

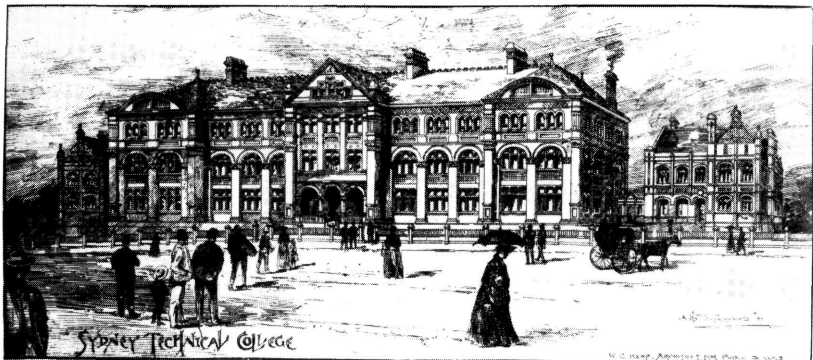
AUSTRALIANA



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AUSTRALIANA NEWS

THE D'OYLEY SHOW

One of the most important exhibitions of Australiana was held in 1979 at Watters Gallery in Sydney, and then shown in other venues. The D'oyley Show, an exhibition of women's domestic fancywork was put together by the Women's Domestic Needlework Group with the financial assistance of the Crafts Board of the Australia Council, and was the first exhibition to highlight the artistic products of a legion of anonymous Australian craftswomen.

Several hundred pieces illustrating this popular art form were assembled and displayed, and an excellent catalogue issued. The exhibition (see the review by Jennifer Sanders in *ASN* 1980 No.1, pages 8 - 9) brought home to many the importance of this material, and gave it recognition as a collectable.

Mindful of the need to preserve this archive of material, the Women's Domestic Needlework Group was negotiating with Sydney's Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences when the whole collection was destroyed in a fire a few months ago. This is a tragic loss - one is tempted to think of the destruction of the ethnographic collections of the Australian Museum in the Garden Palace fire of 1882 - as it is unlikely that such a comprehensive and well-documented collection of Australian needlework could ever be put together again.

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS CONFERENCE

The newly formed Society of Architectural Historians held its second conference at the University of NSW in June, with about forty people from Australia and New Zealand taking part.

EXHIBITIONS AT THE STATE LIBRARY OF NSW

"Rose Scott: Remarkable Woman, Remarkable Friends" runs until November and reveals a fascinating woman (1847-1925) who was a notable figure in the Womanhood Suffrage League with a wide circle of interests and friends. The Mitchell Library has drawn widely from its collections to illustrate the life of Rose Scott and her group which included politicians like Alfred Deakin, painters like Marion Ellis Rowan, writers like Henry Parkes, and sculptors like Nelson Illingworth. Women she knew included Mrs Aeneas Gunn, Miles Franklin, Dame Mary Gilmore and Louisa Lawson. This is a rare opportunity to see and appreciate the depths of the Library collections as well as to see the range of intellectual and political intercourse in New South Wales in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

"Fixed in Time, Australian Photographs 1845 to 1984" closed in May though the illustrated catalogue (\$2.50) is still available. Alan Davies curated

the exhibition and provides an essay on photography in Australia to introduce the exhibition. It includes works by Australia's first photographer, George Goodman, and the earliest preserved Australian photograph, Goodman's 1845 portrait of Sarah Anne Lawson. More than anything, the exhibition illustrates the broad range of photographers from professionals to amateurs and the unique picture of history the medium brings to life. It draws on the State Library's collections, described as the finest assembly of photographs in the country (including 50,000 portrait negatives from Freeman's Studio in Sydney).

Forthcoming exhibitions at the Library will include "Architecture in Australia 1788-1985" opening on 8 August, and "Wedgwood Portrait Medallions", with special emphasis on subjects of Australian interest such as Banks and Solander, from 24 September to 28 October. This exhibition will be mounted with the assistance of the Wedgwood Society and Josiah Wedgwood and Sons (Australia). These exhibitions promise to be of broad interest and it is always illuminating to see the broad range of the Library's collections.

AUSTRALIAN FLORA IN ART

Josef Lebovic has mounted a selling exhibition of Australian flora in art at his gallery at 294 Oxford Street, until 27 July. A collection of original engravings and lithographs dating from 1790 to 1900 not only show the wealth of Australian flora but also demonstrate the changing interest in our flora over a period of more than a century. Prices range from about \$60 upwards.

There is a useful catalogue of the exhibition (\$5.00, postage 90c) and a beautifully printed colour poster reproducing an early waratah.

JOHN GLOVER'S HOUSE AND GARDEN

Ron Radford, Curator of Paintings at the Art Gallery of South Australia, has produced a six page brochure on one of Australia's most famous early colonial paintings, Glover's *A View of the Artist's House and Garden, in Mill's Plains, Van Diemen's Land* dated 1835. The publication reflects the Gallery's policy, stressed by the new Director Daniel Thomas, of publishing its collection.

MORE BIRDS IN A BASKET

In this journal in 1980, the editor wrote a short article on a silver basket stamped by William Edwards and retailed by Walsh and Son(s) of Melbourne, decorated with Australian birds. John Hawkins has now located another basket with identical birds made by Edwards - in London. This has now been acquired by the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, and will go on display in the new Power House Museum side by side with the Australian version. John Hawkins is preparing an article on both the baskets for *The Australian Antique Collector*.

