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INDEX

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contents

6

John Black Carmichael (1803-1857),
artist and engraver

Karen Eaton

21

Book Review

Tony Kanellos (editor), *Out of the Past:
views of the Adelaide Botanic Garden
– a series of Edwardian Era postcards*

Jean Sim

22

The prism of provenance:
the Landau collection of Krimper furniture

Catriona Quinn

ADVERTISERS

Simpson's Antiques	2
W J Sanders	4
Shapiro Auctioneers	4
Mossgreen Auctions	5
Peter Walker Fine Art	39
The Merchant of Welby	39
J B Hawkins Antiques	40

DESIGN

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COVER

John Carmichael (1803–1857), *Thomas Meehan*, watercolour, 15.5 x 14 cm, inscribed
verso "Drawn by John Carmichael 22nd July 1828 Sydney N.S. Wales." Private collection,
courtesy of Josef Lebovic Gallery, Kensington NSW. This portrait – one of only two
watercolours known by John Carmichael – was photographed by the NSW Government
Printer in 1921, recently reappeared and we now publish it in colour.

Thomas Meehan (1809–1835) was the son of the James Meehan (1774–1826), an Irish
convict who rose to become Deputy Surveyor General and who had died at his home at
Macquarie Field on 21 April 1826, just three months before Carmichael painted the portrait
of his 19-year-old son. Thomas died on 11 July 1835 at his residence at Campbelltown,
where he was a farmer, auctioneer, poundkeeper and member of Masonic Lodge 260

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Schulim Krimper (1893-1971), Bookcase, c. 1955, Est. \$8,000 – 12,000

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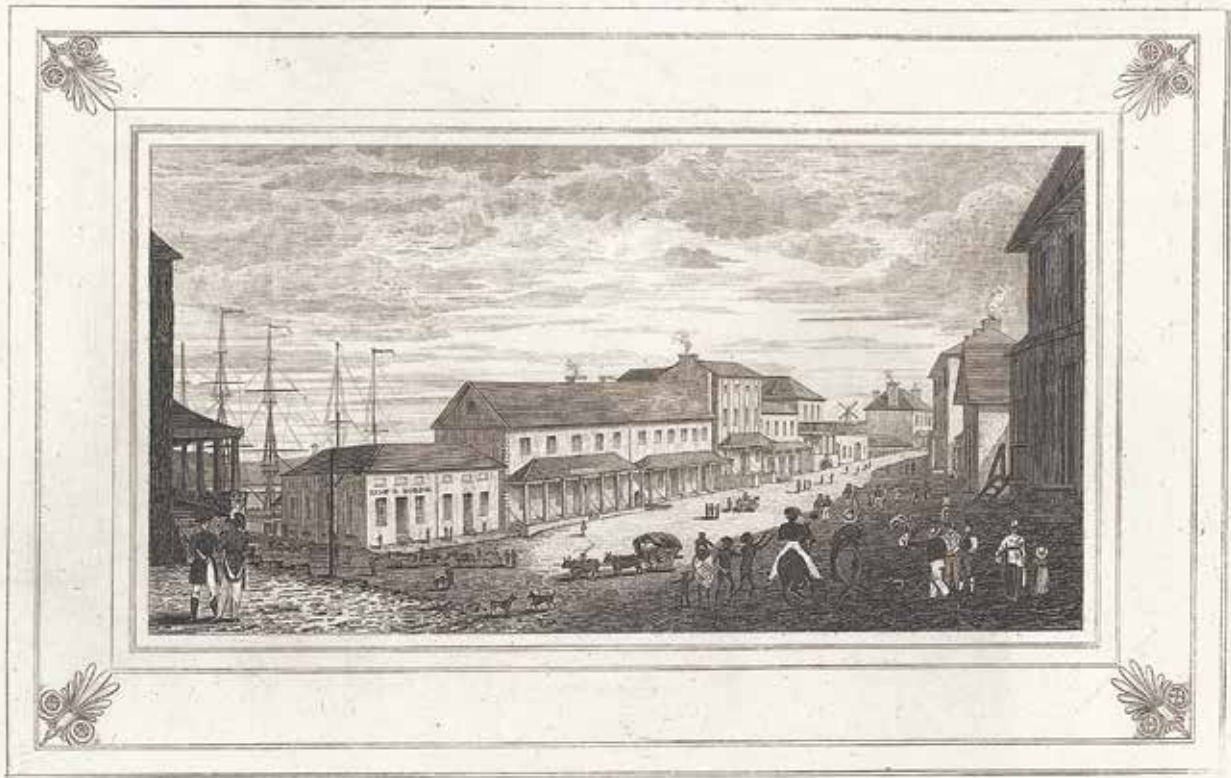
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DRAWN AND ENGRAVED BY J. CARMICHAEL, SYDNEY.

GEORGE STREET.

from the wharf

John Black Carmichael (1803–1857), artist and engraver

1.

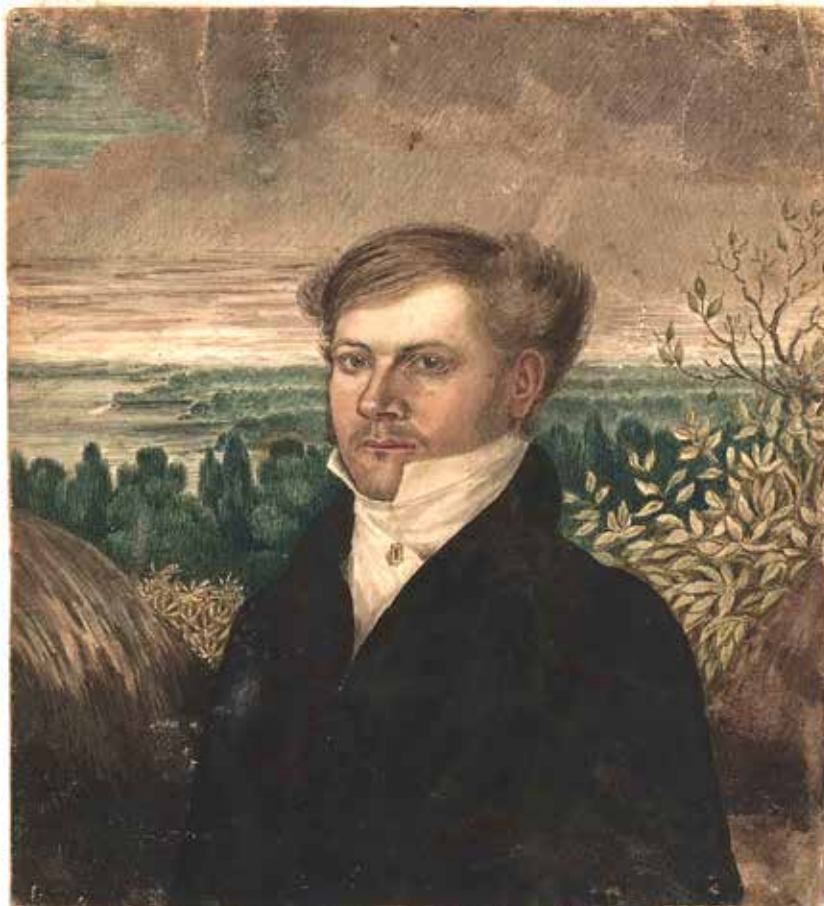
John Carmichael (1803–1857), Arthur Hill, printer (active Australia 1826–1834), *George Street from the wharf* 1829 from John Carmichael, *Select views of Sydney, New South Wales*. Drawn and engraved by John Carmichael, Sydney: the artist, 1829 engraving, printed in black ink, from one copper plate. Printed image 16.6 x 23 cm, sheet 21 x 27.4 cm. Collection: National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, purchased 2006, 2006.328.3

Edinburgh-born John Carmichael arrived in Sydney in 1825, living and working there for over 30 years producing landscapes, portraits, maps, billheads, musical scores, illustrations and some of Australia's first postage stamps. His works provide a revealing and valuable record of life and times in colonial Sydney.

Until now, the published details of Carmichael's life have been fragmentary.

Confusion surrounds his name, his age and education, whether he came free or as a convict, if he was deaf, how many times he married, the number of his children and the distressing circumstances of the last months of his life.

This new account of Carmichael's life illustrates a few of his many works, which can be found in the National Gallery of Australia, National Library of Australia, State Library of NSW, State Library of Victoria, the National Library of New Zealand and private collections. In 2011, the British Library reproduced *Select views of Sydney, New South Wales*. Drawn and engraved by John Carmichael.¹



KAREN EATON

Scotland 1803–1824

John Black Carmichael was born on 27 December 1803 to parents Janet (née Black) and James Carmichael (1775–1820), a poulterer of Edinburgh, Scotland.² He was named James³ at birth but known as John thereafter.

Carmichael was deaf. With no prior schooling, he was admitted⁴ to the Edinburgh Deaf and Dumb Institution⁵ in 1812, where all the pupils were boarders. A small number were “parlour boarders” who occupied “sleeping rooms at the cost of their parents”, the remainder “mainly supported by charity, had a mess table of their own and slept in a separate part of the house.” The children, who came from all parts of Scotland (a few were from Ireland and England), were placed in classes of boys and girls of mixed ages and taught to communicate using gestures, finger-spelling and writing.⁶

A classmate, Alexander Atkinson, remembered Carmichael as good looking

and a “capital fine chap with an excellent turn for drawing”. Atkinson recalled Carmichael’s expressive and “animated” gestures, which conveyed his thoughts and intentions with “fidelity” and humour.⁷ The same could be said about his drawings, which generally include elements that are expressive, animated, faithful and humorous.

The institution fostered the natural abilities of its pupils and, in due course, provided recommendations to potential employers.⁸ Carmichael was apprenticed to John Horsburgh (1791–1869), an Edinburgh engraver and printer.

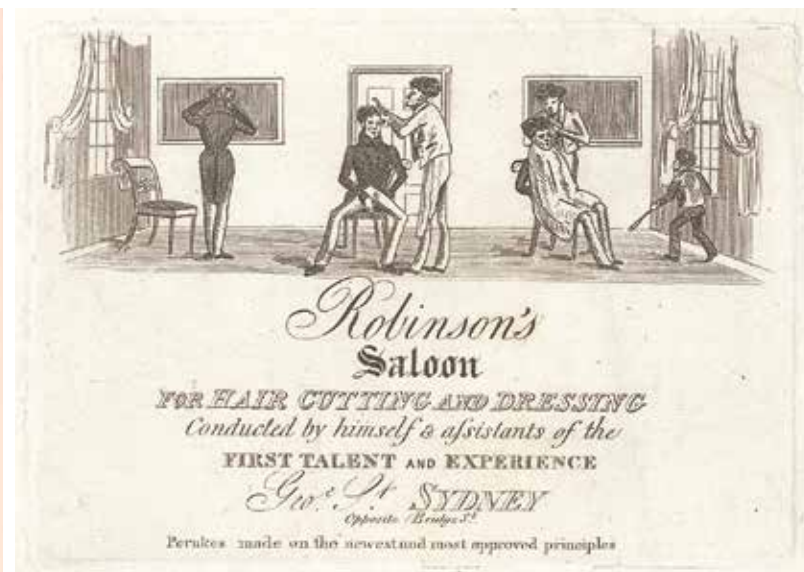
Carmichael had “an enthusiastic fancy” for cockfights, a popular entertainment made all the more exciting when his father James supplied the pits with fighting birds. John also had a great passion for horse racing. He would cheerfully stride out the five miles from Edinburgh to the Musselburgh Races, observing the horses and their jockeys with a keen eye, often making quick pen and ink sketches, which he would later give away to friends.⁹

2.

John Carmichael (1803–1857), *King of black Native*, 1826 watercolour and ink drawing on card, 20.9 x 12.8 cm. At bottom right of image in brushpoint: Drawn by / John Carmichael / 19th December 1826 / Sydney New South Wales; beneath image in ink: King of black Native; on reverse of image in pencil: I-beg-u; an erased pencil inscription is also visible on the reverse. Collection: Mitchell Library, purchased 1999, P2/455. This portrait possibly depicts Bungaree, a well-known Sydney Aborigine who was often referred to as the “King” of Sydney Aborigines. Contemporary European anecdotes often noted his begging, breastplate and old military uniforms which government officials had given to him

3.

John Carmichael (1803–1857), *Thomas Meehan*, watercolour, 15.5 x 14 cm, signed and dated 22 July 1828 verso. Private collection, courtesy of Josef Lebovic Gallery, Kensington NSW. Thomas Meehan (1809–1835) was the son of the late James Meehan (1774–1826), Deputy Surveyor General



4.

John Carmichael (1803–1857),
Advertisement: J. Macnaughton Chemist and Druggist, c 1838, engraving.
 Collection: Josef Lebovic Gallery, Kensington NSW

5.

John Carmichael (1803–1857),
Advertisement: Robinson's Saloon 1835, from *The New South Wales Calendar and General Post Office Directory for 1835*, Sydney, 1835. Engraving, printed in black ink, from one copper plate, image 7.8 x 11.4 cm, sheet 12.5 x 20 cm. Collection: National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, purchased 2004, 2005.675

Stores on the north side and a stone-built warehouse to the south.

Some four years later Carmichael engraved an image of this location (the warehouse by this time was the sailmaking and chandlery store of Kemp & Dobson).¹¹ In *George Street from the Wharf* Carmichael included a small personal detail: a pennant with the name *Triton* is flying from the larger of the two partly obscured vessels lying alongside the King's Wharf (**plate 1**).

Carmichael arrived, aged 21 and without family, with little more than his engraving tools, a modest bundle of personal belongings and most likely one or two letters of introduction. Six weeks after arriving, he advertised in the *Sydney Gazette* of 12 December 1825:

John Mudie Wilson was employed in the Commissariat Department.¹³ William Parker operated an emporium (of sorts) offering law books and household goods.¹⁴ Carmichael continued to advertise regularly and it is likely newspaper staff helped him compose advertisements.^{15,16}

An example of Carmichael's awkward style of writing¹⁷ and determination to produce the best he could is demonstrated by his communication (years later) to the Colonial Secretary.

I got one proof size original well. Very difficult. I was myself to try 10 times damp, put in table, border nails, when dry, size original. I know all printers in England never print size original.¹⁸

Sydney 1825–1835

An adventurous and confident young man, Carmichael sailed, in the spartan comfort of steerage, by *Triton* from Leith Roads on 21 May 1825. Departing with a “full cargo, 51 passengers and 32 Saxony sheep” *Triton* arrived in Sydney Cove on 28 October 1825.¹⁰ Finally at the end of a five-month voyage Carmichael and his fellow travellers stepped onto the rough timbers of the King's Wharf. The new immigrants made their way from the wharf to George Street by a wide gravel lane that passed between the prominent Commissariat

JOHN CARMICHAEL Lately arrived per *Triton* (who served his Time with Mr Horsburgh of Edinburgh), begs to inform the Ladies and Gentlemen of the Colony, that he engraves Coats of Arms and Initials in gold, silver, and ivory; also, Plates for Bills of Exchange, Bills of Lading, Ornamental Cards, Tickets, and Bills of Parcels, &c. on the shortest Notice, in a Style superior to any hitherto attempted to be executed in the Colony. Orders to be left at the House of Mr J. M. Wilson Upper Pitt-street; or, at Mr Parker 99 George-street.¹²

One of Carmichael's earliest portraits, a watercolour thought to be of Bungaree (who had circumnavigated Australia with Matthew Flinders, among other achievements)¹⁹ was completed in 1826 (**plate 2**); two years later, he painted a likeness of Thomas Meehan, son of the recently deceased Deputy Surveyor General James Meehan (**plate 3**).²⁰

In January 1827, Carmichael moved to 21 Castlereagh Street, near the Court House, where he accepted assignments “on the shortest notice and the most reasonable terms”.²¹

Irrawang Vineyard & Pottery.



East Australia.

8.

John Carmichael (1803–1857), engraver, James Macle hose, author and publisher (active Australia c.1833–1844), *Irrawang vineyard and pottery, East Australia* 1838 from James Macle hose, *Picture of Sydney; and strangers' guide in New South Wales, for 1839*, Sydney, J. Macle hose, 1839. Engraving, printed in black ink, from one copper plate, printed image 9 x 17.3 cm, plate-mark 10 x 17.3 cm, sheet 11.2 x 18.4 cm. Collection: National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, purchased from Gallery admission charges 1989, 89.64



Normal Institution.
Hyde Park, Sydney.

9.

