AUSTRALIANA

NOVEMBER 1988

Registered by Australia Post Publication
No. NBH 2771

Vol.10 No.4

SIMPSON'S ANTIQUES

Fine Colonial Furniture

Valuers
Traders
Consultants

Est.
1978

We continually have available items of this quality and condition.

HOURS
Tues – Sat
11.00 – 5.00

40 Queen Street, Woollahra 2025
Tel (02) 32 3424 A/H 569 0211

AUSTRALIANA
NOVEMBER 1988

Vol. 10 No. 4
November, 1988
ISSN 0814-107X
$5.00

Published by The Australiana Society
Editor: David Bedford

AUSTRALIANA, the journal of the Australiana Society, is published in February, May, August and November.

Subscription rates (1989):

Individual	$20
Household	$25
Institutions	$30
Overseas	$30
Life	$500

SINGLE ADDRESS FOR ALL CORRESPONDENCE

Including Editorial, Advertising, Membership, Subscriptions and Requests for back issues etc., should be sent to:

The Hon. Secretary,
Australiana Society,
PO Box 288,
Lindfield NSW 2070

To simplify the process of written communication with the Society the committee has agreed to maintain only a single address for all correspondence, including the submission of material for publication in *Australiana*.

CONTENTS

Designed, Typeset and Printed by The Honeysett Printing Group (02) 569 8133.

Registered by Australia Post Publication No. NBH 2771

Cover: Maude Kettle, rug, c.1941, wool etc. Australian National Gallery.

1989 PROGRAMME

26 JANUARY	ANNUAL DINNER – Venue to be advised
2 FEBRUARY	GUEST SPEAKER – ALAN LANDIS "WEDGWOOD AND AUSTRALIANA"
6 APRIL	SHOW AND TELL Collectors evening to bring along their valued possessions
1 JUNE	GUEST SPEAKER – JOSEF LEBOVIC
3 AUGUST	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
5 OCTOBER	GUEST SPEAKER
7 DECEMBER	TRASH OR TREASURE and CHRISTMAS PARTY Members are invited to bring along items for discussion

FUNCTIONS AND EXCURSIONS TO BE ADVISED

Our Meetings are held at
The Glover Cottage Hall
124 Kent Street
SYDNEY
at 7.30pm

CONTRIBUTIONS PLEASE

We require articles urgently for our Australiana journal.

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

Please forward your submissions to

The Editor
Australiana
P.O. Box 288
Lindfield.
N.S.W. 2070

Nineteenth Century Silver and Goldsmiths (Jewellers) of Western Australia – An Introduction

Dorothy Erickson

When histories of the decorative arts are written in Australia it is rare for Western Australia to be covered except in a cursory manner – it is usually included under blanket statements which assume that conditions in Western Australia parallel that of the eastern two thirds of the continent. This was not the case, and in an effort to balance the picture I offer this article based on current but incomplete research. This may sound foolish but in the absence of a body of research on which to build, the process will be a long one and may never be completely finished. [Half a cake being better than no cake, I publish at my peril and hope that any further information available may be brought to my attention. The research in progress is for the Bi-centennial History of The Visual Arts in Western Australia to be published by Cambridge University Press – for which I am part of a team based at the Centre for Fine Arts at the University of Western Australia].

When considering the history of Western Australia it is wise to remember that although it was the first part of the continent to be trodden by Europeans some 350 odd years ago it was not colonised until 1829 and then as free colony – a colony established for gentlemen based on a system of private enterprise. It was envisioned by the founder, Captain Stirling, as a naval and convalescent station supported by a flourishing agricultural colony strategically placed to take advantage of the Indian and Chinese trade routes. That this did not proceed in the manner envisaged did not change the social values or attitudes of the early settlers. These were to set it apart in attitude as well as physically from the rest of Australia – until South Australia was founded. Nathaniel Ogle's manual for emigrants to the colony published in 1839 detailed the aspirations of the colony's gentry for

> the early cessation from labour, ... a condition of promise which exists in no other community on earth; and which places the state of society before that of all other realms or colonies.

Though the parallels between the Colony of Western Australia and that of South Australia appear to be many, some Western Australian's such as Samuel Pole Phillips ("Squire" Phillips of Culham) were inclined to look down on the South Australian establishment as "all businessmen – at it from morning till night". Commerce was not at this time acceptable in polite society though circumstance was soon to force a change in attitude for people in Western Australia as it was to do in England later in the century. The Swan River settlers, many younger sons of minor gentry, Napoleonic War veterans and East India Company contacts, came with Romantic visions of acquiring landed estates. With them they brought most portable accoutrements of gracious living. Some of these accoutrements, such as carriages, were of course not of much use until roads were built and a more comfortable existance enjoyed. Some settlers came not only for financial or social gain but also for the chance to seek an arcadian iydll. (At his home on the Swan River) George Fletcher Moore was to write in his diary in 1831, [two years after the commencement of the colony]

> How different my rural life from that which I had imagined it would be! Instead of demi-savage and romantic, it is civilized (often ceremonious) and uniform; with less of privation and much more of occupation for mind and body than I had anticipated ...

Further south in the tall timber country, Fanny Bussell at Augusta was to write of her rural surroundings

> It is here that one sees the magnificence of

emigration. At the Swan, European luxuries have already robbed this life of all its wildness and grandeur.

Asset rich but cash poor, the settlement did not prosper and in the first few years many intending settlers were diverted to Van Diemens Land. Others found themselves in unusual occupations. Eliza Shaw in her letters home tells us

> A man with a little money would make a rapid fortune here. ... Money is so scarce that it brings readily from 25 to 30 percent; and gents who sometime since in England rode in carriages are now weighing out a quarter of a pound of tea and a half a pound of rice.

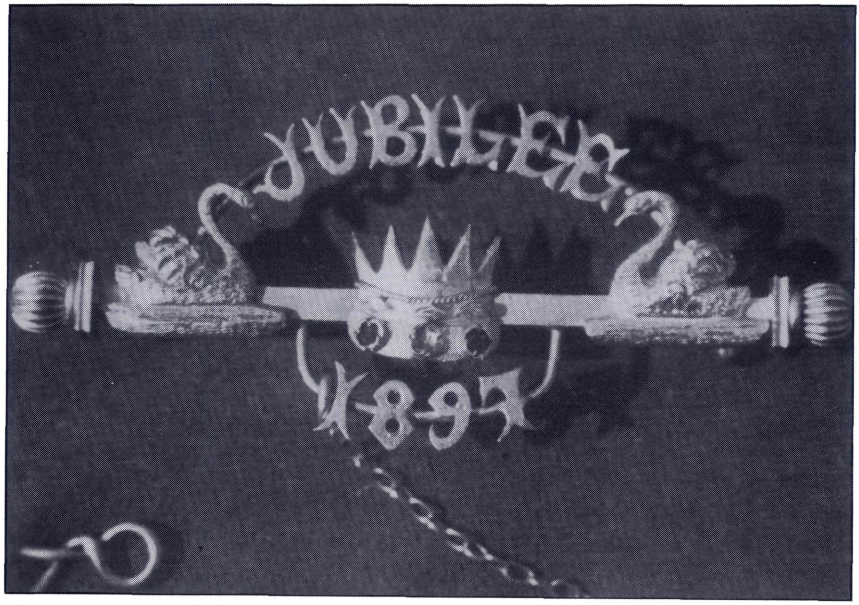
She also remarked "It is astonishing the number of wealthy families out here." Within a few years some substantial homes and businesses had been built, the former graced with chandeliers and fine furniture. These were surroundings suitable for the musical evenings so popular with the colonists, whose ways were those of the country gentry as portrayed in Jane Austen's novels. This was no coincidence as many settlers had relatives who were social contacts of her circle. Others like the Bussells belonged to King William's circle. Yet others were the illegitimite sons of royal dukes and lords of the libertine royal circles of the time. Ogle in his manual for emigrants lists the occupations of the settlers as "physicians, surgeons, lawyers, etc., graziers, agriculturalists, artists, handcraftsmen, trade, fisheries, pilots, domestic servants, carriers, boatmen, porters etc.".

The major bar to progress in the tiny communities scattered along the periphery of the continent was the shortage of labour. This was eventually alleviated by the introduction of male convicts for a period of eighteen years from 1850-68. Even so the gold rushes in the east at this time drew some of the free settlers and many of the expirees, once again depleting the labour force. Industry, for those who stayed, was rewarded. Many of the shepherds and other industrious servants were able to purchase estates to match those of their previous employers. These they filled with furniture and other effects mostly in the "neo-Georgian" style then fashionable. As this style resembled the Regency taste of the original settlers it helped to give the new rich an air of breeding and respectability. Thus the excesses of the Victorian era mostly passed Western Australia by. The ruling families were no longer wealthy but they had possessions and contacts. Old pieces were bought rather than new when replacements were necessary. Tradition was valued. People such as the Brockmans at Herne Hill purchased replacement furniture and paintings etc. from England when the original home was burnt down.

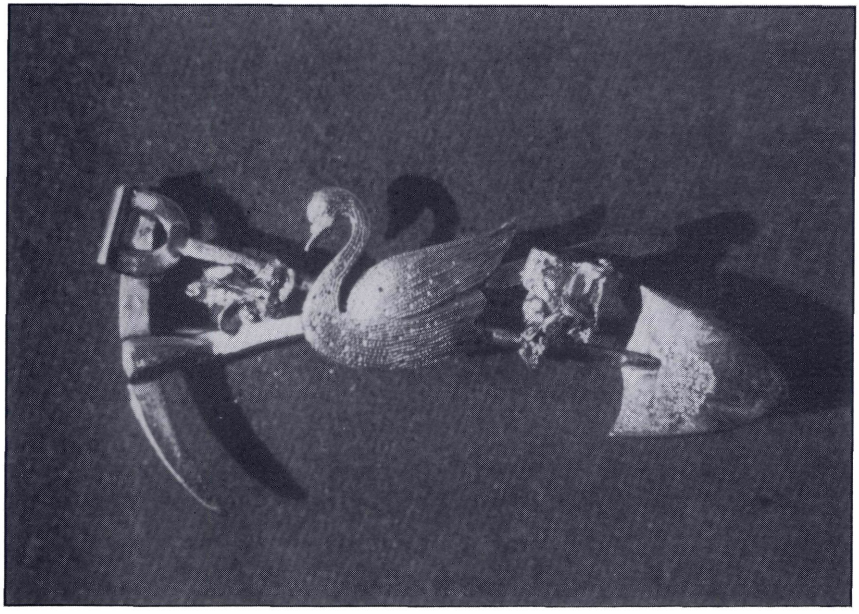
The leisure activities of the gentlefolk were typical of the Victorian era and included such diverse activities as painting, botanising, making musical instruments, furniture, embroidery, feather muffs, seaweed and shell pictures. A surprising number, encouraged no doubt by the journals of the time, were proficient at wood turning and furniture making.

