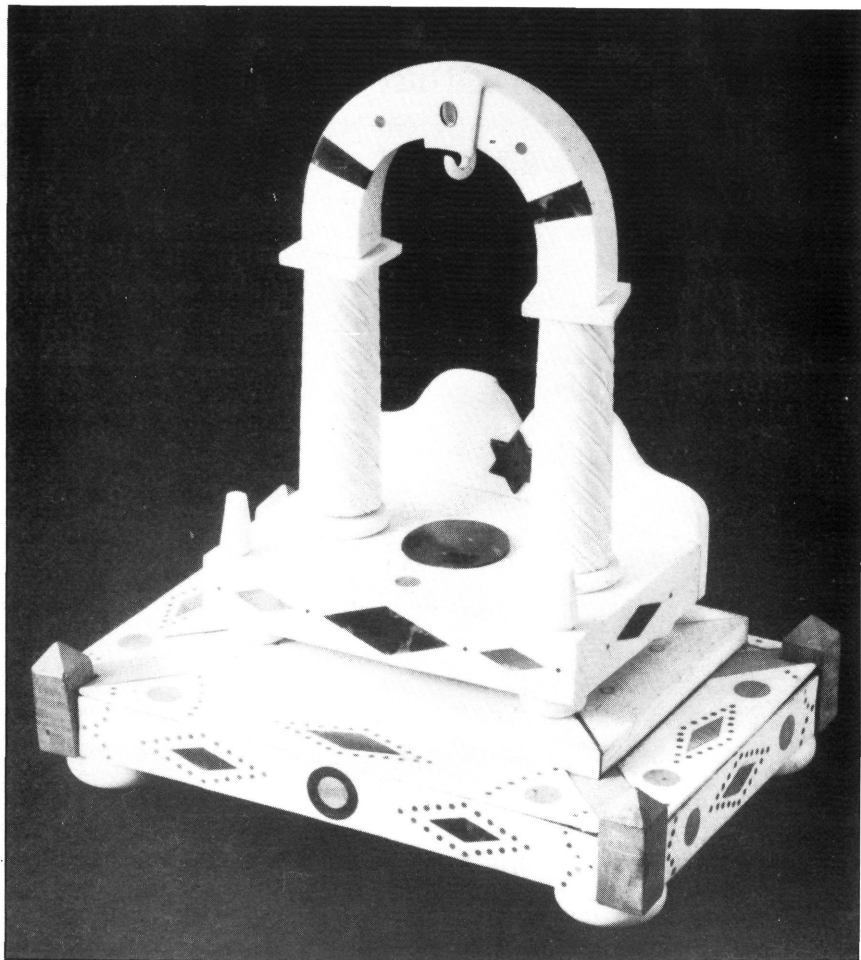*Scrimshaw made by Alfred Evans (1820-1895). The watchstand, 26.5cm high is of wood and whalebone and has a hook to hold a watch beneath the arch.*
The whalebone stick has its shaft spirally grooved to match the pillars of the stand and the whale ivory handle is carved into a stopper knot, a popular type of
decoration. Both pieces are inlaid with red and black tortoiseshell. Reproduced couresty of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney.
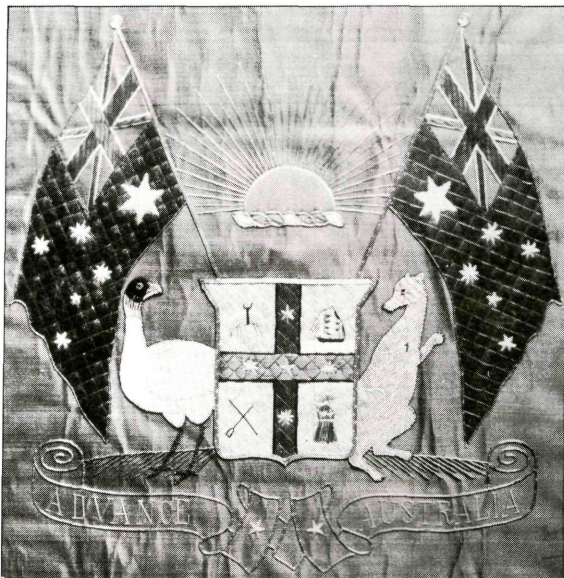
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A framed needlework picture depicting an Australian coat of arms and retaining a partial framers label from Hobart c. 1900, 42cm x 36.5cm.

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

Cover: Watchstand of whalebone and horn, tortoiseshell and wood, made by Alfred Evans, Gladstone, Macleay R. N.S.W. 1855, courtesy of the Trustees, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney.

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President's Report

The Society has had another successful year and membership now stands at a record level. Lectures and outings continued to attract the support of members and their friends.

Our journal *Australiana* has gone from strength to strength in the quality of its articles submitted by members and others.

I would like to thank all those guest lecturers who gave so freely of their time and those contributors to the journal for sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm.

The Society is particularly grateful to James R. Lawson for their continued generosity and support in making their rooms available for our meetings, as well as to our sponsors H.P.M. Industries Pty Ltd and A.B.A. Pty Ltd.

Special thanks must go to Mr Ian Pratley, the special guest speaker at our last Australia Day dinner. The financial success of that occasion was considerably enhanced by an auction of a table generously donated to the Society by Mr Pratley; also to Mr Peter Watts of the Historic Houses Trust of NSW for arranging the Society's visit to Lyndhurst and to Mr & Mrs John Morris for their support and hospitality to the Society.

Over the past year your Committee has been ever vigilant and overworked, in particular the Secretary, the Treasurer and the Editor. On behalf of all our members I would like to thank them all.

Kevin Fahy

Society Information

Notice of Boat Excursion – Australia Day 1988

The Committee of the Society have booked the motor vessel "Twin Star" on the evening of 26th January 1988 for a harbour cruise (7pm to 11pm approximately).

It is envisaged that pick-up points out of the city proper will be organised to avoid the inner city chaos on this occasion.

No food or drink will be provided by the Society – members must provide their own food and refreshments.

The cost will be $25.00 per head – Adults and Children over 14 years only. Members initially will be given priority on the basis of parents and two children and bookings will be accepted on a first in first served priority for one month after the publication of the August journal. If after this period vacancies still exist, members will be allowed to invite friends. The capacity of the "Twin Star" is ninety persons. Phone Graham Cocks 560 6022 bus. hrs.

REMINDER

Next meeting Thursday, October 1st at 7.30pm at James R. Lawson's rooms. Guest speaker – Trevor Bussell, *"An Aspect of Australian Paintings"*.

Secretary's Report

The end of this financial year has seen the steady consolidation of the Society's membership with an increasing majority of members renewing their subscriptions. This is very satisfying to the Committee as it reflects the quality of our journal *Australiana* and the guest speakers who make our Sydney meetings so enjoyable. 1988 will bring different opportunities for the Society to expand its activities and membership and I have no doubt that members will benefit and the Society will prosper due to the added interest in Australiana generally.

I thank the Committee for their support over the past year at the various meetings and functions and look forward to working with them again next year.

THE AUSTRALIANA SOCIETY INCORPORATED

Financial Statements of Receipts and Expenditure
for the year ended 30th June 1987

GENERAL ACCOUNT

RECEIPTS		$	EXPENDITURE		$
Opening Balance		2,975.37	Journal – Production Costs		7,948.67
Subscriptions		5,540.00	Auction Payments		904.60
Auction Receipts		1,203.00	**Excursion Costs**		
Excursions – Revenue			Camden Park		100.00
Camden Park	$210.00		**Annual Dinner**		
Lyndhurst – Glebe	220.00	430.00	Sheraton Wentworth	$3,094.90	
Annual Dinner			Less Deposit	200.00	
Revenue	$2,890.00		Less Credit	50.00	2,844.90
Auction – Wine Table			Postage		851.92
donated by I. Pratley	440.00	3,330.00	Stationery		343.95
Bank Interest		107.62	Insurance		268.28
Sale of Showcase		107.75	Bank Charges & Government Taxes		23.30
Raffle		67.00	Melbourne Meeting – Expenses		50.00
"Australiana Journal"			Repairs – Projector		44.80
Sale of Back Issues	$390.50		Corporate Affairs		20.00
Advertising Revenue	$2,971.72		N.D. Hegarty – Deposit Boat 1988		200.00
		3,362.22	Closing Balance 30.6.87		3,522.54
		$17,122.96			$17,122.96

SYDNEY ACCOUNT

		$			$
Opening Balance 1.7.86		85.78	Government Taxes		.55
Raffles – Meetings	177.00		Refreshments – Meetings		178.50
Raffle – Annual Dinner	400.00	577.00			
Bank Interest		9.05	Closing Balance 30.6.87		492.78
		$671.83			$671.83

INVESTMENT ACCOUNT

	$		$
Opening Balance 1.7.86	2,366.74	Government Taxes	.08
Bank Interest	310.91	Closing Balance 30.6.87	2,677.57
	$2,677.65		$2,677.65

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30TH JUNE 1987

ACCUMULATED FUNDS

Balance B/Fwd 1st July 1986			$5,627.89
Add surplus for year – General Account		$547.17	
Sydney Account		407.00	
Investment Account		310.83	1,265.00
			$6,892.89

REPRESENTED BY CURRENT ASSETS

Cash at Bank	– General Account	$3,522.54	
	Sydney Account	492.78	
	Investment Account	2,677.57	$6,692.89
	Deposit N.D. Hegarty – Boat Hire Aust. Day 1988		200.00
			$6,892.89

IAN RUMSEY
TREASURER

Australian Scrimshaw

Janet West

INTRODUCTION

Few relics of a bygone era are more evocative than scrimshaw, the decorative work which was developed to a high level of artistry and craftsmanship by those involved in the whaling industry.[1,2,3] Whaleships carried large crews, but more men were needed to catch and process whales than were necessary to work the ship, so on cruises in search of them time could hang heavily. From the men's boredom and the materials available a unique folk art developed which came to be known as scrimshaw. It encompassed the decorated teeth of the sperm whale (Moby Dick was such a creature) (Plate 1), sticks (Plate 2) and other ornaments and a wide range of functional creations from ship's fittings and tools (Plate 3) to woolwinders, pastry cutters, needlecases, toys, games and musical instruments. Indeed, any small domestic item and even quite large things could be scrimshaw.