NEWS WANTED

We manage to keep up to date with some of the things that are going on in the Australiana field, but contributions from readers are welcome for this column, particularly from public institutions which are mounting exhibitions or acquiring important items of Australiana. The Editor would be very grateful for information or copies of press releases and news bulletins.

ERRATUM

A line was inadvertently omitted from Kenneth Cavill's article "The Silverware of Magnus Goldring" in *Australiana* 1985 Volume 7 No.1.

The first sentence of para.5, page 8, should read:

Magnus Goldrings became a proprietary company under the direction of Harold and Leslie Goldring in 1947. Following on the death of Leslie Goldring, the business was conducted by Harold Goldring and his sons, Magnus George (referred to as "Digger") and Kenneth.

AUSTRALIAN FLORA



EMBOTHRICUM Speciosissimum

Wentz (N.S.W.)



30 May 1985

Dear Sir,

As one of the authors of *Lindesay - A Biography of the House*, I was pleased to see a review of this National Trust publication in *Australiana*, Vol.7, No.1. However the review presents a confused report of the Trust's Lindesay Committee and the collection.

In 1963 the ground floor and basement of Lindesay became the second house museum open to the public since Vacluse House opened in 1913. It was furnished by the Lindesay Committee, consisting of men and women, set up by the Trust that year, and as well was to be a working house for Trust fund raising. Several people involved at Lindesay went on to become the pioneers of *Australiana* in forming the Trust's notable collection at Old Government House.

Advice was sought and received from the Victoria & Albert Museum on 19th century furnishings and the interiors remain unchanged to this day, except for a new staircase and enlarged library.

It was always the intention of the Lindesay Committee to replace the staircase and restore the library to its original size and a start on these restorations last year was made possible with income from an endowment set up by the Lindesay Committee.

The Lindesay collection was gathered by purchase from funds raised and many generous gifts and was enhanced in 1981 with some fine Australian furniture.

Lindesay's first floor was rented until acquired by the Trust in 1980 when it was decorated in a utilitarian fashion to serve as offices for the Women's Committee and for lectures and exhibitions.

A Trust decision to disband the Lindesay Committee this year, leaves the care and decoration of the house and further acquisitions to the collection in the hands of their Curatorial Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Caroline Simpson.

Australian Flora & Fauna In Sandstone

by Anne Marie van de Ven

Scarcely completed and not yet opened, the new Sydney Technical College, at Ultimo is of red brick, with stone dressings which possess the merit of utilizing the fauna and flora of the country, admirably conventionalised by the sculptors, Messrs MacIntosh and Fillans (who designed, as well as executed, this portion of the work) in the carved ornaments about the caps and other features of the construction.

Australasian Builder & Contractors' News

22 August 1891

This contemporary review of the sculptural merit of the carvings on the Sydney Technical College (inside front cover, top) differs greatly from the views of William Moore and Herbert Badham¹. Moore and Badham admired Henry Parkes' desire to adorn the facades of the Lands Office with the figures of those who had helped to develop Australia, but considered the finished work marred by the incompetence of most of the men engaged to carry it out including MacIntosh and Fillans, Sani, White, Illingworth and Sheriff. Similar disgust had been directed at Tomaso Sani's *Banking* and *The Post Office* at the GPO executed in 1883, its unacademic, unidealized, realistic portrayal of its subject being altogether too radical an approach towards a service which the conservative colonials invested with great pride. When suggestions were made that it be dismantled, its retention received Henry Parkes' enthusiastic support.

Unlike academic sculptors like Achille Simonetti (1833-1900) and Bertram MacKenna (1863-1931) who needed little support and encouragement, the artisan sculptors found that Parkes' support provided the impetus necessary for the promotion, at least in the applied arts, of a form of sculpture which was attempting to come to terms with its location. The decades before and after the centenary of British occupation in 1888, leading up to Federation in 1901, were years marked by a growing nationalistic consciousness. The Australian locale is reflected in the art of the Heidelberg painters, Roberts, McCubbin and Streeton, the poetry of Henry Lawson and A B Paterson, and to a lesser extent, in the sculptural work and architectural embellishment of this period.

The concept of an Australian sculpture, in Sydney particularly, owes a debt to Lucien Henri, a native of Provence, who learned the lesson proclaimed by his teacher, the great architect Viollet-le-Duc. Viollet-le-Duc studied the past for style and nature for inspiration. Arriving in Australia in 1880, Henry found the country ill-prepared to accept the culture he had to offer. He departed eventually in 1891 but his influence remained. William MacIntosh was one of Henri's original pupils in the first modelling class in Australia (1822) and went on to win first prize in the initial exam. As a teacher at the Technical College in Sydney, Lucien Henri's chief work, executed with the assistance of his pupils, was the production of about 100 designs based on Australian flora and

fauna, for use as architectural motifs. The lyre-bird was utilised, as were typical plants like the waratah. These magnificent designs later became the property of the Technological Museum (adjacent to the Technical College). Henri's central idea, wrote Arousseau, was the creation of a school of Australian Decorative Arts² and consequently his designs relied heavily on characteristic local forms.