John Carmichael (1803–1857), engraver, James Macle hose, author and publisher (active Australia c.1833–1844), *Normal institution, Hyde Park, Sydney* 1838, from James Macle hose, *Picture of Sydney; and strangers' guide in New South Wales, for 1839*, Sydney, J. Macle hose, 1839. Engraving, printed in black ink, from one copper plate, printed image 8.8 x 15.9 cm, plate-mark 10 x 15.9 cm, sheet 11 x 18.4 cm. Collection: National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, purchased from Gallery admission charges 1989, 89.65. Henry Carmichael established the Normal Institution in Elizabeth Street opposite Hyde Park, in 1835. The boys' school for both day pupils and boarders operated at this site until 1849, when it moved to King Street

Moss, who usually dressed in a modish fashion (blue dress coat, plain gilt buttons, blue trousers),³² was robbed of 11 shillings, his watch, hat and handkerchief.³³ At his trial, Justice Dowling found William Atkins guilty of highway robbery and sentenced him to death.³⁴

Three years later, on Saturday evening 30 May 1835 Carmichael was again the victim of a thuggish robbery. Attacked in Clarence Street by four sailors, he was severely injured. They stole a pocket book and £7 in bank notes.³⁵

Carmichael was quick to foil an attempt at forgery in July 1835 when a convict assigned to the *Herald*, George Rodham, presented him with a request

to prepare a reproduction of a Bank of New South Wales £1 note. Immediately suspicious of the fellow's intent, Carmichael went to the Chief Constable and the conniving Rodham was arrested soon after.³⁶

He engraved an engaging advertisement for Robinson's Saloon about 1835 (**plate 5**). Thomas Robinson, a hairdresser and perfumer, invited men and women who valued "their greatest personal ornament – a good head of hair" to have a coiffure arranged in a "style quite à la Macalpine."³⁷

Carmichael took an interest in two colourful Sydney identities. A well-known eccentric, Billy Blue (1767?–1834), a Jamaican black and former convict, was the subject of Carmichael's 1833 lithograph titled *The Old Commodore*, said at the time to be a "spirited likeness" of the garrulous old ferryman (**plate 6**). Prints, available from McNaughton the chemist, were popular and many were sold.³⁸

In September 1835 Carmichael's drawing of the notorious boxer Ned Chalker³⁹ was displayed at the Ropemaker's Arms.⁴⁰

Major Mitchell's maps

Carmichael began his long association with the Surveyor General in 1829 with his appointment as an “engraver in the Surveying Department”⁴¹ and during the early 1830s he was almost exclusively committed to working with the Surveyor General Thomas Mitchell. For a period, Carmichael lived in Mitchell's home, *Craigend* at Darlinghurst.⁴² In December 1832, the *Sydney Herald* noted:

Mr Carmichael the engraver is at present engaged on a series of plates of the Southern Constellations for Surveyor General Mitchell.⁴³

Described as “a large burnished aquatint, produced under the supervision of Mitchell and his friend the astronomer James Dunlop, superintendent of the Parramatta Observatory”, this engraving, *Chart of the Zodiac* is now held by the National Gallery of Australia.⁴⁴

In March 1833, Mitchell wrote to Under Secretary Robert Hay regarding his personal and ambitious undertaking of producing a map of the colony.

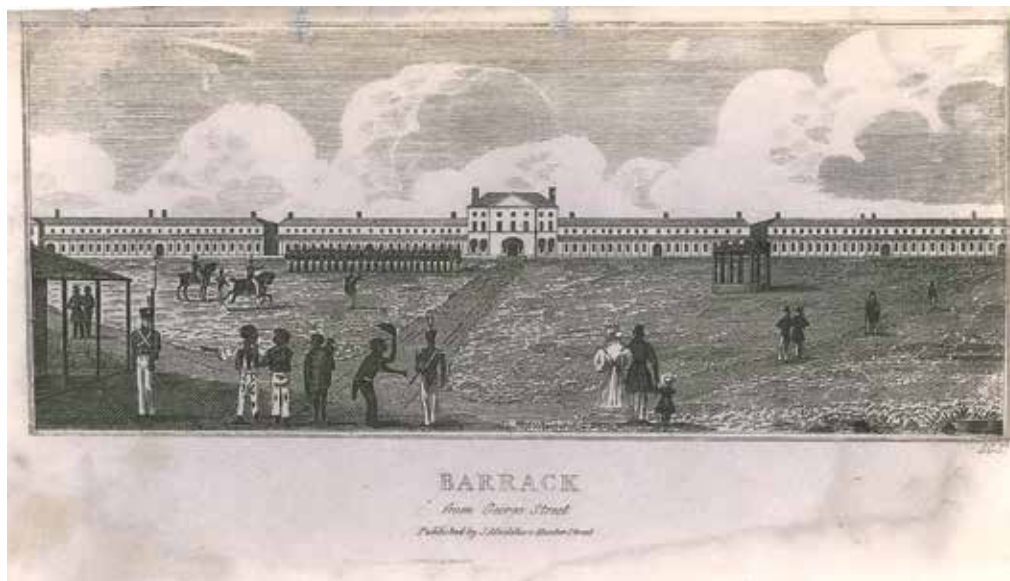
I am happy to say that the drawing and compilation is now about complete and about one half of the work is on copper.

In October that year, Mitchell again wrote to Hay stating:

My map is nearly all on copper having been myself obliged to etch the hills and ranges as few engravers, even in London, can do this satisfactorily ... the rest of the engraving was done by John Carmichael. Who I have paid £200⁴⁵ a year for several years out of my own pocket while he was living in my own house.

On 20 July 1834 the rigorous, exacting Major Mitchell wrote:

I have employed an engraver for several years until I have taught him, tho' deaf and dumb, to engrave hills ... the trouble I have had with this engraver to produce a map which I could own.⁴⁶



Mitchell's *Map of the Nineteen Counties* was considered to be a most “meticulous and valuable etching of the colony's first divisions into Parishes and Counties, the topography rendered in beautiful and minute detail.”⁴⁷ Carmichael's engraving of Victoria Pass in the Blue Mountains is shown here (**plate 7**).

In 1836 Thomas Symonds and Frederick Shortland in HMS *Rattlesnake* completed a survey of Port Phillip Bay, Victoria. Carmichael was commissioned to engrave two charts, one of shoals at the entrance and another of the bay itself where Station Peak [now Flinders Peak] surrounded by clouds, is accurately delineated.⁴⁸

Offered for sale in December 1836, Mitchell's grand neo-classical mansion *Craigend* was described as “that

10.

John Carmichael (1803–1857), engraver, *Barrack* from *New South Wales Calendar and General Post Office Directory for 1834*, Sydney 1834. Engraving, printed in black ink. Collection: Josef Lebovic Gallery, Kensington NSW

11.

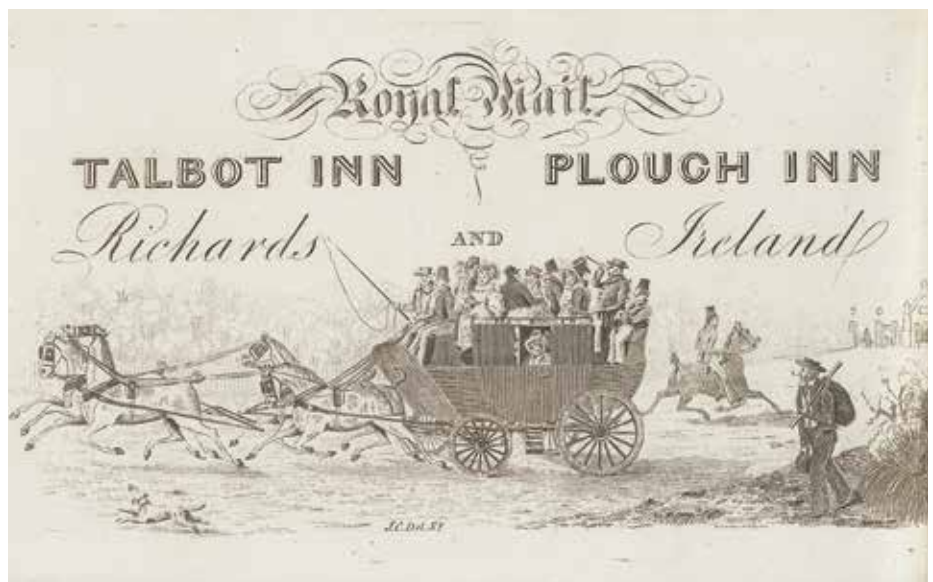
James Adamson, print after, John Carmichael, engraver, Raphael Clint, printer & publisher, *Melbourne from the south side of the Yarra Yarra* 1838. Engraving, printed in black ink, from one copper plate, printed image 17.6 x 35.8 cm, sheet 20 x 40 cm. Collection: National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, purchased 2009, 2009.1031

12.

Thomas Balcombe (1810–1861), print after, John Carmichael, engraver, *The Master of the Fitz Roy Hunt* 1850, from *The Australasian Sporting Magazine*, Sydney, 1850–51. Engraving and etching, printed in black ink, from one copper plate, printed image 10 x 15.9 cm plate-mark 12 x 16 cm sheet 13.6 x 23.2 cm, signed with initials TB and JC. Collection: National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, purchased 1994, 94.423.2

13.

John Carmichael (1803-1857), *Advertisement: Royal Mail, Talbot Inn, Plough Inn, Richards and Ireland* 1834 from *New South Wales Calendar and General Post Office Directory for 1834*, Sydney, 1834. Engraving, printed in black ink, from one copper plate, printed image 10 x 18.8 cm, plate-mark 10.6 x 19 cm, sheet (1) 12.2 x 19.6 cm sheet (both) 12.4 x 19.6 cm. National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, purchased 2004, 2005.681



splendid Roman Villa and spacious pleasure grounds on Woolloomooloo Hill, Darlinghurst.” The sale notice encouraged potential buyers to consider:

In some years hence when all this part of the town will be covered with houses, shops, and warehouses ... this property offers a certain speculation and incalculable profit.⁴⁹

1835–1851

The Irish immigrant ship *Duchess of Northumberland* arrived in Sydney on 27 February 1835.⁵⁰ Although almost all the 240 passengers were young single women, some were family groups such as Bartholomew Clune, his wife Isabella⁵¹

and four of their five children, John, Margaret, Thomas and Belinda⁵² from County Clare.⁵³ Their eldest daughter Maria, a “needlewoman” aged 18, had arrived in Sydney independently some three months earlier.⁵⁴

From about 1812, Clune and his wife Isabella had worked a small four-acre farm at Mount Ivers. All of their children were literate having most likely attended one of the two schools in nearby Sixmilebridge. By 1827 Clune was in debt and as a result lost the property. Before he left Ireland, Clune had secured a position as a station manager with a promised salary of £30 per annum.⁵⁵

Meeting the Clune family would end Carmichael’s bachelor life and provide

him with firm friends and allies. In particular the three lively and engaging Clune sisters would play significant roles in Carmichael’s future. Margaret became his wife; Maria and Belinda gave lifelong loyal and practical support.

On Thursday 28 July 1836, Carmichael aged 34, married 17 year-old Margaret Clune in St Mary’s Church, Sydney. Maria and two others were witnesses to the ceremony.⁵⁶

The wedding day walk to the Catholic Chapel, at that time considered to be “almost in the bush”,⁵⁷ would have been a muddy footslog. In the preceding months Sydneysiders had been in despair over the lack of rain. At the end of June there came the extraordinary sight of a

“drifting fall of snow”. Torrential rain followed throughout July; the drought was broken, the streets a quagmire.⁵⁸

Weddings were usually simple affairs. Margaret would have made or bought a new dress, thereafter intended to be her ‘best’ costume. Perhaps there was a ring for the bride and a traditional cake. Robert Broad the jeweller in George Street had “wedding rings always on sale” and a cake “plain or ornamented” could be had from Dunsdon’s Rich Bride Cake Establishment.⁵⁹

Carmichael’s children were Jannet Maria 1837 (died April 1844⁶⁰), John David 1839, Eloner [Eleanor] Margaret 1842, Janet Maria 1844 (named after her deceased sister), Frederick William Downey 1846 and Edward Feeney 1848.⁶¹ Margaret died, together with a stillborn child, in 1851.

On 3 February 1838, Margaret’s sister Maria married a clerk at the *Gazette* office, William Turkington Crozier,⁶² who died 12 months later “at Waverly [sic] Crescent, where he moved for change of air”. After Crozier’s death, with her red hair tucked under a widow’s cap, Maria and her newborn son went to live with the Carmichaels.⁶³ Baby William died in April that year.⁶⁴ About this time, Carmichael’s household grew with the addition of Isabella and Belinda.⁶⁵ Maria did not remain a widow

for long; in November she married 42 year-old Troop Sergeant-Major Martin Feeney⁶⁶ of the Sydney Mounted Police. By all accounts Feeney was a genial, fair-minded fellow⁶⁷ and over the following ten years while he remained stationed in Sydney, Feeney and Carmichael became firm friends.

In 1842, Margaret’s younger sister, Belinda, married carpenter Patrick Joseph Downey in St Mary’s Church.⁶⁸ The couple lived for many years at the corner of William and Palmer Streets, Woolloomooloo. After an early financial setback⁶⁹ the hard working and dependable Downey went on to establish the firm Downey & Clark, Architects, Surveyors and Civil Engineers.⁷⁰ He was deputy chairman of David Jones’ in 1855.⁷¹ The following year Downey received fulsome praise for his design of “the Wilshire buildings in George Street South ... [which were] fitted up with every convenience for family residence”.⁷² Just as Carmichael came to trust and value Feeney’s friendship, he considered Downey to be an advocate and confidant.

Shortly after Margaret’s death in 1851, Carmichael appointed Feeney and Downey Trustees⁷³ in relation to his properties in Kent and Jenkins Streets. The Deed of Settlement secured the properties for the future benefit of his children.⁷⁴

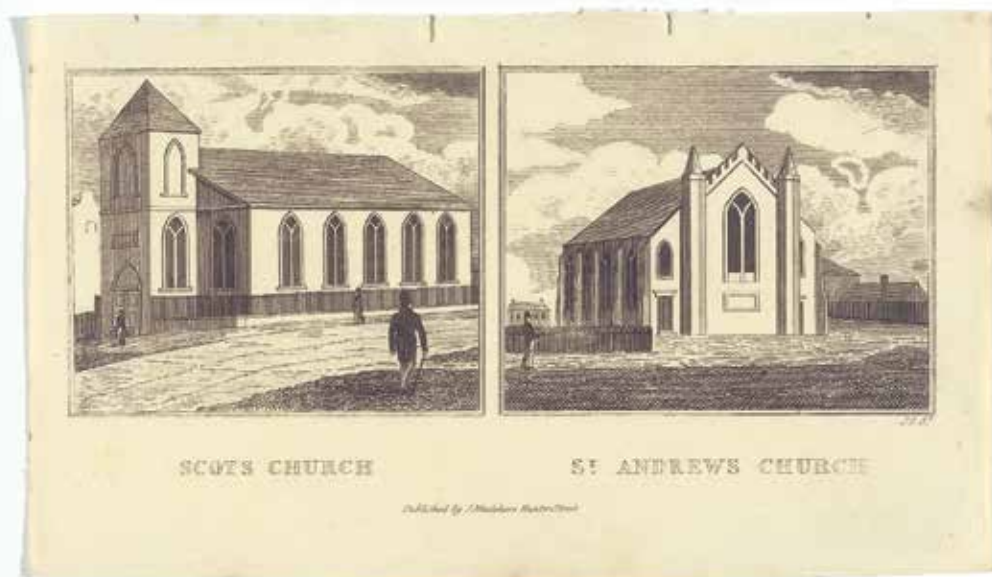
14.

John Carmichael (1803-1857), *Essay for 2d “Sydney View” stamp 1849*. The first NSW stamps were issued on 1 January 1850, showing the Seal of New South Wales and an allegorical figure of Industry greeting an immigrant family with a ship and town beyond. Private collection, courtesy Gary Watson, Prestige Philately



15.

John Carmichael (1803–1857), engraver, James Macle hose, author and publisher (active Australia c 1833–1844), *Scots Church / St. Andrews Church 1838*, from James Macle hose, *Picture of Sydney; and strangers’ guide in New South Wales, for 1839*, Sydney, J. Macle hose, 1839. Engraving, printed in black ink, from one copper plate, printed image (1) 6.6 x 7.8 cm, printed image (2) 6.6 x 8.2 cm, printed image (overall) 8.5 x 16.4 cm, sheet 10.8 x 18.3 cm. Collection: National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, gift of Josef Lebovic Gallery, Sydney 1989, 89.160





cap to a soldier (**plate 10**) à la Bungaree by Augustus Earle.

In July 1839, Carmichael took employment with Raphael (Ralph) Clint,⁷⁷ by reputation an irritable but particularly talented seal engraver.⁷⁸ Engaging Carmichael must have been a boon for Clint's establishment as he advertised the appointment widely.