Scrimshaw was primarily a pastime from the days of sail and it reached its peak in the 19th century. Though the art form was known as early as the 17th century there seems to have been no special word for it until 1821, almost 200 years later.[1] There followed a variety of spellings but "scrimshaw" became the most common. Through the present century the tradition of scrimshaw was maintained in a small way by men using modern whaling methods. In recent years there has been a revival of interest in the art form and it has been adopted by artists and craftsmen who have no other connection with the whaling industry. Some superb modern scrimshaw is being created, as well as that imitating the old styles. In addition, the present interest has stimulated the production of many plastic fakes and reproductions purporting to be 19th century, some of which are very convincing.[3]

As might be expected, the most common materials for old scrimshaw were whale products: sperm whale teeth, pieces of jaw bone and baleen, (Plate 4). (Baleen was often referred to as whalebone, but this term is confusing so I do not use it in this context.) Sometimes other ivories such as walrus and narwhal tusks were used, together with a variety of tropical woods, horn and coconuts. With greater or lesser skill they were cut, polished and fashioned into dozens of useful and pretty things, many of them as presents. Essentially untutored, many men proved to be remarkable artists and some beautiful work was produced.

In Australia as elsewhere, decorated sperm whale teeth are the commonest type of scrimshaw.[4] The typical "scrimshawed" decoration,

whatever the material, took the form of lines cut into the polished surface with a knife blade, sharp point or needle, so the lines are scribed rather than truly engraved. Marks could be fine or coarse, deep or shallow and occasionally the decoration was entirely in stipple. The design was usually enhanced by rubbing black pigment into the grooves. Soot and oil must have been common, but polychrome including red, blue, green, brown and yellow was occasionally used in addition to black. Teeth decorated with relief carvings and sculpted forms are rare before the present century. However, most types of scrimshaw, including that designed for use was also decorated with skill and delicacy, carved and inlaid or covered with the multitude of designs and pictures which reflected the whalemen's world and their preoccupations. Amongst the scrimshaw in Australia, pictures of women, usually in pretty clothes were the most popular, followed by portraits of ships and whaling scenes. But the range of other motifs is surprising and the subjects represented include sailors and soldiers, children, animals and plants, actors and dancers, knights in armour, mythical creatures and story illustrations, buildings, patriotic motifs and valentines. Many of these must have been original or done from memory but others were copied or traced from pictures and prints and I have traced several to wood engravings in newspapers and magazines. Some scrimshaw motifs are outlined with dots or crosses as if the picture was pricked through a guide.

During a six months visit to Australia, I was fortunate to be able to see nearly 900 examples of scrimshaw in the main public and in many private collections. From an examination of the materials and the choice and style of decoration, some 574 of these appear to date from the 19th century and very few can be earlier. Most can reasonably be placed between 1830 and 1870 and relate to the sperm whale fishery when Australia's own deep water whaling fleets had developed and hundreds of foreign vessels were active in the Pacific. Some of the remaining scrimshaw seen was done earlier this century by whalemen working in Antarctica or at the shore station at Frenchmans Bay near Albany, WA, but most was done and signed by Australian artists within the past 20 years or so.[5]

There are four main sources of the 19th century scrimshaw in Australia. Some was brought out from Europe, especially Britain, with other family possessions. Some was purchased abroad by collectors, unrestricted until recently. Some of it originated on the many whaleships from England, France and particularly America which were working in the Pacific and which put into Australian ports for repairs and refits and to reprovision or
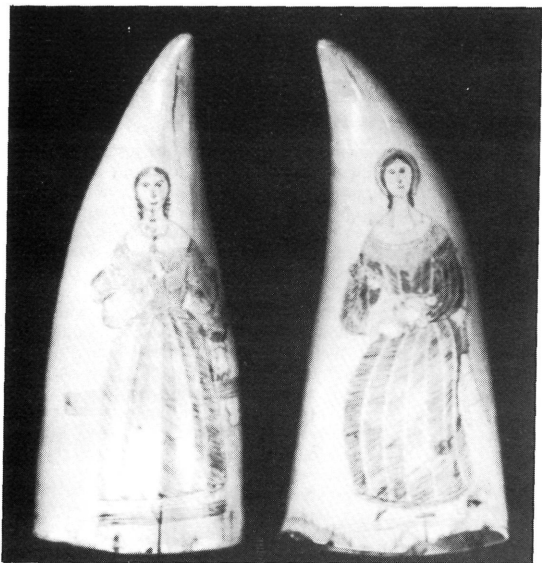
Plate 1. *A pair of Sperm whale teeth ca. 16cm long decorated with delightful primitive pictures of women in the dresses of 1838-40. The wide sleeves of the earlier 1830's have gone, but each woman still wears across the forehead a narrow band which came into fashion around 1835. Photo J. West, reproduced courtesy of the Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts, Hobart.*
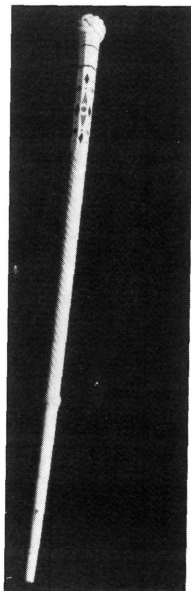
Plate 2. *Finely carved and inlaid walking stick.*

Plate 3. *Seamen's tools comprising three fids, (prickers for separating rope strands), two seam rubbers and a serving mallet. Most are of whalebone. The longest fid (41cm) is from the shore station on Bruni Is. and shows dark flecks in the bone very clearly. The smallest fid is of walrus ivory. The smaller seam rubber is of whale ivory, aged to a rich tan colour, as is the bone serving mallet. Serving boards and mallets were used to wrap ropes with smaller cordage to prevent chafing. Photo J. West, reproduced courtesy of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart.*
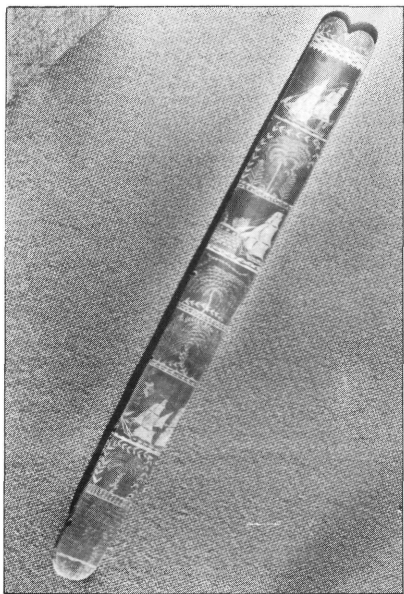
Plate 4. Staybusk of Right whale baleen, 41cm long decorated with extreme delicacy and inscribed "Agnefs Dunncan". The eight panels show an early 19th century British brig and other ships, weeping willows and Norfolk Island Pines (*Araucaria excelsa*). The lowest panel has a verse in minute lettering: "When beauteous Mira lifts her eyes, to view the wide ethereal plain, May Cupid lift my image there to greet her midst the starry train. Let her no longer live to trace those orbs in which the heavens move, to love such studies – do give place, then let, O let her learn to love." Information as to the origin and date of the verse is requested. Photo J. West, reproduced courtesy of Ian Rumsey.

Plate 6. Chair in the Gothic style, made from stranded whale bones from Northern WA, owned by Emma and John Withnell ca 1864-6, restored by Rod Horne and now at Tranby House, near Perth. Photo by the Western Australian Museums, reproduced courtesy of the National Trust of Australia, WA.
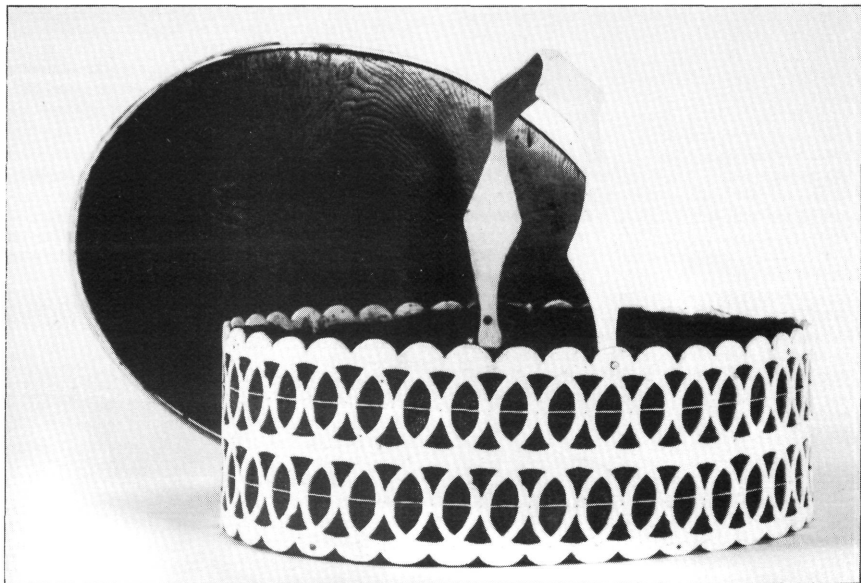
Plate 5. Beautiful Tasmanian workbox of thin fretted whalebone and Huon pine, lined with cotton velvet and unusual in having a lid and a folding handle. Maximum diameter 23.5cm. Reproduced courtesy of the Australian National Gallery, Canberra.

discharge oil. However, a large proportion of it, including some of the most interesting and beautiful examples, appears to have been done by Australians or is associated with Australian-owned vessels and is the main concern of this paper. Tasmania in particular has a rich heritage of scrimshaw: over half of that seen was there, and there are some fine collections elsewhere. In addition a quantity of Australian scrimshaw has been recognised in England and it is very likely that more is to be found. It is also clear that a substantial amount has been taken from Australia to the USA in particular by collectors and dealers over the past 30 years, and one must hope that legislation can help to prevent further losses of this important record of Australia's varied and fascinating past.

SCRIMSHAW MATERIALS

Until the manufacture of coal gas and the discovery of petroleum in the 19th century, whaling was an essential industry in Northern Europe and North America and contributed in no small measure to the early development and prosperity of Australia. Oil from whale blubber was used for lighting and heating, was the basis of soaps, paint and varnish and an essential lubricant for expanding industry. Baleen was manufactured into dozens of things later made of steel or plastic.

