forms of subsidised emigration. Prenzel was somehow exposed to this campaign and decided to migrate. He arrived in "Marvellous Melbourne" on 24 November 1888. Prenzel initially found work with a ship builder but soon met and was employed by Otto Waschatz (1855-1936), a Dresden-born and trained modeller who supplied many of the elaborate plaster and cement decorations for the boom-style buildings of the late 1880s. In 1891 Prenzel set up in business with a Danish-born ivory carver and turner, Johann Christian Treede (1863-

1920). Treede & Prenzel were "Architectural Carvers, Modellers and Designers" and designed and made to order "Artistic Furniture in any Style". Most of that furniture seems to have been in the elaborate Renaissance-revival style in which both men had been trained in Europe. Treede & Prenzel also worked as contract carvers and in 1894, for example, carved the ceiling and upper walls of the west nave of St Patrick's Cathedral, East Melbourne. Later in the 1890s they were employed as designers and makers by Nunan Bros., one of the city's largest furniture emporia.

The Treede & Prenzel partnership was dissolved in 1901 and Prenzel continued on his own at the firm's South Melbourne address. His work at this time showed the impact of the international Art Nouveau style which had just peaked in Europe. Prenzel clearly kept in touch with overseas developments through correspondence, visitors to Melbourne, and art and trade journals. He owned, for example, a copy of *Meubles de Style Moderne*, the illustrated record of the furniture at the Exposition Universelle in Paris in 1900. The forms of Prenzel's early Art Nouveau furniture tended to be fairly conservative and rectilinear, with a certain experimentation with asymmetry, but the surfaces were covered with writhing flowers, tendrils, griffins and other grotesque creatures. Around 1905 the tempest seems to have died down a little and his work approached more closely to that of Louis Majorelle, the great French master of Art Nouveau whose furniture was featured in *Meubles de Style Moderne*. The first major work of this new, quieter phase was a bedroom suite for Steuart and Isabella Black of Glenormiston in Victoria's Western District. The Blacks were members of one of the leading pastoral families in the State and their homestead, Glenormiston was one of the most famous in the District. The

Black's patronage and the stylishness of the Glenormiston suite, with its gently flowing lines and elegant waterlily carvings, opened the doors of Melbourne and Western District society to Prenzel. The next major commission came from Miss May Moat (soon to become Mrs Percy Mathias), Isabella Black's sister, who was visiting from Canada. She ordered, as a souvenir of her visit, a virtual replica of the Glenormiston suite, but with Australian motifs substituted for the waterlilies. Prenzel had been fascinated by the Australian flora since his arrival in this country in 1888, and had used isolated motifs in his work since 1900. In the Mathias suite he grafted Australian floral sprays onto whiplash stems and populated many of the panels with native birds and animals. The formula was a winning one in those nationalistic days and the suite caused "quite a little sensation" when it was shown in Prenzel's workshop prior to its despatch to Montreal. Many orders followed and the workshop was stretched to cope with the volume of work. At about this time, 1910, Prenzel moved his workshop to Toorak Road, South Yarra, the main thoroughfare of the fashionable suburbs of Toorak and South Yarra, where many of his customers lived.

Although Prenzel had become an Australian citizen in 1897, he fell victim to and saw his business almost destroyed by the vicious anti-German campaign which accompanied the First World War. After the war the mood of Australian society seemed to have changed and the demand for Prenzel's furniture, with its innocent nationalism and lingering traces of Art Nouveau, was greatly diminished. There was, however, a continuing market for the framed panels of Australian birds and animals, particularly kookaburras and koalas, which he had begun making just before the war. Curiously enough, there was a strong demand, too, for his honour boards – those

"rolls of honour" which organisations and societies erected to commemorate their war dead. Prenzel brilliantly revived and naturalised the stilted idiom, grafting eucalyptus sprays onto the conventional Gothic forms of the old

world. His services were also in demand as an heraldic carver and he supplied important sets of Australian "coats of arms" to the Commonwealth Railways for the Transcontinental Railway's State Car for the Prince of Wales' use

during the Royal visit of 1921, and for the rooms of the Young Australia League in Perth and Brisbane in 1931 and 1932.

The mainstay of Prenzel's business after the war, however, was ecclesiastical work. The churches



Plate 2. Wardrobe from the Mathias suite 1906, Blackbean, 222.9 cm H. National Gallery of Victoria, purchased 1972.



Plate 3. Koala panel 1917, Mountain ash, 77.0 cm H. Private collection.

knew he was the best carver in town and disregarded the spurious racial campaign against him. His main customers were the Anglican

(particularly High Church) and Roman Catholic denominations and he supplied important work to churches such as St John's, Toorak,

the chapel of Xavier College, Kew, and Our Lady of Victories, Camberwell. His own Lutheran denomination patronised him, too, and he made altars and pulpits for Lutheran communities across Victoria, particularly in the Western District, Wimmera and Mallee.

Prenzel closed his Toorak Road shop in 1930 and went into semi-retirement at his home at Black Rock. Some major commissions were undertaken there but he subcontracted out the carpentry work and personally undertook only the carving. He continued working until his death on 15 July 1941.

Robert Prenzel was one of the most highly-skilled professional carvers to have worked in Australia. He made important contributions as an architectural modeller, ecclesiastical carver and as a champion of the beauty and usefulness of Australian timbers. Most of all, though, he will be remembered for his brilliant naturalisation of the Art Nouveau style and for his creation of a style of furniture that expressed the pride and confidence of federated Australia.

This retrospective exhibition includes carvings and furniture from all phases of Prenzel's fifty-year working life in Melbourne, from the early pieces in the Renaissance-revival style to the late ecclesiastical commissions. It draws heavily on the rich Prenzel holdings of the Gallery and features important loans from local, interstate and overseas collections, including the panels from the famous Glenormiston staircase of 1909, which have been in Britain since the 1940s.

The exhibition is expected to restore Robert Prenzel's reputation as a major Australian craftsman. (A definitive catalogue will be available at the exhibition.)

Photographs courtesy National Gallery of Victoria.

TERENCE LANE

Senior Curator of Decorative Arts
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The Carpenter's Workshop and Furniture Making at The Sydney Lumber Yard in 1821 and 1822

R.A. Crosbie

In January 1817 Major George Druitt 48th Regiment succeeded Captain Gill 46th Regiment as Acting Civil Engineer and Artillery Officers. Druitt immediately instigated a series of reforms to the Engineers Department. The roads in Sydney were remade and the Town Gang of convict labourers reorganised. Building of the Hyde Park Barracks was completed in June 1819 and the government convicts in Sydney called into barracks. To provide additional accommodation the Carter's Barracks was built in Sydney and a Convict Barracks erected at Parramatta. The bulk of the convicts were provided with lodgings and the previous practice of allowing convicts to work for employers after 3pm abolished. Druitt reformed the labour regulations and restructured the organisation of convict labour in the employment of government¹. Governor Macquarie's policy was to absorb the escalating convict population into his public works program. The workshops in the Lumber Yards in Sydney and Parramatta provided the structure for Macquarie's ambitious public works. The building program, and the bureaucracy created to administer it, generated a demand for furniture for government offices and for officials. Some furniture was obtained by purchase from the private sector but the majority was probably made in the government workshops. Before Druitt's reorganisation of the Engineers Department furniture was made in the government workshops but his expansion allowed more extensive production to be undertaken². The workshops absorbed a large number of skills convicts

and the priority under Macquarie's administration was to reserve the best mechanics for the use of government. This and the new labour regulations of June 1819 restricted the supply of labour to the private contractors and settlers. When Commissioner Bigge arrived in the Colony to enquire into Macquarie's administration he was presented with numerous accounts of Macquarie's extravagance and government's monopoly of skilled labour. The administration in England had resolved to cut costs and saw a distribution of convicts to free agriculturalists as the means of reducing expenditure on convicts³.