As a centenary year, 1888 saw the publication in Sydney of Andrew Garran's *Picturesque Atlas of Australasia* which devoted chapters to the 'Flora of Australasia' and the 'Fauna of Australasia'. Louis Bilton, the Doulton artist, was one of the artists sent out to Australia in the 1880s to make drawings to illustrate the Atlas. While here he also drew up designs with Australian motifs for use on ceramics. The interest in Australian animals and plants at this time was not new. In 1845 Gould had published *Mammals of Australia* with magnificent hand-coloured lithographs (some life-size) of the Australian mammals followed by an equally fine edition on the *Birds of Australia*. Even during Cook's and Darwin's voyages the illustrative press of the day was anxious to acquire illustrations of strange, new, natural curiosities from the colony. Though Koalas, native cats and dogs, wombats, platypuses and goannas were not a common sight in the streets of Sydney, by the end of the nineteenth century they were frequently illustrated in books, journals and magazines.

A koala in Gould's illustrated *Mammals of Australia* (cover) is clearly the source of the Fillans and Macintosh koala on the Sydney Technical College facade (inside front cover, lower). Moreover, the original lithograph is almost the same size as the later carving in sandstone. However, Fillans and MacIntosh substituted the waratah for Gould's gum tree, the natural habitat of the koala. The sculptors represent the waratah for its nationalistic, emblematic and decorative qualities rather than for its botanical relationship to the koala. R. T. Baker's *Australian Flora in Applied Art* (1915) illustrates the variety of mediums within which the emblematic waratah found expression. Two of these are Tomaso Sani's statue of Allan Cunningham (inside back cover, top left) for the Lands Department Building and Louis Bilton's decorative waratah plaque (inside back cover, lower). R. T. Baker had joined the Technological Museum in 1888 as Assistant Curator to J. H. Maiden, the botanist who described and named botanical species and prepared surveys of eastern Australian flora.

Baker was passionately fond of the waratah, called it 'the glory of the Australian bush' and wanted it as Australia's national emblem. However, the wattle was chosen. 'The Waratah', wrote Baker, 'is the national flower of New South Wales. It is probably the most gorgeous amongst the native flora. What the Lotus was to the Egyptians, the Acanthus to the Greeks, in architectural decoration - the waratah promises to be to the Australian.'³ Though this ideal was never realized, its use in the sandstone carvings of the Sydney Technical College and on other major buildings of the time (e.g. as a Corinthian capital decoration on the colonnade of Newington College, Stanmore), (inside back cover, upper right), signify an attempt by colonial craftsmen to germinate this or a similar ideal.

Fillans' and MacIntosh's carvings on the ornamental sandstone elements of the Technical College are lively, lyrical and at times comic portrayals of Australian flora and fauna. The sculptors utilised an unusual array of leaves and blooms (banksias, fan palms, flowering gums and gum nuts) to create a ground on to which they insert an amazing selection of Australian

native animals - kangaroos, cockatoos, magpies, wombats, echidnas, kookaburras, lyre-birds, bush turkeys, lizards, goannas and rosellas.

Most of these carvings loom far above the pedestrian, located at the top of double-storeyed pilasters which flank pairs of large double-arched windows. As some of Australia's earliest nationalistic sculptural works they have received little attention, by-passing the critical eye of contemporary local 'academia' who favoured sculpture in the classic tradition, and who may have viewed this work simply in its relation to the other decorative building elements of ornamental terracotta tiles and coloured brickwork used by W. E. Kemp when designing the building. Were it intended that this be so, Kemp would not have commissioned the Sydney firm, Fillans and MacIntosh to design and carve these details at a cost of £393/5/-. Following the controversy which greeted Sani's *Banking* and *The Post Office* perhaps it was a wise decision to locate these works atop double-storeyed pilasters. Interestingly, it is thought that Fillans was a one time pupil of Tomaso Sani. Nonetheless, the disadvantage of viewing these carvings from below is that the skillful manipulation of sandstone by the stonemasons, Fillans and MacIntosh, cannot be fully appreciated without the help of binoculars or a telescopic lens. When presented with a series of detailed photographs of these carvings many are astonished to find that they have walked past the Technical College innumerable times without noticing the beauty, skill and originality, or even the existence, of these wonderful examples of 'Australiana'. The building with its carvings has recently been restored and cleaned and presents itself proudly to the public as a fine example of late nineteenth century architecture and craftsmanship.

In her article, "Sydney Technical College and Its Architect, W. E. Kemp" (*Australiana Society Newsletter*, April 1982) Kai Romot states that the work of Fillans and MacIntosh reflects the patriotic attitudes and pride with which Sydney people saw the construction of their first Technical College (previously the various colleges had been scattered throughout the city). Unfortunately, this pride was to a large extent restricted to those associated with a technical education such as architects and sculptors, people interested in the flora and fauna of the colony or decorative artists, otherwise the taste for Australian motifs in architectural embellishments and commissions for this type of work, would have become more widespread and Lucien Henri's ideal of 'A School of Australian Decorative Arts' could have been realised. The attitude which lingers in Moore and Badham is perhaps more reflective of contemporary public opinion, that naturalistic styles lacked artistic merit, the sculptors responsible for such work being no more less than tradesmen. The imitation of the styles and manner of the European masters was accorded greater merit than attempts to establish a distinctively Australian tradition in sculpture and sculptural decoration.