Whales are mammals and there are two groups, the *Odontoceti* or toothed whales, and the *Mysticeti* or baleen whales.[6] The *Odontoceti* includes the porpoises and dolphins, but the only large species is the Sperm whale which was exploited commercially from the 18th century. Its blubber was found to produce a superior lighting oil and lubricant and its massive head chamber contained spermaceti, a wax which made the finest candles. Sperm range around the deep oceans of the world, prefering warm waters between 40° south and 40° north though males reach higher latitudes. They feed on fish and squid and have in the lower jaw about 24 pairs of teeth which can be over 20cm long in a large specimen. Apart from trade or barter in the Pacific islands the teeth had no commercial value but were much prized by the crew, being a high quality ivory (whale ivory) and the trophies of a dangerous life, and were the commonest material for scrimshaw. After their surface ridges were filed off, teeth were polished and decorated or cut up to make such things as the knobs on canes and sticks, tools, small domestic items like pincushions, needlecases, table napkin rings, egg cups, and for inlays.

The *Mysticeti* includes the rest of the large whales: the Right, Grey and Humpback whales which could be caught from open boats, and the Rorqual group, (Blue, Fin, Brydes, Sei and Minke whales) the largest of which could only be caught using modern whaling methods. The *Mysticeti* feed on small marine organisms which they strain from the sea water through plates of baleen, flat horny sheets with bristle fringes. Each species has baleen of a characteristic size, shape and colour, though the colour is somewhat variable and can be bleached. Baleen as scrimshaw is generally dark brown and comes from Right whales. Right whales were so called because they were the "right" whales to catch with open boats and hand harpoons. Relatively slow swimmers, their thick blubber helped to keep the carcass afloat and their large plates of baleen were very valuable, at times more so than the oil. Baleen is light in weight and very springy and was manufactured into such things as corset stays, crinoline hoops, umbrella ribs, fishing rods, riding whips and the finest brush bristles. It could be heated and moulded into cutlery, boxes and springs for pony cart and carriage seats, and the shreddings stuffed upholstery. Baleen is now most commonly seen as the brown spirally-twisted handles of some 18th century silver ladles.

Arctic or Greenland Right whales, (also called Bowheads) were the basis of the northern European industry. They were caught in the Eastern Arctic (Iceland, Spitsbergen, Greenland and the Davis Straits) from the 16th century and the Western Arctic (Bering sea and Arctic ocean) after 1848. In the southern oceans were the Southern Right or Black whales which were the basis of Australia's own early whaling industry.

Baleen scrimshaw is easily recognised in the form of decorative plaques and staybusks (Plate 4), ruler-like strips used to stiffen the fronts of womens bodices as the fashions of the time dictated. Staybusks were popular for presents, being a simple shape with flat surfaces to decorate and very personal. Baleen takes a high polish and a fine engraving which leaves light marks against a darker background. It was also used for canes, riding whips and life preservers, for contrasting inlays and edgings and the dark rings on some whalebone sticks and canes.

Baleen seems to be surprisingly rare in Australia, though it is possible that some remains unrecognised. Although the microscopic structure is different, small pieces are difficult to tell from wood even with a hand-lens especially if the end grain (cross section) is not visible.

Bone from the lower jaws of the large whales of both groups (whale bone) is particularly dense and even-textured and was a very common scrimshaw material. It was often referred to as panbone, from the hollow depressions or "pans" where the jaws articulated. Bone is made up of fine calcified tubes which may become filled with dirt when cut and show as dark dots or lines, easily seen on the large fid (pricker) in Plate 3. This, with the absence of "grain" caused by growth rings can distinguish it from ivory. Whale bone was available in huge pieces and could be sawn, filed, turned and polished and made into many things for use around the ship or at home. It was was strong enough to make walking sticks and canes, tools and fittings such as blocks and deadeyes, spigots and shackles,[7] few of which have survived, and

also whip-handles. The latter are generally rare, but several examples were seen in Australia.[8,9,10] Thin sheets of bone were used for staybusks and plaques, and could be bent to form the sides of workboxes and baskets which were generally pierced and fretted (Plate 5) or decorated with pictures. Scrimshaw inlays have been identified on elegant Colonial furniture,[11] but the early settlers salvaged all sorts of other whale bones to make ingenious rustic chairs. There is a splendid example of such an armchair now at Tranby House near Perth (Plate 6), made by John Withnell of the Mount Wellington station near Roebourn WA. He was in distinguished company: Lady Franklin records in a letter from Tasmania in 1838, "the shores of the little settlement bay are strewed with whale blubber and bones. Some of the latter well bleached, I had carried off, at the suggestion of Captain Booth, to make garden seats of".[12]

The sides of the lower jaws of small cetaceans such as dolphins and pilot whales (Blackfish) provided a relatively flat surface for pictorial work and were divided or left complete, usually with the teeth still in position. (Plate 7). These bizarre objects seem to be an Australian speciality, being relatively common. Porpoise and other small whales were sometimes caught for their meat (sea beef) as well as oil, but they are often found stranded.

A variety of tusks were used for scrimshaw, either decorated intact or as a source of ivory. The commonest of these were from the walrus, an Arctic mammal which can grow a pair of tusks from about 60cm to a metre long. They appear similar to elephant tusks but are generally elliptical in section and rather angular, particularly around the root. The central core of the ivory (osteodentine) has a marbled appearance which can help to identify small pieces. (Plate 3). Narwhal tusks were occasionally used for scrimshaw and are most easily recognised as walking sticks. The narwhal is a small Arctic whale which usually has a single hollow tusk which can grow as long as 3 metres and has always been highly prized. Narwhal tusks have a spirally running grain which serves to distinguish them from walking sticks of bone which have been spirally carved. Elephant tusk scrimshaw is not very common, but there is an interesting early example in Sydney, which may in fact have been done by a soldier, "Cpl. William Grice of the NSW Corps".[13] There are some spectacular scrimshaw cattle horns in Australia too. Some ships carried cattle as well as pigs to provide meat, so horns might well have been available on shipboard and would certainly be very common around the ports. However, only a minority of decorated horns have a maritime motif and most appear to be the work of soldiers or marines.

WHALING AROUND AUSTRALIA

Before the wool trade was established, Australia was largely dependent on marine resources for its exports. The discovery of fur seals on the Bass

Straits islands in 1797 hastened the relaxation of some of the regulations governing the building or owning of sea-going craft, and soon whale oil was to join seal skins and elephant seal oil as Australia's earliest exports.[14]

Initially the Pacific was penetrated by English whalers in search of sperm whales which were still plentiful there, but other nations, in particular the French and the Americans were soon to follow and the latter came to dominate the sperm whale fishery, outnumbering all the other nations combined.[15] However, waters off the southern Australian coasts were found to be the breeding grounds of Black (Southern Right) whales which became very abundant in bays and estuaries between May and November when they migrated from the south to mate and calve. The early settlers soon realised that these Black whales could be caught using whaleboats sent out from the shore, and a sea-going whaleship was not necessary. For this "bay whaling" they required only their boats and gear, trypots for boiling out the blubber, cooperage and a suitable beach with a lookout and some shelter. The first whaling station was set up on the Derwent river in Tasmania in 1805 and with many eager to try their luck they spread rapidly. From Tasmania where there were 35 shore stations in 1841 they increased out along the mainland coasts.
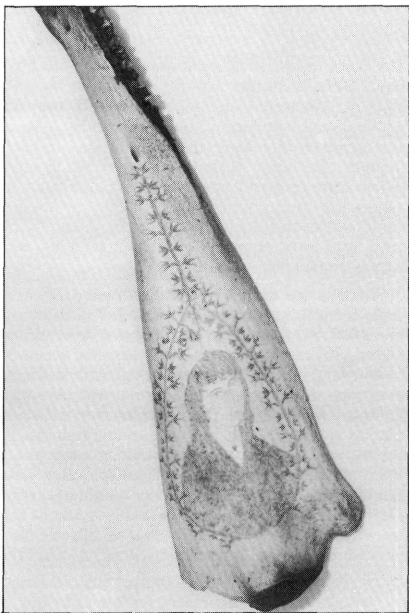

Plate 7. One of the paired halves of a Blackfish jaw ca. 50cm long with late 19th century decoration. They are provisionally included in the "CHIEFTAIN" group as the wreaths are similar to those of Plate 13. They are difficult to date precisely as the woman's dress lacks fashionable details and the bizarre costume of the man has not yet been identified. Reproduced courtesy of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart.

Plate 8. Part of a miniature scrimshaw teaset with a jug 6.3cm high, teabowl and saucer on a tray of finely figured Huon Pine, made by Capt. James Bayley of Runnymede House, Hobart. Photo I. Everson, reproduced courtesy of the National Trust of Australia, Tas.

The more permanent stations were at Two Fold Bay NSW, Encounter Bay SA, Portland Bay VIC and in Western Australia, where Humpback whales were similarly caught. Australians were also involved in setting up shore stations and settlements in New Zealand. Foreign whaleships which were primarily sperm whaling also put men ashore for the bay whaling season. But no species could withstand such massacres of its breeding stock and after about 40 years bay whaling was largely finished.[16]

There seems to be very little scrimshaw in Australia from this early crucial period. Apart from a bone fid from the old bay whaling station on Bruny Island, Tasmania, (Plate 3), nothing else seems to have been recorded in museum collections. However, one must hope that there may still be things amongst family treasures. I did hear of a baleen plaque at Eden NSW[17] but was unable to locate it. Scrimshaw from that area would be particularly interesting: bay whaling at Two Fold Bay near Eden was amongst the most extraordinary in the world as the whalers were assisted by packs of Killer whales. It persisted there on a small scale for a very long time and only ended when the last of the Killer whales, known as "Old Tom", died in 1926.[16,18]

The great period of Australia's own deep sea whaling fleets began about 1820: the fleet in Sydney reached its peak around 1836 and in Tasmania around 1849,[14] and Sperm whales which were still relatively plentiful in the Pacific were the main

catch. Whaleships generally remained at sea until they had a profitable cargo though they could call in to reprovision and discharge oil, or for repairs. As whales became scarcer voyages became longer: four or even five years at sea was not uncommon. Australian vessels had the advantage of proximity to some of the best whaling grounds in the Pacific, but many long and hazardous voyages were undertaken, especially by the mid 19th century. During the 1850s some Australian whalers travelled as far north as the Bering Straits and Arctic ocean[16,19] to supplement their catch with Arctic right whales when Sperm were scarce and this may have been the source of some of the walrus ivory at present in Australia.

