

# AUSTRALIANA

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- William Kerr, Colonial Silversmith 1838-1896



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**Cover** *Gold specimen brooch with Australian flora, attributed to Hogarth Erichsen & Co. Sydney c. 1858-1861. Collection: Powerhouse Museum, Sydney (A6486).*





*Plate 1. Gold brooch with Australian flora – banksia, native pear, lily and tree fern – set with a quartz specimen, c. 1858-61. The paper label in the brooch's box reads "By Appointment Hogarth Erichsen & Co. Practical Jewellers, Chronometer and Watchmakers to His Excell. the Governor General Sir W Denison. 312 George Str. Sydney." Collection: Powerhouse Museum, Sydney (A6486).*

# Julius Hogarth Behind the Shop Front

## Part 1

### The First Bankruptcy 1861

*John Hawkins*

Julius Hogarth was born in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1822, arriving in Sydney along with 229 other "German" immigrants from Hamburg on board the barque *John Cesar Godeffroy* in 11 December 1852.<sup>1</sup>

Almost immediately after his arrival Hogarth went into partnership with Conrad Erichsen<sup>2</sup> opening a gold, silversmithing, watch repair, and jewellery manufacturing business at 255 George Street, Sydney in 1853. Both partners were skilled workmen, as the output from their workshop shows (*Plates 1 and 2*), but were to prove poor businessmen.

Hogarth had anglicised his name, as evidenced by the oath attached to his Certificate of Naturalisation.<sup>3</sup> The certificate signed as Julius Hougaard, alias Hogarth gives his age on 8 December 1856 as 34 (*Plate 3*).

However, Hogarth and Erichsen's lack of good business practice led to bankruptcy in New South Wales in January 1861, and then by Hogarth alone in May 1864 and April 1867 in Victoria.

The three sets of bankruptcy proceedings have enabled me to look behind the shop front to Hogarth's connections within the trade, his customers, skilled employees, sources of materials, and wholesale suppliers, all areas of business that would otherwise pass undocumented.

The boom engendered by gold discoveries in New South Wales in 1851 enhanced the bespoke trade in Sydney, enabling jewellers and goldsmiths to prosper. That Hogarth and Erichsen went bankrupt in a boom year such as 1861 must be considered an achievement but the firm had been making some expensive Exhibition gold items for stock.<sup>4</sup> Their demise as one of the leading goldsmiths and jewellers of Sydney, in January 1861, enabled their former employees to exhibit individually at the Sydney Exhibition of October 1861<sup>5</sup> held as a forerunner to the London International Exhibition of 1862.



The International Exhibition in London of 1862 saw Hogarth and the products of his former workshop illustrated in J.B. Waring's book, *Masterpieces of Industrial Art and Sculpture at the International Exhibition (Plate 4)*. The plate depicts the gold emu and kangaroo on malachite plinths<sup>6</sup> (Plate 5) then the property of the Governor of New South Wales, Sir John Young and his wife. Young arrived in Sydney on the *Northam* on 21 March 1861. The *Catalogue of the New South Wales Exhibition* held prior to the International Exhibition in London states that it opened in Sydney during October 1861 and the emu and kangaroo were exhibited by Lady Young. Therefore these two highly important and valuable gold objects must have been purchased either from a bankrupt Hogarth or from someone who had obtained them from him during the previous six months.

The gold mounted Flavelle inkwell (Item 334) was also manufactured in Hogarth's workshop. Hogarth exhibits not illustrated were Item 341 "The natives on their return from the chase, resting under a palm tree in gold"<sup>7</sup> (Plate 6) and Item 469 "A Gold Medal struck in 1856 to commemorate the establishment of Constitutional Government in Victoria, executed by Hogarth of Sydney and exhibited by General [Edward] Macarthur."<sup>8</sup>

Hogarth's former employee, the jeweller Hermann Finckh listed as Finck and Bockemann, Market Street exhibited Item 340 "a bracelet and brooch of Australian Gold" and Brush and MacDonnell Item 342 "two emu eggs mounted." Brush and MacDonnell had previously exhibited the "two mounted Emu Eggs" in Sydney in October 1861. These two eggs may be by William Edwards, who was manufacturing silver mounted emu eggs for the firm's Melbourne branch by late 1859.<sup>9</sup>

All these exhibits may be traced back through the October 1861 Exhibition in Sydney either to the Hogarth and Erichsen workshop or to their former employees.

The bankruptcy papers<sup>10</sup> commence with a petition before the Judges of the Supreme Court, dated 8 January 1861, signed by Hogarth and Erichsen surrendering all their assets, listing them, and noting their creditors to whom they owed a total of £1,133-3-5d.