Sir Thomas Brisbane succeeded Macquarie as Governor in December 1821. Among his first administrative decisions was the restructuring of the Engineers Department. On January 8, 1822 Druitt was suspended as Engineer and an Enquiry initiated into the Engineers Department⁴. Overseers men and convict artisans were recalled and distributed out of Sydney. The intention was to remove all skilled convicts from Sydney and to phase out the Lumber Yard. In reality the Engineers Department continued to function throughout Brisbane's administration and assignments in Sydney remained until 1837. The Sydney Lumber Yard was finally broken up in 1831 when the value of the land on which it stood far exceeded its manufacturing capacity⁵. In late 1821 preparations were made for the inauguration of the new Governor. The arrangements were in a practical sense through the Engineers Department and the smooth transition from the previ-

ous administration was due to the organisational abilities of the Colonial Engineer and the officers in his department. The official residences of the officers of the government were refurbished by the Engineers Department. Perhaps because of the turmoil generated by Brisbane's appointment a number of documents survive which provide details of the production of the government workshops in 1821 and 1822. In particular a series of "quantities" for the Sydney Lumber Yard have survived. Before analysing these it is appropriate to discuss the Sydney Lumber Yard and, in particular, the Carpenter's Workshops.

The Sydney Lumber Yard in 1822 was the product of Druitt's expansion after 1817. A stone wall had been erected around the Lumber Yard precinct and new workshops built. This led to the old structure being referred to as The Old Lumber Yard and the new structures as the New Lumber Yard. The expansion created covered saw pits, a new Carpenter's Yard, a heavy forge, a painter's workshop and a brass and iron foundry. At Parramatta a New Lumber yard was also built in 1820 under Druitt's administration. In the outstations similar reorganisations were undertaken. The processing of timber was restructured at Pennant Hills and the Lumber Yard at Newcastle streamlined to provide a stable supply of coal, cedar and rosewood to Sydney. To understand the scope of productive activity by government it is necessary to analyse the structure of the Lumber Yard Workshops. Lumber Yards existed at

Sydney, Parramatta and Newcastle, smaller lumber yards or "little Lumber Yards" were maintained at agricultural establishments, e.g. Longbottom, Windsor, Emu Plains or at timber getting settlements such as Pennant Hills. The organisation was constant, only the extent of the workshops varied. The structure in Sydney after 1819 was essentially;

Old Lumber Yard

Blacksmiths Shop, smiths work, file cutting.

Carpenter's Shop, joinery

Carpenter's, Wheelwright's and Cooper's Shop.

Harness Shop, harness and saddles.

Shoemaker's Shop.

Tailor's Shop.

New Lumber Yard

Painter's Shop

Blacksmith's Shop, heavy

Carpenter's Yard

Saw Pits

Timber Seasoning Racks

Engineers Office.

Each workshop had a "store" of tools and materials. Auxiliary workshops existed in the Government Dockyard. Permanent "sheds" and temporary workshops were also maintained on the worksites. Horses were stabled in the Carter's Barracks where additional workshops were in operation. Quarries existed to extract stone and on Brickfield Hill brick kilns and a pottery were in production.

A system of requisition was in use administrated by clerks and overseers. Convict mechanics were selected by the Colonial Engineer for employment in a Town Gang or in the Lumber Yard. Assignment was made through the office of Principal Superintendent of Convicts. The assigned mechanic was known as a government man. For instance in the muster in 1822 men in government employment are listed as, for example, Government Carpenter, while men assigned to the private sector are described as Government Servant. Mechanics in government service were lodged in one of the convict barracks. In Parramatta this was the Convict

Barracks while in Sydney the Hyde Park Barracks or the Carter's Barracks accommodated the government gangs. The best workmen were selected as overseers or clerks and these men either lodged out of barracks or had auxiliary positions in the Carter's Barrack⁵. Discipline was the responsibility of the Engineer though he could not act in an arbitrary fashion as punishments could only be imposed by a Bench of Magistrates. Tasks were set to assure the men performed a reasonable amount of work. The administration was aware of the lack of incentive available to convicts and expected proportionally less work from a convict than a free artisan.

For ambitious convicts promotion to overseer or clerk, constable or watchman, offered a means of advancement in the system. Convict supervisors were not paid but enjoyed the privilege of an assigned man "on the stores". This in effect allowed a convict overseer the opportunity to conduct a business in his free time. Henry Adcock, the fashionable cabinetmaker, is one example of an overseer who had a well established business in Sydney. Profits could be invested in lucrative pursuits. For example, Adcock, who as a convict could not own property while "bond", had a wife Margaret who was the licensee of a public house, *The Fox and Hounds*. This pattern of small business and spirit or beer retailing as a dual occupation while a government overseer was not unique to Adcock. In the furniture trade many successful emancipist cabinet-makers had established the basis of a successful business while in government service. Examples include Lawrence Butler and Thomas Shaughnessy. Convict mechanics were not the only employees in the Government Lumber Yards. The overseers were not exclusively drawn from the ranks of government men. Military men were also employed as overseers, the criteria for employment seems to have been ability as the ultimate necessity was to produce

goods. For examples, in 1819 the two overseers of carpenters in the Sydney Lumber Yard were Stephen Partridge of the 48th Regiment and Henry Adcock per *General Hewitt*. Partridge was mostly in the Yard supervising the convict boys while Adcock had the responsibility for organising the joinery projects and inspecting government works. Incidentally, Adcock was often in conflict with Greenway and invariably both Macquarie and Druitt supported Adcock's priorities.

Apprentices were trained in the Lumber Yard. The bulk of these were promising boys taken from the Town Gangs. Some older convicts in redundant occupations were also retrained by government. Free apprentices were employed in the Lumber Yard (and in the Dock Yard). These were the sons of convicts whose parents had established a stable position in colonial society. Such apprentices were exempt from "premiums" and this led to early challenges against such restrictive practices in the private sector. One example of free apprentice is Edward Flood, apprenticed in the Carpenter's Shop. Free apprentices were indentured to a Master such as Master Carpenter Nathaniel Lucas, prior to his suicide in 1819.

"Stores" were drawn for the use of government mechanics in the Lumber Yard. The Commissariat controlled all provisions issued to government. In Sydney and Parramatta an elaborate network of Wet and Dry Stores existed. Tools had to be drawn from His Majesties Store for the use of the workmen. To draw the required item the Engineer issued a requisition chit which was processed through the office of Storekeeper. Occasionally the Engineer purchased items from merchants when the Stores could not supply a specific request. Inventories of the Stores has survived for some years as have some cargo manifests for stores sent to establishments in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land. The range of tools available for all trades was

extensive and the overseers who determined the items required for government were clearly aware of the latest materials and tools. In addition, government manufactured several "stock" tools for its own use. For example, files were manufactured in Parramatta and Sydney to meet the large demand for files for sharpening pit saws and cross cut saws. To utilise the worn out files government manufactured tools where the steel from files could be heat welded on to a wrought iron body. For example, axes were in great demand for felling trees and government smiths made axes for government use.

Timber for government use came from various sources. Oddments for use in the Carpenters Shop were utilised from old material from either the Dock Yard or government buildings. The majority of the timber came from either purchase or from government establishments. The principal timbers available were:

Hardwoods (mainly Blackbutt and Sydney Blue Gum)

Before 1817 hardwoods were extracted from Lane Cove. After 1817 from the Pennant Hills Establishment⁶. The timber was felled, conveyed to the Pennant Hills Saw Pits and then taken to the Government Wharf on the Parramatta River. It was then taken across the river to Longbottom Agricultural Establishment Wharf. Here it was either resawn in the saw pits or shipped to Sydney or Parramatta. Hardwood was also extracted from Longbottom.

The hardwood reaching the Sydney Lumber Yard was sawn into dimensions suitable for its intended purpose. Timber for building was worked up, while unseasoned, in the Carpenter's Yard. Here timber framed dwellings were cut and erected. Selected material was sawn into battens for flooring and stacked in seasoning racks. Exceptional Blue Gum was selected for bed posts, etc. Other hardwoods were extracted for specialist purposes, but

Blackbutt and Blue Gum were the staples. Timber was also derived from other localities but tended to be used locally rather than transported to Headquarters.