Whaleships averaging 200 to 250 tons would carry 20 to 30 men[19] in cramped quarters with few facilities. The Master and the other officers had much better pay and conditions than the foremast hands, the bulk of the seamen who lived in the forecastle. The harpooners and other tradesmen such as the cooper, carpenter or shipwright, sailmaker and blacksmith whose skills were essential for a successful whaling voyage had an intermediate status. Periods of frenzied activity and danger could be separated by periods of relative idleness and some of the problems caused by boredom and "whale sickness" when whales were scarce could be solved by time-consuming activities such as scrimshaw. It was very common on American whaleships and is mentioned in many whaling logs and journals. In contrast,

though scrimshaw was certainly done, it is rarely mentioned in European or Australian logs and it would be very interesting to know the reason for this. The only direct reference in an Australian log appears to be that of the ISLANDER for March 29th, 1881 "At anchor… the latter part of the day… all hans as been Scrimshoning, making works boxes for there frends, so ends this Day of our Lord." (sic)[20,21] Interestingly, though the ISLANDER was registered in Fremantle and worked from Hobart, her Master was American.[19] However, whale teeth must have been considered important as two are listed amongst the effects of Joseph Mascall, a seaman on the DERWENT HUNTER of Hobart in 1871.[22]

IDENTIFYING SCRIMSHAW

The problems associated with identifying the origins and makers of old scrimshaw are often insuperable, and the material in Australia is no exception. An Australian connection is easily established by motifs such as an Australian coat of arms, pictures of Aborigines, kangaroos, emus, lyre birds and characteristic plants such as gums and Norfolk Island pines (Plate 4) but obviously do not prove an Australian maker. The same applies to the use of native woods, some of which are extremely attractive, as sailors were always on the lookout for new materials and inspiration for their creations.

Inscriptions are most common on decorated sperm whale teeth, plaques, staybusks and cattle horns but they only occur in about 10% to 15% of cases and of these, very few are the names of people, ships, localities or dates. (In contrast, many fakes and reproductions of old scrimshaw and a lot of modern scrimshaw has names and dates). Names can be ambiguous, especially those of women, and many a scrimshawed ship or model has been supplied with that of a favoured female rather than its real name. Again, literally dozens of ships had the same name and that of a person might refer to the ship's captain, the owner, or even the man who commissioned the work rather than the scrimshander himself, so other information may be necessary to determine which is which.

Australian-owned vessels which are named or portrayed on scrimshaw include the PACIFIC, RUNNYMEDE and EMU of Hobart and the LINDSEYS and the GOVERNOR HALKET of Sydney. Scrimshaw ship models are rare, but there are beautiful examples of the Hobart whalers LADY EMMA and the PRINCE REGENT made by members of the crew. Their scrimshaw gear and fittings of bone and ivory include masts, yards, deck houses, capstans, catheads and tryworks and the figurehead of the Prince Regent himself is carved from whale ivory.[10]

The most magnificent portrayal of the PACIFIC is a broadside view on a large whale bone plaque with an inscription which is a researcher's dream: "The PACIFIC whaling ship Captn. Robt. Gar-

diner of Hobart Town, homeward bound, 900 barrels sperm oil, 10 months out, 1848".[20] The only omission is the name of the artist.

The barque RUNNYMEDE is shown on an exceptionally large whale tooth, (25.4cm long) and is obviously a whaleship from the design of the vessel and her several whaleboats, which is confirmed by the houseflag of the owners, the Bayley brothers. From her launch in 1849 to her loss in 1881 she was a successful ship. This tooth is part of an important collection of beautiful scrimshaw from the Bayley family which can be seen at Runnymede House Hobart, their old home. Some of it is known to have been made by Captain James Bayley (1823-94), a superb craftsman and artist who arrived in Tasmania from England in 1840. Lathes were not very common for scrimshaw but he used one and apparently had one aboard the RUNNYMEDE when he was Master between 1857 and 1866. He made some exquisite pieces such as a miniature teaset with six tea bowls and saucers, a teapot, jug, and two basins on a tray of Huon pine, (Plate 8), at least two and possibly three, tiered egg stands[9,20] of figured wood, ivory and bone to hold six eggcups and a whalebone stand for 18 cotton reels. There are some similarities in style between the RUNNYMEDE tooth and the PACIFIC plaque, and as James was the second mate of the PACIFIC between 1847 and 1851,[24] I think it possible he made the plaque too. Other unusual scrimshaw on view is a whale ivory table clamp and an adjustable woolwinder (swift) of bone and ivory, a most difficult device to make.

"T.B. EMU 1850" is inscribed on the reverse of a pair of sperm whale teeth which are decorated with magnificent pictures of buildings,[10] which I was eventually able to identify as the University of London (now University College) and the Royal Mint, London, and which appear to have been copied from engravings. The initials probably refer to Thomas Brown, owner of the EMU and other whalers and traders, but was he also the artist? The EMU was a barque of 309 tons, built for Brown in 1848 but her whaling career was short as she, along with many other whalers, were forced to abandon whaling for trading after 1853 when crews and craftsmen deserted for the goldfields.[19] Many Tasmanian vessels were London traders, so the artist may actually have seen the buildings, but in any case, many prints of famous places or topical interest were readily available in newspapers and magazines. The English newspaper "The Illustrated London News", which has proved to be the source of several scrimshaw motifs, even had a stand at the Ballarat gold diggings in 1854.

Occasionally a particular decorative style is recognisable and will identify the same maker when it appears on other pieces. In exceptional cases an inscription on one will serve to identify the whole group. This was the case with a sperm whale tooth inscribed "Whaling Barque LINDSEYS of Sydney leaving the heads on a cruise 1845, J. Robinson" which proved very important (Plate 9). The ship is
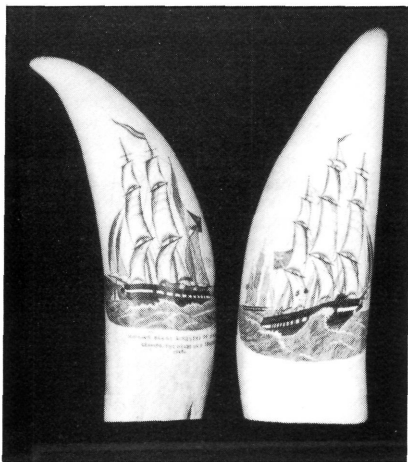
Plate 9. Two sperm whale teeth decorated in polychrome with red, blue/green and brown. The vessel on the left is the "Whaling barque LINDSEYS of Sydney passing the heads on a cruise 1845. J. Robinson". Any information about the possible identity of J. Robinson or of other scrimshaw in this style is welcomed. Reproduced courtesy of Sothebys, London.

portrayed in a very distinctive style in polychrome with red, blue-green and brown. I had already recognised a group of five similar teeth which showed whaling scenes or portraits of ships[25] when I found a photograph of pair of teeth in the same style which included the LINDSEYS, in the archives at Sothebys in London. It was the only one of the group to have an inscription and so proved the Australian connection for them all. The LINDSEYS, a barque of about 220 tons traded between Hobart and Two Fold Bay during the 1830's.[26] In 1842 she was registered in Sydney and converted for whaling,[27] but after a few years she was trading again until condemned in San Francisco in 1849.[28]

As J. Robinson was neither the Master nor the owner of the ship it is reasonable to assume that he was the artist. There was a J.F. Robinson, a shipwright of Gas Street, Sydney during the 1840's,[28] so was it he? Certainly a shipwright could have had an intimate knowledge of the types of vessels portrayed. If anyone knows of other scrimshaw in this style or anything, however small, about a J. Robinson of that period who could have been the artist I should be delighted to know.

The GOVERNOR HALKET was discovered on a large sperm tooth, braving rough weather in company with two other vessels, the reverse of the tooth showing the siege of a harbour.[29] A ship of 317 tons named the GOVERNOR HALKET appears to have been captured from the Spanish and then established a regular trade link with Tobago in the early 1800's.[30] As a whaler the GOVERNOR HALKET was owned in London but was operating from Sydney in 1834, owned there by 1837 and registered there from 1840.[27]

There is also scrimshaw from the whaleship CHANCE when she was owned in Sydney, done by the mate between 1864-74. He gave the scrimshaw to Richard Robinson, a friend who in turn passed it on around 1912 to the Hendrickson family with whom he lived in the Rocks area when ashore, and whose descendents still treasure it.[31] The scrimshaw consists of four decorated whale teeth, a pair showing two peacocks by a fence and a tree, two with portraits of ships, one being a whaler, and a pair of walrus tusks showing a man and woman in seventeenth century dress, probably illustrating a story. In 1874 the CHANCE was sold to New Zealand and immortalised by Frank Bullen in his book "The Cruise of the Cachalot".

Other vessels with an Australian connection named on scrimshaw are the AUSTRALIAN and the MARY JANE, both in the Sydney Maritime Museum. The AUSTRALIAN was a three masted ship built for the emigrant trade between Liverpool and Sydney. She is portrayed under full sail on a fine bone plaque, the picture copied from a wood engraving in the Illustrated London News of 1862.

The MARY JANE, a barque of about 249 tons and built around 1830 was owned in London but based in Sydney. However, her career was short as she was wrecked in 1834,[26] fortunately without loss of life. The scrimshaw commemorates a very important event: "The MARY JANE Captain R. Banks killed her first two whales Feb 5th 1831", which is engraved below a whaling scene on a Sperm tooth.

Ship's flags are unfortunately little help in establishing an Australian connection. Few house flags are shown in sufficient detail to be identifyable as was the case with the RUNNYMEDE, and even so, most of the thousands of shipping companies which were active in the 19th century are unrecognisable today. And whereas the national flags of countries such as America and France were quite distinct during the 19th century and beyond, Australian ships unfortunately wore the British ensign until the 20th. However, it is possible on scrimshaw to distinguish the white ensign with its distinctive stripe, worn by British Naval vessels (and by some ships of the East India Company), from the red and blue ensigns, which may also be separated if colour is used. A British naval vessel with a red or blue ensign is likely to be pre-1864 as the white ensign was worn exclusively after that date, with the red restricted to the Merchant Service. In this context, some scrimshaw showing British naval vessels might well be Australian. One sperm tooth, possibly ca 1820, shows a view of the old Government House, Parramatta and HM Cutter MERMAID which first arrived in Sydney in 1817[32] and several show HMS IRIS (1840-1869)[33] which became the first flagship of the Australian squadron in 1859.[34] However, most scrimshaw involving historic ships with an Australian connection such as the AMITY, CATALPA and FAME are the work of modern artists.
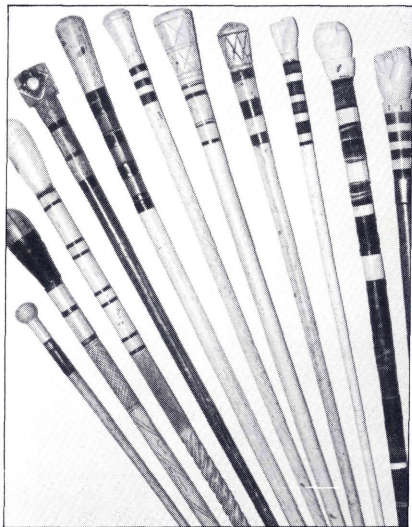
Plate 10. Eleven scrimshaw canes from Tasmania, most with carved bone shafts, whale ivory knobs, (three being clenched hands) and contrasting rings of whale ivory and baleen, horn or wood. The dark shaft of no.4 is varnished bone and no.11 is wood. No.10 has horn and ivory discs on an iron core. No.6 is a short swagger stick, carried under the arm. Photo J. West, reproduced courtesy of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart.