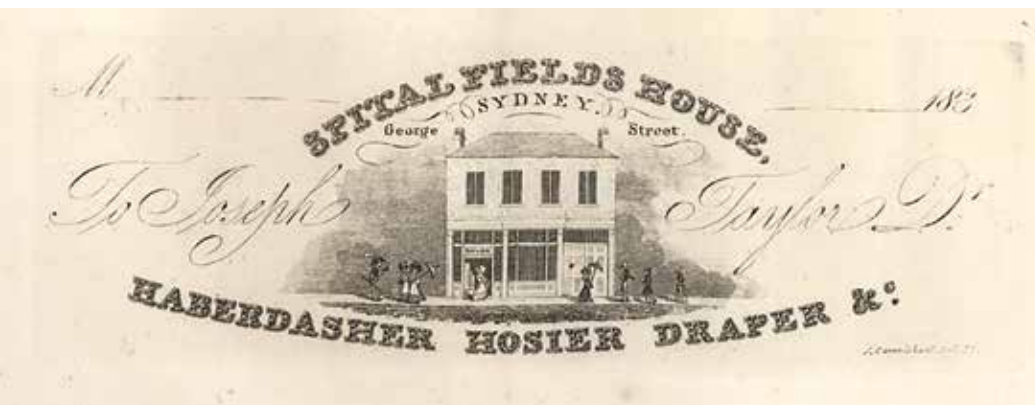
R. CLINT, Engraver and Printers in General, GEORGE-STREET, BEGS to notify to the Public, that he has engaged, at his establishment, the services of Mr JOHN CARMICHAEL. So long known as a first-rate Copper-plate Engraver, by whose extra assistance he hopes to be able to bring up the arrears of work, for which gentlemen have waited so patiently. Seals engraved on Stone, Steel, Brass, &c. &c. Arms extracted from the best Heraldic Works, marshalled and emblazoned according to correct principles. Lithographic, Forms, Circulars, Maps, Plans &c., executed with taste and despatch.⁷⁹

Carmichael worked with Clint for possibly two years or so. During that time he engraved *Melbourne from the South Side of the Yarra Yarra* drawn in 1839 by Scots immigrant John Adamson (d 1841), usually referred to as "Deaf Adamson" (**plate 11**).⁸⁰ Adamson was briefly in Sydney in 1836 but it is not known if he and Carmichael met.

During his career Carmichael engraved many maps, charts and town plans including Port Phillip, the north entrance to Moreton Bay, the towns of Sydney, Launceston and Raymond Terrace.⁸¹

When publican George Jilks, a customer of either Clint or Carmichael, lost his keys and engraved gold and stone seals in April 1841, he offered a reward of £2 for their return to either himself at the Old Bay Horse on the Parramatta Road or to Carmichael in Phillip Street.⁸²

Some 18 years after his arrival in Sydney, Carmichael became a property owner when he bought in Kent Street,⁸³ at the corner of Gas Lane, on 21



16.

John Carmichael (1803–1857), *Advertisement: R. Bourne & Co. Woollen & Linen Drapers Hosiery & Haberdashers* c 1836, Sydney, NSW. Engraving, printed in black ink, from one copper plate, image (irregular) 6.8 x 10.8 cm plate-mark 8.2 x 11.3 cm, sheet 12 x 21.4 cm, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra purchased 2004, 2005.683

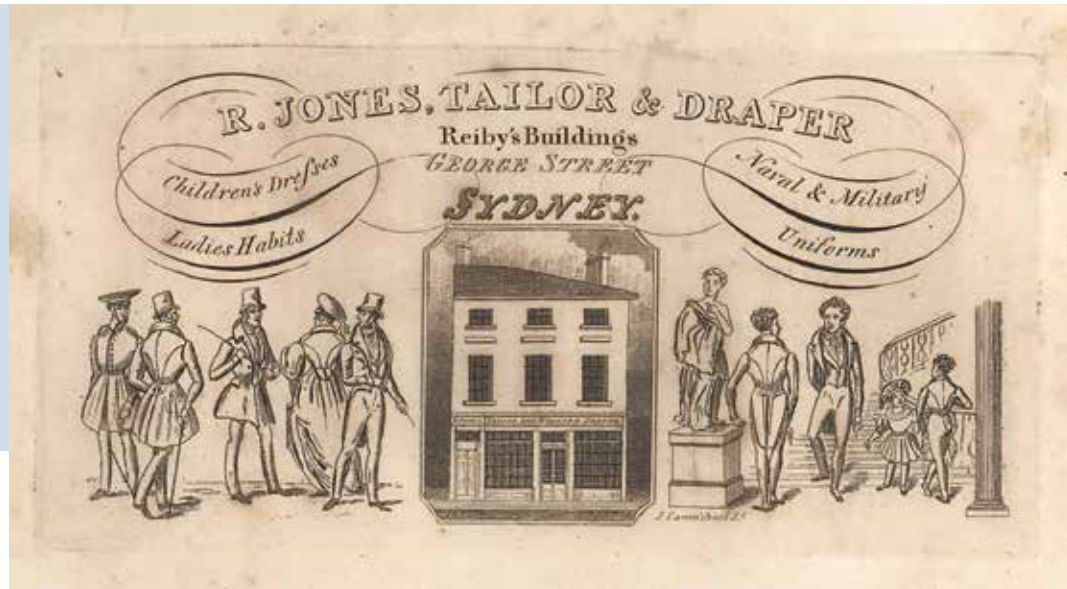
17.

John Carmichael (1803–1857), *Billhead: Spital Fields House, Haberdasher hosiery draper & c.* 1834, from *The New South Wales Calendar and General Post Office Directory for 1834*, Sydney, 1834. Engraving, printed in black ink, from one copper plate, printed image 4.2 x 12.8 cm. Collection: Josef Lebovic Gallery. Kensington NSW

James Maclehoze's 1838 publication, *Picture of Sydney; and Strangers' Guide in New South Wales*, was illustrated with 15 of Carmichael's engravings⁷⁵, the work requiring his focus and labour for many months (**plate 8**).⁷⁶ Some of the plates had already appeared in earlier publications. At first glance one image, the Normal Institution, Hyde Park, Sydney, seems box-like and regimented until closer examination reveals, at the forefront of the scene, children gambolling about the lawn engaged in sword-play, chasing one another, and one boy performing a hand-stand (**plate 9**). The view of the flat, static Barrack is brightened with troops, gentlefolk, an indigenous family and an animated indigenous man ostentatiously doffing his

18.

John Carmichael (1803–1857),
Advertisement: R. Jones. Tailor & Draper from New South Wales Calendar and General Post Office Directory for 1834, Sydney 1834 Engraving, printed in black ink, from one copper plate, signed J. Carmichael. The foppishly dressed figures include a statue trying on clothes. Collection: Josef Lebovic Gallery. Kensington NSW



September 1843, described by Thomas Stubbs the Auctioneer as

House and retail shop ... having a very convenient parlour at the back, commanding extensive views of the harbour, the picturesque scenery of Pyrmont, Balmain ... a capital store [cellar] is under the shop, with the convenience of a trap door. On the first floor ... a neat bedroom and the like accommodation above stairs.⁸⁴

About the same time Carmichael purchased a three-roomed cottage with a kitchen, and two smaller cottages, all brick and shingle construction, in nearby Jenkins Street, which were let.⁸⁵

Carmichael continued to live in Phillip Street until some time prior to August 1845, when he leased Samuel Ashmore's house in Kent Street; from 1848 he was living at his own residence, 26 Kent Street.⁸⁶

Carmichael's change of address is indicated by the following notice.

IF JOHN CARMICHAEL, Engraver, formerly residing at No 89 [sic] Phillip-street, will call at the Treasury,⁸⁷ he will receive a communication from his friends in Scotland.⁸⁸

Carmichael also turned his hand to engraving images for sheet music covers

and musical compositions such as Frederick Ellard's 1842 work *Suisse Air*.⁸⁹

Carmichael's sporting interests may be reflected in his engraving of a silver boxing belt made by silversmiths J.J. Cohen & Son. The elaborately worked three-piece silver buckle was mounted on a belt of dark-blue silk velvet and presented to the pugilist Isaac Reid in 1847 (to be discussed in our next issue).

Thomas Balcombe,⁹⁰ a fellow artist and engraver, and Carmichael were praised for their work on the cover of *Sporting Sketches No 1* featuring the "celebrated racehorse" Jorrocks when it was published in November 1848. The *SMH* commented

We must give praise to Mr Balcombe and Mr Carmichael for the engraving on the wrapper, both in design and execution it is exceedingly neat.⁹¹

A lively engraving after Thomas Balcombe of a man and his horse appeared in another sporting newspaper two years later (**plate 12**), while four straining horses manage to pull a coach overloaded with rollicking patrons in an advertisement for the Talbot Inn and Plough Inn (**plate 13**).

The cutting of the turf for the "first railway in Australia"⁹² was held, in pouring rain, at Sydney on 3 July 1850. A very fine spade made of Australian

steel with a carved tulipwood handle and a barrow fashioned from highly polished native timbers were made for the official ceremony.⁹³ Carmichael engraved the blade with an inscription and the seal of the company, a railway locomotive

... the engraving of the connecting chains, the smoke from the furnace, the caps and whistles of the boiler, are minute work, as they are perfect in the extreme.⁹⁴

Margaret Carmichael died in Kent Street on 4 June 1851⁹⁵ leaving five children between the ages of three and 12. The four older children John, Eleanor, Janet and Frederick remained in Sydney with their father. Maria and Martin Feeney took the youngest, Edward, to live in Brisbane where he was widely known as "their little adopted son, who was deaf and dumb." Belinda Downey and Eleanor often visited the Feeneys' for extended periods where "happy times were spent in singing and chatting."^{96,97}

A two-pence postage stamp

Dedicated philatelists the world over would be aware that on 1 January 1850 New South Wales postage stamps, prepaid and "gummed ready for use", were issued for the first time. Carmichael and two other engravers⁹⁸



19.

John Carmichael (1803–1857), *Billhead: C & F Wilson, Wholesale & Retail General Warehouse Sydney*, from *The New South Wales Calendar and General Post Office Directory for 1834*, Sydney, 1834 Engraving, printed in black ink, from one copper plate, signed John Carmichael. Collection: Josef Lebovic Gallery. Kensington NSW

were commissioned to engrave plates for the one, two and three-pence stamps.⁹⁹ Carmichael's twopenny stamp (**plate 14**) has been described as having “very fine workmanship, the details of the design artistic and highly finished.”¹⁰⁰

During this period the Colonial Secretary pressed Carmichael to commit to a definite date for completion of certain stamp engravings. Carmichael steadfastly refused to sign any document to that effect. However, he did deliver the work in good time.¹⁰¹

Towards the end of 1852 Carmichael engraved, on steel, a three-pence stamp. This plate received the Governor's approval, however, it was noted “it was executed in a manner inferior to that of previous plates by the same artist.”¹⁰² This lapse on Carmichael's part is perhaps understandable given there was much upheaval in his household between 1851 and 1852. In 1853 Carmichael was authorised to engrave a copper plate for the six-pence stamp. The plate was completed with Carmichael's usual care and attention and received the Inspector of Stamps approval on 8 May 1853.¹⁰³

1852–1857

Carmichael's second wife, Emma Sivewright, arrived in Sydney in July 1851 together with her father Frederick, formerly a London law stationer, and her younger brother, Frederick jnr. Soon after his arrival Sivewright snr was employed as

a clerk in the Surveyor General's Office.¹⁰⁴

On 1 January 1852, Carmichael, aged 48, and 20-year-old Emma married in St Andrew's Church (**plate 15**). Emma, perhaps naively, believed her new husband to be much younger; when he died five years later, four death notices record his age as 45 rather than his actual age of 54.¹⁰⁵

Carmichael, Emma and the four children continued to live in Kent Street until late in 1853. However, the following years appear restless and unsettled – the family moving four times in three years.¹⁰⁶ In 1854, Carmichael “removed to Jamison Street”, where in November he advertised a room to let “suitable for a single gentleman” and only a week later advertised “two spacious rooms”.¹⁰⁷

While Carmichael was living in Jamison Street, the FitzRoy Iron Coal Mining Company commissioned various items intended for showing at the forthcoming Paris Exhibition. Anchors, tools, screws, bolts, razors and other items were made to demonstrate the capability of the material being mined in a small-scale fledgling operation at Mittagong in the Southern Highlands of NSW.¹⁰⁸ The *SMH* reported that the collection was shown in Sydney at an event opened by the Chief Justice and noted that many of the articles were decoratively engraved by Carmichael “in an excellent style”.¹⁰⁹

From 1855 to early 1856 Carmichael

could be found at Mrs Cheer's apartments No 6 Horbury Terrace, Macquarie Street (facing the Domain Gate); here Emma gave birth to a stillborn son on 16 January 1856.¹¹⁰ Also living with the family at this time was Emma's younger brother Frederick, a timid and out-of-work 21-year-old clerk.¹¹¹

From March 1856 the address was Gloucester Street, where in January 1857, Carmichael “was ordered to enter into sureties to keep the peace, he having violently assaulted his wife.”¹¹²

By July 1857 Carmichael was living at 5 Prince Street North in desperate and miserable circumstances. He was gravely ill and insolvent. A notice on 22 July confirmed the extent of his debt:

*The undermentioned estates have been surrendered and accepted. John Carmichael of Prince Street Sydney engraver. Liabilities £127 4s, Assets, value of personal property £9 outstanding debts £18 total - £27, Deficit £100 4s. Mr [Adam] Wilson official assignee.*¹¹³

John Carmichael died on the evening of Monday 27 July 1857, aged 54.¹¹⁴ His funeral held on 30 July was conducted by furniture makers and undertakers, John Hill & Son.¹¹⁵ Carmichael was buried in the Presbyterian portion of the Sydney Burial Ground (Devonshire Street). Some years later his children

erected a monument there, in the Catholic section, to the memory of their mother and father.¹¹⁶

Details of Carmichael's illness were revealed in the *SMH* on 4 August 1857:

IN THE INSOLVENT ESTATE OF JOHN CARMICHAEL, Engraver, who died July 27th 1857. In justice to his memory I his wife, Emma Carmichael, beg to publish the following statement, as annexed to his schedule, which he signed, believing himself on his deathbed, in presence of [Augustus] Birch, Esq from the Court in Equity. During the five months of Mr Carmichael's painful illness, he suffered severely, and was almost in a state of starvation, which compelled me to apply and receive relief for him from the Benevolent Asylum, although at that time he was entitled to the receipt of £6 per week (rents) from his property, Kent-street North. EMMA CARMICHAEL 5 Prince-street North.

(Copy from Schedule List A.)

The above property, six years ago, I placed in the hands of two trustees, viz., Martin Feeney, of Moreton Bay, jailor (since deceased), and Patrick Downey, architect, of Sydney, to act for me, being myself deaf and dumb. Downey has since left the colony, without making any arrangement for my support, or leaving me any power to make the above estate available for the liquidation of the annexed liabilities in my schedule list D. I have been unable, in consequence of severe illness to attend to my business (an engraver) since October in last year, and have not been able to leave my bed since the 25th March 1857, and have been obliged to apply and receive relief from the Benevolent Asylum and a few friends. This is the reason of my now praying the protection of the Court. I have not the means of paying my just debts, and am destitute of the means of subsistence.

(Signed) JOHN CARMICHAEL.¹¹⁷

Carmichael's debts included medicines and medical attention £50 3s, cash lent £22 (by Hannah Sivewright, Emma's mother), clothing £19, rent £8, firewood and coal £10, bread and meat £8, stationary £3, wine £2, plus one easy-chair value £5 made by Joseph Sly. Four accounts for engraving, which included £9 for George Hamilton of Hamilton's Steam Biscuits, were outstanding.¹¹⁸

On 19 August 1857 the matter of Carmichael's insolvency was again before the court.

In the estate of John Carmichael (deceased) a single meeting was held. Two debts were proved ... The meeting was adjourned ... for the purpose of enabling Mr [Wood] Readett, solicitor, to take the opinion of counsel upon a voluntary settlement made by the insolvent in favour of his children. Insolvent's widow¹¹⁹ allowed to retain for her use, engraving tools and table valued at £1, articles of furniture and wearing apparel, the total being £9.10s.^{120,121}

Carmichael's legacy

The *Moreton Bay Courier* of 8 August 1857 carried his sister-in-law Maria Feeney's fitting summation of Carmichael's life and career in his death notice.

On the 27th July, at his residence, Princes-street, Sydney, Mr John Carmichael, artist and copperplate engraver, aged 50 years. His transcendent talent was long acknowledged in the colony, in which he was an old and respected resident, being one of the few free immigrants that came from home 30 years ago. His works will long survive him.¹²²

Carmichael was a fine engraver who produced accurate topographical scenes. He had the rare talent of enriching the advertisements which were his bread-and-butter with lively figures and humour, in a way which does not detract from the advertisers' message but enhances it. There are many examples of his work in this

genre (**plates 16–19**), and it is possible that he produced these advertisements not only for cash but also when he needed services or goods in exchange. That he was deaf and had difficulty communicating in writing makes his achievements all the more remarkable.