Besides wheat, wool and sandalwood – pearling and export hardwood timber were to help the coffers of the young colony but there was not the boom which occurred in the fifties, sixties and seventies in the east. Nor did Western Australia have charge of its own destiny. As it was not granted self government in 1850 with the other colonies it was not able to raise loans for projects considered important by the colonists. It was tied very much to the apron strings of the Colonial Secretary in London. It achieved some measure of self determination in 1870 and self government only in 1890. The boom times commenced when money for capital works and investment were able to be negotiated. This was in the late eighties and nineties at a time when, first South Australia then Victoria, followed by the rest of the world, suffered a depression. Consequently the colony attracted to it people who would otherwise never have considered coming to such an isolated outpost, bedevilled by a bad public image and not particularly welcoming to outsiders.

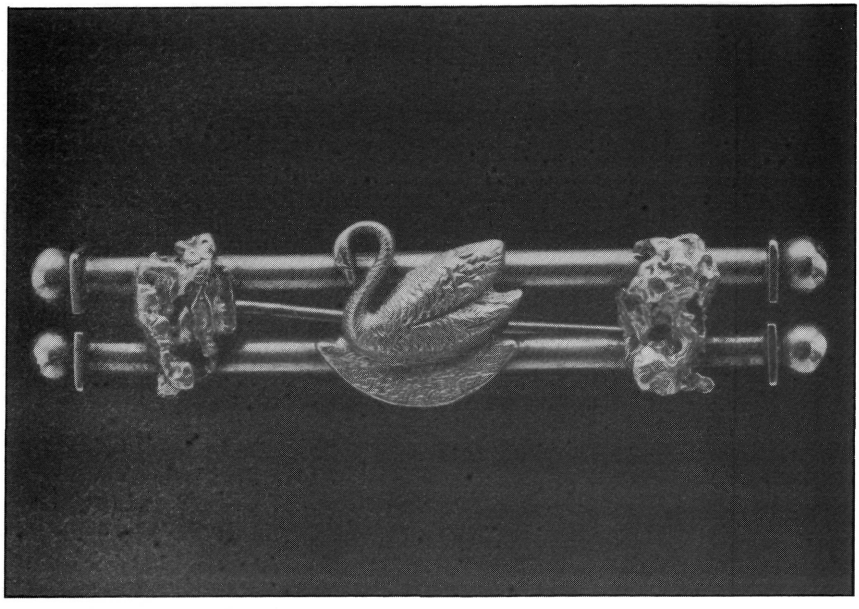
The population rose rapidly and dramatically with the gold rushes. The desert flowered and shanty towns sprang up overnight to be as quickly replaced by cities such as Coolgardie, which May Vivienne (in Travels in Western Australia, 1902) described as having fine wide streets, lit with electric light and handsome buildings. Coolgardie had an International Exhibition in 1899 and attracted travellers from all parts of the globe. The sister town of Boulder, a few years later, was to have the greatest concentration of retail space in Australia. The inhospitable climate and the nature of the gold, which soon needed deep mining techniques, saw the alluvial miners return from whence they came – which was mostly from South Aus-

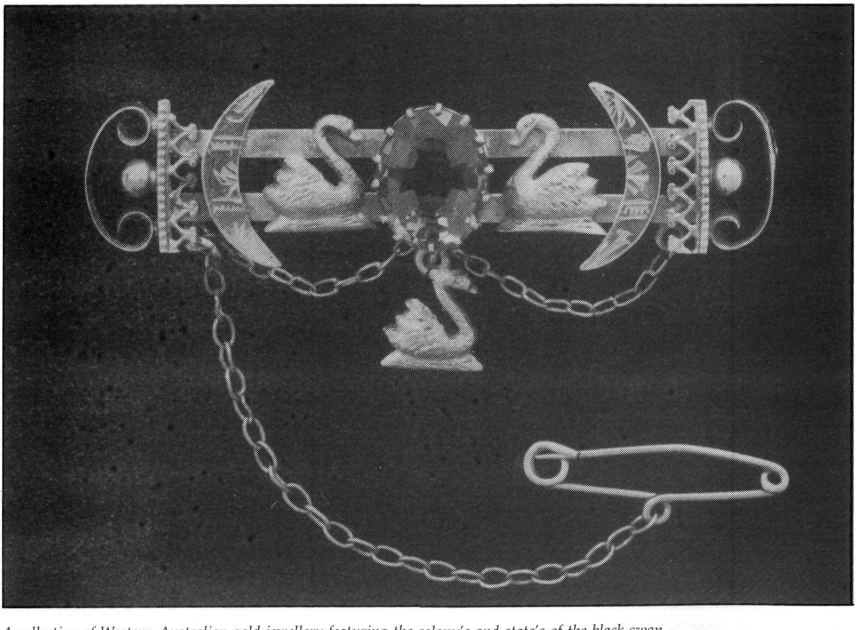


Gold bar 'Jubilee' brooch marked '18ct' and 'L.B.' (Louis boxhorn, Kalgoorlie) 1897. (Priv. coll.)

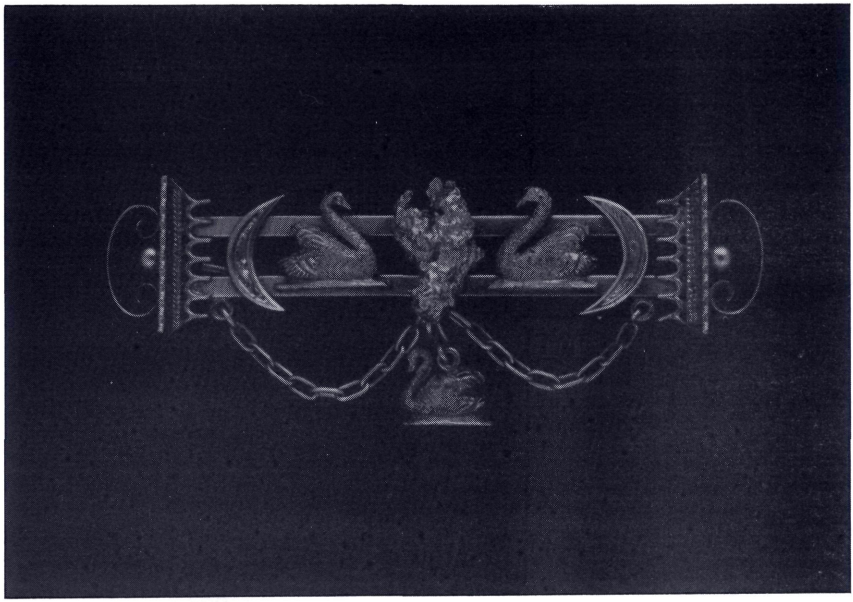


Gold brooch with nuggets, also featuring mining implements attr. B.V. Lindell, Perth/Kalgoorlie (Priv. coll.)

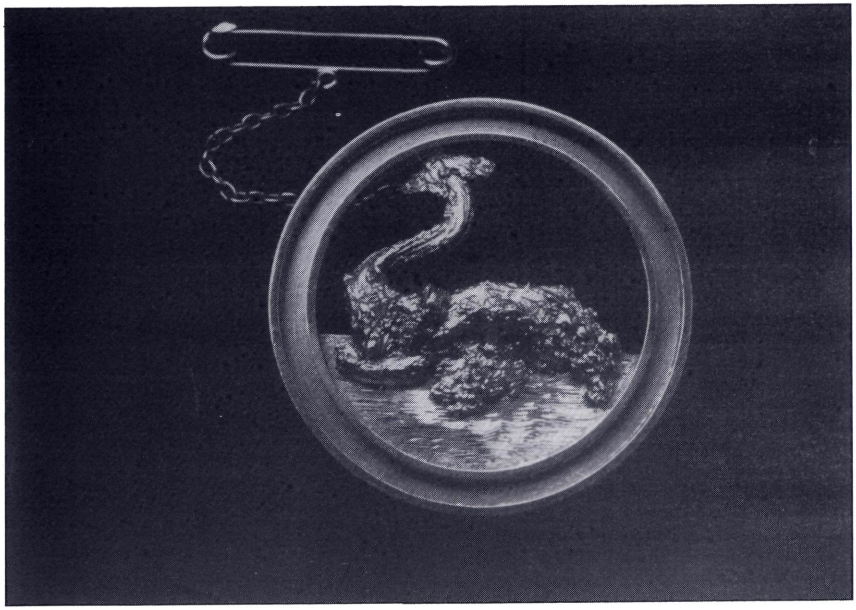




A collection of Western Australian gold jewellery featuring the colony's and state's of the black swan.



Gold bar brooch with nugget marked '18ct' (W.A. Museum)



Gold Nugget brooch marked 'G.R. Addis', Kalgoorlie. Inscribed date 1924 (Hall collection).

tralia and Victoria, and where they had left their families. It was these miners however who dragged a reluctant Western Australia to the Federation table in 1901.

Gold, the gleaming metal that transformed the Cinderella state, brought not only gold diggers but also goldsmiths. Over one hundred came in the decade before Federation. They were to fashion fascinating mementoes of the time. These, because of their later date, were a lighter style than those of the earlier eastern goldrush jewellery.

With the increased population and prosperity came also the flowering of artistic endeavour which was centred around the Perth Society of Artists, The Museum and the new Technical Art School. This was to continue until the first world war. The first decade of the twentieth century was one of growth and prosperity, after which Western Australia went into an economic trough and per capita income did not reach the 1911 level again until 1950. There was one brighter period in the 30s when there was a minor boom due to the floating of the gold price which again made it economic to work the mines. The mining population which left was replaced with soldier settler pioneers – veterans of the First World War. Western Australia was thus still mainly British until after the Second World War when in 1947 the first refugees from Europe arrived. They were to assist in the growth of a diverse economy in the sixties when once again there was an influx of population for a mining boom. This time most stayed and the state reached its (1900) goal of 1 million population.

This is the background against which history of the various decorative art disciplines in the sparsely populated western third of Australia must be considered.