Softwoods

Newcastle provided the majority of quality timber for joinery and cabinet work after 1810. Rosewood and Cedar were extracted from the Newcastle region, sawn into flitches and shipped in the colonial brigs to Sydney. In the Sydney Lumber Yard the Rosewood and Cedar was sawn up and set in the seasoning sheds to season. Pine flooring was supplied from Newcastle after 1816 as were exotic "scrub" timbers for cabinet work.

Commercial Timbers

Government also purchased timber from merchants. Examples include Cedar from the Five Islands and Kauri Pine from New Zealand. No doubt parcels of exotic species were sometimes offered to government.

Tasmanian Timbers

Government inter-traded between its establishments. For example Cedar was sent to Hobart in exchange for Huon Pine. Blackwood, known as lightwood, was in use in Sydney from at least 1810.

THE CARPENTER'S WORKSHOPS

Before discussing the structure of the workshops it is necessary to understand the term Carpenter. It is a generic term and is used in New South Wales in the colonial period in its 18th century meaning. Carpenter can describe any type of woodworker associated with building. Joiners, cabinet-makers, even wheelwrights were sometimes referred to as carpenters. When an individual requested an artisan to be assigned or when an indent lists an occupation this vagueness disappears. For example, when Edward Hunt requested a cabinet-maker he and government knew exactly what he wanted, even so his assigned

man may still have been listed as Convict Carpenter. The use of this general description has led to several misconceptions. Theories have been advanced that joiners and cabinet-makers were scarce because labour returns use the term Carpenter. A notion of carpenters doing rough work and joiners finishing off furniture has also arisen. Both are fallacious. The structure of a Carpenter's Workshop followed a standard pattern in this period. Firstly, we need to realise two types of carpenter's shops existed in the Lumber Yard.

1. The Carpenter's Shop: Overseer of carpenters, wheelwright and coopers.

This was the general workshop geared to the basic needs of carpenters but to the particular needs of wheelwrights and to cooperage. The carpenters in this shop would be working in co-operation with the wheelwrights, or working in the Carpenter's Yard preparing timber framed buildings. In this shop long benches were probably available for heavy workshop tasks such as planing floor boards. This Carpenter's Shop did not undertake joinery work.

2. The Carpenter's Shop: Overseer of carpenters.

This was a joinery workshop where items of joinery and furniture were made. The men in this shop were "bench workers". The distinction between joiner and cabinet maker is not clear cut in this period. Much furniture could be made by joiners. Sydney was really a large English country town. The demand for rigid specification did not exist. The priority was also to complete government buildings, the bulk of the workshops activity would have been joiners work with furniture being made as required. Nor should we assume that the joinery made was any less in quality than the furniture. The concept of a joinery workshop is reinforced by the apparent absence of any government

involvement in upholsterer's work. When such furniture was required it was put out to private cabinet shops.

What Was Such a Workshop Like?

Such a joinery workshop had the capacity to undertake a large variety of tasks. Each man had to be independent and able to do whatever was required. For example, one cabinet-maker in the shop in Sydney was in his own time making Lady's Workboxes for Henry Adcock and George Druitt. For a short period he was sent to Emu Plains to make a Winnowing Machine. The shop was based on the notion of one man one job. The overseer took the order and gave instructions to the artisan. It was the joiners task to select his material, set out his work, prepare his material, cut joints, assemble and finish off the task. Each mechanic had bench space. At his bench he worked up his materials. Tools were issued from the store. As a tradesman sharpened his own tools it is obvious that the best work would be achieved by a man maintaining his own "kit".

It is probable that men were issued with a set of tools for the duration of their employment. For example, when George Druitt had his assigned joiner working in the Lumber Yard the man was issued with a chest of joiner's tools valued at Twenty Pounds⁷. Good artisans would have found the availability of a stable set of tools a great incentive. Men approaching ticket of leave status may even have been in a position to gradually purchase tools from government. All government tools were of course broad arrowed and subject to inventory⁸.

Theft of tools and timber was a constant problem both in terms of loss by government and in temptation to convicts. Many men forfeited responsible positions by giving in to this temptation. The situation is understandable when we realise these men could earn high wages in the private sector but were not

remunerated by government.

The equipment in the workshop would have been typical of any joiners or cabinet-maker's shop in a large English town. Long single vice-benches, numerous wooden planes, hand saws, chisels, shaving hearth to heat glue pots, wood screw cramps, etc. A typical preindustrial workshop. Even though many men may have worked in the shop each man would be involved in his own tasks.

The constant variety of the work prevented boredom and tedium. Of course, any workshop has a feel of its own, an ethos which is the combined character of the men employed. Given the Sydney Lumber Yard as an amalgam of men from all over the British Isles it is easy to assume no unity existed. This would be erroneous. The convict experience gave solidarity to the artisans lives. The men were aware of their rights and the nature of the society they were forced to live in. The stability in the shop was provided by the overseers and the apprentices. Men working together and living in barracks no doubt formed life-long associations. It is no coincidence that emancipist convicts had few problems with their convict labour while free settlers such as Edward Hunt were constantly plagued with labour relations problems.

The Sydney Lumber Yard workshops differed from private workshops principally in terms of size and diversity of work undertaken. The mechanics of the joiner's shop, the process and tools and work habits would have been fairly universal. The government shops, however, placed the artisan in a system with clearly defined regulations. In a sense it forced the convict to think about his relationship to his employer. Possibly this introspection was also applied to private employers whose tyrannical insistence on the rights of "Masters" may not have been unquestionably accepted by the colonial servant.

The Sydney Workshop probably

made up the bulk of joinery and furniture required by government after 1817. Before this time the Lumber Yard Parramatta had been active in producing joinery for government. Joinery was also made in other smaller establishments. The output at Newcastle was probably extensive. Even at the agricultural establishments workshops existed where officials could have furniture made. For example, Richard Fitzgerald was accused of having furniture made at Emu Plains while superintendent of the establishment. Indeed was all the joinery made up in the government lumber yards for the use of government? This again is a question in definition. Items for official use could be obtained by two avenues:

- a. Production by government using felons labour,
- b. Purchase through the Police Fund.

Given the scope of the bureaucracy government could not meet all the requests from officials for furniture. To meet the shortfall Macquarie instituted a system of perquisites. This allowed the governor to permit an official the right to use convict labour for personal benefit. For example, George Druitt was given the privilege of using the government workshops to make up joinery for his estate provided he used his own assigned servant and his own materials. The system was fraught with dangers, both from the point of view of the government and the individual. Commissioner Bigge was critical of this system and Macquarie's successor, Brisbane, was under instructions to eliminate such practices. His administration saw government use of convict labour as wasteful and down-scaled the Sydney Lumber Yard. By the end of Brisbane's administration government was obtaining a percentage of its joinery and furniture from private contractors. The old workshops remained but on a reduced scale. The artisans were gradually transferred or assigned out to the private sector.

Several documents survive which allow some examination of the production of the Sydney Workshop in 1821 and 1822. These will now be examined. The first discussion will be of the general output of the workshop. This will be followed by an analysis of the furniture made for the use of Governor Brisbane in December 1821.

Carpenter's Returns 1821 and 1822

Lumber Yard Returns for December 1821 to February 1822 survive⁹. It is probable some of the furniture in these Returns was made for members of Sir Thomas Brisbane's administration. In this paper I intend to examine the production of woodwork in the Lumber Yard as enumerated in these returns. The documents may not be complete but are extensive enough to provide an overview of the variety of production in the Carpenter's Workshops in the Lumber Yard.

The Returns of Labour are daily lists of work completed. As a job was ready to be sent out of the Lumber Yard the Overseer of Carpenters would record the date and describe the item. Additional records such as order books, bill of quantity, stores receipts and estimates of cost were kept but few of these have survived¹⁰. The workshops were arranged to accommodate various artificers. For example, the Carpenter's Shop provided "bench room" for joiners, cabinet-makers and wood turners; the Wheelwright's Shop gave "bench room" to wheelwrights, millwrights and coachmakers. As the Returns are sequential they do not reflect this structure. By extracting information it is possible to give some idea of the variety of work undertaken in this workshop.