Postscript

Martin Feeney was appointed governor (and Maria matron) of Queen Street Gaol, Brisbane in January 1850.¹²³ In February 1855, Feeney, contemplating retirement, "commenced a two storied stone and brick building", which he named the Prince of Wales Hotel.¹²⁴ Feeney did not live to enjoy his new hotel. He resigned as gaoler in June 1856 due to sudden "frail health" and died, aged 59, the following month.^{125,126,127}

Patrick Downey was returning from England by *Dunbar* at the time of Carmichael's death. The ship was wrecked on its approach to Sydney Heads on 20 August 1857. With the exception of one crewman¹²⁸ all 121 passengers and crew were lost. In the days after the disaster their bodies, battered and broken by the violent sea, some mauled by sharks, were gathered and laid out at the King's Arms.¹²⁹ Downey's corpse was recovered from Manly Beach and later identified by his father Patrick and brother William.¹³⁰

Downey's wife Belinda and young Eleanor Carmichael were returning to Australia by *City of Sydney*. After some delay at Galle, Ceylon, they were obliged to transfer to the *Victoria* and did not arrive in Sydney until 27 February 1858.¹³¹

In due course Belinda¹³² was appointed one of the Trustees¹³³ of Carmichael's estate. Vesting of the proceeds of the Trust (to Carmichael's children) was effected by the early 1870s.¹³⁴

Some time in 1857, possibly in the months before their father's death, Carmichael's children John, Eleanor, Janet and Frederick joined their brother Edward in Brisbane, to live with Maria Feeney at the Prince of Wales Hotel.^{135,136}

Eleanor married, 26 December 1861, William Long, superintendent of Bungaban Station (a cattle run



20.

John Carmichael (1803-1857),
*Advertisement: W. Blyth ...
 Cook, Pastry Cook from Low's
 Directory of the City and district
 of Sydney ... 1847, Sydney, 1847.*
 Engraving, 8.9 x 21.2 cm, printed
 at lower left "Carmichael Sc."
 Dixson collection, State Library of
 NSW DL 84/458 opp. p. 19

on the Dawson River inland from Rockhampton). Janet married Michael Cecil Coffey, a well-educated and amiable Brisbane chemist, 26 December 1864. Both women lived the remainder of their lives in Queensland. Eleanor died 1890 and Janet 1902.¹³⁷

Carmichael's eldest and youngest sons, John and Edward, left Australia to live in Scotland. The 1861 Scotland census records John, employed as a lithographer, living in Edinburgh with Helen Carmichael, a poulterer (widow of his uncle Robert). John married Janet McQueen¹³⁸ in 1875. Subsequent census returns of 1881 and 1891 show his occupation as 'litho artist' and litho-draftsman.¹³⁹

The first record of Edward¹⁴⁰ in Scotland was not until the 1871 census, which recorded him as a bookbinder living in lodgings in Edinburgh. From 1875 Edward lived with his brother and his family until John's death in Edinburgh in 1897. The 1901 census shows Edward, head of house, living with his nephews.¹⁴¹ The following year, Edward married widow Agnes Lund.¹⁴² The couple arrived in Australia in 1908 and returned to England in 1922.¹⁴³

As a young man Frederick, tried his luck on the Victorian gold fields. Later he became a merchant trader and lived in New Caledonia for 32 years. In

December 1879 he married Elizabeth Redment (of Rockhampton, Qld) in the British Consulate, Noumea. Fluent in French, Frederick translated documents in a Brisbane Police Court matter in 1896. Frederick and his wife did not permanently leave Noumea until 1902. Frederick died in Brisbane in 1916.¹⁴⁴

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ABBREVIATIONS

BC Brisbane Courier; SG Sydney Gazette; SH Sydney Herald; SM Sydney Monitor; SMH Sydney Morning Herald; SLNSW State Library of NSW.



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has worked for a major merchant bank, import/export firms, a leading dairy co-operative and the NSW Department of Education. During the 1980s, together with her husband, she worked a beef cattle property. Since her retirement Karen has indulged her passion for colonial history, particularly in relation to Sydney. A keen photographer, mostly of Australian native flora, she lives on the NSW North Coast. Karen can be contacted at eaton.karen@icloud.com.

NOTES

- 1 British Library, Historical Print Editions.
- 2 Findmypast: Scotland Marriages 1561–1910: James Carmichael 18yr old shoemaker and Janet Black aged 15 daughter of David Black, tailor (deceased) and Janet Wallace married Edinburgh 26 Jan 1793. James died Grange Loan, Edinburgh 27 Dec 1820 *New Caledonian Mercury* 6 Jan 1821.
- 3 B. Carty, "John Carmichael Australian Deaf Pioneer", *Selected papers from the Australasian Deaf Studies Research Symposium*, Renwick College, August 22-23, 1998, 2000.
- 4 *Ibid*.
- 5 University Strathclyde www.celcis.org accessed 9 Aug 2014. Edinburgh Deaf and

- Dumb Institution, Chessels Court, off the Royal Mile, Edinburgh, opened 1810.
- 6 Alexander Atkinson, *Memoirs of My Youth* p 13, originally published 1865, published Feltham, British Deaf History Society Publications, c2001
- 7 *Ibid* p 122f.
- 8 *Ibid* p 140.
- 9 *Ibid* p 122f.
- 10 *Caledonian Mercury* 23 May 1825 p 3; Thomas Crawford, a cabin passenger, wrote an account of *Triton's* voyage. Refer <http://www.scottishcorpus.ac.uk/thomascrawford/> (accessed 14 Apr 2015); *Australian* 3 Nov 1825 p 4.
- 11 Karen Eaton, *The Sailmaker's Son A Biographical Sketch of Richard Hinde Fox Kemp 1823–1906*. Karen Eaton, Skennars Head NSW 2012.
- 12 *SG* 12 Dec 1825 p 1.
- 13 State Records NSW: John Mudie Wilson came free *Thalia* 1822.
- 14 *SG* 3 Oct 1825 p 1s; *Australian* 13 Sep 1826 p 1.
- 15 *SM* 27 Jan 1827 p 8; 10 Feb 1827 p 8.
- 16 B. Carty, *op cit*.
- 17 *Ibid*. Carmichael's style of writing is in keeping with his education as a deaf person.
- 18 *Ibid*.
- 19 F. D. McCarthy, "Bungaree (?–1830)", Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/bungaree-1848/text2141>, published first in hardcopy 1966 (accessed 5 Apr 2015).
- 20 The NSW Government Printer photographed the painting in 1921, and it has not been sighted again till now. We are grateful to Josef Lebovic of Josef Lebovic Gallery, Kensington NSW, for providing us with a photograph and to the owner for allowing us to reproduce it.
- 21 *SM* 27 Jan 1827 p 8.
- 22 Ancestry: 1828 Census; *SG* 20 Jun 1829 p 4.
- 23 *SM* 18 Oct 1828 p 8.
- 24 *SH* 22 Aug 1831 p 4.
- 25 *SH* 8 Apr 1833 p 2.
- 26 *SG* 10 Dec 1828 p 2.
- 27 *SG* 2 May 1829 p 3.
- 28 *SM* 18 Dec 1830 p 4.
- 29 By 1861 Carmichael's son, John, was employed in Edinburgh as a lithographic artist.
- 30 Cedric Flower, *The Antipodes Observed Prints and Print Makers of Australia 1788–1850*, Macmillan, 1975. Flower doubted Carmichael was deaf as "he taught drawing and engraving".
- 31 *SG* 29 May 1832 p 3.
- 32 *SH* 10 Apr 1834 p 1.
- 33 *SH* 28 May 1832 p 3.
- 34 *SG* 2 Aug 1832 p 3. No record has been found of Atkins' execution; Ancestry. Gaol Description & Entrance Books: William Atkins native-born c1812.
- 35 *SH* 4 Jun 1835 p 2.
- 36 *SG* 15 Jul 1835 p 2.
- 37 *SG* 3 Aug 1833 p 2; *SH* 7 Oct 1833 p 2; *SH* 20 Aug 1835 p 4; *SG* 9 Aug 1836 p 1; *SH* 4 June 1838 p 1. Robinson operated from various addresses in George Street throughout the 1830s and 1840s. In addition to hairdressing he sold wigs (for men and women), perfume, combs and offered "fancy hair plating" for earrings, necklaces etc. In 1838 he imported a personal "weighing machine" for the benefit of his customers. In 1844 "T. Robinson's Hair Cutting and Bath Rooms" were next to the Royal Hotel, "with no connection with his old Establishment" *SMH* 15 Apr 1844 p 1; by 1849 he was in partnership with Mr Pearson *SMH* 5 Nov 1849 p 2.
- 38 *SH* 8 Apr 1833 p 2, 15 Sep 1834 p 1.
- 39 Edward (Ned) Chalker (1809 NSW–1890 NSW); Ancestry: Gaol Entrance and Description Book 1831.
- 40 *SG* 22 Sep 1835 p 2 Michael Napthaly publican, cnr York & Market Streets. A limited number of proofs were to be struck.
- 41 State Library of NSW card index QA923.5 (refers to typewritten copies of Surveyor General's Department 1829 letters); Findmypast: *Sydney Directory 1834*, records Carmichael as "attached" to the Surveyor General's Office.
- 42 William Foster, *Sir Thomas Livingston Mitchell and his world 1792–1855* p 173. Carmichael may have lived in Mitchell's household before he moved to *Craigend*, which was not occupied until shortly before 22 Apr 1833 (Foster p 137). Mitchell writes in his 4 Oct 1833 letter to Hay "Carmichael was in my house for several years". In much later correspondence of 22 Jun 1852 Mitchell states Carmichael lived at *Craigend* for four years.
- 43 *SH* 20 Dec 1832 p 3.
- 44 Roger Butler, *Printed images in colonial Australia 1801–1900*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra 2007. *Chart of the Zodiac* including the stars to the 4th magnitude between the Parallels of 24 ½ declination North & South the places of the stars calculated for the year 1830.
- 45 By comparison, 1832 salaries of assistant surveyors ranged from £220 to £280. Foster, *op cit* p 205, 452.
- 46 J H L Cumpston, *Thomas Mitchell Surveyor General and Explorer* (chapter VIII), originally published Oxford University Press, 1954, accessed at Project Gutenberg of Australia.
- 47 John F Brock, *A Tale of Two Maps – NSW in the 1830s* Mitchell and Dixon.
- 48 State Library of NSW, *A chart of Port Phillip as surveyed by Lieut Thos Symonds & Mr Frederick Shortland, of HMS.Rattlesnake*, W.m Hobson Esqr Captain / engraved by J Carmichael, Sydney.
- 49 *The Colonist* 1 Dec 1836 p 4; J Broadbent, *The Australian Colonial House*, pp 171–177. *Craigend* was built 1829, demolished 1922.
- 50 *SG* 14 Mar 1835 p 2.
- 51 Bartholomew Clune (c1795 Ireland–1839 NSW); Isabella Maloney Clune (c1801 Ireland–1873 Qld); John Clune (c1814 Ireland–1887 Qld); Margaret Clune (c1819 Ireland–1851 Sydney NSW), Thomas Clune (c1826 Ireland–1853 Qld); Belinda Theresa Clune (c1820 Ireland–1892 NSW).
- 52 The Ship List www.theshiplist.com (accessed 3 Sep 2014) Note: Clune/ Clewn; Isabella recorded as Molony (her maiden name); Belinda Theresa recorded as Isabella.
- 53 *Courier* 16 Apr 1853 p 3.
- 54 Maria Clune (c1816 Ireland–1865 At Sea). SRNSW ref vol 9/6184 entry #29952 *David Scott* 30 Oct 1834 Clune/Clunes.
- 55 Ejectment Books of County Clare, 1816–1835 National Archives of Ireland ID/40/16–ID/40/32. (Plaintiff George Perry 1827); Return of Emigrants from Ireland to NSW by *Duchess of Northumberland* arrived Port Jackson 27 Feb 1835. Clune employed by James Wright.
- 56 Marriage NSW BDM 259/1836 witnesses Maria Clune, John Andrew Robertson, Peirce Taite (Pierre Tuite).
- 57 *Goulburn Evening Penny Post*, Old Times 2 May 1899 p 2.
- 58 *SH* 30 Jun 1836 p 2. A stranger [the first sighting of snow in Sydney since the time of settlement]; *SM* 30 Jul 1836 p 2. Gangs of chained convicts were employed in the worst effected thoroughfares "clearing away mud from the many deep potholes".
- 59 *SG* 31 Mar 1835 p 3; *SM* 12 Sep 1838 p 2.
- 60 *SMH* 22 Apr 1844 p 3.
- 61 Dannah Maria (1837–1844 NSW), John David (1839 NSW–1897 UK), Eloner (Eleanor) Margaret (1842 NSW–1890 Qld), Janet Maria (1844 NSW–1902 Qld), Frederick William Downey (1846 NSW–1916 Qld), Edward Feeney (1848 NSW–?). The NSW BDM records two births in 1842, Ellen and Eleanor, usually taken to be twins, however this is a double entry and only one child, Eleanor Margaret, was born. Deed of Settlement 27 Aug 1851 confirms names and number of children. Conveyance 2 Mar 1871 confirms John David Carmichael's birth date (not recorded NSW BDM).
- 62 *SH* 5 Feb 1838 p 3; *SG* 5 Feb 1839 p 3; 9 Apr 1839 p 3; Ancestry: Returns of the Colony; NSW Land Grants 1788–1963: owner half acre land Wollongong Apr 1837.
- 63 *BC* 2 May 1879 p 3.
- 64 *SG* 9 Apr 1839 p 3.
- 65 *BC* 3 May 1879 p 5. From late 1835 Bartholomew Clune was a station overseer "upon the Namoi River". Clune's wife and children (other than Maria and Margaret who remained in Sydney) accompanied him. Clune died Maitland early 1839, after which his wife, Isabella, daughter Belinda, and son Thomas returned to Sydney. The whereabouts of son, John, at this time are not known. John was a tear-away and to the despair of his family frequently in serious trouble with the law. He married Jane Connolly 16 Oct 1849 Qld.
- 66 Martin Feeney (c1797 Ireland–1856 Qld), father Patrick Feeney of County Galway, first enlisted army 1822 Ireland; arrived *VDL Arab* 1834, marriage *Australasian Chronicle* 26 Nov 1839 p 1.
- 67 *BC* 4 Feb 1922 p 17; State Library Qld Colonial Secretary Letters relating to Moreton Bay.
- 68 Patrick Joseph Downey (c1820 Ireland–1857 Sydney NSW); came free Gilbert Henderson 1841; marriage *Australasian Chronicle* 9 Jul 1842 p 3.
- 69 *Morning Chronicle* 18 Oct 1843 p 2.
- 70 *SMH* 9 Apr 1851 p 1; *Empire* 21 Jan 1856 p 4.
- 71 *SMH* 5 Sep 1855 p 1.