Hogarth's access to funds with which to expand the business came as a result of his marriage to Charlotte Tegg, aged 18, in 1858 with Conrad Erichsen acting as their best man. Charlotte was a minor but from her father James Tegg (1808-1845), the late Sydney bookseller and publisher,<sup>11</sup> she had



Plate 2. Gold bracelet with Australian flora and fauna, attributed to Hogarth, Erichsen & Co., c. 1858. The design corresponds very closely to a Hogarth bracelet described in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 10 June 1858 (quoted in Anne Schofield & Kevin Faby, *Australian Jewellery* p. 53f). Collection: Powerhouse Museum, Sydney (97/225/1).

# OATH.

I, *Julius Høgarth alias Hogarth*

do sincerely promise and swear, that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Victoria, as lawful Sovereign of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and of this Colony of New South Wales, dependent on and belonging to the said United Kingdom; and that I will defend Her to the utmost of my power against all traitorous conspiracies and attempts whatever, which shall be made against Her Person, Crown, and Dignity; and that I will do my utmost endeavour to make known to Her Majesty, Her Heirs, and Successors, all treasons, and traitorous conspiracies and attempts which I shall know to be against Her or any of them. So help me God.

*Julius Høgarth alias Hogarth*

Taken and Subscribed the *Eight* day  
of *December* 186*6*  
Before me

*P. Kerr*

Plate 3. Julius Hogarth's Oath of Naturalisation, dated 8 December 1856.

inherited property listed in the bankruptcy proceedings as "Thirteen allotments of land in the County of Cumberland the property of my wife an infant." The family solicitor Montagu Consett Stephen,<sup>12</sup> a leading Sydney solicitor and member of the Stephen legal dynasty, had taken a mortgage over this property for £240 - all but £90 of which had been drawn down.

The partners surrendered their stock in trade, consisting of jewellery and working tools, valued by them at about \$950 with a note "The whole of this has been removed from our premises by Trustees appointed for the management of our estate by a certain Indenture dated 23/Aug/1860." The firm's stock was sold by Mr D. [Robert?] Muriel, the auctioneer of Bridge Street for £632-0-3. Muriel had gained control of these assets by reason of this indenture signed by the partners before surrendering their affairs to the Court. Only Hogarth lists any personal assets, his household furniture at

his Glebe residence to a value of £60. The valuation includes the piano, possibly the immediate cause of the firm's bankruptcy, and an interesting collection of Aboriginal or Pacific Islands artefacts, and shows he enjoyed a reasonably high standard of living.

The valuation lists the contents of his house as follows:<sup>13</sup>

**Parlour:** 1 piano, 1 table, 1 clock, 1 sofa, 4 chairs, 1 armchair, 6 pictures, 1 cheffonier [sic], 1 workbox, 2 bronze figures, 1 corner table, carpet, ornaments, sundries, curtains.

**Parlour:** 3 tables, 4 chairs, 1 armchair, 1 sofa, 1 bookstand, few books, 1 pier-glass, 12 pictures, 1 sofa, shade of wax flowers, 1 desk ornament, carpets and rugs.

**Dining Room:** 1 table, 7 chairs, large quantity of spears and war implements from the different Islands, 1 chimney glass, 1 glass case containing ornaments, 1 clock, fender and irons, 1 sword, 1 oilcloth.

**Bedroom:** 2 chest of drawers, bedstead and bedding, washstand and set, towel stand, 1 clock, looking glass, 1 cot, 2 figure ornaments.

**Servant's bedroom:** bedstead and bedding, washstand and set.

**Kitchen:** 1 table, 1 dresser, cruet, crockery, cooking utensils, copper tea urn, clothes horse [and the last two items unreadable].

## CREDITORS

When the Court had completed the bankruptcy proceedings a total net of expenses of £674-16-3 was realised for all the firm's assets. The wages of the employees and the landlord's rent were paid in full. All other creditors received 7/6d in the £ and they are listed as follows:

### Christian Ludvig Quist

[Silversmith and Jeweller]

4 weekly wages	£ 15-10-0
5 days do	£ 3-1-0
Wages	£ 18-11-0

Quist arrived in Melbourne on board the *John* from Copenhagen on 24 September 1853 with 15 other Danish passengers. By 1861 his signature on the affidavit shows he had anglicised the spelling of

his name to Quist. He had only just arrived at the workshop of Hogarth & Erichsen, for he was in Bendigo, Victoria as late as 17 February 1860 when the *Bendigo Advertiser* refers to improvements to his photographic studio. The bankruptcy papers locate Quist in Hogarth's workshops at precisely the time of the completion of the Hogarth gold groups, so as a working stereoscopic photographer, it was he who photographed them for Ernest Leviny in Castlemaine (**Plates 5 & 6**).