Goldsmithing in the Swan River Colony, like most other disciplines, was governed by the social and economic conditions outlined above. Families brought the fashionable light dainty jewels with them and then as fashions changed other work was purchased on trips home or from what was imported by the merchants and advertised in mixed cargoes. This state of affairs was to continue for the first twenty years. Goldsmiths set up and advertised as the demand increased for their services but usually in tandem with some other enterprise. By the 1860's enough of the convict jewellers had obtained their freedom to set up in business – a number in association with the burgeoning pearl shell industry. Few of the convicts were jewellers and of the twelve or so identified in associated disciplines only one was a London trained goldsmith, the others were mostly Eastern European Jews with a variety of skills including engraving, mould making, diamond cutting and mould brass finishing. After the convict period only a few more trained goldsmiths arrived before the gold rushes but by then locally born smiths had been trained and joined the still small workforce. The depression in the eighties in South Australia saw a number emigrate to Western Australia and they were to prosper from the early days of the gold rushes. By the eighteen nineties there was a veritable flood of goldsmiths who came to chance their luck as miners and makers. They were to make the many mining brooches featuring items of mining equipment mounted on a bar brooch. These small but attractive objects are often curiously compelling and at present are eagerly sought after.

Gold Medallion marked 'A.O. Kopp' Fremantle (Priv. coll.)

Goldsmiths and Associated Artisans Working in Western Australia – 1829-1900

** Mark attributed or known*

COLONY – 1829-1850

Bowra, John W.A. b.1823 U.K. arr. c.1849 Perth Wmkr/Jlr act.1854-1890
Glaskin, Frederic b.1820 arr.1849 fm Lon. Perth Jlr/G. Smith/R. act.1853-1888s
Gresswell, John b.1798 arr.1831 fm Lon. Perth Ass./G. Smith/R. act.1841-1881

CONVICT SMITHS 1850-68

Badoski, F. b.1827 trp.1854 fm Lon. D.Ctr/Jlr act.1858-1861
* Jackson, Alfred T. b.1842 trp.1866 fm Lon. Fremantle, Geraldton, Albany G.Smith/Jlr act.1875-1912
Josephson, Abraham b.1830 trp.1863 fm Lon. P.T./+ act.1880s
Mason, Frederick b.1829 trp.1864 Fremantle, Perth Imp./Jlr/G.Smith/Wmkr act.1872-1886
Reichberg, Chom b.1815 trp.1863 Perth En/Jlr/D./R./P act.1865-1871
Rogers, Francis b.1836 trp.1856 fm Edin. Jlr act.1859-?
Rosenberg, Abraham b.1806 trp.1863 fm U.K. Framer/Jlr act.1868-1879
Seeligson, Henry b.1830 trp.1864 fm Madras Perth Imp./M./Jlr? act.1867-1896
Skelton, Alfred b.1834 trp.1865 fm Maidstone Perth, Fremantle Wmkr/+ act.1868-1889?
Sunter, Walter J. b.1822 trp.1851 fm U.K. Bunbury Jlr/Smith/+ act.1851-1903
Welby, John b.1842 trp.1867 fm U.K. Fremantle, Northem, Perth Wmkr/Jlr act.1869-1887+

PROGRESS 1869-1890

Bernd, D. Fremantle Jlr/Wmkr act.1887
Bowra, John A.H. b.W.A. (son of J.W.A.) Perth Wmkr/Jlr act.1871-1889
Bowra, Edwin H. b.W.A. (son of J.W.A.) Perth Wmkr act.18 ?-1890 & 1920-?
Brown, W.A. b.? arr.? Geraldton Jlr act.1888-1889
Browne, John J. b.? arr.? Perth Wmkr act.1887
Carley, David b.? arr.? Cossack Jlr/Plr act.1880-1888?
Carter, T. b.? arr.? Fremantle act.1873
Chand, Matthew L. b.1866 W.A. Fremantle, Albany, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, Lp./Jlr/Wmkr act.1880s1926s
Cook, Arthur C. b.? arr.? Perth M./Wmkr/Jlr/O. act.1887-1905
Ellies, Thomas b. Ceylon. arr.1888 fm Singapore. Broome Jlr/G.Byr/Plr act.1888-1921
* Falk, P. & Co (Ad. etc.) Fremantle, Kalgoorlie Imp./Ws./Mf. act.1887-1919
* Fouchard, Anthony arr.1875 fm Lon. Perth I./Wmkr/G&S. Smith act.1875-1899
Glaskin, F.L. b.1847 arr.1852 fm Lon. Perth Jlr/R. act.1876- ?
Galle, Jean b.? arr.? Fremantle, Albany Clockmaker act.1882-1886
Haley, Thomas b.? arr.? Fremantle act.1873
Hardman, H. b.? arr.? Fremantle act.1879
Henri, W.J. arr.1869 fm Sydney Perth Wmkr act.1872-1875
* Hooper, William b.1861 fm Ad.? Fremantle, Perth O./Wmkr/Jlr act.1882-1922
Masel, Joseph & Son b.Russia arr.1887 Fremantle, Perth, MfJlr/D.Dlr act.1887-1907
* May, Charles (Sr) b.1867 arr.fm U.K. 1883 Fremantle, Ws./MfJlr act.1886-1919
* Nesbit, Vincent E. b.1856 arr.1883 fm Ad. MfJlr/Wmkr/R. act.1883-1893
Nugent, S. b.? arr.? Fremantle act.1882
Scanlan, T.R. Perth, Boulder Ws./Mf. act.1881-1922
Wheeler & Bennett Fremantle Wkr/MfJlr/P.T./R. act.1886-1907
Wheeler, Frederick fm S.A. Fremantle – Jlr/O. act.1886-1905
Williams, J. b.? arr? Perth act.1888

SELF-GOVERNMENT 1890-1900

Abelman, Henry b.Switz. arr.1895 Goldfields Wmkr/Jlr/OM. act.1895-1918
* Addis, George R. b.1864 arr.1894 fm Tas. Kalgoorlie G.Smith/Wmkr/OR. act.1895-1934
Band, Charles E. b.1864 arr.1892 fm U.K. and N.Y. Kalgoorlie Wmkr/Jlr act.1893-1905
Barnes, F. fm Sydney Goldfields Wmkr/Jlr act.1893-1907

Behrman, Henry fm Ad? Cue, Perth Jlr act.1898-1907
Bloustein, M.H. (fancy repository) Perth R./Jlr act.1898-1907
* Boxhorn, Louis (Masterton 1909) Perth & Kalgoorlie Jlr/Wmkr act.1897-1909
Bromley, Harold fm Melb. Menzies Jlr act.1898-1916
* Caris Bros (J. & S.) (Lon.) Northam, Perth, & Goldfields. Jlrs/R./Imp. act.1894-1987
Catlett, Waldo E. Perth, Coolgardie, Bunbury Wmkr act.1894-1921
Collie, William G. fm NZ & NSW Perth, Goldfields. Lp./Wmkr/Jlr/O. act.1894-1909
Corne, Henry Goldfields Wmkr/Jlr act.1895-1903
Cox, Arthur J. Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie ? act.1895-1903
Dickenson, Alfred E. Esperance, Collie Wmkr act.1899-1905
Dickenson, Herman Esperance, Greenbushes Wmkr act.1899-1905
* Dixon, Bros. ? Dixon W.J. fm Ade. Perth Wmkr/Jlr act.1898-1905
* Donovan, & Overland Perth MfJlr/Ws./R. act.1897-1930
Emrose, Robert L. (McFarlane) Perth, Fremantle Ws./Mf. act.1898-1905+
Fettling, August & Albert fm Melb. Goldfields. Wmkr/Jlr act.1895-1911
Fimister, George fm Ad. Goldfields. Wmkr/Jlr act.1894-1903
Gibson, Annie & Co. arr.? Geraldton Jlr. act.1899-1922
Giles, A.E. Perth Ws./MfJlr act.1898-1905
Hahn, Ludwig & Co. Boulder Wmkr/Jlr/G.Byr/M. act.1894-1911
Jerger, H. Mortlock (H.J. 1901) fm Ad. Coolgardie, Kalgoolie Wmkr/Jlr/O. act.1897-1901
Jerger, John fm Ad. Coolgardie Wmkr/Jlr/Ass. act.1895-1905
?Jerger, Henry (Wm. H? 1899/1900 Jlr) Nesbit & Jerger? Wmkr act.1899-1903c
Kahan, Samuel fm Melb. Perth Jlr act.1895-1901
Kamprad, Alex fm NSW Coolgardie, Kalgoolie Ws./MfJlr act.1898-1909
Kennedy, Francis (H. & K.) Menzies, Albany Wmkr/Jlr act.1897-1909
* Kopp, Adolphe O. fm Eur. via Melb.? arr.1891 Fremantle Wmkr/Jlr act.1892-1915
* Levinson, Mark & H. b.U.K. fm Vic. & Sheffied Perth Jlrs/ act.1896-1920s
* Lindell, Bernot V. b.? arr.? fm Melb. Kalgoorlie, Perth Wmkr/MfJlr/Imp. act.1893-1899
McFarlane, Thomas (Emrose) Perth Ws./MfJlr act.1898-1905
McKinlay, Robert (P. & M. 1893-1903) Perth act.1893-192?
Morris, L.A. Kalgoorlie Mgr? act.1899-1916
Murfin & Co. Perth Ws./Mf. act1898-1905+
Nesbit & Jerger (V. Nesbit & W.H.? Jerger) MfJlrs/R./Wmkr act.1893-1898
Pearl, Joseph fm Melb. Coolgardie, Perth MfJlr/R./G.Byr act.1899-1922
Piaggio & Co. (Frank?) from Sydney? Perth MfJlr/? act.1891-1892
Piaggio & McKinlay (F. & Robert) fm Sydney? Perth Wmkr/etc. act.1893-1903
Rettig, Alex & Carl 1907 fm Ad. Coolgardie, Kalgoolie Ws./Mf. act.1898-1905
* Rosenthal, Aronson & Co. Lon./Melb. Perth I./Ws./Mf.? act.1897-1905
Robertson, James Boulder MfJlr/Wmkr/G.Byr act.1899-1909
Shepperley, L. York Jlr act.1898-1905
Shellgrove, Richard fm Ad. Perth, Beverley Wmkr/Jlr act.1893-1918
Sonnadere, D.E.W. Perth, Kellerberrin Wmkr act.1895-1913
Steinberg, Jacob Perth Wmkr/Jlr act.1898-1915
* Stewart, Dawson & Co. Livpl, Lon., Sydney, etc. Perth Mf./R./Imp. act.1898-1960s
Stonehouse, John Geraldton, Lennonville act.1899-1905
Upjohn, George Perth Jlr act.1898-1905
Visibord, S. & A.H. Perth, Kalgoorlie Jlr act.1898-1905
* Willis, T. & Co. Head office Melb. Perth Masonic Imp./Ws. act.1898-1907
Wineberg, Wolf to Queensland? Cue, Perth, Geraldton Jlr act.1898-1907

Advertisers from E.S. (in Whitton's Town and Country Directory 1897/8) T. Anderson enameller), * A. Benjamin, Catenach, * Johnson & Simonsen

* *Mark attributed or known*

The previous list includes name, birthdate/place, arrival date in W.A., location, activity and working dates.