Attributions can obviously be extremely useful and whilst some caution is necessary to avoid perpetuating myths, it is unfortunately all too easy for details to be lost when things are passed on or sent for sale if the information is not properly recorded. Scrimshaw walking sticks and canes (Plate 10) are very common in Australia, in fact they were the largest category seen after decorated sperm teeth, a strong indication that many must be of Australian origin, but alas only one is associated with a particular ship, the Hobart barque WATERWICH. This stick has a bone shaft beautifully carved with spiral grooves, a hexagonal section, fine diamond cutting, several rings with contrasting dark bands and a knob of whale ivory with an ebony plug.[10] The WATERWITCH was whaling out of Hobart from 1860 to 1895 and had a very long and successful career. She was built in 1820 as the 10 gun brig FALCON, converted to a London whaler in 1840 and was for a time whaling from Sydney.[23]

Another sad omission is the absence of any information about decorative stands, (Plate 11), spectacular pieces of scrimshaw which are relatively common in Australia. All the ten examples seen were in Tasmania or had been brought from there, but how can we prove them to be Australian?

We are more fortunate with workboxes. Not only were they mentioned in the log of the ISLANDER, but two similar to that illustrated are associated with the DERWENT HUNTER (Hobart whaling 1871-79) and the MARIE LAURIE, (Hobart

whaling ca 1850 to 1864).[9,19] In addition there are two long strips of bone intended for such a box and marked out for fretting but only partially completed,[35] which indicates a local origin.

Unfortunately, people can be easily identified even less often than ships, but a pair of large sperm whale teeth in the Town Docks Museum, Hull, England are inscribed "To R.S. Williams Esqre. from Captn R. Copping of Tasmania". Richard Copping (1820-1872) became one of Tasmania's most respected Masters and commanded the well known traders HARRIET McGREGOR and LUFRA during the 1870's.[36] But did he do the scrimshaw or was it done for him, and who was R.S. Williams? The location of the teeth suggests that Williams may have been in England and Copping made several voyages to London. There could have been a business or a family connection as the Coppings originated in Great Britain,[37] as did many Australian families at that time.

The signature G. Watson appears on several whale teeth and could be that of the shipmaster and owner George Watson, active in Hobart from the 1830's[19,23] but this is impossible to confirm as no named ships have been seen so far.

Fortunately we know the identity of A. Watson who decorated a pair of walrus tusks with a stipple of small holes.[13] They show his name in a cartouche with an unclear date, either 1860 or 1870, an Australian coat of arms, and a stationary engine, an unusual motif. Alfred Watson was a shipwright working extensively in the Pacific before emigrating to Melbourne in 1888.[38] Also attributed to him is a whale tooth done in a much finer stipple with a rather different style, showing another variant of the coat of arms and a strange mythical figure prostrate in a flowing cloak holding a scroll and trumpet, surrounded by Eucalyptus branches done with the more usual scribed lines.[13]

Important decorated teeth and bone plaques now in Australia were signed by I.A. Bute probably between 1830 and 1840[39], by E. Mickleburgh probably earlier,[10] and by W.L. Roderick of the London whaler ADVENTURE dated 1858.[40] Does anyone recognise the names, is more of their work about and were any of them Australians?

Fortunately researched and documented by his great, great grandson is another notable scrimshander, Alfred Evans, (1820-95) who was born in the London dockland area and emigrated to Australia. He was known to be employed as a cooper in Sydney between 1851 and 1859, a trade he may have learned from his father.[41] Coopers had an important place in every community when casks and barrels were usual for storing and transporting liquids and it was skilled work to shape the staves so precisely that no leakage occurred. Coopers were certainly essential in the whaling industry and there were times when ships were held up for want of casks to store the oil.[16] Whaleships always carried a cooper but were

Plate 11. Decorative stand probably of Tasmanian origin, 35cm long supporting two sperm whale teeth, and which might have held a few writing accessories. It has a thin whalebone back and a wooden carcass covered with whalebone, inlaid with a baleen star and tortoiseshell diamonds. The front edging is also baleen. None of the pictures have been identified though the horseman looks important and a second version of the elegant man on the left, in the dress of 1830-40, also occurs on another sperm tooth, suggesting that he may have been well known. Photo J. West, reproduced courtesy of a private collector, Tasmania.

equipped initially with barrels made by coopers employed ashore. Alfred Evans made a variety of scrimshaw[13] (none of it signed), including at least seven decorated sperm whale teeth showing a palm tree, ballet dancers and a classical figure on horseback. But it was as a craftsman that he really excelled. He made a number of small things for the home; a cruet set for salt and pepper, a case for sewing needles, an awl, several dice and two pieces which show superlative work, a carved bone walking stick and a stand to display a pocket watch, both inlaid with black and red tortoiseshell (Plate 12).

Evidence of a cooper's art can also be seen in some beautiful scrimshaw tubs, one with alternating staves of walrus ivory and dark wood, brass bound over a whalebone base[20] and two made entirely of whalebone.[13]

Sailors tools have already been mentioned and many seafarers, especially the tradesmen and the Able Seamen, who were also skilled men, had their own sets which they sometimes made and decorated. (Plate 3). Tools were generally of hard wood though whalemen used bone and ivory which was readily available. Tools of a suitable shape might be carved with a rope spiral or rope knot handle. Though few men inscribed their names, initials are more common. In the Melbourne Maritime Museum, along with an unusual hexagonal fid inscribed "Daniel Cadagon, wife Margaret, Berwick" are some tools which belonged to a sailmaker, an ancestor of the Radin family whose business is still concerned with the

manufacture of canvas goods. The group consists of two seam rubbers and the tips of two cattle horns, one a tallow horn, hollowed out for storing grease and the other for carrying sail needles. Sailmakers made up sails as required from the appropriate grade of canvas, which was generally available only in 2 foot (61 cm) widths. A great many seams were needed to make even a small sail, and seam rubbers were used to press the turnings and smooth the canvas to get a good shape to the sail. More unusual scrimshaw tools seen in Australia were a set square[9] and a pair of bone dividers.[10]

In contrast, some scrimshaw was considered elegant enough to take its place with fine furniture and works of art. Amongst the possessions of the Allport family which form the Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts in Hobart is a pair of teeth showing women in dresses fashionable around 1838-40.[42] As the family arrived in Tasmania in 1831, the scrimshaw is probably of Australian origin.

To conclude, I shall describe some late 19th century scrimshaw which I refer to as the "CHIEFTAIN" group, in the hope that it can be shown to be Australian. At least two of pairs of sperm whale teeth and several Blackfish jaws, most of which are in Australia, are decorated with women or a man and a woman in what appears to be late 19th century dress, each portrait surrounded by a spiky wreath of grass-like flowers resembling oats, (Plates 7 & 13). The similarities in style suggest that they were all done by two people at most,

possibly by one person. The only clue to an identity is an inscription "Nova Zembla ship CHIEFTAIN". It was cut on the reverse of only one of the pair of teeth which both show the same woman. In this case however the inscription only deepens the mystery. Though there were two Scottish whalers named CHIEFTAIN[43] they were more likely to be voyaging to the North American Arctic than to Nova Zembla in Russia, and in any case, it is unlikely that sperm whales were taken there. And whilst there was a sperm whaler named CHIEFTAIN,[27] she was active in the 1830's, before the scrimshaw was done. Perhaps the artist was at some time on a trading vessel of that name? There was apparently a barque CHIEFTAIN of 933 tons, which was built in Newfoundland in 1876, sold to Russia in 1901 and owned in Finland from 1908 to 1911, when she was broken up.[44] Certainly the quality of the pictures in the group varies a lot, and could span a number of years, though the possibility of more than one artist remains. The unusual costume of the man illustrated on the jaws is also a puzzle as it has so far proved impossible to identify and so to date.[42] Two similar versions of the man exist on jaws, so is he in theatrical costume? Is there more scrimshaw in the same style, has any of it an inscription and does anyone know who the artist might be?

There was a time when scrimshaw was claimed almost exclusively as the work of American whalemen, but as we have seen, some of the finest was done by Australians. And the fact that so much has been identified as of Australian origin means that a very great quantity must have been done by Australians or on Australian ships, more than can ever be proved to be the case. However, research on Australian scrimshaw as a whole is relatively recent so the results are extremely promising. Some of our most important sources are families who have treasured their scrimshaw and tried to add to the knowledge of who did it, when and where. A large proportion of our museum collections are the result of generous donations but it is possible that a lot more scrimshaw still exists amongst family possessions and in private collections. If it can be photographed and recorded it will help our chances of identifying similar things elsewhere. So as research proceeds, I hope that more examples with inscriptions or other identifyable features will come to light around the world and can be proved eventually to be Australian.