Quist's affidavit dated 4 March 1861 (**Plate 7**) claims a month's back wages and confirms that until January 1861 he was an employee of the firm on a daily rate of about 12 shillings a day. On 23 April 1861, Quist then aged 42, married Anna Pries, aged 29, in Sydney so the payment of his wages in full was a matter of great importance. Quist's surviving work shows he was one of the most talented goldsmiths working in Sydney, although curiously his trade is not mentioned in the affidavit. At this time he would have been working with Hogarth on the Flavelle gold-mounted inkstand for the 1861 Sydney Exhibition. Flavelle was a creditor of the firm, probably as a result of an advance to Hogarth of the gold and silver used in its construction.

Hogarth made one of the first recorded Australian silver mounted emu eggs in the form of a vase and a claret jug for the Intercolonial Cricket Match of January 1859.<sup>14</sup> These silver mounted eggs must have been commenced in 1858. Two years later with the demise of the firm the order must have been referred to Quist who made the Intercolonial Cricket Trophy as a silver mounted egg in January 1861.<sup>15</sup> At this time Quist was associated with James Clarke, a gold and silversmith formerly at 42 Francis Street.<sup>16</sup>

I suggest that Quist, because of his prior connection with Hogarth's workshop and its known production of silver mounted emu eggs, was the man responsible for those exhibited by both Brush & MacDonnell and Flavelle in Sydney in October 1861 and later in London in 1862. Quist finally opened a business in his own name – C. L. Quist – at 15 Hunter Street in 1864.

#### **Theodor Lassen**

For balance of about 6 week's wages as Watchmaker  
£15-14-6

Theodor Lassen is listed individually as a watchmaker between 1858-59 at 107 South Head Road, and in 1861 at 90 Woolloomooloo Street.<sup>17</sup> It is tempting to think of Lassen as yet another Dane who joined the Hogarth/ Erichsen/ Quist workshop. With the demise of the firm Lassen must have gained employment as a workman with another firm, for his name as an individual trader does not appear in the 1863 *Sands & Kenny Trade Directory*.

#### **Hermann Finckh**

Jeweller

For different jewellery as per Bill rendered  
£154-1-6

1 week's wages £2-10-0

A native of Germany, Finckh arrived in Sydney in 1853.<sup>18</sup> His original bill is no longer filed in the Bankruptcy Papers. Finckh was paid his outstanding wages of £2-10-0 in full. The balance of his account was paid at 7/6d in the £, a total of £57-17-2. It is fair to assume that Finckh had some special skill, as yet unknown, for which the firm employed him on a part-time basis. In addition he bought and sold considerable quantities of jewellery that he either made or purchased within the trade. With the demise of Hogarth, the firm of Finckh and his partner Bockemann opened at 96 Market Street and exhibited at the 1861 Sydney Exhibition a gold bracelet and brooch later forwarded to London for the 1862 Exhibition.<sup>19</sup>

#### **John Berthold**

For about 3 year's wages per balance as shown by insolvent's books £150-0-0

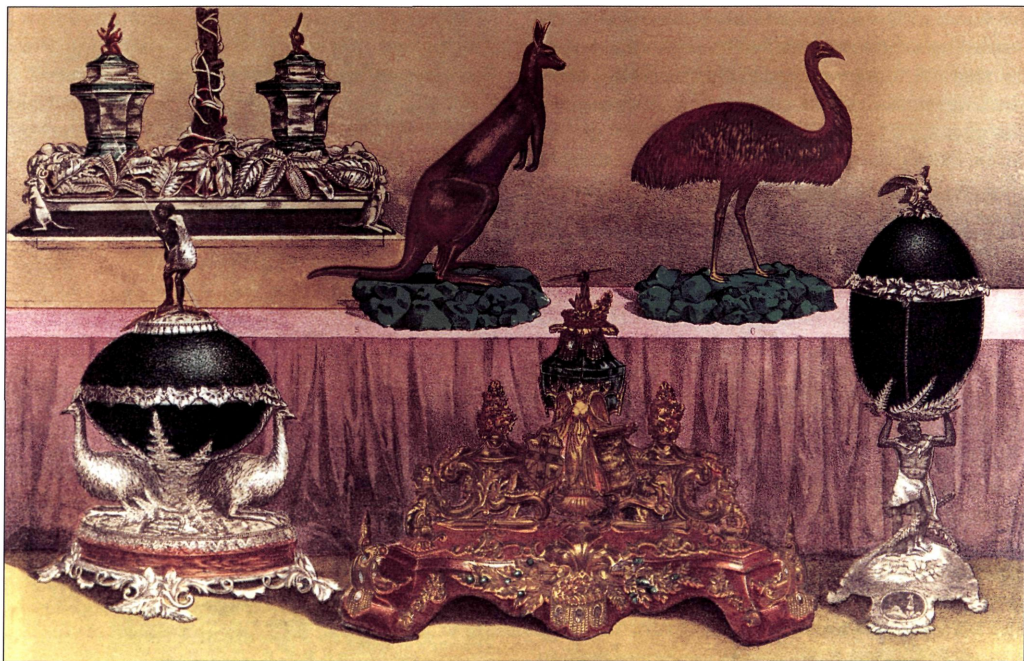
His affidavit states "Allowed £36 for 6 months wages at 28 shillings per week, the balance of £114 he received at 7/6d in the £, a total of £42-16-2". No occupation within the firm is given in the affidavit. However Berthold was to play an important part in the robbery at Hogarth's shop over Christmas 1862, and by this time his occupation was given as jeweller. I suggest in practice he was the shop manager, for in the 1862 Court case he was responsible for security and locking up the shop.