The following extracts some of the items in the Returns¹¹ and arranges them in occupational groups:

Wood Turning

The range of wood turning undertaken varies from furniture items to

structural building components.

21 Dec 6 doz trowel handles
26 Dec 12 awl hafts (sic)
28 Dec 22 spindles
Jan 1822

— 9 columns. 15ft long, 11" dia.
Feb 1822

— A Splinter bar turned
— Two stump feet turned

The trowel and awl handles would have been for the use of government artisans. In addition to these items the turners made the components for the beds and spinning wheels discussed later.

Joinery

No doubt the bulk of the workshops output would have been joinery items for public buildings. The Returns include six panel doors, window sashes and other joinery. The joiners probably made some of the furniture items discussed under cabinet work. Here I will extract the more interesting and unexpected examples of joiner's work.

21 Dec
— 6 Molls and Stocks
— A Pattern Wheel (wooden pattern for the Iron Foundry in the Lumber Yard)
— 6 Wine Cases

8 Dec 1821 Two Cages

5 Jan 1822
— 3 large and 2 small cages for Kangaroos
— 2 do. Emus
— 3 do. Black Swans
— 2 do. Barren Geese
— 2 Plumb Rules (probably for bricklayers)

February 1822

— Two Meat Safes
— Table for ship *Hindostan*

The cages were probably for Sir Thomas Brisbane who may have followed Lachlan Macquarie's example and kept caged native animals at Government House Parramatta.

The joiners may have also made the Wooden Leg included in the Returns¹². Probably they also made commonplace furniture such as¹³;

Jan 1822
2 3 Camp Stools
2 Camp Chairs

1 Camp Table
One frame
1 small Camp Table
9 Tent Poles

Whether the joiners or wheelwrights assembled spinning wheels is debatable.

Dec 1821

24 Twenty spinning wheels
29 Twenty spinning wheels

Cabinet Work

The range of furniture is extensive. Repairs are included and these will be extracted first;

Dec 1821

21 12 Chairs repaired

Jan 1822

— A book bin and press repaired

These chairs, given the size of the set, may have been for Sir Thomas Brisbane's use at Government House Parramatta.

The following is an extract of all the furniture items, excepting those discussed under Joinery, with comments where appropriate.

No date to order¹⁴

— A Four Post Bedstead and
— 2 Tend bedsteads, 3½ feet wide

Dec 1821

— 2 Desk Stools (for clerks desk)

18 4 Post Bedstead

28 A board bed and form (perhaps bed and Table)
A Tailor Box

31 A small night chair (commode, possibly child's) (see also Joinery)

Jan 1822

3 A Box and keys to fit the locks of 5 boxes

Folio No. 1 undated

Stool 2'8" high

Table 8' x 3'

12 Bedsteads 6'2" x 3'

Table 4' x 3'

Box of Hardwood 3½" x 2' x 2'15

Case 3' x 3'1" x 1'3"

4 Boxes 2' x 1'5" x 1'5"

2 Boxes 2'6" x 1'6" x 1'

12 Cedar Boxes 3'7" x 1'7" x 1'6"16

4 Cases 4'6" x 3'8"

Case 4'2" x 3'8"

Jan 1822

— A Dresser

— A Box (see also Joinery)

Feb 1822

— A Shaving Box (see also Joinery)

The dimensioned furniture in Folio 1 is probably of greatest interest to serious students of colonial furniture.

I do not intend to try to "reconstruct" the appearance of these items. If some of these sizes can be related to known Macquarie period furniture it would be satisfying but it is enough to contribute a little more to the body of knowledge on our early history.

Work Done for Sir Thomas Brisbane

In the first week of December 1821 Sir Thomas Brisbane was sworn in as Governor of New South Wales and officially established his household at Government House Parramatta¹⁷. In the same month or in early 1822 a quantity of furniture was despatched from the Lumber Yard Sydney to Sir Thomas Brisbane at Parramatta. An account of this consignment of furniture made for the new Governor survives¹⁸. Other items were made for the Governor as there is a discrepancy between the monetary value in the list of items sent to Parramatta and the amount in the marginal note in an accompanying Return of Work carried out in the Lumber Yard¹⁹. It is interesting to compare this new furniture with the inventory of government owned furniture at Government House Parramatta during Governor Macquarie's residence²⁰, as well as in later furniture inventories there in 1837, 1846 and 1855.

The shipment of furniture comprised two caned couches, two small wardrobes, two bedsteads with cornices, two common chest of drawers, one large breakfast table and pillars, one sofa table, one large wardrobe and one drip stone case. Also included were a circular sentry box, two common box work

stands and the cases for packing the various articles. Dimensions for each item are given. The appearance of each piece could be deduced, though the design of the stands and the form of the drip stone case and sentry boxes is subject to speculation.²¹

Timber species is not listed. At first the temptation is to assume all items were made of cedar. The use of the term "common" for the chests of drawers may imply some items were of better quality. The furniture could be divided into utilitarian and formal. The caned couches and the large breakfast table with pillars and the sofa table are obviously for formal rooms. These items may have been made of superior wood, perhaps rose mahogany or imported mahogany. The Lumber Yard, Sydney stocked rose mahogany from Newcastle as well as cedar and imported timbers. It is probable the sofa table was made to match the two caned couches. No doubt they were made in the latest fashion.

Such speculation aside this list of furniture does permit some analysis. The first question to solve is whether these items were manufactured to supplement the existing furnishings at Government House Parramatta or represented a refurnishing. The latter possibility seems the most probable. Items such as bedsteads, wardrobes and chests of drawers suggest refurnishing for a new household. If this was a refurnishing other consignments of furniture may have been sent to Parramatta. It is possible additional furniture was made in the Parramatta Lumber Yard or purchased from cabinet-makers in Sydney or Parramatta.

I believe it is reasonable to assume the Governor's residence was furnished with items of quality. It seems unlikely that Sir Thomas Brisbane, or any Governor, would accept an appointment which would imply a reduced level of material well being. The merchants

of Sydney may have been able to afford superior furniture, either English or by local makers of the calibre of Thomas Shaughnessy but the Governor would have at the least expected furniture in the "latest taste" with some claim to neatness of execution such as that sold by cabinet warehouses like Hunt's establishment.

If this assumption is valid we can assume government, that is the Colonial Engineers Department, could manufacture furniture of a quality acceptable to the Governor. A reading of the Overseer of Carpenter's Returns suggests the range of work undertaken in the Sydney Lumber Yard. The term "carpenter" should not mislead the reader. It is merely a generic term for any woodworker in a trade related to housing. For example, Lawrence Butler referred to himself as a "carpenter" or on some occasions a "cabinet maker"²². The Lumber Yard Carpenters Shops were, in fact, a series of specialised workshops.

The appointment of Brisbane as Governor resulted in immediate disruption in the Engineers Department. This was due to the dispersal of convicts, especially mechanics, from Sydney and a series of suspensions of officers from the Lumber Yard, Sydney. Despite this, production appears to have been maintained throughout 1822. The additional furniture made for Brisbane was probably sent to Parramatta in the first half of 1822. If this furniture was of good quality it means that the workshop in the Sydney Lumber Yard was capable of producing a range of "fashionable" furniture at relatively short notice.

By the end of 1822 this capacity in the Sydney Lumber Yard was to be "broken up". Brisbane introduced the tender system whereby the needs of government were to be supplied by public tender²³. The expertise acquired by government was to be dispersed. Most of the Lumber Yard mechanics were assigned out of Sydney, though some

were transferred to the Lumber Yard Parramatta. Those who stayed in Sydney were assigned to capitalists such as Bell or Hunt, those free by servitude either worked for masters or set up small workshops. By 1823 Engineer Owens had a small nucleus of convict mechanics to undertake the public works in Sydney. For important projects, such as building the Carter's Barracks treadwheel, mechanics were recalled to government service. The capacity established by Druitt for Macquarie's ambitious projects was seen as extravagance. Under Brisbane and subsequent governors the labour of convicts was directed to assisting settlers establish the pastoral industry. Mechanics retained in government service were employed only on essential public works or to provide services not available by "Tender".