Some marks ascribed to WA Jewellers prior to 1900

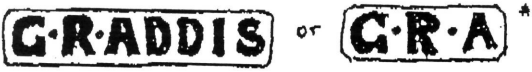
(Family Coll.) Alfred Jackson

(W.A.M.) Anthony Fouchard

(Mithral Coll.) William Hooper

(Private Colls) Vincent Edward Nesbit

(Private Coll.) Charles Henry May
(NB. Wholesale jewellery has only quality mark)



* or * George Richard Addis
* (Numerous variations)

(Private Colls.) Louis Boxhorn

(RWAHS) Caris Bros

(Private Colls.) Donovan and Overland

* or * Levinson & Sons
* (Numerous variations)

(AGWA) Bernot V. Lindell

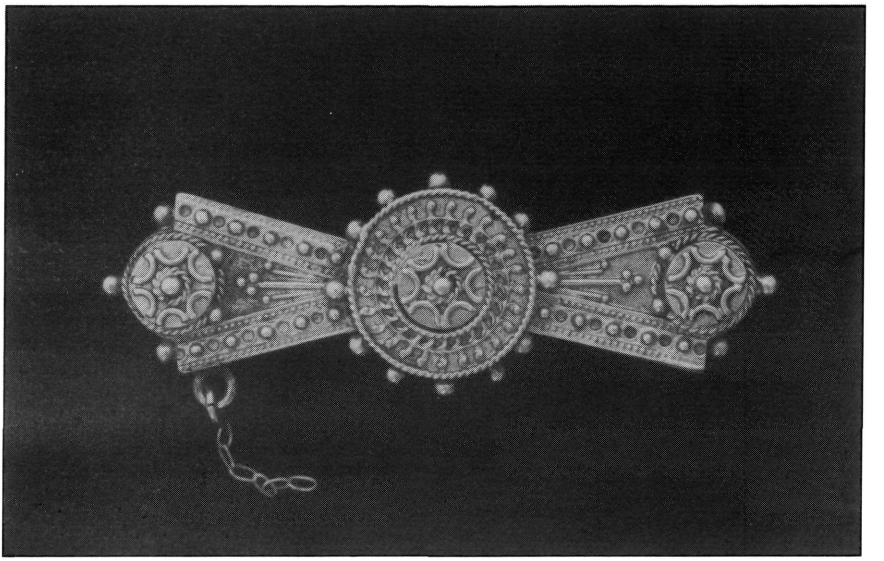
(Probably after '79) Stamped on a watch – piece from Family collection of an employee. Fred Mason

(Private Coll.) Frank Piaggio & Co.

Adolph Otto Kopp

Footnote

These sketches were often taken hurriedly in-situ so some inaccuracies are bound to occur.



ABBREVIATIONS

act.	active
Ade.	Adelaide
adv.	advertised
arr.	arrived
Ass.	assayer
b.	born
d.	died
D.	dentist
D.Ctr	diamond cutter
D.Dlr	diamond dealer
Edin.	Edinburgh
En.	engraver
E.S.	eastern states
fm	from
G.Byr	gold buyer
G.Smith	goldsmith
Imp.	importer
Jlr	jeweller
Lon.	London
Lp.	lapidary
M.	merchant
Melb.	Melbourne
Mf.	manufacturer
MfJlr	manufacturing jeweller
Mgr	manager
N.Y.	New York
O.	optician
P.bk.	pawnbroker
Plr	pearl cleaner
P.T.	pearl trader
R.	retailer
S.A.	South Australia
S.Smith	silversmith
Tas.	Tasmania
trp.	transported
U.K.	United Kingdom
Wmkr	watchmaker
Ws.	wholesaler

Australian Folk Art

Linda Young

"Australians are all too unaware and ill-informed of the existence of a tradition of folk art in their own country", writes John McPhee, Curator of Decorative Arts at the Australian National Gallery, in the *Australian Antique Collector*, 35th edition.[1] He illustrates his article with a watercolour, a sculpture, a rug, a shell picture, a pair of cane chairs and a patchwork quilt, by which we infer that these are unacknowledged examples of Australian folk art. But just who are the folk and what are the folk cultures they are said to represent? In what sense are they different from high art or popular art? Can Australia be said to have a folk culture at all?

The meaning of the term "folk art" is infamously difficult to define. Indeed, the concepts of "folklore" and "folklife" are still arguable in many circles. The 1987 Report of the Committee of Enquiry into Folklife in Australia examined numerous definitions of its topic.[2] The one on which the Enquiry eventually based its own definition comes from the American Folklife Preservation Act of 1976:

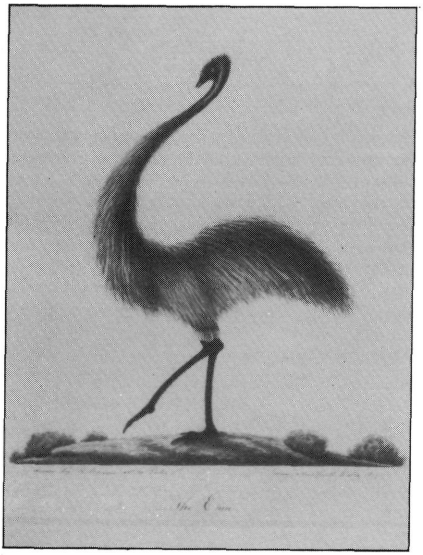
> ... folklife means the traditional expressive culture shared within various groups ... familial, ethnic, occupational, religious, regional; (it may comprise) ... creative and symbolic forms such as custom, belief, skill, language, literature, art, architecture, music, play, dance, drama, ritual, pageantry, handicraft; (folklife is) generally maintained without benefit of formal instruction or institutional direction.[3]

The Committee of Enquiry modified this large idea to include an admittedly blurred distinction between traditional and contemporary folklife practices. They stressed that the one of the most significant indicators of "folk"-ness is the communal origin and ambit of such practices – that they relate to specific worlds. To assess their topic in terms of Australian conditions, they observed that any custom practised in Australia is or becomes Australian.[4]

Because the Committee of Enquiry concluded that Australia's material heritage already receives considerable attention from various bodies, it concentrated its research on the intangible elements of folk culture. The *Report* gives a nod to folk crafts and vernacular buildings (less than five pages), but the bulk of the study examines the existence and preservation of forms such as yarns, jokes, recitation, music, dance, customs,, beliefs and aspects of occupational and generational folklore, such as children's folklore. It therefore has little to add to the particular question, "what is folk art?", but it does cast significant light on the growing interest in Australian folk phenomena.

The history of the awareness of folklore and things folkloric throws up suggestive parallels with the circumstances of the current interest. The Arts and Crafts movement of the later 19th century inspired its proponents in Europe and America to rummage the countryside in search of handworked artefacts and tools as evidence of an ideal, but lost, way of life. (In Australia we see the Crafts Council sponsoring research and exhibitions of "colonial craft" – essentially, hand-made or make-do objects.) In some newly independent or unified states of the 19th century, eg. Finland and Germany, such articles came to rest in museums, where they were hailed by patriots as visible proof of distinctive national character. (The Australian Bicentenary and associated exhibitions exploit the same line of analogy.) By the early 20th century, interest in folk material grew into various kinds of romantic nationalism, ranging from the Nazi cult of German-ness to the American New Deal rural handicrafts movement. (The rash of books on Australian "traditional crafts" – most lately, Jennifer Isaacs' The *Gentle Arts*[5] – similarly manufactures a warm, nostalgic picture of the past, thought to express the real nature of Australia.)

Collectors of this sort of material began to classify and analyse the subjects of their interest by form, technique and material – the basic antiquarian approach of its time; indeed, in England the study was called "popular antiquities" until superseded by ther term "folklore".[6] When the antiquarians examined function they met the problem of folk art, and resorted to the concepts of art history to explain it. To my mind, this is an approach grounded in confusion about the purposes of things, for all made things have



R.Browne, "The Emu", 1819, watercolour. National Trust (NSW).

John Baird, portrait medallion of Lord Loftus, 1883, kerosene shale. Private collection.

Unknown, pair of armchairs, c.1900, cabbage tree palm. Australian National Gallery.

both practical and aesthetic purposes.[7] Where aesthetic pleasure-giving is the predominant function, objects tend to be called art; where a practical use predominates, they tend to be called craft. Drawing a distinction between the two categories still constitutes the language in which most commentators discuss folk production.

This is the reason why folk art is described with a repetitive vocabulary of the lesser adjectives of art appreciation: innocent, naive, primitive, crude, unsophisticated, country, provincial, pioneer, natural, unself-conscious, amateur, self-taught, non-academic. Sometimes these are said to be inadequate descriptors, and elaborated. Such is the posture adopted by McPhee, quoting Jean Lipman of the Whitney Museum of American Art: folk work is characterised by its "independence from cosmopolitan, academic traditions; lack of formal training; a simple and unpretentious approach, originating more typically in rural than in urban places, and from craft rather than find art traditions."[8]

A critical, historical approach makes it is easy to recognise myths among the fine words.[9] The independence or individuality of the makers of folk goods is a modern blindness to the scale of production of ephemeral or everyday objects which do not now survive in great number. That such manufacture was unlearned or unpracticed is a similar error in understanding the mechanics of production. The implication that the maker of such artefacts was a simple, happy artisan is reminder both of the noble savage myth of the Enlightenment, and of the Ruskinian anti-machine delusion of 19th century medievalism, still alive today, in the interests of constructing a cosy, golden past to contrast with the problems of the modern world.

But the real coherence of some of the sorts of works described by Lipman and McPhee deserves informed analysis. The search leads to the academic study of folklore, in which historical, anthropological, philosophical and linguistic models can be used to establish standards for understanding folk production.