#### **James Bowen**

Jeweller

1 week's wages £3-10-0





*Plate 4. J.B. Waring, Masterpieces of Industrial Art and Sculpture at the International Exhibition 1862, pl. 292 shows the gold, silver, malachite and myall wood inkstand exhibited by Flavelle Bros; gold kangaroo and emu on malachite bases by Julius Hogarth; silver mounted emu egg cup by J. M. Wendt; gold inkstand made by Ernest Leviny; and silver mounted emu egg supported by the figure of an Aborigine, almost certainly made by Schomburgk for J. M. Wendt.*

Bowen must have been a jeweller of some consequence as his wages approximate to those of Quist.

**? Vialley**  
Bookkeeper  
Wages

£2-0-0

As noted by Robert Sempill the Official Assignee "The Insolvents' Books had been kept by a foreigner which occasioned much difficulty." Vialley was not to receive his money in the final settlement from the Court and did not submit an affidavit for wages due. Perhaps some of the blame for the demise of the firm rested on his shoulders.

**House servant** – no name given  
Wages

£1-10-0

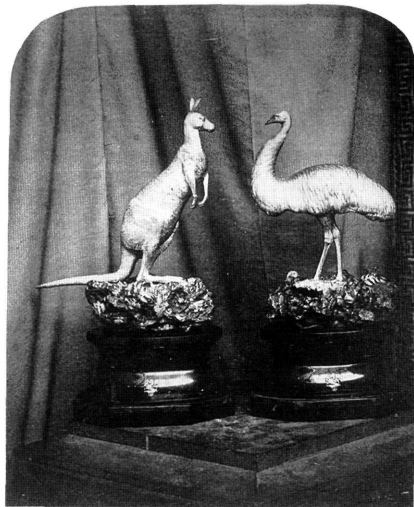
This was presumably someone working at Hogarth's house in the Glebe and he or she must have been paid off in cash.

**William Long**

The only creditor not an employee to receive

his money in full was the owner of the shop premises at 405 George Street. A former convict, publican and property dealer, Long (1797-1876) was listed in the Court papers as a wine merchant. He had purchased John Verge's important Georgian house *Tusculum* at Potts Point in 1848. He was owed two week's rent at £7 per week a total of £14-0-0.

Rent must have always been a problem for Hogarth who had many addresses during his short career in Sydney. The business commenced in 1853 at 255 George Street, moving in 1856 to 310 George Street, formerly the property of Mrs Ellard, widow of the early Sydney silversmith Alexander Dick. Hogarth's letter dated 13 August 1856 to James Macarthur, referring to the Victorian Gold Medal, gives this address. In 1858 the firm moved next door to 312 George Street, Alexander Dick's old premises adjoining Beckmann chronometer and watchmaker. Beckmann's friend, the printer and photographer John Degotardi, was presumably responsible for the introduction that resulted in the Auer centrepiece.<sup>20</sup>



**Plate 5.** Stereoscopic photograph by Quist of Julius Hogarth's gold kangaroo and emu. Collection: Castlemaine Art Gallery and Historical Museum, Castlemaine Vic.

In 1859 the partners were at 405 George Street the property of William Long, as shown by the bankruptcy papers. In February 1861, they are at 295 George Street.<sup>21</sup> Hogarth alone moved late in 1861 to 9 Hunter Street, sharing premises with Adolphus Blau a creditor in his bankruptcy proceedings, where he remained until 1863. It was from these premises that Hogarth was robbed precipitating a final move to 21 Hunter Street in 1864 prior to his departure for Victoria in 1866.