Fillans' and MacIntosh's carvings on the Sydney Technical College were produced too early in our history to be fully appreciated for what they represent - a break from established taste and a fresh, innovatory approach to Australian architectural decoration. With changing public opinion and the approaching Bicentenary, many previously overlooked examples of Australian craftsmanship are receiving more attention. This interest in skilfully crafted items which utilise our flora and fauna for its decorative qualities is reflected in the Museum of Applied Arts and

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Sciences' collection housed at The Mint Museum and it is hoped that the "Style" exhibition planned for the Power House Museum to be opened in 1988 will display an even wider range of British, Continental and Australian craftsmen-produced designs which utilise Australian motifs. The plaster air vents which depict the waratah and flannel flowers would be an illuminating extension to such an exhibition. It is now realized that Australian art is not merely landscape or figure painting. It encompasses much wider perspectives, including architecture, sculpture and design of every description.

For this reason, the uniquely Australian sandstone panels on the Sydney Technical College are worthy of detailed study. The perspective with which the lyre-bird (back cover, upper left) is executed and the symmetry present in the composition of the panel are noteworthy. The base of the arch supported in the flow of the bird's tail suggests that the panels were worked after they were in place ... carved in the tradition of the Greeks or of Michaelangelo in the direct method, from the outside inwards. The panel faces west where the deep relief and plasticity of the carving benefit and respond grandly when the afternoon sun is cast upon them.

A frill-necked lizard on another panel curls around the corner to be confronted by a bush fowl (back cover, lower) whose plumage is finely detailed. The softness of its underside contrasts with the starker feathers of its wings. A cockatoo (back cover, upper right) is presented on a panel with its body facing away from the viewer while its head turns around and downwards to catch the pedestrian's gaze. Its head is crowned with a magnificent array of feathers. Congenially, the rapport which exists between these animals engages the pedestrian, making him an active participant in a wildlife spectacle. Herein, together with the skillful detailing, lies the artistic ingenuity of the sculptors, Fillans and MacIntosh.

Poised above the entrance are two, healthy, powerful and predatory goannas, their tails intertwined, each crouching as if about to lurch at prey beyond. On the right, a platypus perches, ready to jump off the corner of the arch; on the left, a wild animal, perhaps an opossum, clings precariously to its corner of the arch. That pair of primordial beasts, the goannas, dominate the whole sculptural arrangement.

The use of assorted Australian flora and fauna was an Australianisation of the American Romanesque revival-style architecture favoured by Kemp in the Sydney Technical College. In a paper addressed to the recently formed Architects Association, published in the *Australasian Builders & Contractors' News* (8 July 1895), Kemp explained his use of the more simple, classical style in school architecture in preference to the previously popular, picturesque style with its steep roofs, sharp gables and pointed arches (e.g. the early schools of G. A. Mansfield). In this paper, Kemp suggested architects look to Italy rather than to northern Europe for an architectural style which would be climatically suitable for Australia. A week after the publication of this address, Kemp was praised for having successfully and practically laid down the seed-germ for an Australian architecture of the future. However, Kemp did not mention the use of decorative carvings in the Australian tradition as a decisive consideration in his architectural style despite his use of them later on the Newcastle (1894) and Bathurst (1896) colleges. The commendations for the innovative nature of this Australian architectural component must go to the sculptors, their teachers and the person who had the power and foresight to encourage their early efforts, Sir Henry Parkes.

ENDNOTES:

- 1 Moore, W. *The Story of Australian Art* Angus & Robertson, Sydney 1934.
Badham, H. E. *A Study of Australian Art* Currawong Pub. Co. Pty. Ltd.
Sydney 1949.
- 2 Aourousseau, G. H. "Lucien Henri - First Lecturer in Art at the Sydney
Technical College". *The Technical Gazette* Vol.2 Part III 1912 (Mitchell
Library).
- 3 Baker, R. T. *Building and Ornamental Stones of Australia* Technical Museum,
Sydney 1915 (Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences)



LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- COVER - John Gould's hand coloured lithograph of a koala in *Mammals of Australia* published in London 1845, (Mitchell Library).
- INSIDE COVER, UPPER - A. H. Fullwood's early illustration of Sydney Technical College. *Australasian Builder and Contractors' News* 22 August 1891, (Mitchell Library).
- INSIDE COVER, LOWER - Koala carved in sandstone on Sydney Technical College by Fillans and MacIntosh very closely resembles the Gould Koala. Photograph by Daniel Hunt.
- INSIDE BACK COVER, UPPER LEFT - Statue of Allan Cunningham by Tomaso Sani on the Lands Department Building using the Waratah as a decorative and emblematic element in the sculptural arrangement. Photograph from R. T. Baker's *The Australian Flora in Applied Art* 1915 (Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences).
- INSIDE BACK COVER, UPPER RIGHT - The Waratah utilised as a corinthian capital decoration on the colonnade of Newington College. Photograph from R. T. Baker's *Building and Ornamental Stones of New South Wales* 1909 (Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences).
- INSIDE BACK COVER, LOWER - Louis Bilton's Waratah plaque painted from living specimens by this Doulton artist when visiting Australia in the 1880s to make drawings for the *Picturesque Atlas of Australasia*. Illustration from R. T. Baker's *The Australian Flora in Applied Art* 1915 (Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences).
- BACK COVER, UPPER LEFT - The flow of the lyre-bird's tail supports the base of the arch with pleasing architectural symmetry. Carving by Fillans and MacIntosh on the Sydney Technical College. Photograph by Daniel Hunt.
- BACK COVER, UPPER RIGHT - A cockatoo carved by Fillans and MacIntosh turns to catch the gaze of the pedestrian. Photograph by Daniel Hunt.
- BACK COVER, LOWER - Finely detailed plumage on the bush fowl carved by Fillans and MacIntosh in 1891. Photograph by Daniel Hunt.