From these sources comes the concept of registers within a broad cultural continuum. At one end of the band is academic or elite culture; in the middle is popular culture; at the other end is folk culture. The values of each register can be identified respectively as progressive/normative/conservative.[10] But these are divisions of cultural practice and perception – not of people. It is important to be aware that every person carries elements of all registers in his or her mind simultaneously, applying different standards to different situations. Thus I may have a sophisticated knowledge of music; read the *Women's Weekly* from cover to cover; and always hang out the washing with the shirts pegged upside down, just as my mother taught me. You might be an educated theatre-goer; a passionate follower of Aussie Rules football; and at the same time, a cautious soul who never walks under a ladder.

The design and making of goods, like all human functions, is relative to one of these registers. Analysis of the form and use of objects indicates which one. An arty ceramic pot made by Pablo Picasso, though it might be practical to use for milk or flowers, will be appreciated mainly by connoisseurs with educated eyes; it would be acquired for aesthetic or status-affirming reasons. If the pot were one of a 10,000-bowl run produced by a factory in Staffordshsire, the economics of production would ensure that there was a popular, mass market for its form and use, reflexively established. But the storage pot made by a German immigrant potter in the Barossa Valley to be sold to other Germans in the vicinity, on the model of the trade taught him by his father, would be conservative within its own culture. The first and second example describe articles made by and for the elite and popular registers of their cultures. Only the last would be old fashioned within its culture, and is thus identifiable as a folk artefact.

This example draws on the method suggested by Henry Glassie, a Professor of Folklore at the University of Pennsylvania.[11] Glassie's long studies of folk material culture have led him to look carefully at the definition of folk art. He stresses that in the folk tradition, few objects can legitimately be separated from their useful contexts as objects of art. Beginning with the proposition that there is no human-made work totally lacking art, it is easy to show that folk artefacts tend to be artistic only insofar as art does not hinder their practical use. For this reason the art of useful objects tends to be applied art.

Within the constraints of practicality, the art that is applied to folk artefacts tends towards conventionalized (or culturally filtered) images, and repetitive motifs. Such

characterizations of folk-ness in material goods reveal the mind creating the work (it is also a useful identifier of cultural register). The conventional image removes specificity of person or time or place from the subject, making it endlessly familiar. Thus a house tends to be represented as an enclosed form having anthropomorphically placed windows on either side of a central door, and a flower tends to display geometrically round or oval petals regardless of species. The repetition of motifs – a string of flowers, a band of endless ornament – proves the maker capable of avoiding mistake and exercising control over concept, technique and material – ancient concerns of Western artistic consciousness.

Glassie proposes as a guiding principle in assessing the nature of folk art that "folk" is an indicator of the social source of the maker and his/her ideas.[12] That is to say, the ideas in the mind of a maker will be the usual mixture of conservative, normative and progressive, and if the idea expressed in the production of an artefact is conservative, then the thing can be called "folk". John Vlach, a George Washington University folklorist, proposes that the principle is applied to practice by studying how folk art is "conceived, designed and executed by its artists and appreciated and used by its originally intended audience."[13]

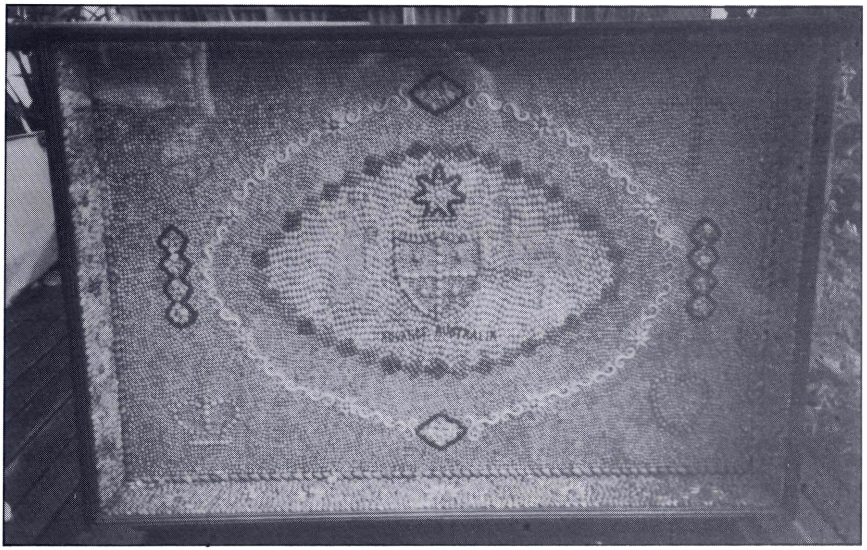
In this sense it is irrelevant to assess an object as "naive". What is generally meant by users of the term is work that does not fit an acknowledged style, or fits it incompletely or incorrectly. The average turn-of-the-century suburban Australian house makes a good example: it may have Italianate stucco mouldings; boom style cast iron brackets, Federation turned wooden verandah posts; and a trefoil Gothic-decorated ventilator. It is not a good example of anything to be found in a regular guide to architectural history, but an assemblage of ideas in the mind of a conservative designer/ builder. Rather than attempting to identify the traces of academic style in such an artefact, it is more productive to look for the maker's intention. It is thus we can identify such a house as a folk product.

To apply this method to the examples in John McPhee's article shows that few of the works fit, but points to the unity and character of those that do. Unfortunately, the cost of obtaining photos of works owned by the Australian National Gallery is too high to allow *Australiana* to print but a few; readers are referred to the original article in the *Australian Antique Collector* to compare the illustrations with the examples available to the writer.

R. Browne's early 19th century water colour of a lyrebird, "The Mountain Pheasant", is a good example of the fallacy of the art historical approach to folk art; his "Emu" is an analogous work for the purpose of this analysis (Fig.1). The *Dictionary of Australian Artists* suggests that Browne was almost certainly a possibly professionally trained natural history artist.[14] If he had not been transported as a convict, he might have come to Australia as a scientific illustrator in the footsteps of Sydney Parkinson or John Webber, or perhaps worked for a scholar or publisher in his native Ireland. Browne was clearly a far less accomplished artist than Parkinson and Webber, but this work and others of his output[15] locate him unarguably in the same academic stream of what Bernard Smith identified as "art as information".[16] Judged in the terms of academic art production his work may be primitive, but it is not part of a folk culture.

The shale portrait sculptures by John Baird are a similar but different case – and it is still not folk (Fig.2). There is no indication that Baird was trained in academic art; he was a postman, who discovered kerosene shale as a sculptural medium in which to commemorate his dead child.[17] He did not work in a family, occupational or regional tradition of such sculpture. It is the material rather than the form that makes his work unusual (though the medallions are allied to the jewellery applications of Whitby jet).[18] His production, mainly portraits, takes conventional portrait *forms* such as the bas-relief medallion, full length figure and the bust, and in this sense his intention was clearly to refer to academic sculptural forms more usually executed in stone or metal. In the terms of the high art, whose *forms* he echoed, Baird – like Browne – would be judged crude, but it is neither apt nor correct to call his work folk art.

The pair of cabbage palm armchairs by an unknown, turn-of-the-century maker on the north coast of NSW refers to a different cultural register (Fig.3). Without access to the maker's personal history, the search for the source of his ideas could be opaque, but the form of the chairs show clearly that they relate to the 1890s-1910s fashion for bamboo and wicker furniture.[19] The cabbage palm stalks function as ersatz cane – a good example of the resourceful making-do of people too poor or isolated to buy the real thing (this



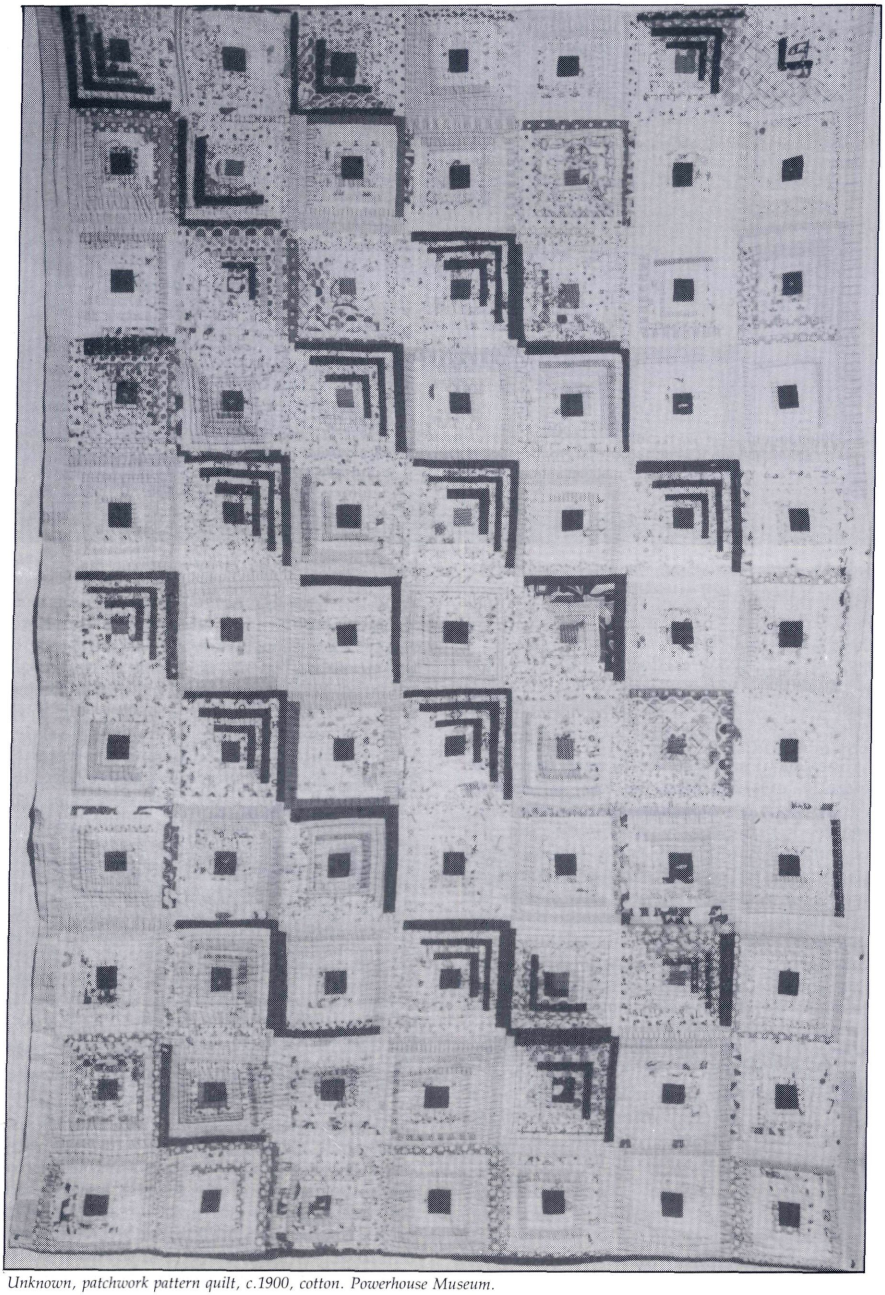
Unknown, shellwork picture depicting an unofficial Australian coat-of-arms. Late 19th century. Private collection.

forms the basic stock of Australian "colonial craft" studies, exemplified by Murray Walker's *Pioneer Crafts of Early Australia*).[20] The cabbage palm armchairs do not derive from an older, folk tradition of bush seating; they are inspired by ideas of the popular taste of the time and should be treated as such.