- 72 *Empire* 21 Jan 1856 p 4.
- 73 Deed of Settlement 27 Aug 1851 (Properties to be held in trust for Carmichael's children.)
- 74 William Hardy (d 1878 Ireland) *Evening News* 8 Jan 1879 p 2. Solicitor of the Sydney firm Stenhouse & Hardy acted for Carmichael and his family from as early as 1843 through to 1871.
- 75 Roger Butler, *op cit*. The remainder of the prints were by William Wilson and Samuel Clayton.
- 76 *Colonist* 24 Jan 1838 p 4.
- 77 Raphael Clint (1797 Hereford UK–1849 Sydney NSW).
- 78 *Bega Gazette* 7 Nov 1883 p 4.
- 79 *SM* 12 Jul 1839 p 1.
- 80 'Garryowen' [Edmund Finn], *The Chronicles of Early Melbourne 1835 to 1852*, 1888 p 37.
- 81 *Launceston Advertiser* 22 Sep 1836 p 1 (Launceston); *Maitland Mercury* 25 Jan 1854 p 2S (Raymond Terrace); SLNSW (Port Phillip, Moreton Bay, town of Sydney).
- 82 *SM* 2 Apr 1841 p 1.
- 83 Ancestry: NSW Electoral Rolls 1845; City of Sydney Assessment Books 1845–1948.
- 84 *SMH* 19 Sep 1843 p 3.
- 85 NSW State Records Insolvent Estate of John Carmichael.
- 86 City of Sydney Assessment Books 1845–1948.
- 87 Commissariat Office.
- 88 *SMH* 13 Aug 1845 p 3 indicates No 89 Phillip St; *SM* 2 Apr 1841 indicates No 8 Phillip St.
- 89 *SH* 5 Apr 1842 p 2 The *SH* writer praised the execution of the engraving, however sternly noted an error "repeated twice" – that being 'et' for 'ed' in two Italian phrases "Legato il sopra et ben marcala il basso agitato et molt allegro". (Frederick's father was the proprietor of Ellard's Music Saloon.)
- 90 Thomas Tyrwhitt Balcombe (1820 St Helena 1810–1861 Sydney NSW).
- 91 *SMH* 14 Nov 1848 p 3.
- 92 Australia's first passenger railway opened in Melbourne in 1854. The Sydney to Parramatta railway was not completed until 1855 due to finance and construction problems.
- 93 *Bathurst Free Press* 13 Jul 1850 p 3.
- 94 *Geelong Advertiser* 10 Jul 1850 p 2.
- 95 *SMH* 6 Jun 1851 p 4; NSW BDM V1851209 118/1851; Biographical Database of Australia: K. Johnson & M. Sainty, *Sydney Burial Ground 1819-1901 and History of Sydney's Early Cemeteries from 1788*. Buried Sydney Burial Ground re-interred La Perouse RC section 4S, plot 32.
- 96 *Maitland Mercury* 9 Jul 1851 p 3; *Moreton Bay Courier* 3 Sep 1853 p 2; *Maitland Mercury* 7 Jan 1854 p 2; *Bell's Life in Sydney* 27 Feb 1858 p 3; State Library of Queensland Colonial Secretary Letters relating to Moreton Bay. Patrick Downey was an occasional visitor.
- 97 *BC* 4 Feb 1922 p 17.
- 98 *SMH* 23 Aug 1936 p 4 (Robert?) Clayton and Henry Cooper Jervis.
- 99 *The World's News* 17 Apr 1835 p 18.
- 100 *SMH* 12 Aug 1936 p 4.
- 101 B. Carty, *op cit*.
- 102 *The Postage Stamps, Envelopes, and Post Cards of Australia and the British Colonies of Oceania*, 1887 p 62–3. forgottenbooks.com
- 103 *Ibid*. With the exception that on one stamp the word "Wall" was inserted instead of "Wales".
- 104 Ancestry: 1851 England Census; *Bell's Life in Sydney* 2 Aug 1851 p 3.
- 105 See n 113 & n 114.
- 106 Ancestry: NSW Electoral Rolls.
- 107 *SMH* 3 Mar 1856 p1, 4 Mar p 1, 6 Mar p 1.
- 108 www.fitzroyironworks.com.au, accessed 14 Oct 2014.
- 109 *SMH* 20 Nov 1854 p 4.
- 110 *SMH* 19 Jan 1856 p 8, 13 Mar 1856 p 8.
- 111 *SMH* 3 Mar 1856 p 1, 4 Mar p 1, 6 Mar p 1. Sivewright jnr was likely reliant on Carmichael from about the time of Sivewright snr's death at Parramatta on 28 Jun 1854, *SMH* 3 Jul 1854 p 8; *Bell's Life* 8 Jul 1854 p 3.
- 112 *SMH* 17 Jan 1857 p 4.
- 113 *SMH* 22 Jul 1857 p 3.
- 114 *SMH* 29 Jul 1857 p 1, 10 Sep 1857 p 12; *Empire* 29 Jul 1857 p 4, 30 Jul 1857 p 1; NSW BDM V1857454 102. Informant on death certificate was Emma's brother Frederick. Cause of death "dropsy" Dr George Bennett.
- 115 *Empire* 30 Jul 1857 p 1.
- 116 Biographical Database of Australia: K. Johnson & M. Sainty *op cit*. Carmichael was buried at Sydney Burial Ground re-interred Bunnerong, Section: 4N Plot: 45. There was clearly confusion about Carmichael's age. At the time of his death Emma believed he was 44 yrs & 9mths, the memorial erected by his children claims 42 yrs (and their mother 29 yrs). Maria Feeney believed he was 50.
- 117 *SMH* 4 Aug 1857 p 3.
- 118 *Ibid*.
- 119 Emma Carmichael née Sivewright (c1832 UK–1907 Surry Hills NSW) married secondly William Holden *Empire* 18 Feb 1860 p 7.
- 120 *Empire* 20 August 1857 p 4; *SMH* 20 Aug 1857 p 2.
- 121 NSW State Records: Insolvent Estate of John Carmichael.
- 122 *Moreton Bay Courier* 8 Aug 1857 p 2.
- 123 Ancestry: Returns of the Colony; *Moreton Bay Courier* 12 Jan 1850; State Library of Queensland NSW Colonial Secretary Letters relating to Moreton Bay; Christopher Dawson, *That Gingerbread Structure*, Published 2010.
- 124 *Maitland Mercury* 28 Feb 1855 p 2S.
- 125 *Moreton Bay Courier* 28 Jun 1856 p 2; 19 Jul 1856 p 3.
- 126 Maria Feeney became licensee of the Prince of Wales Hotel, married secondly George Cameron 1859; both died at sea when the *Fiery Star* caught fire and sank off the coast of NZ 1865. *Queensland Times* 30 May 1865 p 3.
- 127 Isabella Clune lived Brisbane from 1851. Isabella held the Publicans Licence for the Prince of Wales Hotel, in 1860 and 1861. *Moreton Bay Courier* 15 Dec 1860 p 5. 18 Apr 1861 p 2.
- 128 Dunbar survivor James Johnson (c1837 UK–1915 NSW) *BC* 15 Apr 1915 p 6.
- 129 *Goulburn Herald* 29 Aug 1857 p 5.
- 130 *Empire* 11 Sep 1857 p 3; *Freeman's Journal* 29 Aug 1857 p 2; *SMH* 24 Aug 1857 p 8; *Empire* 11 Sep 1857 p 3; *Moreton Bay Courier* 29 Aug 1857 p 2.
- 131 *Shipping Gazette* 22 Feb 1858 p 33; *Bell's Life in Sydney* 27 Feb 1858 p 3; *SMH* 26 Feb 1858 p4.
- 132 Belinda Theresa Downey née Clune married secondly 1859 Thomas Octavius Mitchell (1833–1869) son of Sir Thomas Mitchell, Surveyor General, thirdly Woodville McLaren 1890, died intestate 1892 effects to Frederick Carmichael. *Maitland Mercury* 20 May 1869 p 2; *SMH* 19 Dec 1890 p 1, 20 Jun 1893 p 1; *Freeman's Journal* 13 Aug 1892 p 16; *BC* 13 Jul 1895 p 2.
- 133 Conveyance 2 Mar 1871. Belinda Theresa Mitchell and William Hardy, Solicitor, as Trustees. As the properties were held in a Trust (Deed of Settlement) they were isolated from Carmichael's insolvency.
- 134 Kent Street property sold to Alexander Harper, shipwright £1,289. Conveyance 2 Mar 1871; subsequently Harper purchased the three Jenkins Street houses. City of Sydney Assessment Books 1845–1948.
- 135 Frederick Carmichael's death certificate confirms he left NSW 1857.
- 136 *BC* 11 Feb 1822 p 12.
- 137 Eleanor married with the consent of her guardian Maria Cameron (née Clune); *BC* 16 Jan 1862 p 4; 17 Jan 1865.
- 138 Janet McQueen née Dickinson (c1839 Scotland–?).
- 139 Ancestry: Scotland Census 1861, 1881, 1891; Scotland Select Marriages (issue three); England & Wales; National Probate Calendar.
- 140 Conveyance 2 Mar 1871 describes Edward as "Gentleman living Edinburgh".
- 141 Ancestry: Scotland Census: 1871, 1881, 1901.
- 142 Agnes Maria Lund née Kay (c1854 Scotland–?)
- 143 *Courier* 30 Nov 1861 p 2; Ancestry: Scotland Census 1861, 1871, 1881, 1890, 1901; England & Wales, Free BDM Marriage Index 1837-1915; Victoria, Australia, Assisted & Unassisted Passenger Lists, 1839–1923; UK Incoming Passengers Lists 1878–1960. No record of issue or Edward's death has been found.
- 144 *Empire* 7 Sep 1872 p 2; *Queenslander* 31 Aug 1872 p 2; *SMH* 31 Dec 1879 p 8; Frederick's comments on trade between Queensland and New Caledonia. *BC* 15 Feb 1895 p 5 & 6; 20 Oct 1909 p 16s; in 1895 Frederick was described as an ironmonger of Brisbane and in the same year licensee of the Osborne Hotel, Sandgate; Ancestry: Census & Voter Lists 1903, 1905, 1908, *Queenslander* 30 Sep 1916 p 9; *BC* 13 Nov 1896 p 8; 29 May 1896 p 5; 5 Mar 1896 p 2; Qld BDM Death Certificate B24136 (issue two, pre-deceased father).

Book review



REVIEW BY JEAN SIM

Tony Kanellos (editor), *Out of the Past: views of the Adelaide Botanic Garden – a series of Edwardian Era postcards*, Wakefield Press, Adelaide. Slipcased hardback, 664 pp, 154 x 257 mm, \$49.95. ISBN 978 1 921876 01 1

The extended title for this splendid visual feast is a *catalogue to accompany the exhibition Postcards from the Edge of the City at the Santos Museum of Economic Botany, 9 December 2014 to 26 April 2015*. As a catalogue this book contains the front and back sides of 300 postcards published between 1900 and 1917.

Before the postcards, we are treated to a foreword by eminent botanist David Mabberley and four short essays, which provide essential background understanding. These essays provide insights from different points of view about the history and meaning of postcards. Tony Kanellos is Cultural Collections Manager and Curator of the Santos Museum of Economic Botany, and introduces the exhibition and this book. Lisa Slade is Project Curator, Art Gallery of South Australia and discusses the “Pocket-Kammer”. Stephen Forbes is Director, Botanic Gardens of South Australia and writes about botany in the botanic garden. Luke Morgan is Senior Lecturer in Art History and Theory, Monash University and introduces some of the new ways of researching landscape history, which John

Dixon Hunt and Michel Conan describe as the “social reception” of gardens.

Postcards, especially those used to communicate messages, reveal so many interesting factors about people and place and ideas. Thus, this book is useful for historians of many sorts as well as the casual seeker of secrets and personal stories.

The delight begins as one takes this unusually long landscape format book from its slipcase with images of children frolicking on the lawns. Bibliophiles will delight in the postcards as much as the book design and production. Upon opening the covers, images of extra-large, inked-handwriting claims endpapers and later pages between essays. These bewitching visuals are teasers for the whole postcards revealed later. One could be distracted with desires for brown ink and a return to hand-written letters, but their current colour is more likely due to fading black ink.

All the postcards are presented front and back on facing pages and at full size. One can dip into the picturesque photographic images and their strangely worded titles or tinting, or one can conjure scenarios in the imagination to match the “communications” written by senders. Some postcards are pristine and never posted and are a shock of minimalism. But the lack of personal story only makes one scan ahead for the next personal missive.

These postcards provide a wealth of information for a visual design historian; the back can feature a publisher’s fancy scrollwork title or a simple “POST CARD”. Those that are franked capture a variety of one penny stamps and postal stamps with place and date. The choice of views by the photographer (and their publishers) is revealing of contemporary aesthetic preferences. Sometimes the fountains, sculptures, seats, fences or buildings are gone now and so these images are precious documents of record. The landscape historian is equally fascinated and frustrated by what is not revealed in the images selected. The botanist may want more accuracy in naming plants (what is a “Date Fern”

exactly?), but again this reveals the primary values of postcards for entertainment and social communication.

It was delightful to read about the dedication of botanic garden volunteers such as Audrey Abbie and Barb Field, who donate precious time, energy, enthusiasm and this collection of postcards. Celebrating botanical treasures like the Adelaide Botanic Garden can be both recreational and informative for us. Books, museum holdings, exhibitions and guided walks help safeguard the long-term health of historic landscapes by encouraging strong feelings of attachment and familiarity. *Out of the Past* provides a virtual tour of the gardens from the comfort of an armchair time-machine. One could imagine grandparents telling their stories to their grandchildren using this book as a prompt.

This is a good example of the collaboration needed in book publication: the writing is fine and informative; the editing is effective but subtle; and special kudos for the distinctive contributions from the designer (Kate Burns) and the photographer (Paul Atkins). The book feels right in the hands and pleasing to the eye. The soft grey tone as background to the postcards was well chosen; white would have been glaring against the old beige cards. The whole package is a delight and now a benchmark for such compilations of social and botanical history.

After reading this book, you too will be a “cartophile” (p 33) and perhaps begin a collection as a “deltiologist” (p 10). Personally, I want more compilations of this standard for other botanic gardens around Australia and I wish I had seen the actual exhibition in Adelaide earlier this year. Congratulations to all involved.

Dr Jean Sim is senior lecturer in landscape architecture at Queensland University of Technology, a garden historian and heritage consultant who has prepared conservation plans for the Brisbane Botanic Gardens and Queensland Government House Grounds, Paddington. She can be contacted at j.sim@qut.edu.au.

The prism of provenance: the Landau collection of Krimper furniture



Museums tend to lift items out of the ordinary world into the refined orbit of curators. In detailing the history of a collection of Krimper furniture bought by a Sydney family, Catriona Quinn shows the importance of knowing the history of an object, its owners and context – its provenance – and argues that its social, physical, economic and historical relationships are a crucial part of understanding its significance.

1.

Schulim Krimper (1893–1971), *Chest of drawers on stand* c 1955, Melbourne. Cedar (*Toona australis*), Queensland silver ash (*Flindersia bourjotiana*), 119.0 x 104.5 x 46.2 cm. Collection Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, Ken Myer Fund 1992, 927F2A. This was formerly owned by Charles Lloyd Jones. Like many others in public ownership, its important provenance is not recorded in the digitised record online

CATRIONA QUINN

Furniture designed and made by Schulim Krimper (1893–1971) occupied an iconic place in museum collecting of Australian decorative arts in the later 20th century. In the last 25 years, individual pieces have continued to feature in major survey shows including the most recent, *Mid-Century Modern*, at the National Gallery of Victoria in 2014. The NGV itself houses a large collection of Krimper, as does the National Gallery of Australia. A smaller collection, one strongly linked to key periods in the museum's development, is held at the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences.

Krimper is represented in galleries across Australia from Brisbane to Ballarat (**plate 1**). Museums house collections of Krimper with significant provenance to important collectors, curators and to Krimper himself. This aspect of Krimper scholarship is as yet unexplored and absent from digital records.

The recent emergence of a large collection of Krimper furniture, commissioned by the Landau family in Sydney in the 1950s, presents an opportunity to explore the history of Krimper's clients. Despite Krimper furniture being highly valued by institutions as objects, no substantial research into the provenance – the

context of the commission and its history of ownership and use – has yet been undertaken. Examining furniture from an historical angle, when it was collected by art museums originally for aesthetic reasons, raises the question: why should provenance matter? Many crafts and decorative arts sit in an uneasy position in art museums, as they were usually designed for and used in a domestic setting, as part of a group of furnishings. Studying their context adds to our understanding of a range of associated issues: their contribution to a broader Australian cultural history, the forces that influenced their maker's creativity and their own place in the history of (a necessarily selective) curatorship in Australia.

Schulim Krimper (1893–1971) was one of many European immigrants who came to Australia in the 1930s and 40s, invigorating furniture design and manufacture.¹

Krimper was born in Bukovina province in Moldavia, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the son of a Jewish religious scholar and a mother he described as “small, temperamental and hard working.”² Both parents died before Schulim turned twelve. Pursuing his own dream inspired by the beauty of a wooden walking stick he had once admired, Krimper trained as a cabinet maker. He travelled extensively in Germany, which shaped his preference for simply treated solid timber furniture that owed something to the simplicity of traditional

folk art and Biedermeier design, and sympathy with the philosophies of the *Weiner Werkstatte*. All of these influences he saw as a legacy of his travels in the provinces of Germany.

Krimper had realised at a young age the gaps in his own education when compared with his contemporaries and made conscious efforts to surround himself with friends such as “journalists, artists... (who) widened my knowledge of literature, history and art.”³

After emigrating with his wife Elspeth to Melbourne in 1939, Krimper eventually set up his business in St Kilda Road. A chance connection with curator Robert Haines around 1941⁴ transformed both Krimper's style and his market. Haines made a prescient purchase for the National Gallery of Victoria in 1948 and in 1951 organised an exhibition at Georges' Gallery, the first of several at museums and galleries. This launched the business as a real proposition and established the furniture's credentials as museum quality. “From now on people trusted me to make furniture for their homes without question.”⁵

Krimper's workshop expanded to include seven staff. The number of clients is undocumented, but at least 34 separate names, each representing multiple, significant private collections, are listed as lenders to major exhibitions, which followed his success and recognition.⁶ The bulk of museum acquisitions of Krimper furniture occurred after his death in 1971 and continued into the 2000s.