Various wholesale manufacturing jewellers and

silversmiths were owed money on the demise of the firm. Many had handed over goods in return for a promissory note. A promissory note is not drawn on a third party, but contains a simple promise by the debtor to pay a specified amount, usually on a specified future day to the person named on the note or to his order or to the bearer and acts as a form of security for the sale. The larger the sum of money owed the more likely that the debt would be covered by a promissory note. All the following creditors received settlement at 7/6d in the pound.



**Plate 6.** Stereoscopic photograph by Quist of Julius Hogarth's gold sculpture "natives on their return from the chase resting under a fern tree". Collection: Castlemaine Art Gallery and Historical Museum, Castlemaine Vic.

### **Adolphus Blau**

Jeweller

Promissory Note

£94-6-0

A native of Hungary, Blau arrived in Sydney in 1850.<sup>22</sup> Blau first advertised in Sydney in 1853 as a working jeweller at 489 George Street. It seems probable that he was by trade a wholesale manufacturing jeweller. The promissory note was presumably held as security against goods supplied to Hogarth and Erichsen but seemingly not taken into account was the debt of £4-9-0 owed by Blau to the firm.

Blau took the bankrupt Hogarth into his premises at 9 Hunter Street in 1861 and it was from this address that the robbery of Hogarth's stock took place over Christmas 1862. Blau was not going to lose money to Hogarth again and he was not owed money according to the second bankruptcy papers. Hogarth had been forced to move to 21 Hunter Street, by 1863 his place at number 9 being taken by Francis Jones the watchmaker.

### **Gustavus Schroter**

Jeweller

Different jewellery as per bill rendered £26-15-3

George Schroter is listed as a jeweller at 117 York Street in the first *Sands & Kenny Directory* covering the years 1858-59, and he appears to have been a self-employed working jeweller with no retail outlet. He is not listed in the trade directories as a jeweller at the time of the firm's bankruptcy.

### **Thomas James Felton**

Jeweller, 370 George Street

£6-14-0

Thomas Felton was established at this address by 1858. The debt is itemised in his bill dated March 1861 as follows:

May 31, 1859; 3 ivory brooches 7/6d, 1 mourning ring £1-8-0;

January 18, 1860; wedding ring 6/6d;

July 12, 1860; silver knife, fork and spoon £2-2-0;

August 11, 1860; silver snuff box £2-10-0;

a total of £6-14-0.

In his affidavit Felton states that the insolvents have set against him the sum of £3-6-0, as noted in the list of the firm's debtors, leaving the sum of £3-8-0 due.

### **Christian Hafer**

Jeweller

For different jewellery as per bill rendered

£9-13-0

Christian Hafer (b. 1828) arrived in Sydney from Hanover in 1857 and was immediately employed by Hogarth.<sup>23</sup> He soon left their employment and was in partnership with Henry Jansenn at 298 George Street by 1858.<sup>24</sup> By 1863 Hafer was working on his own from 2 Hunter Street.<sup>25</sup> Settled at 7/6d in the pound.

### **Henry Schilsky**

[Jewellery Importer]

The balance of account for jewellery £22-16-9

This was the largest account owed to a jeweller not covered by a promissory note, but unfortunately no itemised documentation survives in the bankruptcy papers. Schilsky, a Prussian, is not listed in any contemporary directory as a jeweller, but is noted at 27 Hunter Street as an importer presumably specialising in jewellery.

### **Veyret & Delarue**

[Silversmiths and Jewellers]

£14-8-9

Cyrille Veyret signed as principal of this firm of jewellers and silversmiths, having entered into partnership with Hippolyte Felix Delarue in 1856.<sup>26</sup> The bankruptcy papers give no indication of the firm's products nor the reason for the debt.

### **Alfred Joseph**

Watchmaker & Jeweller King Street

£10-12-0

Alfred Joseph was a supplier of, among other items, scrap gold to the firm, as shown in his account (*Plate 8*). The date April 1861 of this invoice may include bullion for the gold sculptures shown in *Plates 5 and 6*.

### **Flavelle Bros**

Jeweller

£16-0-0

The affidavit is signed by John Flavelle "as partner in the Firm of Flavelle Bros. & Co of Sydney Jewellers" and is for goods supplied as per account rendered, which no longer exists. As previously mentioned this may well relate to the supply of gold and silver in the manufacture of the inkstand or the silver mounted emu egg exhibited in Flavelle's name at the Sydney and London Exhibitions.