Shell pictures are a class of work that is frequently mis-identified as folk art (Fig.4). Along with compositions of feathers, hair, seaweed, fishscales, waxwork and embroidery, these should more accurately be called parlour crafts, being the polite accomplishments of young women of the middle (or aspiring middle) class, taught them by governesses, schools or instructions in magazines.[21] The cultural register to which such objects relate is the popular stream of fashion, in which norms of practice prevail among considerable numbers of people. The source of the idea embedded in such works does not derive from family, occupational or regional tradition. This makes young ladies' shell pictures different from sailors' shell pictures, and explains why the shellwork arrangements of seamen can indeed be called a folk art while that of genteel girls should not.

Maude Kettle's rug is a more difficult case (Fig.5). Dated c.1941, its motifs suggest references to Aboriginal art, which was a mildly avant garde design at the time – with the use of such motifs by Margaret Preston and others.[22] I am not aware of Maude Kettle's background, but it is possible that she attended art classes where advanced tastes were promoted. In this scenario, her rug would be an unusual application of elite style to common technique and material – but the guiding idea is definitely progressive. On the other hand, Kettle may have been making rugs for years, taught by her mother or by a local friend, and she may have designed her 1941 rug in response to an image that came her way in a magazine, advertisement or a department store exhibition. This would be a case of authentic folk production, illustrating the mechanism of variation in folk motifs – that is, a mental reorganisation of traditional resources. In this process, popular culture is far and away the most significant influence for change in folk production.[23]

McPhee's last example is an applique quilt by the unknown MJH, but any patchwork quilt illustrates the point (Fig.6). MJH's remarkable picture quilts are not the most common pieced, geometric type, but her's are still clearly within the same tradition of bedcoverings manufactured out of carefully selected scraps of fabric and embellished with embroidery.[24] This task is one of the ancient roles of gender-divided labour, learned at the



Unknown, patchwork pattern quilt, c.1900, cotton. Powerhouse Museum.

"...One Norman Lindsay even we wouldn't put a price on..."

THE AUCTIONEER

JAMES R. LAWSON AS SEEN BY NORMAN LINDSAY
COPYRIGHT JANET GLAD

Many of Mr. Lindsay's works were noted for their irreverance. Indeed he earned a notoriety that ultimately proved very valuable to the owners of much of his work.

The drawing you see here is particularly close to our hearts as it is Lindsay's own portrayal of James R. Lawson, founder of this company (1884) and equally renowned for his witticisms and performance on the rostrum.

The art of the auctioneer has not changed much in a century. Yet the application of his skills has widened dramatically.

Every month precious fine art, antiques and collectibles pass through our Sale Rooms. Paintings, antique furniture, jewellery, silver, porcelain, oriental art, rare books, maps, etchings and even tribal art.

You don't have to be a fine art collector or a professional antique dealer, you may just be curious about the real value of that family heirloom. Get to know Lawsons, their friendly personalised service is a by-word in the auction world.

Lawsons, Australia's oldest and most respected fine art auctioneers and valuers, founded in 1884 and still Australian owned.

For more information telephone (02) 241 3411

JAMES R. LAWSON PTY. LIMITED

212-218 Cumberland Street Sydney N.S.W. 2000

Members of the Auctioneers and Valuers Association of Australia. (Inc)

OFFICIAL VALUERS AND AUCTIONEERS TO THE NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA (N.S.W.)

Board of Directors: B.H. Badgery; Managing Director, J.H. Alford, J.D. Gray.
Associate Directors: D.J. Bubb, P.H.C. Thomas.

knee of older women in the family and taught to younger generations as a thrifty skill rather than a conscious art form. Even when patchwork was described in popular ladies' work manuals, it was looked down upon as old fashioned: "Let noone despise this homely art", admonished the *Universal Self Instructor*, but it did not actually recommend that its readers should indulge in it; save the pretty scraps, it suggested, for "some elderly woman who keeps a quilt on hand".[25] A quilt in this tradition is a deeply conservative manufacture – old fashioned in its own time – profoundly a folk work.

That such traditions of folk production exist in Australia is beyond doubt. But identifying them calls for more critical and rigorous definitions than have so far been offered in this country. In the present literature, two streams of approach predominate: the art historian's and the craft researcher's.

The art history approach classifies as "folk art" that category of artworks that are substandard but charming to the contemporary eye; John McPhee's illustrations and suggestions for further research are models of the kind. Henry Glassie is shrewd about this sort of judgement, suggesting that what it really refers to are "good expressions of a popular style that ... lack elite analogues, or poor expressions of a popular style that ... have an accidental similarity to modern art".[26] He concludes that the recognition of folk art is very much in the eye of the curator!

The craft approach is chary of the title "folk", perhaps a symptom of distaste for cuteness; the word is not mentioned, for instance, in Judith Thompson's *Crafts of South Australia* catalogue.[27] More or less explicitly, this project covered the three fields of production which Murray Walker outlined as "improvisations made of necessity, works of professional artisans, and craft objects created in leisure-time."[28] Assessed according to the criteria of folklore studies, these may or may not be artefacts relating to folk cultures, and the reluctance to employ the term does credit to the researchers.

But attempts to lump together all forms of "naive" production – based either on the observer's own opinion or the crafts researcher's data – under the rubric "folk art" are too simple to do justice to the subject. There is a basic mistake in interpreting artefacts from different social contexts, based on different intentions, as comparable or interchangeable.[29] Folklore studies offers the direction forward. In this way we can simultaneously enlarge the evidence of human mind and past, and take the pleasure in objects as was always intended by original makers.

Bibliography and notes

1. John McPhee, "Folk Art in Australia", *Australian Antique Collector*, 35th ed., 1988, p.66.
2. Committee of Enquiry into Folklife in Australia, *Folklife: Our Living Heritage*, Canberra, AGPS, 1987, p.11-16.
3. Ibid., p.13.
4. Ibid., p.19,17.
5. Jennifer Isaacs, *The Gentle Arts: 200 years of Australian women's domestic and decorative arts*, Willoughby NSW, Lansdowne, 1987.
6. Richard M. Dorson, "Concepts of folklore and folklife studies", Richard M. Dorson (ed.), *Folklore and Folklife: an Introduction*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1972, p.1. The terms "folklore" and "folklife" are sometimes used interchangeably; sometimes to refer respectively to oral and practical expressions of folk culture; and often in tandem ("folklore/folklife") to encompass both. For the sake of simplicity and familiarity, I use "folklore" as a portmanteau word for the two.
7. George Kubler proposes the broad vision that "the universe of man-made things simply coincides with the history of art"; *The Shape of Time*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1962, p.1.
8. Jean Lipman, "Preface", Jean Lipman and Alice Winchester, *The Flowering of American Folk Art, 1776-1876*, Harmondsworth, Penguin/Whitney Museum, 1977, p.6.
9. Myths about folk art are engaged by Kenneth Ames, *Beyond Necessity: Art in the Folk Tradition*, Winterthur DE, Winterthur Museum/Norton, 1977.
10. The concept is outlined in Henry Glassie, "Folk Art", in Richard Dorson (ed.,) *Folklore and Folklife: An Introduction*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1972, p.258.
11. Henry Glassie, *Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968, p.8-12.
12. Ibid., p.258.
13. John Michael Vlach, "Properly speaking: the need for plain talk about folk art", John Michael Vlach and Simon Bronner (eds), *Folk Art and Folk Worlds*, Ann Arbor, UMI Research Press, 1986, p.17.

14. Joan Kerr (ed.), *Dictionary of Australian Artists: Working Paper 1*, Sydney, Power Institute of Fine Arts, 1984, p.104-6.
15. *The Skottowe Manuscript*, David Ell Press/ Hordern House, Sydney 1988.
16. Bernard Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific 1768-1850*, London, OUP, 1960, p.1-5. See also Joan Kerr, "Views, Visages, Invisibility" in Patricia R. McDonald and Barry Pearce, *The Artist and the Patron* (exhibition catalogue), Sydney, AGNSW, 1988, p.15.
17. Alan Landis, "John Baird, 1834-1894", *Sydney's Colonial Craftsmen* (exhibition catalogue), Sydney, Australiana Society, 1982, p.28-9.
18. Kevin Fahy notes that other work in kerosene shale is known, possibly – but not necessarily – by Baird. Personal communication, 27.7.88.
19. e.g, illustrations in Gillian Walking, *Antique Bamboo Furniture*, London, Bell & Hyman, 1979, p.95,117.
20. Murray Walker, *Pioneer Crafts of Early Australia*, Melbourne, Macmillan, 1978.
21. Bea Howe, *Antiques from the Victorian Home*, London, Batsford, 1973, p.125-58.
22. On the diffusion of Aboriginal motifs in white culture see Philip Jones, "Perceptions of Aboriginal art: a history", Peter Sutton, (ed.) *Dreamings: the Art of Aboriginal Australia*, NY, Braziller, 1988 (in press).
23. Henry Glassie, *Pattern*, p.24-5.
24. See Margaret Rolfe, *Patchwork Quilts in Australia*, Melbourne, Greenhouse Publications, 1987, for the range of quilt types.
25. *Universal Self Instructor*, Sydney, 1883, quoted by Annette Gero, "Quilt makers from our past", *Australiana*, 8/2, May 1986, p.46.
26. Glassie, "Folk Art", p.260.
27. Judith Thompson, *Crafts of South Australia: the first hundred years*, (exhibition catalogue), Adelaide, AGSA, 1986.
28. Walker, *Pioneer Crafts*, p.2.
29. Vlach, "Properly speaking", p.17.