2.

Janek Landau (right) in his teens, c 1915

3.

Janek Landau (centre, rear) with high school classmates, possibly in Vienna or Prague, 1915. Photographs and documents testify to the transience of the education experience forced on Jewish students like Janek Landau in Europe between the wars

4.

Janek (centre, front) with workers at his timber mill, the Annandale Timber and Moulding Co c 1960. His generosity towards his employees and refugees was well known. Photograph by Edmund Turnor





In relying on publications relating to Krimper, of which there are many, a one-dimensional interpretation of the man emerges. The portrait of Krimper consistently drawn, both by the contemporary popular press and later curators, was of a perfectionist master craftsman with a passion for timber. His personal style – beret, clothing, the habit of only ever referring to himself by one name “Krimper” – adds up to what Terence Lane called his personal mystique.⁷ Lane described the craftsman’s devotion as an “appreciation of timber to almost religious levels.”⁸ The religious devotion extended, according to the Melbourne *Argus*, to a burning desire for

immortality through design.⁹

As early as 1950 *Australian Home Beautiful* identified traits which became part of the Krimper legend, including his personal selection of clients, artistic integrity and desire to create pieces with “a timeless quality that sets them apart from distinctions of period.”¹⁰ Clients appear in the story characterised as sophisticated fellow European émigrés (and how much more sophisticated is an émigré than an immigrant!), knowledgeable enough to recognise the value of the master craftsman and compliant with his controlling nature.¹¹

Just as Haines had given Krimper his breakthrough, curator Terence

Lane at the National Gallery of Victoria established Krimper as essential to art museum collections in the 1970s. Lane built on the legacy of Robert Haines at the NGV: he acquired the bulk of the gallery’s present day collection of 24 pieces. In addition to the 1987 catalogue raisonné for which he is well known,¹² Lane published prolifically on Krimper in the 1970s and 80s in a range of valuable scholarly articles.¹³ Writing about his 1975 exhibition, Lane described Krimper as “without doubt the most important cabinetmaker working in this country during the late 1940s, the 1950s and 1960s” and aimed to encourage a reconsideration and assessment of Krimper’s “position in the history of the crafts in Australia” for admirers for whom he was already a “legend.”¹⁴

Discussion around these important phases and locations of museum collecting has emphasised the taste and connoisseurship of curators;¹⁵ in contrast, the taste of his clients has yet to be examined in any depth.

Krimper’s affiliation with Melbourne was strong, his position “unique in the cultural history of Australia generally and of Melbourne in particular” a point Terence Lane drew out when adding to the NGV’s collections in 1973.¹⁶ Despite this, Krimper had several important clients in Sydney and little has been written of who they were – their backgrounds, taste, patronage, source of wealth, social circle and lifestyle.

The Landau family

The Landau family offers a window into the background and lifestyle of one client outside Melbourne. The Landaus seem at first to fit the bill of the typical Krimper client. Closer analysis of the couple reveals a more complex picture.

Jonas (known as Janek) Landau (1899–1971)¹⁷ was a remarkable self-made man with a keen interest in art, literature and a reputation for assisting those in need around him. Janek was born in Jakla, a small village near Dolina, in what was then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and now the Ukraine (plate 2). Superficially Janek



5. Sons John and Peter helped out at the Blackwattle Bay mill in school holidays. Photograph by Edmund Turnor

6. Janek and Joyce Landau at the Greenwich house around 1950

fits the profile of Krimper's Jewish, central European immigrant clients. In fact, his family background was extraordinarily humble, relative to many of his Sydney contemporaries, coming from a family of woodcutters in the Carpathian Mountains.

Landau's reputation for exceptional intelligence and academic ability led to opportunities that saw him attending a variety of institutions of higher learning in Austria and Czechoslovakia, eventually graduating in chemical engineering from Brno University (**plate 3**).¹⁸ It was very unusual for someone of Janek's background to go to university at that time, complicated further by the quotas on Jews at European universities that undoubtedly restricted his choice.

Between the wars Janek ran a successful timber company in Trieste, a free port under the control of the League of Nations' mandate, a safe place to live and run a business. This period was a turning point for Janek in the development of his own tastes and aspirations, as, with success and wealth, he was able to acquire and appreciate beautiful furniture and books.¹⁹

Janek, his first wife and his cousin Rina Huber, who lived with the couple in Trieste, left Italy when Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia, arriving in Sydney via Palestine in 1939. Janek's first job was in a Coffs Harbour plywood factory.²⁰ In the 1940s Janek bought the Annandale Timber and Moulding Co. Pty Ltd, which had premises at Blackwattle Bay in Sydney's inner west and for the second time in his life built a profitable business in the timber industry (**plate 4**). Tempting though it is to extrapolate a link between Krimper and Landau, the Annandale Timber Co was not a mill of the type that processed the fine native and Pacific timbers that Krimper used. The timber business was mainly involved in importing Oregon timber for the construction of weatherboard. So the connection between Landau and Krimper did not come about over a passion for timber (**plate 5**).

Janek's second wife, Joyce Blumer (c 1916–2001), was born in Macksville NSW, where her father Dr George Albert Blumer (b 1887) was a medical



practitioner, son of a Scandinavian ship's captain. George volunteered for war service in 1916 as a medical officer; for three years, his younger brother Dr Sydney Blumer of Bowraville carried on his practice. In France he was wounded in the thigh by shrapnel.²¹ In the last months of the war, Captain Blumer was awarded the Military Medal for continuing to treat patients, single-handed, when under fire.²² He did not return to his wife Marion Frances née Connelly (c 1892–1943)²³ and daughters until mid-1919.²⁴

Academically gifted, Joyce attended selective Newcastle High School, but

7.

The Landau House, Whale Beach, designed by Harry Seidler, 1952

8.

Janek and family at the Whale Beach house, early 1950s. The Hardoy 'butterfly' chairs, also used by Seidler at the Rose Seidler House, Wahroonga, were the only furnishings the Landaus are known to have reused at St Ives, as they appear in later photographs.





9. Joyce Landau and friends with the large sliding doors firmly closed against the wind.

10. Joyce working in the kitchen at Whale Beach, early 1950s. The kitchen at the Rose Seidler House in Wahroonga, 1949 was almost identical. It was the most expensive element in that house's fit out and the kitchen's modern luxury illustrates the speed of Janek Landau's business success after the war

11. A bedroom at Whale Beach showing furniture typically prescribed by Harry Seidler for his houses, including 'gooseneck' spotlights, the Charles and Ray Eames DCM chair and desk/dressing table custom made by Paul Kafka



circumstances around the Depression limited her choices.²⁵ She won a scholarship to a secretarial school in Sydney and the attractions of the city drew her. Like Janek, Joyce was self-educated and benefited from the circle she came to know in Sydney. Joyce met Janek Landau through her sister Elizabeth's then husband Adolf Kupferman, also a refugee from Europe. By 1950, the couple were married, both for the second time, and living in King's Cross; the Kupfermans lived nearby and may have introduced the Landaus to Schulim Krimper. Two sons, John and Peter, were born at St Luke's Darlinghurst but as the family grew, Joyce and Janek moved to leafy Greenwich (**plate 6**).

At this time, Janek and Joyce commissioned architect Harry Seidler to design and build a weekender, which became known as the Landau House at Whale Beach (1952), an undertaking that illustrates the complexity of the connections they had made in Sydney in the previous decade. The intersecting relationships between the players were numerous and the possibilities for their original point of contact were many.

The Landau House (demolished in the 1990s)²⁶ was constructed using timber supplied by the Annandale Timber and Moulding Co and the connection between the two Jewish European refugees was one of many instances in which Janek Landau actively assisted his friends to establish themselves in

Australia. Photographs by Max Dupain and family snapshots clearly show that Seidler himself furnished the house, using the Eames and Saarinen furniture typical of the collection he originally shipped to Australia in the late 1940s and used at the Rose Seidler House (**plates 7–11**).

Among this furniture can be seen coffee tables by émigré Viennese furniture maker, Paul Kafka (1907–1972) who had arrived in Australia in 1939, the same year as Landau. Kafka and Landau, with much in common personally and professionally, were close friends. Another immigrant furniture maker, Paul Gerstel, whose workshop was next to the timber mill in Blackwattle Bay and who was known for his furniture using inlaid timber and laminates, also became a friend.

While it is possible that the timber business led to connections with architects and furniture makers, it is far more likely that the professional relationships were forged out of the personal.²⁷ With a reputation for helping his friends, and having made a success of his own business relatively quickly, Janek Landau looked for opportunities to promote and assist fellow immigrants. His generosity is likely to have led to the commissioning of the house at Whale Beach, the purchase of Kafka furniture and, in another instance, assisting Nicholas Greiner²⁸ and his family to start their own timber company.

But the Seidler house at Whale Beach was not a success for the Landau family and they sold it within a few years.



Neither Joyce nor Janek enjoyed having the house, for different reasons. The house at Whale Beach was on top of the ridge, next to Jonah's Restaurant. Joyce felt the design was unsuited to the site on the hill and by mid-morning they would be blown away by the wind. Joyce claimed there was a raging gale every time you opened a window. The same large windows became an irritant, as public curiosity grew commensurate with Seidler's fame. A constant stream of people who came past to look at the house meant Joyce felt the family was constantly on view. It did not help that Janek disliked the beach.

Joyce found it a chore packing and transporting four small children there on weekends and, by 1955, owning any type of weekender became redundant for the family when they made their next move, to St Ives. The Landau House at Whale Beach was sold around 1957 and its integral collection of Eames, Saarinen and Kafka furniture dispersed.

Suburban St Ives

St Ives in the mid 1950s, prior to the large-scale sub-divisions of the 1960s and 70s, was still semi-rural. The Landau's house at 34 Woodbury Road West was on a dirt track, in an area with few residents and only three shops (**plates 12–13**). Horses and chickens roamed the three acres of garden and the four Landau children enjoyed an outdoor life, with the freedom of riding all day in the bush of Kuring-gai that surrounded

the property. It was a big change for the urbane couple but it is likely Janek wanted to get away from the city. The move was a success, with Joyce eventually overseeing an interior filled with Krimper furniture and the couple's growing art collection, to form a remarkable scheme, unique on the North Shore, and extraordinarily unusual in Sydney in the 1950s.

The Landaus' new home was a large, sprawling, traditional suburban brick house. An architect was involved but it was not a modernist house, having been designed in 1950 by John Blyth Suttor for the previous owner. Suttor built many similar houses around Killara, Bellevue Hill and Palm Beach in the 1950s.²⁹ Both the house and the contents the Landaus were to acquire there were in sharp contrast to the Seidler house at Whale Beach and its International style furnishings.

Relations with Krimper

The most likely scenario in which the Landaus first met Schulim Krimper is on one of their frequent trips to Melbourne, where they had many friends.

Many of these trips were to buy from art dealer Joseph Brown,³⁰ and the couple knew many of the state gallery directors well. By the 1950s the Landaus had become dedicated art collectors and regularly bought from the department store galleries, including Georges in Melbourne, Farmer's Blaxland Galleries and David Jones' Galleries in Sydney, which were then an important part of the commercial gallery scene in Australia.

12.

The traditional pitched terracotta tiled roof, gables, bay windows, terraces and pergolas of 34 Woodbury Road West, St Ives in the mid 1950s contrasted sharply with the Seidler house

13.

St Ives was a semi rural idyll of orchards, market gardens and animals for the family in the 1950s

By the mid 1950s when the Landaus began commissioning Krimper furniture, it was very likely the introduction had already taken place years before by Krimper's most important promoter, Robert Haines. The Landaus could well have seen Haines' pivotal exhibition *Furniture by Krimper* at Georges Gallery in 1951. Twelve pieces accessorised by Robert Haines as "furniture as art" caused a big impact in Melbourne, resulting in a reversal of fortune for Krimper. Clients now came to him and he was able to dictate the taste and style rather than other way around.

Australian Home Beautiful described how Krimper's first interaction with clients worked:

He divides his customers into three groups. The first has taste. He gets on well with them. The second has no formed taste, but trusts him. They



14.

Schulim Krimper, child's bedhead c 1955, from the Janek and Joyce Landau house, St Ives. The oriental design influences that occasionally emerge in Krimper's work are yet to be researched

get on well enough, too. The third lacks taste, and wants him to make furniture that artistically he regards as rubbish. Of them he says- "We part company soon!"³¹

Krimper was not Joyce's first choice to furnish her new house. She had seen a suite of 18th-century Venetian furniture for sale in a copy of *The Connoisseur* magazine, but by the time she had written to London, the pieces had been sold.³² So convenience, as well as

fashion and aspiration played a role in approaching Krimper. Either way, this was a meeting of minds. Clients did not choose Krimper, Krimper chose them and evidently Janek and Joyce met with Krimper's approval.

Marion Landau remembers her mother's beautiful natural taste: a good eye for fashion and art, an instinctive feel for beautiful interiors. Nothing in Joyce's background is known that would have prepared her for this, but she absorbed the influences of Janek's

friends – older, sophisticated, European, most of them Jewish and from much more affluent backgrounds.

While Janek had limited involvement in the commissioning of the interiors, he respected Krimper's approach and ideals and, like Joyce, let him have free rein. The Landaus certainly had an appreciation of the tradition from which Krimper came, the quality of his work and his standing as an artist craftsman.³³ Something all three had in common, along with this commitment to art,



15.

Schulim Krimper, bookcase, 1950s. Landau Collection sale at Shapiro Auctioneers 10 November 2015. Photograph courtesy of Shapiro Auctioneers



16.

Schulim Krimper, bookcase, 1950s detail of drawer pulls. Landau Collection sale at Shapiro Auctioneers 10 November 2015. Photograph courtesy of Shapiro Auctioneers

17.

Schulim Krimper, bookcase, 1950s detail of Krimper's signature. Landau Collection sale at Shapiro Auctioneers 10 November 2015. Photograph courtesy of Shapiro Auctioneers

design and craftsmanship, was a self-educated path to these interests.³⁴

It is open to question whether clients such as the Landaus in the 1950s saw themselves as collectors of Krimper in the same way they were collectors of Dobell or Drysdale. After all, they were primarily furnishing a large family house. It is fair to say that the way they furnished and collected reflected everything Haines had been trying to achieve in educating the public – a synthesis of furniture and art in a furnished interior, placing Krimper on the same level as fine artists.

The growing collection

Though Marion Landau recalls Krimper coming to visit in person at least once, it was Elspeth Krimper who memorably used to come to Sydney to do business on the Landau house at St Ives. She stayed with a friend in Warrawee opposite Knox Grammar School; from there³⁵ Joyce would pick her up and she would come to the Landaus' place to arrange the next order. Elspeth was the sales person and was an important part of the process that linked Krimper to the client. The arrangement, if there was one, was that Janek just bought the furniture on spec. Krimper understood the Landaus, the Landaus trusted Krimper – and furniture would arrive.

The interiors at St Ives were not completed in one major commission. Krimper was famous for keeping clients waiting until he was happy with the finished piece. Krimper's clients required patience. Though the house was furnished over many years, it was all from Krimper, a process that continued throughout the 1950s. The house consisted of a lounge room, father's study, dining room, TV room, a small study for Joyce and bedrooms. The house was carpeted and Joyce chose all the soft furnishings. All of the Landaus' Krimper furniture from this extensive commission, apart from seven pieces in the Shapiro sale of 2015, remains in family ownership.

The earliest memorable furniture, not unsurprisingly, was for the children's



rooms. Peter Landau recalls “all this furniture that just appeared,” a set of beds and desks for the girls' rooms and a set of beds and desks for the boys (**plate 14**). Like other Krimper beds to have come on the secondary market, some had integral bedside tables on a useful hinged mechanism and the bed heads were strongly horizontal in design with Japanese influences.³⁶

Desks were a feature, six all together. Each child's room had a desk, Janek's desk was in his study. Joyce's desk in her own small office was in fact the chessboard-topped table in the 2015 Shapiro sale (**plate 20**). Why did Joyce have a chess table to use as a desk? Peter Landau explained “The thing was when you bought furniture from Krimper you got what he sent you.” A second chess table in the house, with a matching set of chessmen, was actually used for chess (**plate 21**). When the Landaus lent the chess table, chessmen and two chairs to the Krimper retrospective at the NGV in 1959 exhibition, Elspeth wasn't happy with how the white chessmen had darkened. Her attempt to clean them made them worse, so she decided that Krimper should make a new set to give the Landaus.³⁷

18.