Lawsons

by *Michel Reymond*

Surprisingly nothing seems to have been written about this well-known auctioneering business which has flourished in Sydney since about 1884. During this long period it has sold the contents of many notable collections and historic houses and has grown from a small general auctioneering business to today's specialised sales of such things as pictures, jewellery, books, antiques and industrial goods.

The founder of the business was James Robert Lawson who was born in Sydney on 10 October 1860, the eldest son of James Lawson and his wife Emma née Glen.

His father had come to Australia in 1855 from Greenock, Scotland, where he had been born in 1836. At the age of 12 his father was apprenticed in the engineering trade but his family were apparently in the joinery business at Stirling not far from Greenock. On 27 November 1857 at St Andrew's, Sydney, he married Emma Glen, the eldest daughter of Robert Glen, an engineer with the Hunter River Steamship Company. James described his usual occupation then as brass founder. By this marriage James had seven sons and two daughters, some of whom died in childhood.

Shortly afterwards he started a furniture warehouse and cabinet making business in George Street, Sydney (now part of the site of the CBA Centre) which later moved to showrooms in William Street near the Royal Blind Society building (demolished in 1979) with a factory at Newtown. This business became known as "Lawson Brothers and Co."

The factory made all types of furniture and upholstery work as well as importing all the latest furniture and related goods. A contemporary advertisement described the business as "Art Furniture Makers Upholsters and Carpet Warehousemen .. with special designs for furniture for Entrance Halls Drawing Rooms Dining Rooms and Libraries."

As his sons became old enough they were taken into the business and learned the hard way at the bench. They were each delegated to a particular facet of the business: James Robert learned cabinet making, William drew furniture designs, while Ernest kept the books and Alfred french polished.

Apparently whilst working in his father's business James Robert decided to take up auctioneering and was sent to Harrison and Ackman, a well-known auctioneering firm of the period, to gain experience, probably in about 1884. Having learned all he could here and with the help of his father he set up his own auctioneering business in partnership apparently with a man named Jones. This occurred in late June 1886 when the new firm "Jones Lawson Bros. and Co. - Auctioneers Valuers etc. of 39 Castlereagh Street near Hunter Street" begged "to inform the General Public and Ladies and Gentlemen who are about to dispose of their Furniture and Household Effects that they are prepared to hold Outdoor Auction Sales". Prior to this time there is no apparent record of him in any auctioneering business.

Subsequently in 1887 the firm described itself as Art Furnishers and Auctioneers of Pomeroy Chambers 39 Castlereagh St. This firm lasted until about April 1887 when it apparently ceased. James then traded under the name "Lawson Brothers" at Pomeroy Chambers and at United Chambers in Hunter Street and subsequently under his own name. Early in 1888 he formed a partnership with a man named Broughton and the business traded under the name "Lawson and Broughton" at 333 George Street (now the site of the Bank of New Zealand, George and Wynyard Streets). However, this partnership apparently ceased sometime during 1890. Who exactly Jones and Broughton were we do not now know.

From then until 1893 there is no record of him in any of the contemporary directories and it is probably during this period that he went to England with his wife Marie née Rossiter whom he married on 20 January 1885 at St Paul's, Canterbury, New South Wales. He stayed in London and studied all aspects of the auctioneering business there.

Sometime during 1893 he returned to Sydney and established his own business again at 128-130 Pitt Street near King Street trading under the name "Lawson Brothers and Co. Auctioneers Valuers and Commission Agents". The building in which he conducted his business adjoined Minerva Chambers (demolished June 1984) and is featured in an early photograph which can be dated 1895. The Tank Stream ran under the premises and many are the stories of it frequently bursting through the flooring. Despite this he was to remain here for 21 years.

However, in 1894 he traded under his own name "James R. Lawson" and this remained so until he entered into a partnership on 4 February 1896 for a period of 7 years with John Charles Smith of Sydney who described himself as a "Gentleman". The agreement establishing the partnership provided that Smith was to pay Lawson £500.0.0, and in addition was to contribute the whole of the initial capital of the partnership amounting to £1,000.0.0, which capital was to be shared equally between Lawson and Smith. This partnership lasted until Smith's death on 25 July 1899.

Lawson then decided to incorporate a company which he called "Lawson Caro and Co. Limited". This company took over his business from 1 October 1899 and thereafter the business traded under the Company's name. The Caro in the Company's name was Julius Caro who was a Director but exactly what part he played is not known for he appeared to hold no shares in the Company. Early in 1903 this Company ceased trading. Lawson then entered into partnership with William Augustus Little. This partnership began on 31 March 1904 and lasted for 10 years trading under the name "James R. Lawson & Little". Lawson was paid a bonus of £500.0.0 by Little as a consideration for being admitted into the partnership and had, in addition, to pay under the terms of the partnership agreement the whole of the initial capital of £2,000.0.0 to the partnership which capital was shared equally between Lawson and Little.

With the end of this partnership in 1914 Lawson returned to trade under his own name and moved to new premises at 196-198 Castlereagh Street near Park Street just around the corner from the old T. & G. Building. These premises were later occupied by another auctioneer, Geoff K. Gray. There he stayed until October/November 1925 when he moved to "The New Gallery Auction Rooms" at 236 Castlereagh Street where the firm was to trade from until the end of December 1981.

W A N T E D

Good pieces of Australiana for a major exhibition in 1988, to celebrate 200 years since the foundation of European settlement in Australia.