Promissory notes were due to three large firms of importers who wholesaled jewellery and silver products from around the world into Sydney and Melbourne. They were as follows:



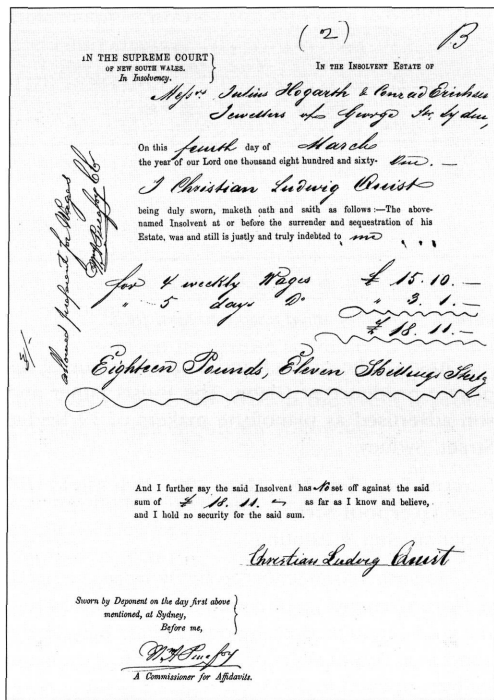


Plate 7. Oath sworn and signed by Christian Ludwig Qvist, 4 March 1861.

### Joseph Kohn & Co.

Promissory Note	£29-15-0
Promissory Note	£43- 0-6

Joseph Kohn was Austrian by birth and is listed in 1856 in New South Wales. By 1860 with his partner Frederick Kellermann, of *Bleak House* Little Coogee, they had formed the firm of Joseph Kohn & Co., 13 Hunter Street, Sydney. They were not listed as jewellers, watch or clock makers but only as importers, presumably importing silver or jewellery as wholesalers to the trade. The second promissory note was issued in favour of J Kohn & Co by Hogarth and Erichsen and was due on 12 December 1860. Prior to this date, J Kohn & Co transferred it to the late Edward Salamon<sup>27</sup> whose executors George King and Samuel Aaron Joseph were proceeding for settlement. The firm's list of debtors shows Kohn & Co of Hunter Street owing £35-0-0 a sum not seemingly taken into account.

### Levi & Seligmann, Melbourne

Promissory Note	£25-13-0
-----------------	----------

Bernard Levi and Daniel Seligmann are listed as wholesale jewellers in the Melbourne Directories at 28 Collins Street West. From the late 1850s to 1861 they are listed as importers and there is no entry for the firm in 1862. In 1863 the partners were listed in the *Sydney Directory* at 95 York Street. The promissory note was dishonoured and they asked Frederick Kellermann to act for them; his firm may well have been their agent in Sydney until 1863.

### Montefiore Graham & Co.

Promissory Note	£28-5-2
-----------------	---------

Jacob Levi Montefiore of Macquarie Street was one of the leading Jewish businessmen and citizens of Sydney and a Member of the Legislative Council. His firm supplied Hogarth and Erichsen with silverplate, their purchases totalling £129-16-4. As trade customers they received a 20% discount, leaving an outstanding account of £103-17-2, most of which had been settled.

The handwritten invoices, which are difficult to read, cover electroplated goods such as fish carvers with ivory and mother of pearl handles, dessert sets in dozens, sugar sifters, pickle forks, cruet stands at various prices according to the number of bottles – 7 bottle stands £3-6-0, 4 bottle stands £1-13-0, eggstands, toast racks, candlesticks, chambersticks, snuffer and trays, waiters and a canteen of flatware, of plain pattern incorporated in a large oak case, costing £68-4-10.

The balance of this account is calculated as follows:

Wholesale purchases	£129-16-4 less
20% discount	£103-17-2
Less paid on account	£ 75-12-0
Balance	£ 28- 5-2

### Feldheim Brothers, Melbourne

Promissory Notes Due:	
June 29 1860	£103-15-0
July 22	£ 71-12-6
September 11	£ 95- 4-9
October 11	£ 51- 0-0
November 11	£ 50- 0-0
	£ -15-0
	£ 372- 7-3

The affidavit states Isaac and Hayman Feldheim are trading as Feldheim Brothers Melbourne. They engaged Louis Phillips to act for them in Sydney.