The Serpentine Parade, Vaucluse interior in 1991, showing the Paul Kafka designed cabinets that once displayed the Greengarten's collection of 18th and 19th century porcelain. Photograph by Louise Lister, courtesy of Caroline Simpson Research Library and Collection, Sydney Living Museums

The family adopted a modern way of living in the St Ives house – every room in the house was lived in, without a sense of certain rooms being precious or formal. Marion Landau reflects “You would feel you could be in any room, as a child – you could jump on the couch, sit on it to watch TV, go in and out all day from the outside to the inside.” These everyday items included couches and easy chairs with loose cushions covered in high quality wool in a black and purple weave, most likely chosen by Elspeth, who handled all the textile details to Krimper's work (**plates 22, 23, 27**).

As well as the dining table with chairs, there were at least two sideboards and two traymobiles. Several forms of shelving for the books Janek and Joyce



19.

The sepia toned painted plates depicting scenes from the Russian Civil War that were displayed in the bookcase. Image courtesy of Sotheby's Bond Street, London

20-21.

Schulim Krimper, two chess tables from the Janek and Joyce Landau house, St Ives, late 1950s. Joyce used the desk with the chessboard top in her study at St Ives. Photograph courtesy of Shapiro Auctioneers. The other was the chess table lent by the Landaus to the 1959 retrospective, Krimper, at the National Gallery of Victoria. Private collection, photograph courtesy of Peter Landau

liked to collect lined the hallways and study (**plates 24–25**). Coffee tables in various forms and nesting side tables were part of the lounge room scheme (**plates 26, 27, 29, 30**).

The bookcases

The Landau bookcase or display cabinet³⁸ is immediately familiar for its resemblance to its contemporaries housed in several public collections (**plates 15–17**). The National Gallery of Victoria's two bookcases from the early 1950s in teak and blackbean, blackbean and eucalyptus³⁹ are almost identical, as is the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences's example from 1950⁴⁰ and the National Gallery of Australia's from 1948,⁴¹ both in New Guinea walnut.

The date of these museum acquisitions, from 1973 to 1981, 1988 and 2006 is testament to the enduring desire for public institutions to add a monumental and representative piece of Krimper furniture to their collections. All four bookcases in public collections are strikingly similar to the Landau example.

Part of the legend of Krimper the craftsman was the originality of each piece. Robert Haines wrote that Krimper "learned from the old masters of his craft but refused to copy and was even loath to copy his own work when he was asked to do so. He was non-commercial."⁴²

Many examples of Krimper's work exhibit variations on very similar designs. When the MAAS acquired its bookcase in 1988 it was its "apparently identical" resemblance to the NGA's example that was put forward to the Trust as a reason for purchase.⁴³ Not so much evidence of commercialism, these similarities are signs of the craftsman reworking and perfecting variations on a theme.

All four bookcases have the same 16-panel glass-fronted upper section, atop a set of six drawers, with a set of identical rounded legs with brass detailing. The points of difference are size (all are the same except the taller MAAS example) and styling of drawer scale and pulls. John McPhee, in writing about the NGA's bookcase expands a well made point about the drawer pulls (**plate 17**), the one consistently variable component among all the known book cases:





Krimper emphasized the specific nature of his craft. This is especially apparent in his concern with joints and connections, and the manner in which details of construction are seldom hidden, but allowed to become a feature of the work itself. An excellent example of Krimper's attitude towards decoration is seen in this bookcase, where the simple repetition of the drawer-pulls becomes a fine decorative detail.⁴⁴

Despite Elspeth listing these as “bookcases” in all Krimper catalogues, the Landaus (and other owners) used this type of furniture as display cabinets. Many of the European refugees who arrived after World War II were able to bring paintings or decorative arts to Australia with them, in part as potential collateral with which to fund their new life. The immigrant Greengarten family of Vaucluse used their large scale cabinets in this way, displaying their collection of decorative porcelain originally brought to Australia as a financial safeguard (plate 18).⁴⁵

Janek, by this time a collector, would buy such precious imports to support his fellow immigrants. In this way, and with Joyce also involved in the selection, the Landaus developed a collection of Meissen porcelain, Russian plates,

inlaid boxes and other decorative arts. The most memorable were displayed in the bookcase and included a set of four 1920s Soviet propagandist porcelain plates by Mikhail Adamovich (1884–1947), which Janek bought from a former curator who had escaped Russia (plate 19).⁴⁶

Robert Haines had used his bookcase in his Brisbane home in a similar way. According to *Australian Home Beautiful*, the cabinet, “filled with Chinese tomb figures and bronzes of the Han and T’ang periods”, was considered by the magazine as one of the finest examples of modern furniture in Mr Haines’ home. Once again, Haines and the Landaus were of one mind: “Mr Haines follows the theory that, provided the furniture is first class, you can mix antique with modern.”⁴⁷

All four bookcases/cabinets in Australian museums have important provenances, many with a single transaction between original owner and museum. Little attention has been paid to their history: information on their origins is restricted to museum paperwork and one or two references in long forgotten journals.

The mid-1950s teak and blackbean example in the NGV (D147-1981), purchased in 1981 from the Krimper estate, was Krimper’s own, custom made for his St Kilda apartment, where he

22-23.

Couch and armchair by Schulim Krimper from the Janek and Joyce Landau house, St Ives, 1950s, typical of the comfortable furniture enjoyed by the family. Private collection

lived above his shop for over 20 years, a unique association with the maker and his domestic interior.⁴⁸

The NGV’s second bookcase (NGV 2006.218.a-j) in blackbean and eucalyptus was originally owned by Constance Stokes (1906-1991)⁴⁹ artist and, with Drysdale, a member of the George Bell group with strong links to the NGV through her patron Sir Daryl Lindsay, an association worthy of investigation of its own. The bookcase has special significance to Krimper’s career history: made in 1951, its date links it to Krimper’s formative year of creativity resulting in the Georges exhibition of that year. Stokes lent it in 1975 to the memorial exhibition at the

NGV, the only bookcase shown.⁵⁰ A more complex question is raised when we understand that the bookcase was part of the furnishings at Stokes' family home in Toorak, designed by 'Melbourne Prairie School' architect Edward Fielder Billson (1892-1986). The prospect of provenance adding to our understanding of how the work of these two designers – cabinetmaker and architect, both modernists inspired by traditions outside the International Style – melded in the Toorak house is a new field of Krimper study in itself.

The object file for the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences bookcase reveals a remarkable provenance not previously published in association with its exhibition history.⁵¹ Acquired in 1988 in a period of expansion for

the opening of the Powerhouse, it was proposed as a rotation for the museum's Krimper sideboard in the exhibit *A Free Hand*, but eventually displayed in *The Australian Dream* in 1993.

Purchased through a third party, the bookcase came from the Chesterman family⁵² by descent from Dr Ewan Murray-Will, giving it a significant link to one of Sydney's most important artistic patrons and amateur film makers.

Dr Murray-Will (1899–1970) was a Sydney dermatologist whose footage of the Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo in impromptu performances on Bungan Beach in 1936, among others, is considered important in the documentation of dance in Australia. Dr Murray-Will had links to the Contemporary Art Society and a

number of artists and collectors, through dancer Helene Kirsova.⁵³ He rented the Bungan Beach house at the time of the Ballets Russe's tours between the wars, but little is known of the furnishings of his homes or how Krimper connects with Dr Murray-Wills' other artistic activities. Any new research into the provenance could prove enlightening as to the depth and diversity of Krimper's clients.

The New Guinea walnut bookcase (NGA73.573.A-B) in the National Gallery of Australia has arguably the most important historical and cultural association of any piece of Krimper furniture in a public or private collection, owing to its provenance to Krimper's chief promoter and one Australia's most influential curators of the 20th century, Robert Haines. Haines bought it in 1948 while living and working in Melbourne on the staff of the NGV. It was a photograph of this bookcase that Haines chose to submit to *The Studio Yearbook* in 1954, lending it a particular significance in the international appearance of Australian interiors in the mid-century. The bookcase's subsequent domestic context in Haines' architect designed house in St Lucia, Brisbane was well documented thanks to *Australian Home Beautiful*.



24-25.

Schulim Krimper, two types of shelving from the Janek and Joyce Landau house, St Ives, 1950s. Photographs courtesy of Shapiro Auctioneers



26.

Schulim Krimper, unusual coffee table from the Janek and Joyce Landau house, St Ives, late 1950s, one of several in the house, incorporating a planter box. From the Janek and Joyce Landau house at St Ives, private collection

27.

Schulim Krimper, leather upholstered armchair, the shape recalling the folk furniture which was a formative influence as a young man travelling in the villages of Germany. From the Janek and Joyce Landau house at St Ives, private collection

28.

Schulim Krimper, lamp base, bowl and nesting tables 1950s. Joyce lent the bowl to the Krimper memorial exhibition at the NGV in 1975. A display of smaller objects like these first drew Robert Haines' attention to the Krimper's St Kilda shop in the early 1940s. From the Janek and Joyce Landau house at St Ives, private collection



In the austere sub-tropical setting, the bookcase was at home with Tongan sea-grass matting: “the cool straw colours go well with the strong warm colours of the wood.”⁵⁴ The eclectic, yet simple interiors included a 16th-century Italian lamp, a Queen Anne desk and a Jacob Epstein sculpture. A watercolour of Venice by Donald Friend provided the cue for the kitchen colour scheme. The NGA file reveals how in 1973, Haines came to sell what must have been an extraordinarily precious item in his collection, while he was living in Sydney and running the David Jones' Fine Art Gallery.

James Mollison, inaugural director of the National Gallery, approached Haines directly and privately, unconnected with his role at David Jones. Their correspondence shows that Haines had not previously considered selling the bookcase but would do so to ensure the piece was acquired for the new national collection. This process encouraged Mollison to approach Elspeth Krimper, who suggested that her husband “would have been happy to see one of his pieces at the National Gallery of Australia.”⁵⁵ Despite this promising exchange, it seems that the gallery did not add to its Krimper collection until the arrival of curator John McPhee in the 1980s and the expansion of the decorative arts collection.

The Landaus' circle

Despite being considered very out of the way in the mid 1950s, the Landaus' house at St Ives became more than just a family home: at the hospitable centre for their group of lively friends, a place where artists and patrons met, their Krimper furniture played an important role in that life. Housed in Joyce's study were the folding tables which were brought out for Sunday cards. The women would play at one table in one room, the men at another table in another room. Each table had sets of matching chairs with typical leather thonging forming the detail to the backspats. The family remembers these gatherings as peopled by exceptionally interesting émigrés. They would come each week for cards on Sunday and some of them had exotic and exciting stories of their lives in Europe.

By this time the Landaus were actively collecting art, primarily Australian painters such as William Dobell and Russell Drysdale.⁵⁶ Rudy Komon (1908–1982) was Janek's closest friend and came for dinner every Wednesday night. The Viennese Komon had, like Landau, lived in Czechoslovakia between the wars, later escaping to Switzerland and arriving in Australia in 1950.⁵⁷ He probably introduced Joyce to Dobell. In





29-30.

Card table and chair, by Schulim Krimper from the Janek and Joyce Landau house, St Ives, 1950s. Emblematic of the convivial social life, it was around this table that the Landaus' circle of artistic refugee friends laughed, talked and played cards. Photograph courtesy of Shapiro Auctioneers

1959, when Komon bought a shop in Paddington to set up his gallery, Landau supported him financially.

The couple was friends with writer Frank Clune, his wife, artist and dealer Thelma, and in 1957 invested to help their son Terry establish his art gallery at 59 Macleay Street, Potts Point. Janek was also close to artist Sali Herman, who advised him on buying pictures.

The commitment from the couple was clear. They sought the friendship and company of artists and dealers and backed that up with financial support that made them viable in 1950s Sydney. In return, Janek enjoyed first pick of the painters they represented. Each had their own complementary reasons. Janek viewed art as an important future investment for his children. Joyce had an eye for selecting purchases and drove their collection of Dobell, Fairweather and Drysdale.

In the same way as Janek and Joyce had collected treasured émigré decorative arts, they also bought paintings from other refugees arriving from Europe in the 1950s. In this way, the Landaus acquired two paintings by Emil Nolde, a Maurice Vlaminck and an Oskar Kokoshka. Together, these Australian and European 20th-century paintings formed a memorable display, described by Freda Potok, who recalled both the collection and the characteristic generosity of the “house in St Ives with a 40 feet gallery that was filled with prominent artists’ work. The paintings he didn’t much like he would give to our family.”⁵⁸

Other accessories such as lamps and bowls, hand made by Krimper, completed the picture. When the National Gallery of Victoria held its two major exhibitions, the retrospective in 1959 and the memorial in 1975, the Landaus lent to both. They are notable in the exhibition catalogue as two of the very few Sydney clients involved. None of their other close friends in Sydney had furniture by Krimper. They did, however, know many of the establishment families of Sydney who were art collectors, including the Fairfaxes and the Lloyd Joneses.

Recognition was limited in Sydney, despite the influence of Krimper’s small number of clients.⁵⁹ Charles Lloyd Jones (1932–2010) was the most significant of this circle. Not only was he an influential art patron, but also, as Chairman of David Jones, responsible in 1961 for appointing Robert Haines as Director of David Jones’ Fine Art Gallery, where Haines had a significant impact on broadening the range of decorative arts and crafts for sale. Haines held exhibitions of Krimper furniture there throughout the 1960s and Lloyd Jones was a fellow collector.

A notable sale from Charles Lloyd Jones’ collection was the 1955 cedar and silver ash chest of drawers on stand sold by Sotheby’s in 1992⁶⁰ to the Art Gallery of South Australia (**plate 31**). The chest had been part of the interior scheme at the Lloyd Jones seat *Rosemont*, Rosemont Avenue, Woollahra. Like many others in public ownership, its important provenance is not visible in the digitised record online.⁶¹

The Landaus were very private and it is unlikely the house would ever have been photographed or illustrated in magazines. The many articles on Krimper in home magazines focused on a portrait of the eccentric craftsman who loved timber, rather than the houses for which his designs were destined.⁶² A National Trust Open Day held there in the 1960s was very well attended.

Joyce became involved in a North Shore film club and they used the house as a set for some of their work. Rare surviving film club footage may hold valuable information on the Landau house. However, like the Lloyd Jones, the Murray-Wills and an unknown number of other Krimper collections, the house and its interiors were not formally recorded.⁶³

Joyce and Janek Landau possessed an element of restlessness. They eventually travelled extensively, away for up to two months every year, and Marion remembers they discussed relocating the family to New York or Israel, the extended Landau family having scattered around the world. If they considered moving overseas it was because of what they perceived as the cultural limitations

in Australia; the only place they liked as much as Sydney was San Francisco.⁶⁴

Janek Landau died in 1970 and by 1978 the house in St Ives was sold. The extensive collection of Krimper remained and, even after the 2015 sale, largely remains in family ownership, integral to the interiors of the houses of the second and third generations.

Clients and taste

Open to question is how closely the Landaus fit the ‘canon’ of the written history of Krimper. 1950 is the earliest reference to the breakdown of Krimper’s clientele, broadening from the “foreign communities” to include “Australians”, though *Australian Home Beautiful* hastily qualifies the locals as “discriminating.”⁶⁵ The magazine complained that “recognition was slow” implying Krimper’s success was impeded by immature local taste which then developed over time. In fact, owing to the restrictions of World War II, many designers were only just reviving their careers at the end of the 1940s and early 1950s. This was true for Fred Ward, Noel Coulson, Marion Best, Fred Lowen and Gordon Andrews. Given Krimper’s arrival in 1939, it is arguable that the war and its aftermath held up his business expansion to the same degree as many other designers.

Terence Lane consolidated this frequently repeated position on clients when he wrote “His clientele was composed predominantly of immigrants, many of whom had flourished in their new country, but included an increasing number of discriminating Australians.”⁶⁶ By immigrant, Northern European is assumed, as is the concept that informed and selective taste came naturally to Europeans, but was unusual and acquired in Australian-born clients. The Landaus diverted from the canon on two fronts – the immigrant half of the partnership did not grow up in a sophisticated Biedermeier apartment in Vienna, but had acquired his discrimination just as carefully as his Macksville-born wife, who was the decision maker in the commissioning of Krimper.



There were, of course, more factors at play with all clients than inherent sophistication and appreciation of design and craftsmanship. Other reasons people follow a group in commissioning art, interiors and furniture include social aspirations and fashions. Jewish clients themselves were probably not as homogenous as the canon would like – they were too diverse to define by a single taste and it was possibly their common connections rather than some inherited European taste or history that drew them together and to Krimper.

Terence Lane, reflecting on Krimper’s success in 1987 makes the point that the furniture maker had found a niche market somewhere between the mass produced “contemporary” (by which he means those largely deriving from the Bauhaus) furniture of Ward, Meadmore and Andrews and the popular reproduction “period” furniture the demand for both

31.