Notes

- 1 See Ritchie, J. *The Evidence to the Bigge Reports*. Volume 1. *The oral Evidence*. Heinemann Melbourne 1971. Chapter 1. Convicts. G. Druitt. pp1-39.
- 2 For instance, furniture for government was made in the Parramatta Lumber Yard before 1819. See M.L. A2086-8. Superintendent of Carpenters Parramatta Returns 1811-17. See article Fahy K., "Old Government House Parramatta: the Furniture", *Australian Antique Collector*, No. 41, January-June 1991.
- 3 For a full discussion of Commissioners J.T. Bigge see Ritchie, J. *Punishment and Profit*. Heinemann Melbourne 1970.
- 4 See Original Correspondence Secretary of State. Proceedings of the Board of Enquiry into the Conduct of the Engineers Department. PRO 134 (C.O. 201/151).
- 5 See Governor R. Bourke, Sydney New South Wales, 8 Feb 1832, to Goderich, Home Office, London. Transmitting the Report of a Board of Survey on Public Buildings in Sydney. 5 Feb 1833. ML 1267. pt. 5 (CY695) pp514-521.
- 6 See Forthcoming publication *Timber Getters of Pennant Hills*, Ralph Hawkins, Archivist, Society of Australian Genealogists.
- 7 See evidence regarding Druitt's government men by Charles Ellis in

Enquiry Engineers Department PRO 134.

- 8 Broad arrowed or for saws and files with a hole through the tool.
- 9 See Colonial Secretary Reel 6056 original location 4/1763 Bundle 18. Miscellaneous p310. Documents given to Superintendent of Carpenters of Wood worked up in the Lumber Yard Sydney since 1st Dec 1821.
- 10 The structure of the Lumber Yard was a bureaucracy; from Chief Engineer, to store keepers, clerks, overseers and constables and watchmen. Detailed records were essential as each item expended had to be accounted for by the Commissariat system.
- 11 Col. Sec. 6056 pp305-319.
- 12 Ralph Hawkins, archivist, Society of Australian Genealogists, has the reference to a convict requesting a wooden leg.
- 13 Part of a Return for October 1821 is in this bundle; Col. Sec. 6056, pp305-319.
Oct 1821: Three Camp Chairs; 3 Camp Tables.
I suspect these were a common utilitarian item made up by joiners.
I have not extracted all the joiners work, the topic would justify an article of its own. In the future I may use this material, combined with other sources, to analyse Colonial Joinery circa 1820.
- 14 Col. Sec. 6056, p308.
- 15 This is a rare reference to the use of hardwood for furniture. The probable timber is Sydney Blue Gum; Casuarina would not be used in the solid for such an item.
- 16 The use of the term Cedar reminds us that it may be simplistic to assume all this furniture is of cedar. Other probable timbers are Deal or pine, imported; or Huon Pine, Tasmania, Kauri, New Zealand.
- 17 Col. Sec. 6008 p116. Colonial Secretary's Office, Sydney, 4 Dec 1821 "To All Benches of Magistrates".
- 18 Col. Sec. 6056, p169. Work done for Sir Thomas Brisbane. Parramatta. Wm. Edwards. Overseer Carpenters. Lumber Yard. Sydney. 1821? See also p305 (Note 1). All the furniture discussed in this article is enumerated in the Return on p169. Compare Col. Sec. 6056, p305. Returns and p159, "Work ... Brisbane".
- 19 Dec 1822. Colonial Secretary 6056, p305. Folio No. 1 "Quantities" Lumber Yard. This occurs as part of a marginal abstract of cost estimates. The specific items made for the new Governor are not enumerated. See also note 3.

20. Printed in Fahy, K. et al, *Nineteenth Century Australian Furniture*, D. Ell Press, Sydney 1985, p411.
- 21 Dimensions of Furniture, Col. Sec. 6056, p169. Work done for Sir Thomas Brisbane. Wm Edwards, Overseer of Carpenters.
 - 112.1 Two Caned Couches 6 feet long by 2 feet wide
 - 120.2 Two Small Wardrobes 3 feet 6 inches wide, 4 feet 6 inches high
 - 312.3 Two Bedsteads with Cornishes (Cornices), 7 feet high, 6 feet 8 inches long, 4 feet wide
 - 100.4 Two common Chests of Drawers 3 feet 6 inches wide, 3 feet 6 inches long
 - 80.5 One Large Breakfast Table, 7 feet over with Pillars
 - 40.6 One Sofa Table, 6 feet long, 2 feet 6 inches wide
 - 200.8 One Large Wardrobe, 4 feet 6 inches wide, 7 feet 6 inches long
 - 40.10 Two common Box work hand? Stands 18 inches square, 3 feet 8 inches high
 - 100.9 One Drip Stone Case, 3 feet high, 2 feet square
- 22 Col. Sec. in Letters. A.O. NSW. 4/1846, p40. Petition Lau. Butler - carpenter. Col. Sec. In Letters A.O. NSW 4/1736, p150.
- 23 See Ritchie, J. *Punishment and Profit*, Heinemann. Melbourne, 1970, p248 for specific events see: Col. Sec. 6008, p133 6 Dec 1821. Col. Sec. Office to various officials, p136, 7 Dec 1821. Col. Sec. Office to Druitt et al, p248, 8 Jan 1822. Col. Sec. Office to Druitt Suspension.



The Elizabeth Rouse Mourning Brooch

Scott Carlin

Sydney's Mitchell Library possesses a most interesting memento; a mourning brooch containing a portrait-miniature and lock of grey-brown plaited hair, inscribed to the memory of "Mrs E [Elizabeth] Rouse Obt Oct 26th 1849 At [sic] 76 Years". The portrait is closely related to two portraits by Parramatta artist, William Griffith (c.1808-1870), one of which forms part of the Hamilton collection at Rouse Hill House¹. The Griffith portraits have remained central to Elizabeth Rouse's descendant's perceptions of her. A few vignettes have recently come to light con-

cerning her life and character, but much of what is "known" about Elizabeth Rouse is inferred from biographical information concerning her husband. Circumstances surrounding the creation of Griffith portraits and the mourning brooch provide valuable insights into the social contexts of these works.

Born Elizabeth Adams, the daughter of an Oxford victualler on 25 January 1772, she married Richard Rouse on 5 June 1796. The couple arrived in Sydney per the *Nile* in 1801², with their daughter, Mary (1799-1883) a son, John



Plate 2. Mrs Elizabeth Rouse (nee Adams, 1772-1849). artist: William Griffith (c.1808-1870), 1847 Hamilton Rouse Hill Collection.



Plate 3. Mrs Elizabeth Rouse (nee Adams, 1772-1849). artist: William Griffith (c.1808-1870), 1847. From Freeman (photographic) copy in possession of Mr R Rouse, Birkala, Mudgee.



Plate 1. Mrs Elizabeth Rouse (nee Adams, 1772-1849) Mourning Brooch containing portrait and lock of hair. Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW.

Richard (1801-1873) born during the voyage, and a quantity of saleable commodity goods, notably tea³.

Richard Rouse soon found work in accordance with his profession as a cabinet maker and joiner at John Palmer's Woolloomooloo. Rouse took up his first grant, "Oxford Farm" at North Richmond by March 18024.

Advancement came in 1805 with Richard Rouse's appointment as superintendent of the Government lumber yard at Parramatta⁵. Displaced by the rebel government under Major Johnston in 1808, as a Bligh supporter, Rouse was reinstated in 1810 by Macquarie, "in his former position as Superintendent of Carpenters at Parramatta"⁶. Rouse held this position until his retirement in 1825.