WHERE TO SEE SCRIMSHAW

There is a quantity of old scrimshaw on view in a number of Australian museums and sometimes even more in Reserve collections, so it is worth checking on what is where, especially as displays change. Several of the major libraries also have scrimshaw, and it is usually necessary to ask permission to see it. Most of the scrimshaw on display for sale in shops and galleries is the work of modern artists but private collections which include old scrimshaw are occasionally exhibited, as was that of Ian Armstrong of Frankston, VIC.
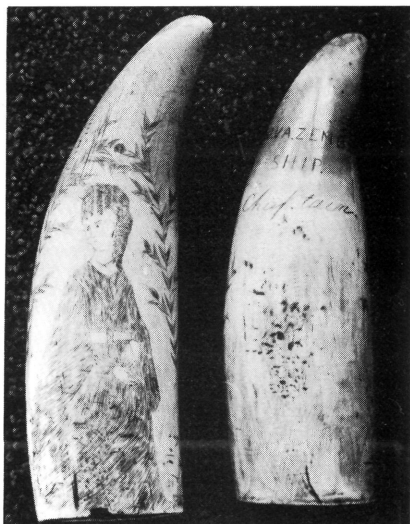

Plate 13. The "CHIEFTAIN" teeth, a pair decorated with identical pictures of a woman, one of which is inscribed on the reverse, "Nova Zembla, Ship CHIEFTAIN". The figures are surrounded by a spiky wreath similar to those in Plate 7. Information is sought about a possible maker or other scrimshaw in the same style. Photo J. West, reproduced courtesy of Mrs V. Jackson, Hobart.

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JOSEF LEBOVIC GALLERY

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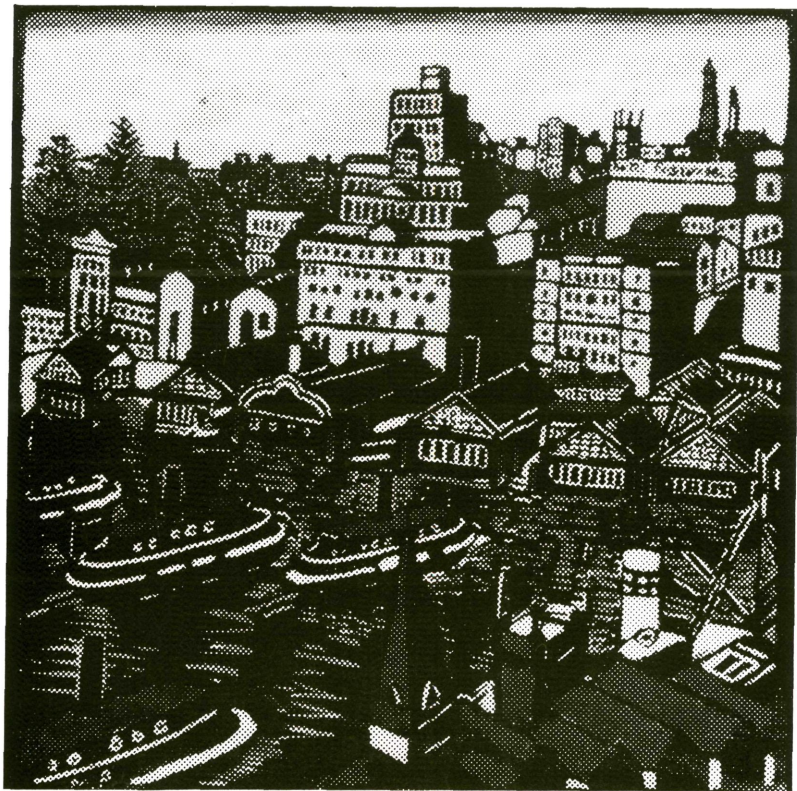
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Acknowledgements

Some Notes on House and Ship Building in Van Diemen's Land

Milford McArthur

The association of local shipbuilding and the construction of Colonial buildings is well known. For example, this association applies to John Watson (1800 – 1887) the notable ship builder of Van Diemen's Land.[1,2] A less well known shipbuilder was John Eason, and his Colonial house 'Anstruther House' is recorded.

Eason built the following craft:[3]

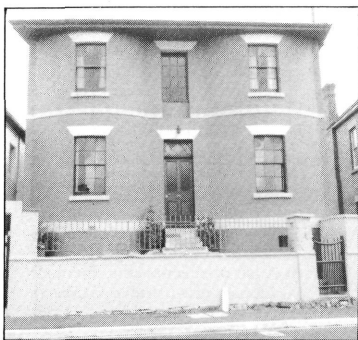|	Type			Location
1840 ISABELLA	Schooner	68 Tons		North West Bay
1841 SCOTIA	Schooner	112 Tons		North West Bay
1842 DAVID	Schooner	67 Tons		North West Bay
1844 ALLISON	Cutter	21 Tons		North West Bay
1846 MACQUARIE	Barque	130 Tons		Macquarie Harbour

Plate 1.

He was also owner or part owner of the ELIZA, a schooner of 14 tons and CACIQUE, a barque of 141 tons. (His wife's name was Allison and his step-daughter's name was Eliza.)

In 1847, Eason purchased for £51/19/0, land in Hampden Road, Battery Point, from Thomas Smith.[4] Smith was originally granted the land by Governor George Arthur. Eason built a double bow-fronted, double storey brick house on a sandstone foundation. The house originally had a shingle roof with Flemish bond sandstock bricks on the front and visible eastern side. The rear and unseen western faces are in English bond. A decorative sandstone string course is on the front and eastern faces. (Plate 1)

The layout of the rooms was a close variation of the Georgian two storey house as in J.C. Loudon's *Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture and Furniture.*

The most striking feature in the interior is the widespread use of Huon pine as a decorative and structural component. Presumably, Eason was well used to the properties of Huon pine from his shipbuilding experience and he may have had ample supplies of the wood from his shipbuilding yards.

Huon pine has often been used in Tasmanian Colonial houses, especially in areas exposed to the weather, where it was almost certainly painted. The practice of stripping front doors of their paint to expose the wood, however pretty, is not sympathetic restoration.

Windows, doors, gates and barge boards are commonly used of this rot-resistant wood. "Vernon" in Mona Street and "Colville Cottage" in Colville Street, Battery Point, both have exterior work in painted Huon pine.

More extensive use of Huon pine is less common. "Holebrook" a Regency home in Davey Street, Hobart, built about 1846, has Huon pine "bird's eye" featured doors, window frames and some in-built fixtures. "Stowell", completed in 1834 for Colonial Secretary John Montagu, is

reported to have extensive use of Huon pine in its construction.

Houses in McGregor and Colville Streets, and Waterloo Crescent, in Battery Point, are known to have Huon pine doors featuring "bird's eye" panels, but whether they were originally painted, is unclear. Presumably, many houses in Tasmania have Huon pine as a decorative feature in the joinery hidden under layers of paint.

In Anstruther House, the floors in three rooms, plus the entrance hall, are of Huon pine. The boards vary from 6in to 9in wide and are 1in thick. They are butted together. The remaining floors are original and of hardwood. Whether the Huon pine floors were originally smooth planed and exposed is also unclear, although the under surface of several of the boards is smooth planed, suggesting this technique may have been used.

There are eight "bird's eye" four panelled doors which have survived in excellent condition. (Plate 2) The windows, architraves of doors and windows are of "bird's eye" pine. Fire surrounds, skirting boards and an in-built cabinet of Huon pine remain. (Plate 2) Thus most of the interior wood is of selected "bird's eye" Huon pine, the wood that Eason presumably knew well.

The use of Huon pine seems to be less common in Tasmanian Colonial houses than other timbers such as cedar and Baltic pine, although at least one East Coast home has doors, a panelled ceiling and architraves of Oyster Bay pine. Other usages of Oyster Bay pine are described by Sharland.[6] Obviously, local availability is an important factor. However, it is apparent that Huon pine was widely used in Colonial times, not only for cabinet work and shipbuilding, but also for building construction.
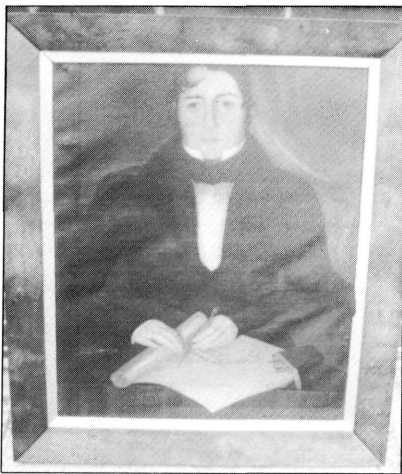

Plate 3.

Plate 2.

John Eason seems to have been a successful shipbuilder. W.B. Gould, the convict artist, painted his portrait in 1838. (Plate 3) Eason is shown holding some drawing instruments.[7] As stated in faded writing on the back of the oil Eason was 39 years of age at the time.

Eason died in 1853 and his step-daughter, Eliza, died at Anstruther in Scotland, 1855.

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Expert advice and information was obtained from: Thomas Bulmer, G.T. Stilwell, G.B. Brown, W.N. Hurst.

Lithgow and Adelaide:
The Holford Connection

Noris Ioannou

This article outlines the life and work of one of Australia's most interesting early immigrant potters, William Holford, and his contribution in the skill of mould-making and design, an essential industrial technique of the late 19th-century commercial potteries. Much comparative research still remains to be done in the 19th-century industrial phase of Australian ceramic development.

The development of pottery in Australia began a new phase with the arrival of a Staffordshire-trained Journeyman potter in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. William Holford, together with his son Thomas, forged a link between the Lithgow Pottery, various Adelaide potteries, and with others about the Australian colonies and New Zealand.

Born in 1841 in the Staffordshire town of Hanley, William Holford became an apprentice potter at the age of seven years, thus continuing a family tradition established in the late seventeenth century. In 1874 the then trained potter, together with his eight-year-old son Thomas and wife Annie, travelled to New Zealand to take up a position at the Milton Steam Pottery Works. This venture soon failed and in 1876 the Holford family travelled to Melbourne. Little detail is known of the family's activities here except that they established and operated a pottery. Following its closure, probably due to the competition from larger more efficient potteries, the Holford family departed in 1881 and resettled in Sydney.

In about May of the following year, William Holford, together with his son, had secured the position at the Lithgow Pottery recently vacated by potter James Silcock. Again, this position did not last long, only some seven months, but during that time William Holford initiated and developed the range of domestic and decorative wares produced at the pottery. Holford's specialty lay in designing and making of master moulds from which articles could be mass-produced by the pottery workmen. Breadplates, water-filters, jugs, bowls, teapots, and jardineres were commonly produced by this method, usually ornamented with various motifs including ferns, figures, coats of arms or floral designs. These low-relief ornamented articles were then glazed in either the popular and vari-coloured majolica, rich-brown Rockingham or yellow cane finish.

By February 1883, the Holford family was again on the move, this time back to Sydney where they established and operated another pottery for almost five years. Competition from imported

wares, as well as from the local potteries, was fierce. Thomas Holford later recollected: "I have been in competition that keen that I remember, in the teapot line, in New South Wales, hundreds of crates being dumped down on the city market – about 1881 or 1882." This competition appears to have been one of the factors that led to the repeated closure and re-establishment of potteries by the Holfords.