The firm was an importer and wholesaler of jewellery with a long history in Melbourne. By 1897 they had expanded as Feldheim Gotthelf & Co, registering their mark as silversmiths at Goldsmiths Hall in London, with premises in Sydney.<sup>28</sup> The firm had recently suffered a fire and over £4,000 worth of plate had been destroyed, yet sufficient stock was on hand in their warehouses to replace everything immediately. Their premises at 97 York Street consisted of five floors, 70 feet deep by 40 feet wide, containing the largest fashion goods, silks, silver and jewellery business in Sydney. The partners commenced their Sydney operations in 1865. Hayman died in Melbourne in 1886 and Isaac, a gentleman, in England in 1903 leaving nearly £75,000 split between Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

### Sigmond Hoffnung

Promissory Note

£17-4-6

Hoffnungs were fancy warehousemen and importers of 2 Wynyard Street and were owed for "goods sold and delivered by me to the said insolvents", but no further documentation exists in the record.

### Jules Lanseigne

Promissory Note

£52-4-11

Jules Lanseigne had issued this promissory note for three months from 17 May 1860 and it was due on 20 August 1860. No other record can be located of him in New South Wales. He is however recorded as a debtor in the firm's books owing £17-3-0.

### The Union Bank of Australia, Sydney

Promissory Note

£59-10-4

They were holding as security an unpaid promissory note to Hogarth and Erichsen made out by A. Dreutler & Co of Wynyard Street. [A Dreutler is listed as insolvent in *SMH* January 1861].

### PERSONAL DEBTS

Only two accounts remained unpaid relating to Hogarth's personal affairs:

#### D. Buist & Son, Sydney

Judgement and costs as per the affidavit of David Levy

£39-1-6

David Lawrence Levy of Lloyd's Chambers, 364 George Street, was the Buist family solicitor. Levy had taken Hogarth to the Supreme Court for non-payment of a debt, presumably that incurred by the

W. LATE 110, PITT STREET. Sydney April 10th 1861		A. HOGARTH & ERICHSEN	
WATCH MAKER AND JEWELLER.			
1850	Lorier delivered for old Gold & Diamond Brooch	5	2 0
April 17	Gold Watch	12	10 0
		5	0 0
18429	By cash	30	12 0
	Balance	10	12 0

Plate 8. Account of Alfred Joseph, 10 April 1861.

purchase of the piano listed in the parlour of his private residence at Glebe. The Buists father and son advertised as pianoforte makers of 19 Bridge Street, Sydney.

### Samuel Smedley, 551, (late 398,) Brickfield Hill near Liverpool Street.

Paperhanging & Painting

£7-16-6

Hogarth's connection probably arose as a result of Hogarth receiving the commission to manufacture the gold cup to be presented to William Randal, the contractor responsible for the Sydney to Parramatta Railway opened in 1855.

Smedley's son, John, (1841-1903) aged 14 was awarded the first prize in a competition having worked on the winning design with his cousin William Dexter, for a drawing showing a panoramic view of the station buildings between Sydney and Parramatta which was to encircle the cup. At the presentation ceremony held in Sydney's Royal Hotel in 1855 the subscribers were so impressed with the design and the youth of the co-designer that he was placed on a table in order to get a better view of him. A purse of 30 sovereigns was subscribed in the room and presented to young Smedley as a mark of their appreciation of his ability.<sup>29</sup>

Samuel Smedley ran a business as a painter, paperhanger, plumber and glazier. He had worked for Hogarth at his residence in Glebe supplying

10 rolls of flock wallpaper at 7/- a roll	£3-10-0
paint, varnish etc etc	12-0
48 feet of gilt moulding	£1-4-0
2 men's labour for 2 days at 15/- per day each	£3-0-0
total	£8-6-0

of which Hogarth had paid £2-0-0 in cash. Samuel Smedley had taken him to the District Court for

judgement incurring extra expenses in bailiff's fees and court charges.

## THE DEBTORS

The list of debtors drawn up by the firm's bookkeeper Vialley was qualified by the Official Assignee, Robert Sempill "The Insolvent's Books had been kept by a foreigner which occasioned much difficulty" - so much difficulty that only 22 debtors paid £37-2-0 from a list of 116 owing £326-16-0. Hogarth and Erichsen had listed only £25-2-6 as bad or doubtful.