Schulim Krimper, *Bookcase* 1948, New Guinea walnut, bronze, glass, National Gallery of Australia 73.575 A-B. Boasting the most significant provenance of any piece of Krimper furniture in public ownership, this bookcase was the first Krimper ever made and was owned by Robert Haines, furnished his homes in Melbourne and Brisbane and published in 1954 in *The Studio Yearbook*, one of the most influential design journals in the world at that time. Online records show only that the bookcase was purchased in 1973. More recent acquisitions such as the 2010 collection from the Smibert, part of the Melbourne medical clientele, link the family name to the digital record. The bookcase was on show at the NGA 1988–9, 1994–5 and 2000 during John McPhee’s curatorship and in a period of increased interest in Australian decorative arts after the bicentenary

of which was a reaction to post-war austerity.⁶⁷ While it is arguable whether these examples ever produced furniture on a mass scale, it is true to say Krimper found a small, appreciative audience for the type of craftsman furniture he wanted to make.⁶⁸

In testing the immigrant client theory, it is worth examining the list of lenders of the furniture for the 1975 retrospective. The list reveals several important and influential immigrant figures, such as Paul Morawetz, but many of the collectors who originally commissioned the furniture included a range of establishment Melbourne academics, business people, artists, institutions and people involved in the art world. Along with the Landaus, the Mushins and the Broons, are Wimmera-born, Gennazzano Convent-educated Constance Stokes, the Presbyterian Ladies College and St Mary's College at the University of Melbourne.

If any socio-economic classification is revealed, it is a group of patrons with a common profession: Melbourne medical practitioners. Lenders included Dr and Mrs Champion de Crespigny, president of the Victorian branch of the AMA in the 1970s; Dr R S Smibert who lived with his wife, a Walkley from Adelaide, in South Yarra; Dr and Mrs A Marshall; Dr and Mrs Robert Diskin; and Lady Travers, widow of the prominent ophthalmologist Sir Thomas. The characteristics Krimper's clients most often shared were possibly an interest in art and a desire to buy furniture of a style and quality to match that of their friends and colleagues.⁶⁹

Yet it was not the orders of a client, but the aesthetic judgment of a curator, Robert Haines, which had started Krimper on a path of both public and private collecting at the start of his Australian career in the 1940s. Haines, with NGV board members Professor Brian Lewis, Eric Westbrook and Sir Russell Grimwade probably did more than any European immigrant client to promote Krimper's work.⁷⁰ Haines had convinced Director Sir Daryl Lindsay to acquire the gallery's first Krimper in

1948. It was Haines' advice to Krimper in 1950 to cease making to order and design only according to his creative spirit and the resultant exhibition at Georges in 1951, that was to attract new buyers and much needed publicity.

In addition, Haines' contacts made during a year at the Courtauld Institute in London in 1950 enabled the publication of a picture of his own flat, featuring Krimper furniture, in the influential *Studio* magazine in 1954.⁷¹

When Haines became Director of the Queensland Art Gallery (famously snubbing Joh Bjelke Petersen, who was lobbying for a pioneers' hall of fame in the proposed new art gallery), he continued to acquire Krimper for that collection.⁷² He arranged the Australian exhibition at the Rockefeller Centre in New York in 1956, giving Krimper a local publicity boost and international exposure. When he moved to the David Jones Fine Art Gallery, he stocked and sold Krimper furniture there.

Haines had a canon of his own in which his own immense taste is always emphasised.⁷³ Haines wanted Furniture for the Ages – and the continued collecting of Krimper 75 years later would seem to endorse his choice. But in his position of influence he affected this view as well as seeming prescient enough to identify it.

If Haines threw the torch on Krimper's creative development, it was the patronage of loyal clients that ensured his survival as a bespoke cabinetmaker in a relatively small market. There is space in the canon of Krimper to explore beyond this and look at provenance and context; for further research and interpretation on diversity of the clientele, their backgrounds and their houses, the settings for decades of use of the furniture by their families.

The Landaus may well have been one Krimper's biggest clients. Owing to a lack of researched provenance, the extent of other clients' collections is unknown. State art museum collecting of this era can be scant on acquisition information and research and acquisitions at the MAAS naturally tended to be

exhibition driven, dating from the 1980s, when large areas of display were dedicated to thematic interpretations of the collection. Where provenance information does exist, it often remains as paperwork on a hard copy file, rather than digitised and researched.

It is hardly surprising that provenance has been a secondary part of the Krimper story, especially when taste and connoisseurship have been considered paramount. The alternative philosophy proposed by James Broadbent in 1983 remains relevant:

Our tastes have nothing to do with the historical importance of an interior and we should study, analyse and enjoy and restore such interiors irrespective of our own aesthetic judgments.⁷⁴

Provenance extends beyond the chain of ownership that is customarily recorded by art museums as proof of authenticity, rather than a meaningful history. Understanding Krimper and his clients is not just important for the history of 20th-century Australian design but for wider Australian cultural history.

The Landau collection, with its extensive quantity of furniture, small and large, photographs, documents and oral histories, offers a rare opportunity to view Krimper through the prism of provenance.

Although the great majority of the Landau collection – more than 50 pieces – remains intact, seven pieces are being sold by Shapiro Auctioneers in Sydney as part of their 20/21 Century Design Sale on 10 November 2015.

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NOTES

- 1 Some, like Paul Kafka (1907–72), Steven Kalmar (1909–89) and George Korody (1900–57) have also been collected and researched by the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences and Sydney Living Museums in the last 20 years.
 - 2 Schulim Krimper, "An Outline" *Krimper*, National Gallery of Victoria exhibition catalogue, Melbourne 1975.
 - 3 *Ibid.*
 - 4 Robert Haines (1910–2005) was founding Director of Georges Gallery, Melbourne in the late 1940s, Assistant Director of the National Gallery of Victoria 1947–51, Director of the Queensland Art Gallery 1951–60 and Director of David Jones' Fine Art Gallery 1960–76, consultant 1976–83. In all of these positions Haines had a crucial influence on both the commercial and curatorial status of Krimper and as a private collector influenced what others collected. His belief in the integration of fine arts and crafts in the 1940s was years ahead of its time.
 - 5 Schulim Krimper, *op cit.*
 - 6 Documented in the exhibition catalogues for *Krimper*, the retrospective held at the National Gallery of Victoria in 1959, *Krimper the memorial exhibition* held at the NGV in 1975 and *An Important and Unique exhibition and sale of furniture and woodwork from the family estate of Schulim Krimper (1893–1971) Master Furniture Craftsman*, Adam Galleries, 349 Collins Street, Melbourne, 15 – 27.11.81.
 - 7 Terence Lane, "Krimper, Schulim (1893–1971)", *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/krimper-schulim-10765/text19087>, published first in hardcopy 2000, accessed online 5 August 2015.
 - 8 Terence Lane, "Schulim Krimper and Fred Lowen: Two Melbourne Furniture makers", in Roger Butler (ed), *The Europeans: Émigré artists in Australia, 1930–1960*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra 1997.
 - 9 Keith Finlay, "Artist with a Spokeshave", *Argus*, Melbourne 15 August 1952.
 - 10 Joan Leyser, "Timber is his Life", *Australian Home Beautiful*, July 1950 pp 15-18.
 - 11 *Ibid.*
 - 12 Terence Lane, *Krimper*, Gryphon, Melbourne, 1987
 - 13 Terence Lane, 'Krimper Furniture in the National Gallery of Victoria,' *Australian Antique Collector*, January/June 1984
- remains one of the most useful in terms of tracking provenance.
- 14 Terence Lane, 'Krimper Memorial Exhibition,' *National Gallery of Victoria Society Bulletin*, April 1975.
 - 15 Daniel Thomas, "An elegant man with and unerring eye, Robert Haines, Gallery director, 1910–2005" *SMH* 22 Oct 2005; Christine France, "A Matter of Taste," *Art and Australia*, vol 37 no 1 1999 pp 75–81.
 - 16 Terence Lane, "Writing Desk Schulim Krimper", *Art Bulletin of Victoria*, NGV, 15, 1973–74 pp 50-51.
 - 17 Information from author interviews with the Landau family.
 - 18 Family documents include school reports, citations and certificates from a high school in Vienna in 1913, a German Technical High School in Brno in 1919 and the University of Graz in 1928 testify to the transience of the education experience forced on Jewish students like Janek Landau in Europe between the wars.
 - 19 Rina Huber, *Letters to My Father*, Sydney Jewish Museum 2013.
 - 20 Possibly Seccombe's Mill at the Coffs Harbour jetty. <http://www.coffsharbour.nsw.gov.au/places-for-living/land-use/HeritageSheets/Houses/> accessed 28.9.15.
 - 21 *Daily Examiner* (Grafton) 7 May 1918 p 4.
 - 22 *Daily Examiner* (Grafton) 1 Nov 1918 p 2.
 - 23 Death notice *SMH* 31 Mar 1943 p 12.
 - 24 *Mudgee Guardian* 10 Jul 1919 p 7.
 - 25 Her youngest sister Mary became a doctor, *Sunday Herald* 25 Feb 1951 p 13.
 - 26 Joy Hughes (ed), *Demolished Houses of Sydney*, Historic Houses Trust of NSW, Sydney 1999.
 - 27 Peter Landau.
 - 28 Nicholas Greiner was the Hungarian-born father of Nick Greiner, Premier of NSW 1988–92.
 - 29 Kuring-gai Historical Society, *The Historian* 39.1 pp 152, 154, 155–6. http://www.khs.org.au/historian_database/1-9.html accessed 30.9.15
 - 30 The Polish immigrant art dealer may have been a connection to Krimper, but in the 1950s was still largely focused on fashion. His extensive acquisitions form the Joseph Brown Collection at the National Gallery of Victoria.
 - 31 Joan Leyser *op cit.*
 - 32 Information from Dr Christopher Thompson, recalling a conversation he had with Joyce Landau as to why she bought Krimper furniture. The possibility

- of 18th-century Viennese furniture shows a more eclectic taste than would be assumed by the ownership of a Seidler house and Krimper furniture.
- 33 Marion Landau.
- 34 Schulim Krimper *op cit*.
- 35 Peter Landau.
- 36 Bedhead with provenance to the George Shaw collection, SH103 *Shapiro 20/21 Century Art and Design*, 18 November 2014, lot 48; hanging bedside table, *Australian Woodworkers 1950 to Present*, selling exhibition Shapiro Auctioneers, July 2011.
- 37 Krimper NGV catalogue no 25 and Terence Lane, *Krimper*, Gryphon, Melbourne, 1987 p 37.
- 38 Terence Lane called them “double-staged bookcase or as a display cabinet.” In Robert Haines’ correspondence to James Mollison he refers to the work as a “bookcase”, but in one letter refers to it as a “cabinet”. In the minutes from the NGA Acquisitions Committee meeting when the work was officially accepted into the collection and in the invoice for payment the work is listed as “cabinet/bookcase”. NGA artist file, department of Australian Decorative Arts, courtesy of Alice Desmond.
- 39 2006.218.a-j; D147-1981. The bookcase acquired in 2006 was a major purchase for an Australian piece of furniture at \$20,000 http://www.michaelreid.com.au/Resources/LM02_Krimper.pdf. The same blackbean bookcase was originally owned by Mrs Constance Stokes and lent to *Krimper*, National Gallery of Victoria, 1975, catalogue no 5, the only bookcase shown in the memorial exhibition.
- 40 88/663.
- 41 NGA73.573.A-B.
- 42 Robert Haines, ‘Krimper,’ *Krimper*, National Gallery of Victoria exhibition catalogue, Melbourne, 1975
- 43 MAAS 88/663 object file. michellepotter.org/articles/Sydney-friends-of-the-ballets-russes-dr-ewan-murray-will.
- 44 John McPhee, *Australian Decorative Arts in the Australian National Gallery*, ANG, Canberra 1982.
- 45 The Paul Kafka-designed interior is documented in the Caroline Simpson Library and Research Collections’ Recorded for the Future online project, <http://sydneylivingmuseums.com.au/documenting-nsw-homes/serpentine-parade-house>.
- 46 Painted by Adamovich, former Red Army soldier, at the State Porcelain Manufactory in 1921, the plates depict scenes of the Russian Civil War and were sold by the family at Sotheby’s Russian Art and Faberge Sale, 27 November 2007 lot 613.
- 47 Keith Dunstan, “2 Homes in One”, *Australian Home Beautiful*, July, 1957 pp 18–21.
- 48 Terence Lane, ‘Krimper Furniture in the National Gallery of Victoria,’ *Australian Antique Collector*, January/June 1984 p 45 illustrated fig 4.
- 49 Anne Summers, “An Artist Lost: rediscovering Constance Stokes”, speech at National Gallery of Australia, 17 Nov 2009 <http://www.annesummers.com.au/speeches/an-artist-lost-rediscovering-constance-stokes/> accessed 18.10.15
- 50 Terence Lane, *Krimper*, NGV 1975 catalogue number 5.
- 51 MAAS 88/663 object file.
- 52 Dr Murray-Will was godfather to a member of the Chesterman family. Poppy de Souza, ‘Chesterman Films,’ Australian Screen Online, National Film and Sound Archive, <http://aso.gov.au/titles/collections/chesterman-collection/> accessed 18.10.15.
- 53 michellepotter.org/articles/Sydney-friends-of-the-ballets-russes-dr-ewan-murray-will.
- 54 Keith Dunstan, ‘2 Homes in One’, *Australian Home Beautiful*, July, 1957, p 20.
- 55 NGA73.573.A-B object file correspondence, courtesy of Alice Desmond.
- 56 There was some connection between the timber moulding business (which may have made some frames) and Russell Drysdale. It is likely that Janek, already a patron of Drysdale, helped set up Drysdale’s son in a framing business.
- 57 Lenore Nicklin, “Komon, Rudolph John (Rudy) (1908–1982)”, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/komon-rudolph-john-rudy-12754/text23003>, published first in hardcopy 2007, accessed online 26 September 2015.
- 58 “Member profile Freda Potok,” *Look*, Art Gallery of NSW, July 2015. Potok’s father worked at the Annandale Timber Co and Freda recalled the association with framing for both Drysdale and Elwyn Lynn, and that Landau was occasionally paid for framing with the gift of a painting.
- 59 Not so in Victoria, where Krimper was a phenomenon. In the 1970s, when a new acquaintance from Melbourne walked into Landau’s St Ives house, she instantly identified the interior as Krimper and exclaimed on it.
- 60 Charles Lloyd Jones’ Collection, Sotheby’s, Sydney, 19 July 1992 lot 66.
- 61 <http://www.artgallery.sa.gov.au/agsa/home/Collection/detail.jsp?ecatKey=6150> accessed 18.10.15
- 62 Finlay, *op cit*.
- 63 Wolfgang Siever’s photographs documenting Krimper furniture and interiors of the Bruce Benjamin (or the “Round”) House in Canberra (1958) are in the National Library of Australia and the National Gallery of Victoria.
- 64 Peter Landau, pers comm.
- 65 Leyser, *op cit*.
- 66 Terence Lane, *Krimper*, Gryphon, Melbourne, 1987.
- 67 *Ibid*.
- 68 Another group of diverse Melbourne clients, many of them Jewish, looked to an Australian designer in Noel Coulson in the 1950s and 1960s for bespoke furniture, with a very different, though not unrelated, stylistic outcome. Catriona Quinn, “Noel Coulson and the Lipshut House Toorak, 1959”, *RMIT Design Archive Journal*, vol 4 no 2, 2014 pp14–23.
- 69 *Krimper*, National Gallery of Victoria, 1959 and *Krimper*, National Gallery of Victoria exhibition catalogue, Melbourne, 1975. Lest the true diversity of Krimper’s most loyal clients be put down to later, developing tastes, both catalogues are arranged chronologically, documenting a range of clients from the early 1950s.
- 70 Krimper described the crucial year of 1950 and Haines’ advice: “In the early fifties, this friend still seeing me struggling for a living, suggested to me to make and put aside a number of outstanding pieces over the next year. These were to be shown as an exhibition in Georges’ gallery, Melbourne. The exhibition was highly successful. The art critics also took notice and gave high praise – especially the Herald critic.” Schulim Krimper, *op cit*.
- 71 “Living Room in Mr Robert Haines’ flat in Brisbane, designed by the owner”, in Rathbone Holme & Kathleen M. Frost (eds), *Decorative Art, the Studio Yearbook of Furnishing and Decoration 1953*, The Studio Publications, London, 1954 p 33.
- 72 Pair of benches c.1950, Acc. 4:0030.001-2
- 73 Daniel Thomas, *op cit*; Christine France, *op cit*.
- 74 James Broadbent, “Colonial Interiors”, *Proceedings of the Historic Interiors Symposium*, Sydney College of the Arts, 1983, p 18.



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