Throughout this period, Elizabeth Rouse bore children, notably, Edwin (1806-1862), George (1808-1888) and Eleanor (1813-1898). Margaret Catchpole, the convict who had acted as midwife to Elizabeth Rouse on board the Nile, and who had evidently been assigned to the Rouses since their arrival in NSW provides one vignette of Elizabeth in a letter of October 1806;

"... Bin for this 2 years past up in the Countrey at Richmond Hill I went thear to nurs one Mrs Rouse a very respectfull person they Com from englant free they respect me as one of their owen famely for Mrs Rouse with this Larst Child she had could har husband that she must died Becurs i was not thear ..."⁷.

An inquest of 28 November 1817 into the death of Llewellyn Davis⁸, a sheep shearer working at Rouse Hill reveals Elizabeth Rouse supervising, and possibly cooking for, a group of about ten assigned convicts working on the property, including, James Chilvers, carpenter, and William Farrell, plasterer, engaged in completing the house. While this vignette strikes us as contrary to the popular view of the convict system, (these convicts had

probably demonstrated skills and good conduct in the Parramatta lumber yard prior to their assignment to Richard Rouse)⁹ it is significant, in that Elizabeth Rouse appears as one whose time and work was given to building the family's fortune. Earlier, Margaret Catchpole their convict servant, "respected as one of their family" had been entrusted with the lonely task of overseeing the Rouse's North Richmond farm. Later, sons, John Richard and Edwin Rouse would be placed in Superintendent's positions at the Parramatta Prisoner's Barracks¹⁰ and in the early 1820s found the Rouse's pastoral headquarters, 'Guntawang', near Mudgee.

Rouse Hill, and the Rouse's Parramatta House were the landmarks of their economic "success" to the end of the Macquarie period. Rouse initially appears to have considered operating or leasing Rouse Hill as an hotel, but by 1882 referred to it as his "countrey seat"¹¹. The Parramatta house stood on the east side of Church street, midway between George and Phillip streets. Like Rouse Hill, it was built by assigned labour, using materials apparently paid for by Rouse himself. Constructed between 1818 and c.1823, it complied with a scheme initiated by Macquarie¹², but carried out by Brisbane, whereby a Parramatta town lease was converted to a grant if a house erected on it was worth one thousand pounds or more¹³. Rouse was granted his large Church street block in 1823¹⁴.

In 1824, Rouse leased the Parramatta house to the colonial government for use as a courthouse¹⁵, and the Rouses retired to Rouse Hill. Thereafter the family appears to have had no role in public life in Parramatta¹⁶. Similarly they had no official role in race meetings, although the Rouse horse stud, the winning of the Hawkesbury Race Purse of 1838, and their collection of horse portraits by Joseph Fowles attest to their interest in the turf.

The Australian Arms Hotel, built by Richard Rouse in 1837 on the George Street corner of his Church street block possessed a long gallery on its upper floor, used as a picture gallery by the artist, William Griffith. During the 1840s, the licensee of the Australian Arms was the enterprising John McKay who hosted meetings of various groups (eg of the committee for the incorporation of the town of Parramatta)¹⁷. The long gallery of the Australian Arms was also used to exhibit canvases with reputed Royal Academy provenances which were raffled through Art Unions in 1846-47¹⁸.

Griffith was no less entrepreneurial with his work¹⁹. The commission for the Rouse portraits was probably the result of one of Griffith's own promotional ventures, rather than the Rouses' ownership connection with the Australian Arms.

In February 1844, the *Parramatta Chronicle*²⁰ proselitized;

"Many of our readers are not aware that a portrait club is in active and successful operation in Parramatta; and that its meetings are held weekly at Mr McKays Hotel ... Ten or twelve portraits of the members, including those of Messrs Paton [Payten] (senr and junr) Hayes, Houison, Fayle, Bryan, Tapp and Constable, already ornament the picture gallery of the club, and are pronounced by competent judges to be admirable likenesses. They are executed in chalk, in the best style of the art as displayed by the French, who have instituted a new, modern school in that effective and beautiful line of portrait painting or etching, in which the artist, Mr Griffith, has had the benefit of studying during many years residency in France, and of acquiring that admirable proficiency in the art which the exquisite finish of his portraits displays".

In April, the *Chronicle*²¹ reviewed further portraits, and strongly

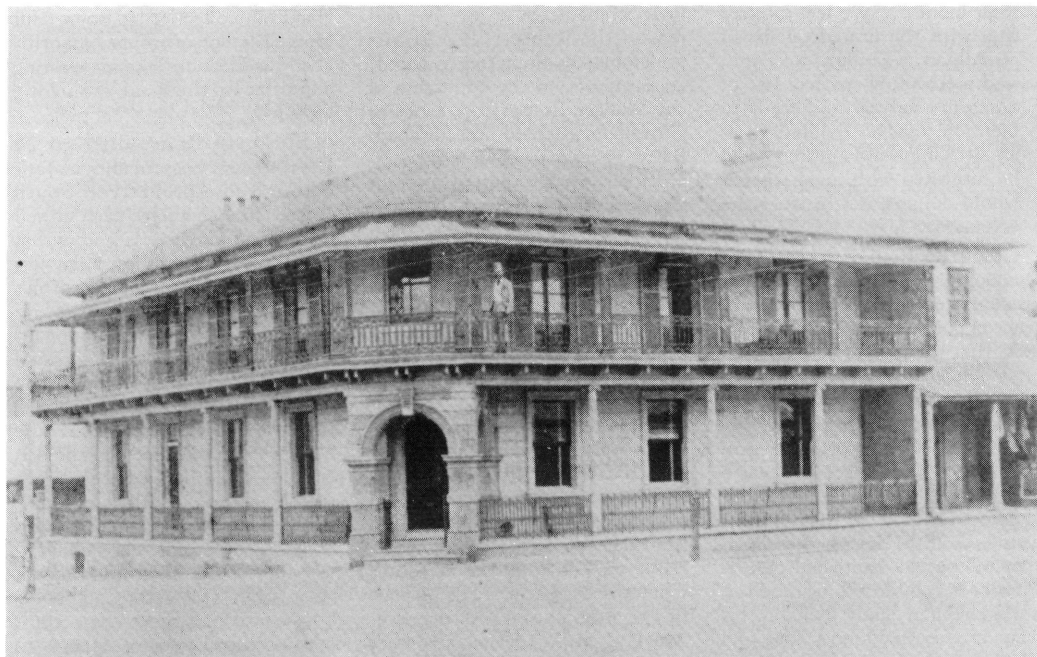


Plate 4. The Australian Arms Hotel albumen print The Italianate arch was added after c. 1875. Historic Houses Trust of NSW.

recommended that its readers pay the Portrait Gallery a visit,

"as the whole of the portraits will be finished in a few weeks, when their respective owners will remove them. They may be reviewed, gratuitously, any day of the week at Mr McKay's Australian Arms, George Street".

The "ingredients" which transformed a small loan exhibition into a portrait "club" may have included teaching in drawing and/or art appreciation. Patricia McDonald records that Griffith "introduced the then novel concept of paying by installment"²². That this enabled all classes of citizen to have their likeness taken²³ is not borne out by the published reviews of portraits, all of whom appear to be of solidly middle class citizens²⁴.

Griffith's role as an organiser and contributor to colonial art exhibitions may have led to commissions. In 1847, the year in which the Rouse portraits were executed, Griffith exhibited twice. In Oc-

tober 1847, an exhibition was held in the "long room" of The King's School in aid of the Benevolent Society. "This consisted entirely of loan works drawn from the surrounding district. Griffith probably played some role in its organisation, and certainly was its major contributor"²⁵.

The Benevolent Society exhibition followed the exhibition of the Society for the Promotion of Fine Arts held in Sydney in July 1847, the first held in the colony of New South Wales. The *Parramatta Messenger* of 20.3.1847 heralded such an exhibition, editorialising on what would become recurrent themes regarding art and patronage in nineteenth century Australia:

"An annual exhibition, such as that at South Australia ... would be a gathering place for all the Artists of the Colony, and would secure to them a certain mart for the disposal of their productions and furnish an additional incitement to energies which are now

lying dormant for want of some fostering hand to fan the almost extinguished flame which is smouldering amongst them. We could mention names of high talent in the various branches of the Art whose production would be credible in country, and would certainly reflect much lustre on this; independently of the good which must naturally result to the rising generation by leading their minds to the contemplation of the beautiful, and abstracting them somewhat from pursuits, which, however profitable, certainly do not possess a very strong power of mental elevation.