The Power House Museum, opening in 1988, will explore the interrelationships of science, art and people in an Australian context. There will be significant displays of decorative arts, everyday life, creativity, power and energy, communications and transport in Australia.

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 We will be at:

WILLOUGHBY ANTIQUE FAIR, Chatswood Town Hall,
 15th and 16th June, 1985

ANTIQUA COLLECTORS FAIR, E. G. Whitlam Recreation Centre,
 Liverpool 6th and 7th July.

DOLL COLLECTORS FAIR, E. G. Whitlam Recreation Centre
 Liverpool 20th and 21st July.

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 GLASS, POTTERY & PORCELAIN, ARMS & MILITARIA, HOROLOGY,
 JEWELLERY, MUSICAL AND ORIENTAL COLLECTIBLES, POSTCARDS, etc.



In 1921 he took into the business his two sons Maxwell James and Stuart Rossiter, both of whom he trained as auctioneers and valuers. On 5 November 1926 James Robert Lawson died at his residence "Chasecote", Turramurra. At that time he was described as one of Sydney's oldest and best known auctioneers, highly respected in business circles who had been associated with many of the most important auctions conducted in Sydney for the last 40 years. He had an outstanding personality, a brilliant brain, and was much admired and loved by all who knew him. He was one of the last auctioneers to wear the top hat and frock coat as a regular thing when auctioneering.

Some of the great sales over which he presided during his lifetime were the estate of Sir Henry Parkes; "Carthona at Darling Point; the estate of Sir Daniel Cooper; "Sunnyside" at Kirribilli; "Toft Monks" at Elizabeth Bay; "Tusculum" at Potts Point; "Greenoaks" at Darling Point; Mark Foy's residence at Bellevue Hill; John Norton's residence "St Helena", Maroubra Bay; Vaucluse House; the J. J. Hackett Art Collection; Dr G. H. Abbot's pictures and works of art; the Eedy Collection of Chinese pottery porcelain etc; John Young's art collection; the Burdekin House sale; and the Bertram Stevens' Collection, to name only a few.

Thus ended a brilliant career. With a sound foundation laid his two sons carried on and the business greatly expanded. However, Stuart soon retired leaving his brother Maxwell, or Max as he became known, to carry on in the fine tradition of his father. During this period from the mid 1920s until the late 1950s the firm again presided over some of the greatest art and antique sales held during this time. After the end of the Second World War a company called "James R. Lawson Pty. Limited" was incorporated, on 29 July 1946, and took over the business which has been conducted by it ever since. In 1969 Max retired from auctioneering.

The buildings (demolished in 1982) which the company vacated in December 1981 have, after nearly 55 years, themselves had interesting histories. No.236, a three storey plaster rendered brick building, was erected in 1875-6 for Charles Aggar Hunter, a shoe and boot manufacturer. He occupied it as such until he sold it in 1884 to the New South Wales Protestant Hall Company Limited. During that Company's ownership the building was used and occupied by importers, clothing manufacturers, and printers, until sold in December 1923 for £14,500.0.0 to The Fields Trust Limited, who resold it in May 1924 for £15,500.0.0 to James Robert, Maxwell James, and Stuart Rossiter Lawson. The small building next door known as No.234 Castlereagh Street where the offices were located was erected in 1900 by Ronald Clark and Henry Brown who occupied it as ladder and barrow makers until 1932, when it was occupied by Lawson's until 1936. It was then used by a tyre and retreading company which altered the front facade in 1938. In 1946 it was purchased by Max Lawson and was used separately as a small auction room and storeroom until converted into offices in 1973. A photograph taken in 1912 shows these two buildings as they originally appeared.

Thus after nearly a century of auctioneering which has seen the business move from the City centre to the City South the firm has now moved to The Rocks, the City North, where the early commercial and trade life of Sydney began.

FROM HERE AND THERE

Compiled by *Tan Rumsey*

- ★★ A Victorian member informs us that Australia's first detective story and one of the first written in English sold for \$70 at a Sotheby's book sale in London last year. "The Mystery of the Hansom Cab" was written in Melbourne in 1886 by a New Zealander, Fergus Hume, and was published in London the following year. The Novelette soon became a best seller throughout the Empire.
- ★★ From Tasmania comes news that last year an exceptional sale was held when the historic Hutton Park and its contents, at Melton Mowbray, were sold. The 600 odd lots were auctioned by Baillieu, Freeman, Duff & Co., and of these numerous lots the highlights were two small antique tables. A colonial blackwood sewing table sold for several thousand dollars & this price was almost matched by a bird's eye Huon pine console table.
- ★★ More recently the Ratten collection was sold up in Hobart some months ago. This sale featured 2 cedar long case clocks (although one was reported to be more like mahogany) which sold for \$2,100 and \$2,400, but the limelight was reserved for a cedar sofa table that sold for \$13,000. At least 2 Sydney members were known to be bidding, one dropping out at just over \$8,000 and the other was the underbidder. Other items of interest were a cedar 2 door sideboard (\$700); a cedar footstool (\$260); an S. T. Gill watercolour "On the Upper Loddon" (\$2,300); an Australian 3 tiered butlers servery (\$1,150); a cedar serpentine sideboard (\$3,600); and a cedar 4 door bookcase (\$2,400).
- ★★ 1985 is the centenary of Australia's first expeditionary force to be sent overseas. In 1885 NSW sent a contingent to the Sudan to participate in the revenge for the death of General Gordon and the massacre of the garrison at Khartoum. To commemorate the event, professor Ken Inglis of the Australian National University has written an account of the Sudan Contingent called "The Rehearsal - Australia in the Sudan".
- ★★ The Society's Adelaide correspondent cables us that the day after the gold Adelaide Hunt Club Cup sold for \$44,000, another piece of Steiner's work was offered for sale. This time it was a silver claret jug and sold for half its estimate of \$10,000. While on Steiner, a boxed set of 5 napkin rings (the 6th missing) were knocked down at auction for a massive \$1,200. This would have to be an Australian record for napkin rings. They were from the Michell collection, most of which is now in the Art Gallery of South Australia. One Sydney collector was once offered these napkin rings for \$30 each, but declined, offering \$20 each. It would seem those days are well and truly over.
- ★★ Our newly appointed Western Australian correspondent sends word that Heritage Week has finally gone national with that State observing the celebration this year. Victoria started it all in 1980 and was soon followed, in 1981, by NSW, and so on, until this year when Western Australia