Another Side to Conrad Martens

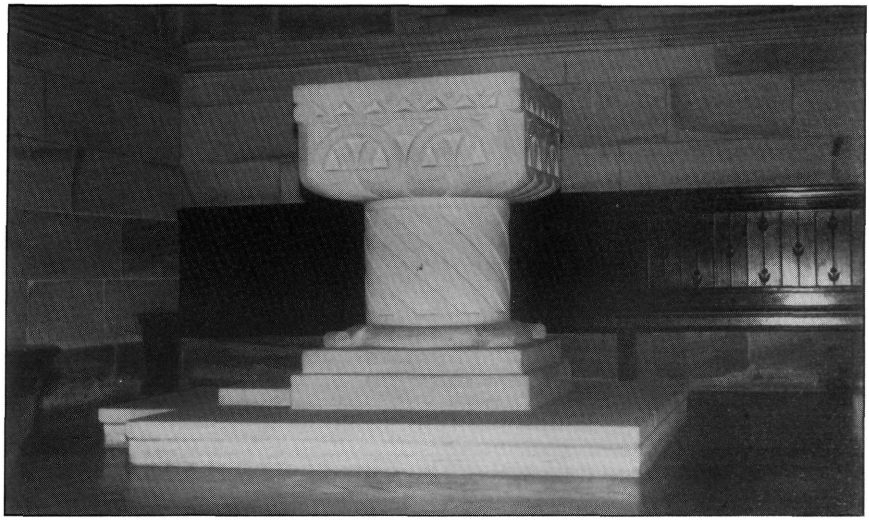
Brian Eggleton

Conrad Martens is well known as the artist who, more than any other, followed the English tradition of watercolour painting and depicted many scenes of Sydney Harbour during the years when the city was developing and the North Shore was very much virgin country. It would be fair to say that he is of interest today not only because of his artistic ability (he was a student of Copley Fielding and very much a disciple of Turner) but because of the historical interest of the views which he painted.

Conrad came to Sydney in April 1835 and, apart from painting trips into the countryside, even as far as Queensland, he lived in North Sydney until he died some 40 years later. During that time and especially in the early years he is sometimes portrayed as a struggling artist finding it 'hard to make ends meet', a suggestion which now appears doubtful. In 1837 he married Jane Brackenbury Carter and, in 1844, he built his home *Rockleigh Grange* in which was then St. Leonards, in the parish of Willoughby. The names of suburbs have changed since then. At that time the parish of Willoughby extended as far as Manly and included virtually the whole of the North Shore of Sydney, and what was then St. Leonards now includes almost the whole of the North Shore right out to Chatswood.

Conrad Martens did not spend all his time painting watercolours! In 1843 the foundation stone had been laid for St. Thomas' Church in North Sydney and this church was consecrated on 5th August 1846. In his book *Savage Life and Scenes in Australia and New Zealand* (Vol. II) published in 1847, George French Angas writes, "Not far from his pretty cottage Mr Martens had, by his own labour erected a little church the chaste design of which is entirely his own. The great interest he took in its completion may be inferred from the fact that when I last saw him he was

St Thomas' Church, North Sydney.



The font sculpted by Conrad Martens 1845 (the date is carved into the base on the north side).

at work sculpturing the font out of a block of white Sydney stone with his own hands."

Where he found the time to design a church and design and sculpt a font is not known but it certainly gives a new dimension to the life of one of Sydney's best known early artists. Conrad Martens became the Rector's Warden at St. Thomas' and the interesting thing is that the Rector was the famous W.B. Clarke M.A., sometimes referred to as "The Father of Australian Geology". One cannot help but wonder whether the Rector and his Warden went on joint expeditions into the countryside, the one to study geology and the other to paint the view!

It is recorded that Conrad Martens presented, to St. Thomas' a set of sterling silver communion plate, comprising a chalice, paten and flagon, on 4th August 1846, the day before the church was consecrated, however, as the pieces are hallmarked with the London mark for 1847 it is evident that he provided the money and the plate was ordered from the London silversmith John James Keith, the finest maker of church silver of the time. These pieces still exist and are used on special occasions. The chalice and flagon bear the inscription "Presented by Conrad Martens to St. Thomas' Church Willoughby Aug 4 1846" whilst the paten is inscribed "Conrad Martens presented this paten together with Flagon and Chalice to St. Thomas' Church Willoughby Aug 4th 1846".

The original Martens-designed church no longer exists. In the early 1880s a larger, Blacket-designed, church was built around it and, when the new one was completed the old one was dismantled and taken out through the new West Doors! The new church was dedicated in 1884. Martens' widow (he died in 1878s) was also a keen church supporter and apart from money, she donated a sterling silver chalice and a paten (London-made in 1883/84) which almost, but not exactly, match the original ones given by Conrad some 40 years before.

Another treasure in the Church is the beautifulcarved eagle lectern which is a memorial to Conrad Martens and given by his widow and his daughter Elizabeth (who, in turn, is commemorated by stained glass clerestory windows in the Chapel).

All this leads up to the greatest treasure of them all – the magnificent carved stone font, the original one carved so long ago by Conrad Martens and possibly the only known piece of carving or sculpture by him. Made from Sydney sandstone, the font stands on a stepped base and rises on a circular swirl-fluted column stem. The bowl of the font is a circular depression in the centre of a square block of stone the base of which is gently curved with flutes and the sides of which are finely decorated with overlapping semi-circles topped by a band of triangular zig-zags almost reminiscent of bright cut engraving on

Sterling silver communion set presented by Conrad Martens in 1846.

The eagle lectern, in memory of Conrad Martens.

The inscription on the base of the lectern.

silver. The overall effect is one of both stability and beauty showing yet another side of one of our best known early artists.

The font is still in use today and deserves to be better known. It stands on the left hand side as one enters St. Thomas' through the West Door, its glory enhanced by the slanting light through stained glass windows in a quiet corner of a church which must surely be Blacket's greatest masterpiece. Said to be one of the largest parish churches in Australia, St. Thomas' was designed as a cathedral and is sometimes known as "the cathedral of the North Shore". For the visitor there is much to see; but above all the Conrad Martens font stands supreme and should be seen by every lover of Australiana.

Bibliography:

Daphne Dobbyn, *A sense of Time Past and Future*, 1978

Tim Bonyhady, *The Colonial Image*, 1987

Acknowledgement

Photos inside church by David Smith.

J.A. Clarke's 'grand picture' of Brisbane

Judith McKay

Public collections in Queensland can boast few good examples of the work of its early artists. Of the large paintings which have survived from the colonial era, J.A. Clarke's *Panorama of Brisbane*, 1880 [Fig.1] is the best known[1] and, as an historical record, the most significant.

Clarke's 'grand picture'[2] was commissioned by the Queensland Government to hang in the Queensland Court of the Melbourne International Exhibition of 1880. The artist was adding finishing touches to his large (4½ x 12 ft) canvas in September that year,[3] in time for the opening of the Exhibition on 1st October. His commission was, it seems a last minute addition to the Queensland Court, for he had to suspend his regular duties as an art teacher in Brisbane in order to make rapid progress on the painting and was dissatisfied with its state of completion. He asked to be allowed to continue work 'for three weeks in a month' when the painting returned from Melbourne, without adding to his fee of £136/10/-.[4]

Contemporary reports were generally enthusiastic about the selection and arrangement of exhibits in the Queensland Court, despite the drawbacks of Queensland's allotted space within the exhibition building – where the roof came low upon a double row of pillars. The pillars were artfully disguised by tropical ferns and 'the occasional appearance of a pineapple'. A decorative dado ran around the pale lilac walls, and Queensland's was the only Court to cover the floor with neatly patterned oilcloth. The Court contained a veritable 'museum of curiosities': maps, pictures, photographs, hides, skins and botanical specimens covered the walls; while display cases and spectacular trophies and obelisks of the colony's natural products filled the cramped space.[5] Clarke's painting hung at the back of the Court, above the Commissioners' office.[6]

The painting was well received by Melbourne critics, first by C.L. Fletcher, a local artist employed as curator of the Fine Arts Galleries, who assisted with its unpacking and hanging.[7] Its topographical accuracy led another critic to mistake it for a coloured photograph,[8] possibly confused by the painterly qualities of Richard Daintree's photographs also on display in the Queensland Court. Clarke also achieved success in the Fine Arts section of the Exhibition, with a third prize for engraving on steel.[9] There was plenty of competition for visitors' attention among the 1500 or so Fine Arts exhibits, which included pictures by famous artists of the Royal Academy, London, and of the Royal Scottish Academy; a grandiose selection from Queen Victoria's own collection; Italian pictures; and works by Australia's most fashionable artists like Louis Buvelot, Eugen von Guerard, Julian Ashton and Ellis Rowan.[10] It was no mean feat for the work of a Brisbane art teacher to be noticed among such distinguished company.

Clarke spent some time 'touching up and improving' his *Panorama of Brisbane* before it was shown again at Brisbane's National Association exhibition of August 1881.[11] It was finally offered by the Government to the Queensland Museum in October 1881, on condition that it would be 'properly hung in the Museum, well cared for and returned to the Colonial Secretary when required.[12] The painting was not received by the Museum until late 1882,[13] by which time the eminent Brisbane photographers, Mathewson and Co., had produced 'handsome' photographs for sale, in no less than three sizes.[14]

This collaboration with the Mathewson firm provides a clue as to how Clarke may have achieved his topographical accuracy – his painting shows the same panoramic view of Brisbane from Bowen Terrace as recorded by Thomas Mathewson in his equally well known photograph of 1881[15] [Fig.2] and possibly preceded by earlier photographs of the view. Other 19th-century artists derived their pictures of Brisbane from photographs, in the case of J.C. Armytage and Thomas Baines without ever having visited the city.[16]

The following is a contemporary description of Clarke's painting:

> The view is ... a very comprehensive one, embracing as it does the greater part of

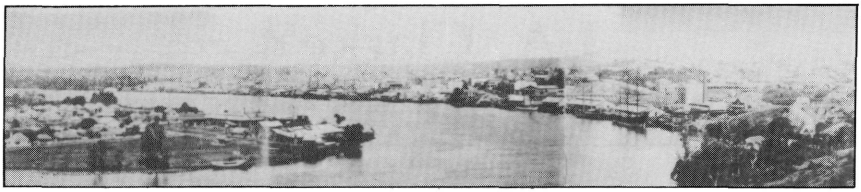


Fig.1 Joseph Augustus Clarke ***Panorama of Brisbane****, 1880. Oil on canvas 4½ x 12 ft. Collection of the Queensland Museum.*

> North and South Brisbane and Spring Hill, with Taylor's Range, and the more distant Little Liverpool Range as a background. The artist has succeeded admirably with those most difficult subject – sky and water, and it is needless therefore to say that the remainder of the landscape is artistically painted. The river in front of Birley's saw mills [Kangaroo Point] forms the immediate foreground, to which great life is imparted by a barque being towed up, the 'wake' produced by the tug being capitally managed. Spring Hill in the middle distance on the right of the picture is full of well-worked out detail, and the range of hills at the back, terminating in One Tree Hill, has an admirable effect. Parliament House is a prominent object in the centre of the picture, which, as a whole, will give strangers an excellent idea of the capital of Queensland. The artist has done in this work what so many of his bretheren of the bush fail in – he has made his ships look like ships.[17]

The painting is a valuable record of Brisbane's buildings, amenities and industries of 1880.