An 'Art Union' might also be established; and this, perhaps would be the most immediate way of assisting the artist ... and in lieu of [the annual engraving given to the subscribers] a number of slight sketches might be introduced so that all of the subscribers would have value for

their money ... We feel satisfied that with the united talents of an Allport, a Griffith, a Dennis, and a Rhodius, with a list of amateurs far too numerous to mention, that an Exhibition, or an Art Union of Paintings could be furnished with materiel that would delight and instruct the community ..."²⁶.

Griffith's portrait of the Rev John Dunmore Lang of 1851²⁷ is his latest provenanced work. While the absence of portraits after this date suggests that the advent of photography²⁸ rendered him redundant as a portraitist, Moore's claim that "the introduction of the daguerreotypes brought a sudden change, and henceforth the artist's life was a grim struggle"²⁹ relates to a misconception of Griffith as a "garret artist". Griffith, described as "gentleman" on the baptismal certificates of his children³⁰, belonged to a cosmopolitan family, including his wife's brother Rev John Duffus, and brothers in law, Constantine Alois Lubecki, and Count Lucien de Broel Plater³¹. Teaching appears to have been Griffith's major occupation, with the portrait gallery at the Australian Arms providing respite between his employment at The King's School (1839-1842)³² and his wife's school for girls, where his experience equipped him to teach drawing and French. (These were accomplishments which the first and second generation of Rouses presumably lacked). Griffith died in Parramatta on 13 June 1870.

Griffith's medium for the Rouse portraits was charcoal with white crayon highlights. The *Chronicle* perceptively related Griffith's technique of creating portraits as akin to the work of an engraver, although the white crayon added a glossy solidity to contrast with the grainy charcoal. Griffith used medium to good effect in capturing detail of costume, hair and jewellery. Griffith achieved "realism" more satisfactorily with middle aged or elderly faces through the ability to fill out the image with

lines of character, or age. For this reason the Rouse Hill portraits preferable to their "rejuvenated" counterparts, in the collection of the Mudjee Rouses³³. A series of portraits of Richard and Elizabeth Rouse appears to have been commissioned for distribution amongst their children. The Rouse Hill portraits may have descended through Edwin Rouse, the Mudjee portraits may have descended through George Rouse.

Despite the coincidence of the Elizabeth Rouse portrait, the extraordinary variation in the quality of Griffith's oeuvre leads to reservations about attributing the image of the Mitchell Library's mourning brooch to him. Griffith contributed a series of competently executed miniatures in watercolour to Eliza Staff's needlework picture of the triple-decker pulpit at St John's Church Parramatta³⁴. His portrait of the late Thomas Moore Esq, which received (deservedly) poor reviews in the 1840s³⁵, demonstrates Griffith's problems the medium of oil painting. In both of these instances, the painted portraits were worked up from pre-existing images. Patricia McDonald's entry on Griffith records his good reputation as copyist of works by Martens and Royal Academicians. This suggests a development of Griffith's ability as a painter during the 1840s. The late Thomas Moore Esq and Captain Richard Sadleir³⁶ reveal problems with anatomy, which do not intrude into the Rouse portraits as head and shoulder views. One wonders whether Griffith's awareness of his own limitations led him to become a provincial artist?

The Mitchell Library's mourning brooch³⁷ was donated in 1937 by Mrs John E. Terry, whose husband was a descendant of Elizabeth Rouse through her daughter, Eleanor (1813-1898), married first to John Terry (c.1806-1842) and later pioneer photographer Major Thomas Wingate (1807-1869). A daguerreotype, also part of the

Hamilton collection at Rouse Hill House, depicts a woman identifiable³⁸ as Eleanor Wingate wearing a similar or the same mourning brooch³⁹.

Elizabeth Rouse died on 26 December 1849, probably at Jericho, a Rouse property at South Creek. "She may have been unwell beforehand for there is a story that Edwin rode 100 miles in a day just to see her". Caroline Thornton's *Rouse Hill House and the Rouses* includes Eleanor Terry's account for the purchase of mourning apparel for the Edwin Rouses upon the death of Elizabeth's husband, Richard Rouse in May 1852. The Mitchell Library's mourning brooch reflects a family's concern with public expression of loss, of familial/historical associations and through the middle-class conventionality of the mourning brooch, their status. (Margaret Catchpole's apostrophe, "A most respectful. [respectable?] person" springs to mind). Rouse Hill, home to Elizabeth Rouse for part of her life, came to be, after the loss of the Rouse-Terry fortune in the twentieth century, emblematic of much the same themes as the mourning brooch³⁹.

Caroline Thornton muses, "She smiles gently at us from her portrait hanging on the wall of the dining room at Rouse Hill. Although she is not beautiful she has a kind face, as my mother used to remark. She looks quite determined too"⁴⁰. I cannot help but think of Elizabeth Rouse's life as a catalogue of tasks performed. Perhaps there is no more for us to know about her.

References

- 1 Rouse Hill House is a property of the Historic Houses Trust of NSW.
- 2 Caroline Rouse Thornton: *Rouse Hill House and the Rouses*, published: C R Thornton Nedlands, W.A. 1988 pp13, 49.
- 3 Thornton op cit pp17, 21.
- 4 Thornton op cit p19.
- 5 *Sydney Gazette* 7 July 1805 p1, see also Thornton op cit p23.
- 6 *Sydney Gazette* 14 Jan 1810 p2.
- 7 quoted in Thornton op cit p17. Mar-

- garet Catchpole's life became the subject of the Rev Richard Cobbold's *The History of Margaret Catchpole* (1847).
- 8 AONSW 2/8286 pp211-214, reel 2232. Occupations of Chilvers and Farrell, see Thornton op cit pp33-35.
 - 9 Thornton op cit p45.
 - 10 Edwin Rouse appointed 8.12.1821 (AONSW Reel 6039; 4/424 p 7) John Richard Rouse in office 18.4.1825 (AONSW Reel 6014 4/3514 pp94-96).
 - 11 Thornton op cit pp41, 51.
 - 12 Pollon, Frances: *Parramatta, Cradle City of Australia*, Parramatta City Council, 1984 p13 Higginbotham, Edward: *The Future of Parramatta's Past: An Archaeological Zoning Plan 1788 to 1844*, Dept of Planning, Sydney 1991. pp10-11.
 - 14 Higginbotham op cit p68.
 - 15 Jervis, James: "The Development of Settlement in the Town of Parramatta" *Journal & Proceedings of the Parramatta & District Historical Society* Vol 4 (1935) p88. See also "Old Sydney" by "Old Chum" in *Truth* 23.12.1917.
 - 16 An exception is their donation of a North Parramatta site to the Wesleyans for a chapel in 1835. (Udy, Gloster S: *A Spark of Grace: The Story of the Methodist Church in Parramatta* Epworth Press c. 1975 p239).
 - 17 *Parramatta Chronicle* 14.12.1844 p1 (SLNSW BN 248).
 - 18 *Cumberland Times* 11.4.1846 p1, *Parramatta Messenger* 5.6.1847 p1.
 - 19 Griffith was a member of the Masonic Lodge of St John, which met at the Australian Arms. He appears to have executed portraits of many of its members. Hay, RG BA SW No 521: Freemasonry in Parramatta 1836-1936 pub. Parramatta c.1936 (no details) p19.
 - 20 *Parramatta Chronicle* 10.2.1844 p2, (see also 24.2.1844, 7.9.1844).
 - 21 *Parramatta Chronicle* 20.4.1844 p2.
 - 22 Patricia R McDonald: "William Griffith", entry in Kerr, Joan (ed): *Dictionary of Australian Artists* Melbourne University Press, 1992 pp326-327.
 - 23 This statement originated with Rivett, J Collinridge: *The Art Union Story and Old Parramatta* (pub. the author, 1957).
 - 24 cf David Lennox, superintendent of public works 1832, Houison and Payten, government and private contract builders c. 1838-1870. The Rouses appear to have worn three hats; those of middle class townies, freehold land owners and squatters.
 - 25 McDonald op cit p326.
 - 26 *Parramatta Messenger and Cumberland Express* 20.3.1847 p2.
 - 27 Hanlin, Rev Frank, MA BD: "Side-lights on Dr John Dunmore Lang", *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* Vol 30 (1945) p 241.
 - 28 The Lawson family of Prospect commissioned a series of daguerreotype portraits by George Goodman in 1845. (Neville, Richard: *Image, Reality and the Portrait*, SLNSW 1993 catalogue entries 63-64).
 - 29 Moore, W: *Story of Australian Art* Vol 1 Sydney, 1934 p23.
 - 30 Margaret B. 16.12.1840, Jane Ellen B. 15.2.1843, and William B.26.6.1846.
 - 31 Rev & Mrs Duffus and family, Lubecki, and possibly Griffith (hand-writing indistinct) arrived per Eden on 17.10.1838, Mr & Mrs Plater, Mrs Ferdinand Plater and Mrs ([Miss?]) Duffus arrived per Alfred on 7.1.1840.
 - 32 Yeend, Peter: *The King's School Register 1831-1981*, pub. The King's School, Parramatta, 1981 p x.
 - 33 cf. Captain Richard Sadleir with Mrs Anne Sadleir, Mitchell Library, SLNSW.
 - 34 Needlework, c. 1846 Collection of the Cathedral Church of St John, Parramatta.
 - 35 Collection of St Andrew's Cathedral, Sydney. It hangs in the chapterhouse.
 - 36 Collection, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW ZML 691.
 - 37 Z min 77 The brooch, probably not of Australian manufacture, is gold plated. It includes the portrait image (5.4cm x 4.2cm) with inscription and lock of hair under oval glazed panel to (slightly domed) verso. A flat border of metallic "ribbon" border is attached around the circumference, with crossed "ribbons" at four cardinal points. The portrait is in oils on ivory.
 - 38 on the basis of other portraits, notably R89/110.
 - 39 NB the daguerreotype HR88/12 is a reverse image.
 - 40 Thornton op cit p 84.