made it a truly national celebration. -----I might add our correspondent in Perth is still recovering from shock after hearing of the antics of collectors and the trade chasing Edwardian goldfields jewellery from the Kalgoorlie/Coolgardie regions. "What next, Broome Pearls?!"

★★ Q: Ever wonder how our nation came by its name?

A: The Portuguese explorer Pedro Fernandez de Quiros (1563-1615) named the continent in honour of his patron, Phillip III of Spain, who was of the house of Austria. Australia is a corruption of the original name "Austrialia". All this happened more than 150 years before Cook sailed our waters.

★★ Sydney's Lindesay Antiques Fair was a huge success as regards the sale of Australian silver. Society member and dealer John Hawkins could be said to have brought the house down (the chandelier actually fell with part of the ceiling) with the quick sale of his colonial silver. Several collectors who hesitated at some of the prices, found that within 48 hours red stickers had appeared on all the silver. The collection had been exhibited only a couple of times in recent years and was believed by our Melbourne contacts to be the same collection formerly belonging to Mr and Mrs Cherney of Melbourne.

★★ Word has come to us at "From Here and There" that a six-legged cedar sideboard was recently sold for around \$20,000 by a country dealer in New South Wales.

★★ The woodworkers group of NSW held its almost annual exhibition at the Sydney Opera House from June 11th to the 30th. Along with other members of the group, Mike Darlow (master woodturner) is having a book published. *The Practice of Woodturning* is being published internationally at the end of August. The book's major sales will be in America and as it features some of Mike's contemporary Australiana, there could be a further upsurge in Australiana prices. ---Who could forget Mike's cedar tea pots and his 3 tiered Azzie whatnot. Just the thing every museum curator desperately wants for their organisation.

Australiana Books

GOAT ISLAND, AN ANALYSIS OF DOCUMENTARY AND PHYSICAL EVIDENCE AND AN ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE, by James Senple Kerr. Sydney, Maritime Services Board, 1985, 62 pages, ill. \$5.00.

Goat Island has now been opened to the public. This report was prepared as part of the conservation plan for the use of the Island, and documents its colourful history (including the quarry, gunpowder magazine and barrack), landscape and vegetation.

COCKATOO ISLAND, PENAL AND INSTITUTIONAL REMAINS, by J. S. Kerr. Sydney, National Trust, 1984, 62 pages, ill. \$10.00.

A companion volume to the above, on the companion island notable for its dry dock and marine engineering facilities. It was prepared for the Department of Housing and Construction, and is restricted to only the penal and institutional remains.

THE MECHANICAL EYE IN AUSTRALIA. PHOTOGRAPHY 1841-1900, by Alan Davies and Peter Stanbury. Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1985. 228 pages, 159 ill. \$25.00.

More than 3,000 amateur and professional photographers working in Australia in the 19th century are recorded in this book, which documents the changing technology of photography, and discusses the photographs against their historical background.

THE HISTORY AND DESIGN OF THE AUSTRALIAN HOUSE, edited by Robert Irving. Melbourne, Oxford U.P., 1985. 336 pages, 48 pages of colour and 100 b&w, ill. \$50.00.

Like the previous book "Fine Houses of Sydney" that Bob Irving had a hand in, this volume is similarly well illustrated with historic and modern photographs, plans and drawings. It is of interest to the general reader as well as the architect or social historian.

IMAGES IN OPPOSITION: AUSTRALIAN LANDSCAPE PAINTING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, by Tim Bonyhardy. Melbourne, Oxford U.P., 288 pages, 16 pages of colour and 80 b&w ill., late 1985, \$40.00.

To be published in late 1985, this volume promises to focus on the subjects depicted by the artists and the contrasting views they presented on colonial Australia.

THE COURSE OF EMPIRE: NEO-CLASSICAL CULTURE IN THE ENGLISH COLONY OF NSW, by Robert Dixon. Melbourne, Oxford U.P., 224 pages, 16 b&w ill., late 1985. \$25.00.

Dr Dixon's thesis explores the ideas that helped shape early colonial culture particularly in relation to the concept of nationalism.

A GUIDE TO TRADITIONAL PAINTING TECHNIQUES, prepared by Keith Gehrig, edited by Don Ellsmore. Sydney, Heritage Council of NSW, 73 pages, 1985.