It is also the key work of Brisbane's first major artist. English born and trained Joseph Augustus Clarke (1840 – 1890) had some reputation as a topographical artist before he came to Queensland in the mid 1860's. In 1863 he had been appointed Instructor in Topographical Drawing at the Imperial Central School At Poona, India. In Brisbane he became a prolific illustrator of popular newspapers, including the *Queenslander*, the *Queenslander Figaro* and the *Planter Farmer*; was co-founder with poet James Brunton Stephens of the *Queensland Punch*;[18] again with Stephens, was a foundation member of the Johnsonian Club; and was a regular participant in Brisbane's early art exhibitions, the Exhibitions of Art and Industries held at the School of Arts in the 1870's. Clarke is best remembered in Brisbane as a pioneer teacher. From 1869 to 1874 he was the only specialist drawing teacher in Queensland Government schools.[19] In 1881 he initiated art classes at the Brisbane School of Arts, at first offering freehand drawing and design, and a 'ladies' class' for watercolour painting.[20] He also taught modelling in 1888-90 when Harold Parker, later to achieve international acclaim as a sculptor, was a student. It was largely due to Clarke, an advocate of technical education, that the School of Arts classes became a Technical College in 1884.

Clarke's *Panorama of Brisbane*, in its original splendid frame made by C. Knights,[21] Brisbane's leading gilder and picture frame maker of the 1880's, hung prominently in the Queensland Museum's old William Street building, confronting 'the visitor as he enters ... and straight in front'.[22] Later it was also a popular exhibit at the Museum's Gregory Terrace building, so popular indeed that it was damaged by visitors eagerly pointing at familiar landmarks. Today it is serving time on recall to the Government, but hopefully soon it will return to public display as the prize of the Museum's art collection.

Footnotes:

1. The panorama was reproduced on the dust jacket of the first book to be published on Queensland's colonial artists: Susanna Evans, *Historic Brisbane and its Early Artists*, Brisbane, 1982.
2. 'The Exhibition', *Brisbane Courier*, 11 August 1881, p.3.
3. 'View of Brisbane', *Telegraph*, Brisbane, 14 September 1880, p.2.
4. Letter of 19 November 1880 from George King, Executive Commissioner for Queensland, at the Melbourne International Exhibition, Colonial Secretary's correspondence, COL/A302, 1880/6115, Queensland State Archives.
5. 'Queensland', *Argus Exhibition Supplement*, 6 October 1880, p. 14 and *Australasian Sketcher Exhibition Supplement*, 9 October 1880, p.3. Unfortunately, I have been unable to locate a drawing or photograph of the Queensland Court.

6. *Queenslander*, 23 October 1880, p.534.
7. Letter of 19 November 1880 from George King, *op. cit.*
8. 'The Exhibition', *op. cit.*
9. *Queenslander*, 5 March 1881, p.303.
10. 'The Picture Galleries', *Argus Exhibition Supplement*, 2 October 1880, p.7.
11. 'The Exhibition', *op. cit.*
12. Letter of 7 October 1881 from the Colonial Secretary's Office, Queensland Museum inwards correspondence for 1881.
13. The only record of the painting entering the Queensland Museum is in the Minutes of the Board of Trustees' meeting of 5 December 1882.
14. *Brisbane Courier*, 8 May 1882, p.2.
15. John Oxley Library, negative 104075. The photograph is dated as 1881 by the Library, but 1882 would seem a more accurate date. Butler Brothers' Adelaide Street warehouse at the far right of the photograph, beside the Brisbane Gas Company's chimney stack, was not completed until May 1882. Tenders were not called by the architect, John Hall, until January that year (*Brisbane Courier*, 2 January 1882, p.5.).
16. Susanna Evans, *op. cit.*, pp.58-61.
17. 'View of Brisbane', *op. cit.*
18. *Queensland Daily Guardian*, 6 September 1866, p.22.
19. Keith Bradbury and Glenn R. Cooke, *Thorns and Petals: 100 Years of the Royal Queensland Art Society*, Brisbane, 1988, p.11.
20. *Telegraph*, Brisbane, 16 March 1881, p.3.
21. 'View of Brisbane', *op. cit.*
22. Report of a visit to the Queensland Museum, *Brisbane Courier*, 24 January 1883, p.5.

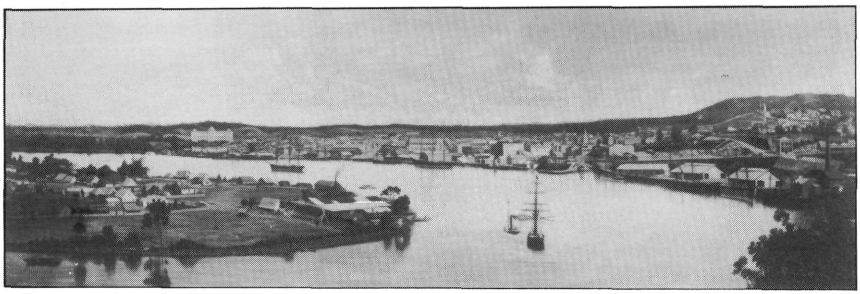


Fig.2. Thomas Mathewson Photograph of Brisbane from Bowen Terrace, 1881 Collection of the John Oxley Library.

Schulim Krimper Cabinet-Maker

Terence Lane – photography, Mark Strizic (100 pp. ill.) Gryphon Press. Melbourne 1987

This important study of Schulim Krimper (1893-1971) and his work is a worthy tribute to one of Australia's greatest furniture craftsmen. Although he arrived in Australia in 1939 his early work as that from the period 1965-1971 is largely unrepresented. The dramatic photographs or his major work from the late 1950s and 1960s convey the essence of his style, the qualities of construction and the timbers he chose for their colour and texture, particularly those of Australia and the Pacific region. The magnificent photographs were commissioned by the National Gallery of Victoria for a retrospective exhibition held at the Gallery in 1959. Krimper's work is represented in public collections in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Canberra as well as in a number of private collections.

Kevin Fahy

Available from Gryphon Press, 457 Malvern Rd., South Yarra. 3141. Hard Cover $125-00; Soft Cover $49-00.

Notice

The society proposes to introduce in future issues of **"Australiana"** an enquiries or notice column. Its purpose is to encourage contact between members of the society who share a common interest in particular aspects of Australiana.

It is not intended to be a swap or sale column, such entries will be rejected! Members entries in this section will be gratis, with a maximum of one free entry per year (not to exceed 60 words including name & address.

For additional entries and those of non members a fee of $15.00 will be charged payable in advance.

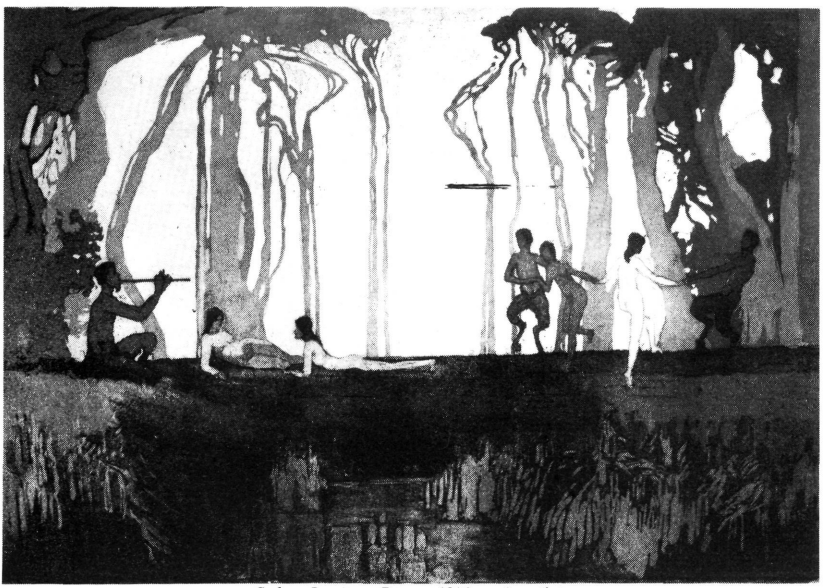
Only typewritten applications will be accepted – notices must be confined to the subject of Australiana – details of research in progress, events of interest to members – exhibitions, historic house openings and requests for information on aspects of the Australian Decorative Arts will all qualify for inclusion.

The notice or enquiry will be subject to the editor's discretion as to suitability for publication. Correspondence generated by the notice should be directed to the advertiser.

Take notice!! – use your journal to assist your research, or promote your project.

JOSEF LEBOVIC GALLERY

SPECIALISING IN OLD AND RARE ETCHINGS, ENGRAVINGS & PHOTOGRAPHS



Sydney Long *Pan* 1916 Aquatint

The Gallery stocks a comprehensive selection of prominent Australian printmakers from the early settlement period to the 1950's and a selection of nineteenth century and early twentieth century English and European printmakers.

We stock nineteenth century Australian photography.

Valuation, restoration and framing services available.

REGULAR EXHIBITIONS HELD • CATALOGUES AVAILABLE

34 PADDINGTON ST, PADDINGTON NSW 2021, SYDNEY AUSTRALIA.
TELEPHONE: (02) 332 1840

OPEN MONDAY TO FRIDAY 1PM to 6PM
SATURDAY 11AM to 5PM OR BY APPOINTMENT

MEMBER OF ANTIQUE DEALERS ASSOCIATION OF NSW/
AUCTIONEERS AND VALUERS ASSOCIATION OF NSW

J.B. HAWKINS ANTIQUES

TEL 048 682726
048 681603
FAX 048 683376

WHITLEY
OLDBURY ROAD
MOSS VALE 2577

H. STEINER

ADELAIDE

EMU EGG CLARET JUG
CLASSIC AUSTRALIANA $22,500