In late 1887 the Holfords quit Sydney and travelled south to Adelaide. For almost one year, William worked as a potter at Trewenack's pottery in the eastern suburb of Magill.

Though six potteries were then operating about Adelaide, and economically, the state was in a recession, William raised sufficient capital to establish a pottery in the eastern suburb of Maylands in 1889. Over the next twenty years, this pottery was to close and re-form, each time with new shareholders as a new company. Its name changed variously from: The London Pottery Works, The Adelaide Pottery Company, The London Pottery Company, The Federal Pottery Company, and The Federal Brick, Tile and Pottery Company.

In 1903, the pottery launched into the production of white earthenwares following the discovery of suitable white clay at Longwood in the Mount Lofty Ranges. An eye witness account of the first kiln of these wares to be opened noted: "The door of the kiln... was broken down in the presence of the visitors, who gave hearty cheers when the first article – a beautifully glazed white breadplate – was taken out... [together with] earthenware teapots of various colours and designs."

But as Thomas Holford said in 1905: "The greatest thing we have to contend against is prejudice..." His hostility towards a public that showed these prejudices was well known; he always purchased Australian-made goods right down to the brand of whisky that he drank!

By 1912 the pottery was closed and demolished. William Holford died in 1914, and though Thomas was his only child he had become a grandfather of twelve children. One of these, Jim, born 1910, continued the family tradition at the Bennett Magill Pottery until the 1970s.

Following the closure of the Holford pottery, Thomas worked for a time at the nearby Premier Pottery of J. Koster, and later until his death in 1938, at the Bennett Magill Pottery where he con-

The Holford pottery at Maylands, Adelaide, c.1897. Pictured on the extreme right in front of the trap is William Holford. On the extreme left is Thomas Holford.

Majolica jardinere, 16 cm ht., impressed stamp. c.1905.

Caneware jardinere with sprigged decoration, ht. 20 cm. c.1890.

Stamp on base jardinere: "Federal Pottery Maylands."

Holford's "Rebecca-at-the-well" teapot, ht. 20 cm, c.1890.

tinued the specialty his father had taught him, that of mould-making.

During the 1890s and early twentieth century, pottery produced by the Holfords closely resembled that produced at Lithgow, as well as in the other Australian colonies where the Holfords had worked. Indeed some items, such as the ubiquitous breadplates with their Gothic-lettered ornamentation, are almost indistinguishable as they were produced from moulds carried from colony to colony as the Holfords travelled about. The fern motif, as well as the blackberry motif were also popular designs used by the Holfords in Lithgow and Adelaide, particularly on teapots. As well as being skilled at designing moulds, Holford also utilized the sprigging method of ornamentation, whereby a motif is moulded separately to the item that it is subsequently attached to with slip. Teapots ("Rebecca-at-the-well"), teacaddies and jardineres were decorated by this method and have been noted in Adelaide.

Even as late at the 1930s, William Holford's influence is evident in the design of some of the art ware produced at the Bennett Pottery by Thomas. There, a box-vase was produced using the floral motif found on the Lithgow "Premier" jardinere. The original design can, in this case, be traced back to a Staffordshire original.

As well as those majolica and Rockingham-glazed articles that are now avidly sought after by collectors, there is a wealth of the other classes of ware produced by the Holfords: Bristol jars (often stamped), caneware bowls and footwarmers, and whitewares. They represent the period of industrialized pottery production common the world over and owing its origins to the English Staffordshire Potteries region, William Holford's birthplace.

This article is based on an extract from Noris Ioannou's book: *Ceramics in South Australia 1836-1986: From Folk to Studio Pottery,* published by the Wakefield Press (Adelaide).

Majolica breadplate, 35.5 cm length, incised "W.H." c.1895.

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A Silver and Gold Presentation Inkstand by William Edwards, Melbourne, in 1865

Christopher Thompson

In November 1986 at an auction at Sotheby's New York the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences in Sydney acquired a silver and gold presentation inkstand made by William Edwards, a noted Melbourne silver manufacturer of the 1850s to 1880s.

The Sotheby's auction catalogue described the inkstand as: "*An Important Silver and Gold Inkstand, William Edwards, Melbourne, circa 1865, retailed by Kilpatrick & Co., on four winged paw feet linked by shell and scrollwork (part missing on one side), the rectangular stand with bowed ends and moulded rims, frosted surface with a rectangular central seal box engraved with presentation inscription flanked by two (wool) bale-form containers, each with calyx of gold fern leaves, a well for pens on both sides, the cover of the seal box mounted with a gold scene of two addorsed kangaroos below spreading ferns on a gold ground chased with grasses and scattered with applied flowers (sic) and plants, the covers of the containers formed as emus, one with turned head, both with chased plumage standing on flower-strewn gold bases. (Lacks glass liners)… 53ozs 8dwts.*[1]

The inkstand is the first example of Australian gold (other than jewellery) to enter the Museum's collection of metalwork and is one of thirteen examples of 19th century Australian gold known to survive. It complements a group of five pieces manufactured by Edwards already in the collection and adds to the group another example of the techniques used in Edwards' manufactory.[2]

The base of the stand is marked on the underside: "STERLING / K&Co (for Kilpatrick & Co., the retailers) / SILVER" and with Edwards' standard Australian mark: "(emu / W.E. / (kangaroo)".

The original invoice for the inkstand, with an elaborately engraved letter head, has by fortunate chance, recently come to light in the University of Melbourne Archives, along with other papers relevant to its presentation.[3] Dated 11 April 1865 and made out to T.B. Guest Esq, the invoice describes the piece as: "Silver & Gold Inkstand to order / 43 oz Silver — 11 oz Gold — £100.0.0". The discrepancy in weight may be due to the damage to and loss of, part of the gold calyxes surrounding the inkwells and to the scrollwork around the base.

In recent years William Edwards has been accorded significance, notably by the late F.N. Hodges, as "perhaps the most outstanding and prolific"[4] 19th century Australian silversmith.

Edwards received appropriate recognition from his contemporaries; in the 1861 Melbourne exhibition of Victorian entries for the 1862 London International Exhibition he was awarded a first class certificate for worked silver. The exhibits consigned to London did not arrive in time for judging and Edwards was not mentioned in the cursory comments of the British jury on the Victorian exhibits: "the Jury regretted that on the occasion of their visit the Victorian exhibition was not perfected".[5] At the 1866 Intercolonial Exhibition, also held in Melbourne, Edwards received an Honourable Mention for "good workmanship of epergnes of most tasteful craftsmanship", perhaps confirming a reputation for quality, if not for invention.

Edwards produced gifts for the visit of Prince Alfred, the Duke of Edinburgh, to Victoria and New South Wales in 1867-68 and was subsequently granted a warrant as goldsmith and jeweller to the Duke's household, an eagerly sought pretension among colonial businesses. The Royal visit was marred by the attempted assassination of the Duke at Clontarf Beach by the alleged Fenian, Henry James O'Farrell. Edwards' manufactory produced a presentation emu egg given to Mrs W. Vial by the Cornish ladies of Adelaide in recognition of her husband's services in saving the life of the Duke. This piece was recently auctioned at Lawsons.[6]

Edwards, the son of a London gold and silversmith, was a manufacturing silversmith in London before emigrating to Australia. He first registered his mark at Goldsmiths Hall as a small worker on 7 January 1843. He arrived in Melbourne in July 1857 on board the *Blanche Moore*. Recent research by John Hawkins[7] has shown that Edwards was probably not a practising silversmith. Hawkins suggests that after his departure from England, Edwards' London firm, under the aegis of his brother Thomas, continued to produce silver for the Australian market. Many of these pieces were stamped for retail in Australia. Examples of these retail marks are found in the Museum's collection.

Unfortunately almost nothing is known of the craftsmen Edwards used in Australia although Hawkins speculates that he may have brought with him some of the craftsmen from his London manufactory. Hodges queried, when looking at Edwards' repoussé work "how much of the embossing on Edwards' plate was actually done by

him and how much he taught his (unrecorded) apprentices and journeymen?"[8] On the basis of the pieces confidently attributed to being made by Edwards in Australia, it would seem he did not bring his best workmen with him.

An example of gold work, traditionally ascribed to Edwards, and known to be the work of the Melbourne watchmaker and jeweller Anton Eick (Eicke) might hold a clue to the identity of one of Edwards' anonymous craftsmen.[9]

The piece was an elaborate gold sword hilt and scabbard, made after a design by the Anglo-Swiss painter Nicholas Chevalier and presented in 1861 to Giuseppe Garibaldi, the hero of the Italian *Risorgimento*, by the citizens of Victoria "as a tribute of their admiration and esteem".[10] As described in the *Age*:

"The hilt of the sword is of colonial gold and weighs upwards of twenty-five ounces… the grip of the hilt is a full length standing figure of Liberty, armed in mail and capped with a mural crown; her left hand is engaged in grappling with and breaking the chains of despotism, which bind the tricolour shield of Italy, the same hand also putting to flight the evil genius of that country (Austria, we presume), which, in the shape of a griffin, mounts guard over the chains of despotism; and forms the fence of the handle. The right hand of the figure is uplifted, grasping the sword of defiance, crowned with the (laurel) wreath of victory. The guard is of open work (gold), "Victoria to Garibaldi" on the one side and on the other side the star of Garibaldi shedding its rays on the scales of justice, surrounded with a waving band, bearing the words "Amor Patriae" inscribed on it. On either side of the guard are also Florentine lilies — emblems of purity".[11]

There appear to have been some modifications made by Eick to Chevalier's design which is now held in the La Trobe Library. While the whereabouts of the sword are unknown its description coupled with an apparent lack of competent goldworkers available in Melbourne at that time, raises the possibility that, should the inkstand have been made in Australia, Edwards may have employed Eick, a proven and experienced gold worker, on a contract basis, to work the gold mounts on the inkstand.

As well as Eick, Hodges lists four other metalworkers resident in Melbourne at this time who could have been used by Edwards:[12] T. Cambers, a gold chaser; W.J. Taylor, a die and token maker; I.H. Bird, a plate and jewellery maker; and Louis Chevalier, possibly a brother of Nicholas, who was noted as making plate for Royalty. Hodges noted Louis Chevalier as the designer of a silver epergne made for TRH the Prince and Princess of Wales on 10 March 1863, illustrated in the *Australian Sketcher*, (n.d.). This piece was manufactured by Kilpatrick & Co., the retailers of the Museum's inkstand.