Acknowledgment

The assistance of Mr Ian and Mrs Miriam Hamilton is gratefully acknowledged.

From the Editor's Desk

The editor is delighted and enthused by the response from members of the Australiana Society who made comment and worthwhile suggestions as to its present state and future direction with their current renewal subscription.

To date some 38 members have answered the questionnaire relating to activities, meetings, the Journal, etc, that was included on the Annual Subscription Notice – Sydney (18), Country NSW (2), ACT (3), South Australia (2), Queensland (4), Tasmania (1), Victoria (7) and Western Australia (1). Hopefully many more will fol-

low in the immediate future.

Please check to see if you are currently financial. If not please remedy the situation and don't forget to answer the questionnaire. This is YOUR Society. The Society's Committee and Editor need the input of all its members not only with articles and news items for the Journal but comment and suggestions for the Society in general.

The answers to the questionnaire indicate an overwhelming support for the Journal in the quality of its production and content. Suggestions were made for more articles on Australian art and those

of a less technical nature on historical subjects. The Editor would be delighted to include both but is dependent on contributors to provide either.

While it might not appear so, each issue of the Journal is produced under considerable pressure. Apart from submitted articles, many are obtained by request to individual authors whose patience with the Editor must be wearing thin. The voluntary contributions by both are hardly conducive to regular and balanced Journal issues bound by quarterly deadlines. The Journal's existence for over fifteen

years has made a unique contribution to the history of Australian decorative arts not to be found in any other published source.

A suggestion from one member was the publication of an index of the *Journal*. The Society has previously published indices of the *Journal* Vols 1-5, Vols 6-10 and Vols 11-12. It is presently preparing a revised index — Vols 1-15 (1978-1993) — including subjects, articles by title, authors and craftsmen. This will be published and available to members of the Australiana Society later this year. The financial viability of the Australiana Society is unlikely to succeed with the commercialisation of its *Journal*. What is required is an increase in its membership base. Your Committee is investigating avenues of advertisement, allowing for the expense of such an undertaking. If we could double our membership the *Journal* which is heavily subsidised by a variety of fund raising activities in Sydney including house inspections, excursions, raffles, etc. will be able to pay its way despite rapidly increasing printing and postage charges. Country NSW and interstate members are not altogether deprived by their inability to attend lectures and activities in Sydney. Total financial returns have been largely directed to the production of the *Journal* which is circulated to all members, Australia wide.

Other suggestions by Society members will be followed up by your Committee. *Hold a weekend seminar with several speakers* — in this day and age it is difficult to obtain an individual speaker to deliver a lecture at our bi-monthly meetings. *Visits to private collections* — in these uncertain times few private collectors are prepared to open their houses to even a small group of fellow collectors. *Request the bi-monthly guest speaker to provide a printed text of their lecture (available to members unable to attend)* — most speakers talk directly to their audience with slides and no written

text. While the suggestions are worthwhile they all raise a number of problems that your Committee will attempt to resolve.

The Australiana Society Committee will carefully consider all these submissions.

The continued existence of the Australiana Society rests with an increased membership base and contributions of articles and news items to its *Journal*.

Members are urged to canvas membership from their interested friends and to suggest to their local libraries to take out a subscription. The continuity of the Australiana Society cannot rely on the voluntary efforts by a few of its members but requires active support by all its membership. No effort on their part is too little to keep the Australiana Society alive and increasing public awareness of its purpose.

ATTENTION-AUSTRALIANA CHOCOHOLICS

For Australiana collectors more concerned with the edible than the collectable, the Editor would like to recommend the recent production by the confectioners 'Belle Fleur' of Rozelle NSW of well packaged and modestly priced chocolate with Australia's own macadamia nuts moulded in the shape of Australian flora. A unique gift for friends locally and overseas providing you can resist the temptation to sample. The quality is high, the taste superb and their design unique. (For enquiries telephone (02) 810 2690).

FOUR DECADES OF AUSTRALIAN DOMESTICITY

The Editor would like to draw the attention of Australiana Society members to two recently published books — *Australian Houses of the Twenties and Thirties* and *Australian Houses of the Forties and Fifties*, by Peter Cuffley (The Five Mile Press, Knoxfield, Vic. 1989 and 1993). The author has previously published a number of major works

relating to Australiana. These, his most recent, are a unique exploration of Australian domestic architecture from the 1920s to the 1950s. Colour schemes, interior decoration, furniture and furnishings, fabrics and garden design are discussed in a lively and informative manner. A particular quality of both publications is their wealth of contemporary photographs and illustrations. They are the first major publications in this area of Australian society history. The former is now available in paperback.

FELIX THE CAT

The famous comic strip feline is celebrating his 75th birthday, long credited to the pen of Australian animator Patrick O'Sullivan. Originating in O'Sullivan's New York studios in 1919, Felix was his property but not his creation, that being the work of an employee, the American cartoonist Otto Messmer. O'Sullivan taking both the credit and the royalties. (*Sunday Telegraph*, Sydney, 30 January 1994).

Felix's image has been chosen as a logo for The Merchant's House, a Museum for Children and their Friends, at The Rocks, Sydney, operated by The National Trust of Australia (NSW).

AN INVITATION

The Editor invites members of the Australiana Society and readers of its *Journal* to provide a brief precis of any particular area of Australiana they may be researching. If, within the parameters of the subject, the *Journal* may be able to provide students and researchers with further information of their particular interest. Australiana Society membership is Australia wide. Our extended audience provides the Australiana researcher with a unique facility. Please be brief. Your name, address and subject of interest will be published and readers will be asked to write directly to you. Acceptance of any entry will be at the Editor's discretion.



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A remarkable Travelling Writing Desk by Henry Broughton, exhibited at the first Victorian Industrial Society Exhibition, January 1851, with the original list of all the local timbers employed in its construction. This desk will be the subject of an article in the next edition of the Society's Journal.