Keith Gehrig has been associated with the painting industry for 50 years and here encapsulates his experience with technical details and formulae relating to colours and paint finishes traditionally used in Australia. This is Research Study No.9 published by the Heritage Council of NSW.

A HISTORY OF CERAMICS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA 1836-1986, by Noris Ioannou, to be published in 1986 by the Wakefield Press, Adelaide.

THE HATCH AND BROOD OF TIME. A STUDY OF THE FIRST GENERATION OF NATIVE-BORN WHITE AUSTRALIANS 1788-1828, Vol. I, by Portia Robinson. Melbourne, Oxford University Press, about 370 pages, 1985. \$39.50.

Dr Robinson looks at who were the first white Australians, and attitudes towards men, women, and occupations. Of particular interest will be the chapter on skilled artisans.

AUSTRALIA'S BRILLIANT DAUGHTER - ELLIS ROWAN by Margaret Hazzard. 166 pages, colour plates, 1984. \$35.00.

Biography of Marion Ellis Rowan (1848-1922), renowned for her watercolours of wildflowers from Australia and neighbouring islands.



Sydney Observatory - An Historical Background

Sydney Observatory has been a part of the Sydney scene since 1858. Situated on Observatory Hill above The Rocks, it commands a superb view of the City and the Harbour and is visible in its turn from South Head to Gladesville.

The First Fleeters made good use of the Hill as a look-out point when waiting for the Second Fleet to arrive. In 1797 it became the site of Sydney's first windmill and by 1804 Governor King noting the strategic value of the Hill, ordered the building of Fort Phillip, a stone citadel to withstand convict uprisings or French invasions. However, this was never fully completed and in 1853 both the fort and the windmill tower were demolished.

By this time the site was known as Flagstaff Hill. In 1825 the Fort's eastern parapet became the base for both tall flag and semaphore poles. These could relay details of ships' arrivals from South Head to the Hill, and on to Gladesville, Dundas, Parramatta, and could also be seen from most sections of the City and its Harbour. The Sydney Signal Station, its flag poles and, by this stage, a cottage, were part of the city-scape from this time onwards.

By the 1850s Sydney was an important maritime city and port for whalers and the new trading clipper ships, while the discovery of gold also brought shiploads of new migrants and eager traders. What was required next was a time-ball to assist the maritime emphasis of the city's development and navigation.

Sailors used to navigate by the Sun and the Stars, needing accurate star-charts to find their latitude and accurate time-keeping for their longitude. By the 1840s, all major ports had time-balls. Mounted on a pole on a tall tower on a harbour hill, the local time-ball dropped down its pole at 1.00 pm precisely, setting a standard for seamen and city folk alike. The best time-balls were those associated with observatories; Sydney, said its leading citizens, should have both.





In 1852 Colonial Architect Edmund Blacket produced the first plans and sketches. In 1855 Governor Denison approved a sophisticated observatory and ordered the time-ball mechanism. Colonial Architect William Weaver drafted the final plans. In 1856 Rev. William Scott, a Cambridge mathematician and our first astronomer, arrived, and he and the new Colonial Architect, Alexander Dawson, supervised the building of Sydney Observatory. In June 1858 the time-ball was dropped for the first time, and a cannon duly fired from Dawes Point.

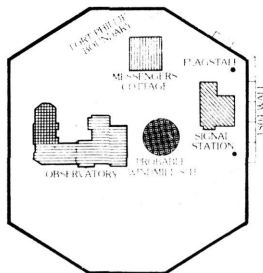
Sydney Observatory is a elegant building in the Florentine Renaissance Revival style. It successfully marries a twin-dome working observatory and time-ball tower with a comfortable two-storey residence. Built of warm-toned Sydney sandstone in textured blocks with plain details and string courses, the building and its three associated mid-Victorian cottages set in an extended octagon, crowns the Hill without marring the open park landscape. Visible from most Harbour and City vantage points, the Observatory is an attractive and familiar major landmark.

During its working life, the Observatory has contributed greatly to both local and international knowledge in areas such as general astronomical observations, cataloguing of Southern Hemisphere stars, magnetic observations, surveying of New South Wales, the establishment of meteorological observations, studies of tides, provision of accurate time services, and the promotion of education in Astronomy - the last two original objectives, of course, continue to this day. Perhaps the Observatory's most significant undertaking was the cataloguing of almost one million southern stars for the great International Astrographic Catalogue, an undertaking begun in 1890 but not finalised until 1971.

During its long working life, the Sydney Observatory has gradually acquired a remarkable collection of scientific instruments, including some of those brought to Australia by Governor Brisbane in 1821 for use at his private Parramatta Observatory. Many of these will be used in current and forthcoming exhibitions. They include telescopes, clocks, cameras, marine chronometers and a variety of measuring devices. Of equal importance is the large astronomical library which will eventually be catalogued as part of the Museum's own library, and possibly housed in one of the Observatory Hill cottages.

Today, as the latest division of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, the Observatory houses temporary exhibitions of Astronomy, Time-keeping, and Navigation. The historic building is still undergoing painstaking restoration work, but the Museum is open to the public, and admission is free. Morning tours are held during the week and the Museum is open from 1 pm to 5 pm on Saturday and Sunday. Night observation sessions using the Observatory's recently restored telescopes are also available on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, but bookings are essential - Telephone (02) 241 2478 to book.

 1796?	1804	 1848
 1857-9	1862	 1877





THE AUSTRALIANA SOCIETY

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DateSignature of Candidate

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