This list may not be exhaustive and does not take account of known silver retailers such as Brush and MacDonnell, Walsh & Sons, or Josephs of Sandhurst, who are known to have, or may have,

manufactured metalwork in their premises.

Eick's significance lies in the fact that we know of a piece made by him and, while the subject of the sword hilt is notably different from the inkstand's gold covers, both pieces are executed naturalistically and both would have required considerable skill to manufacture. It seems unlikely that Edwards would have employed a full time workman in his manufactory capable of crafting such pieces. No other such complex pieces are known to have come from Edwards' Australian manufactory.

According to Hodges,[13] Eick arrived in New South Wales in 1851 and left for Victoria the following year after failing at the Turon diggings in New South Wales. His bad luck followed him to Castlemaine and Sandhurst (Bendigo). From 1854 until 1895 Anton Eick is listed in Sand's Melbourne Directory as a watchmaker and jeweller, at various Collins Street addresses. Hodges quotes an unsourced contemporary report that "Australians have a great penchant for jewellery… Mr Eick has a well chosen stock".[14]

The retailers of the inkstand, Kilpatrick & Co. were a Melbourne wholesale and manufacturing goldsmith and jewellery firm, established in 1853. Along with Edwards they exhibited at the 1866 Intercolonial Exhibition although they received no awards. Kilpatrick & Co. were one of the wholesalers supplied by Edwards.

Evidence suggests that the inkstand was undoubtedly made in Australia. Apart from the laconic comment "to order" in the invoice, this supposition is supported stylistically by the inkstand's restrained, Neo-classical design, an anachronistic style not commonly associated in the 1860s with the presentation pieces made in Britain. Kurt Albrecht, in his 1969 publication *Nineteenth century Australian gold & silver smiths*, noted that the inkstand was "very colonial looking". British pieces of this period designed in a classical idiom tended to use ornament more profusely.

Edward's London-manufactured pieces are, for the most part, made in the ubiquitous and popular mid 19th century Neo-rococo style. By contrast Edwards' known Australian-made pieces show a miscellany of styles, with an emphasis on eclectic mixes, some with Gothic revival overtones.

The absence of any London hallmarks supports an Australian-made theory. While this cannot be assumed as an absolute, together with the inkstand's outdated "colonial" style, and the knowledge that there were workers capable of making elaborate cast goldwork, it is most likely. There is no evidence to suggest that it was made anywhere else but in Melbourne.

The inkstand was constructed using a variety of metalworking techniques. The feet are cast and chased, somewhat crudely in contrast to the rest of the piece. It may be that the feet either have been removed from an earlier piece of silver and reused,
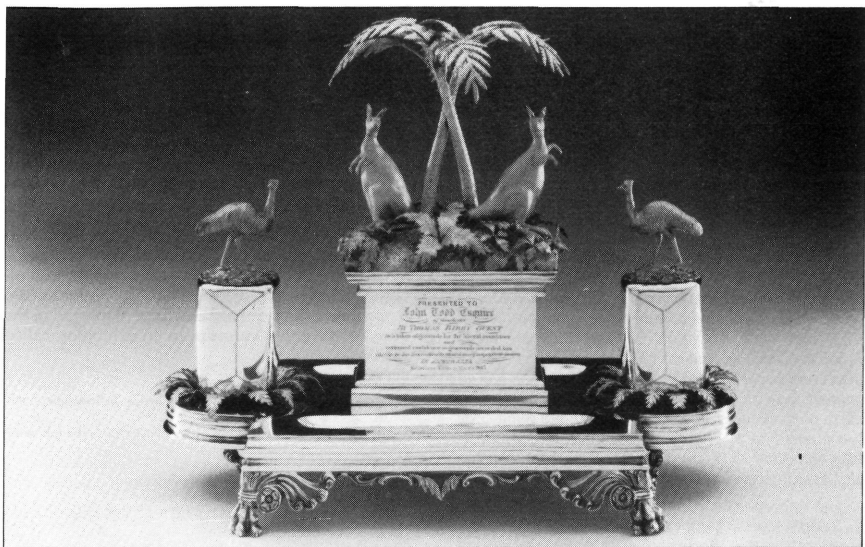
Fig.1 The silver and gold presentation inkstand given by Thomas Bibby Guest of Melbourne to John Todd of Manchester in 1865. The inkstand was delivered in August that year to Todd who wrote to thank Guest for "the inkstand (which is) more beautiful and costly than anything I have done for you deserves". **Reproduced courtesy of the Trustees of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney.**

or are pre-cast components, imported from England, a common practice with 19th century silversmiths. It is worth noting Hodge's unsourced remark that "from 1866 to 1874 Edwards experienced great difficulty in obtaining silver. Thousands of ounces of old plate were purchased by them and melted down for the production of new lines of work. No difficulty was experienced in getting gold".[15]

The base and the central seal box are formed of sheet silver, soldered at the corners. The seal box is bolted to the base with two silver screws. The two flanking inkwells are formed of hand raised soldered silver, forming the slightly curved shape of the bales. The gold covers for the seal box and the inkwells are detached from the main silver body. The gold bases and figures have been cast in sections, soldered together and decorated with extensive repoussé work. The casting of the central base has left visible defects. Pin holes have formed where the gold was cast too thinly and these have been sealed with scraps of sheet gold. The leaf calyxes, fern fronds and applied foliage are stamped from a thinner sheet of gold. Edwards used this method of decoration on a number of other extant pieces.[16] Hodges comments that "Edwards had a nice way of decorating with the fern leaf; this was by application: a cut card work adhering to the body... with a second row of leaves coming down at an angle from the same source".[17]

A recent analysis of the metal content of the

inkstand, undertaken by the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation,[18] shows that a consistently high carat of gold was used in the manufacture of the cast components of the inkstand. The leaves on the central seal box and the leaf calyxes around the bases of the inkwells are of a lower carat which suggests that they were made by another hand, particularly since they are characteristic of work known to be produced in Edwards' workshop.

The inscription on the seal box reads: "PRESENTED TO / John Todd Esquire of Manchester / BY THOMAS BIBBY GUEST / as a token of gratitude for the liberal assistance / and / continued confidence so generously accorded him / whereby he has been enabled to establish himself in profitable business / IN AUSTRALIA / Melbourne Victoria March 1865".

Thomas Bibby Guest arrived in Sydney from England in 1852 aboard the *Salacia*. Initially he acted as an agent for the Manchester trading company Todd & Coston, selling pistols, shawls, flannel blankets and walrus tusks. Invoices made out to Guest exist in the University of Melbourne Archives, dating from 31 January 1853. It seems likely that Guest had a connection with Todd & Coston prior to his departure for Australia. This may explain the amiable, if not avuncular, nature of the subsequent correspondence between Todd and Guest. Moving to Melbourne in 1856, Guest established a steam biscuit manufactory in William Street, initially in partnership with one Barnes.

The partnership, Barnes, Guest & Co., was dissolved around October 1859, when T.B. Guest & Co. was founded.

It seems that Barnes, Guest & Co., like many of their contemporaries, succumbed to the lure of the goldfields during the late 1850s. In a letter written in May 1875 to his "Dear Aunt Jane", the substance of which he had also conveyed to his cousin James Fildes of Manchester, Guest described how:

"After making a considerable sum of money in mining I was unfortunate & lost most of it. (I never came to grief though.) Well I wrote to Mr Todd (of Todd & Coston) & told him I had been making a great fool of myself, that I had lost my money, & my business had gone from me that my machinery was worn out, & requested him to send me new — What did he do but send me out the best plant that could be got in England... costing about £1500 for which he paid cash & allowed me ½ the manufacturers disc. & waited my ability to repay him and all without security. The last good turn he did me enabled me to produce such a quality that no one else could & by this means I have got back my lost trade, & my returns have since that time (about 6 years ago) more than trebled & still go on increasing."[19]

The reference to 'about 6 years ago' is confusing, as Todd's loan appears to date from about 1859. It seems clear that Barnes, Guest & Co. expanded into mining, making a considerable loss, resulting in the end of the partnership. This may also have motivated Guest's plea to Todd which resulted in the consignment of the new biscuit-making machinery early in 1859. Possibly Guest was thinking of the time it took him to discharge the loan when he wrote to his relatives. The loan was repaid in full in August 1865, when the inkstand was delivered to Todd in Manchester.

T.B. Guest & Co. obviously prospered, thanks in part to Todd's acumen in making what amounted to an unsecured loan. Guest's drive and ambition was not to be underestimated. Todd himself stated:

"I think you may be justly proud that you have done this (discharge the loan to Todd & Coston) by your own energy and industry solely and it is another evidence that men who will set about earnestly to succeed in life guided by right principals (sic) under providence will always be blessed with success."[20]

Guest's steam biscuit works were relocated to North Melbourne in 1897, and in 1900 the business was converted into a proprietary company. Guest died on 3 April 1908 and was lauded as "a man of exceptional business capacity, and his enterprise in starting a new industry so early earned him the esteem and respect of his fellow colonists".[21]

The history of the inkstand after its delivery is uncertain. Todd was both surprised and gratified by the unlooked for gift and wrote to Guest stating:

"As to the inkstand I shall always cherish it as substantial evidence of your gratitude which is equally gratifying to those who give and those who receive it and the inscription will shew to those who come after me how delightful a thing it is to assist those in the first struggle

of commercial life who can and will help themselves as you have done."[22]

John Todd died in Manchester in February 1875 and there is no further mention of the inkstand.[23] Todd & Coston appear to have ceased trading on Todd's retirement and nothing is presently known of his family. As mentioned by Albrecht the inkstand last came to public notice in 1969, at the New York auction house, Parke Bernet (later part of Sotheby's) where it was purchased by a New York private collector.[24]

The Museum was able to acquire this significant example of Australian metalwork with the assistance of a group of Australian companies and individuals known as the Patrons of the Powerhouse. Appropriately the inkstand will be displayed in the new Powerhouse Museum in an exhibition called *Australian Achievement*.

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A7420 Sugar basket — silver, about 1859-62, with the retail marks of Walsh & Sons.
85/450 Presentation cup, silver mounted emu egg, about 1859.
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86/1613 Presentation inkstand – silver and gold, as discussed in this paper.
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