The firm on its demise submitted a list in the hand of its bookkeeper Vialley suggesting that the firm was owed £326-16-0. In the event it proved possible to collect only the following:

	Due	Received
[Henry] Rotten MP [MLA] Medical Practitioner, The Sydney Club	£ 3-17-6	£ 1-18-0
Hardy Brothers [Jewellers] Hunter Street	£ 4-10-0	£ 4-10-0
A Salmon C/o Bank of New South Wales	£ 1-13-0	£ 1- 3-0
W W Billyard [Solicitors] [32] Hunter Street	£ - 8-0	£ - 8-0
[Meyer] Brodziak [Merchant] Wynyard Lane	£ - 4-0	£ - 3-0
Thomas Mort [Greenoaks] Darling Point	£ 3-18-0	£ 3-10-0
Robert P Abbot Solicitor 104 King Street	£ 3- 0-0	£ 1-10-0
[J Oswald] Gilchrist [Secretary to the] Bk N.S.Wales	£ -16-0	£ -16-0
Conrad Herald Office Hodgson Aust.Mut.Prov. Soct. [AMP]	£ - 3-0	£ - 3-0
[John] Baptist Gardener [Bourke St Surry Hills] Sir William Denison [Governor-General of NSW] Gold/Gould ? Post Office Hotel	£ 1-5-0	£ 1-5-0
Daniel Egan [MLA] [148 Castlereagh St] [Samuel] Emanuel [MLA] [105] Liverpool St	£ - 5-0	£ -5-0
[Louis] Goldring [Musical Instrument Maker] [291-293] George St	£ -12-0	£ -12-0
	£ -10-0	£ -10-0

Henderson Goulburn	£ 1- 9-6	£ - 2-0
Montague Levy [Merchant] [1] Wynyard St [Sq.]	£ -13-6	£ -11-0
Captain [Charles N] Lovell [Major of Brigade] Royal Artillery	£ 3-17-6	£ 3- 2-6
Dr [Charles] Muller [M.D.] [162 Phillip St]	£ 2- 2-6	£ - 8-6
Simon Zollner [Galvanized Iron & Tinworks] [80] York St	£ 3-10-0	£ - 6-0
Dayrell Chemist	£ 4- 5-0	£ 3- 0-0
Captain Blix <i>Grafton</i> Steamer	£15-16-6	£12-14-0
		£37- 2-0

[ ] Indicate additional information, not in the original transcript.

The debtors who actually paid include the Governor-General of New South Wales, Sir William Denison, three Members of the Legislative Assembly and Sydney's leading businessman, Thomas Mort, whose recently completed and still surviving house, *Greenoaks* at Darling Point, was at that time the largest private house built in Sydney. The largest debtor to pay, Captain Blix of the coastal steamer *Grafton*, was presumably acting as agent for Hogarth selling his jewellery or goods on a sale or return basis.<sup>30</sup>

John Hardy of Hardy Bros in Hunter Street was the only retail jeweller to pay his outstanding debts in full to Hogarth. At this date Hardy Bros had not commenced manufacturing for themselves, but were soon to employ Evan Jones and William Kerr as apprentices.

The money owed by Louis Goldring, the musical instrument maker, may have been for the supply or repair of the silver mounts to a musical instrument, such as a flute.

Those who owed money to the firm and failed to pay, were listed as follows:

	Due
Mr Mackay, St Kilda House	£ 2-10-0
Mr Hawley, Moreton Bay	£ -18-0
Ryan, Bathurst	£ 2-10-0
James Elliot Blake, Merchant Raymond Terrace, Hunter River	£ -10-6
Lubeck	£ 1- 0-0
Waugsuheim [Gustavus Wangenheim] Promissory note	£ 31- 7-6
Lt Bent HMS <i>Isis</i>	£ 1- 9-6



Captain Kelly	£ 1-11-6	E Weston Liverpool	£ 3- 0-0
Mrs M[Mary] Henfrey, Milliner		Wilkinson	£ - 2-6
[291] George St	£ 1- 8-6	Capt. McDermott, Redfern	£ 1-10-0
Dahle? Adelong	£ 4-16-6	Bradshaw, Bridge Street	£ -11-0
James Mort	£ - 6-6	Thomson Hatter. Geo. Street	
Ellis Julia Dealer 218 George St	£ 1- 5-0	[possibly James Thompson,	
Captain Johnston Royal Artillery	£ 2-10-0	Hatter. 18 William St 1858-59]	£ - 8-0
Mr Richardson (R and Wrench)		[Jacob] Lazarus [of Rossiter and	
George Street	£ 1-16-0	Lazarus] Wynyard [Square]	£ - 17-0
Harrison Police Inspector	£ 2-12-6	Hon [Francis] L Merewether	
P[eter] N[icol] Russell, Ironfounders		[MLC, 95 Forbes Street]	£ - 10-0
442 George St	£ 9- 2-0	Hood, Parramatta	£12- 2-0
Edwards	£ 1-10-0	Delphindale? of P N Russell & Co	£ - 8-0
Mrs McDermott [Boarding House]		Parker of Parker & Bates	
2 Domain Terrace, Richmond	£ 1-10-0	} Contra against £3-1-3	£ - 3-0
S N Simpson	£ - 3-6	Bates George St	
E Werner, New England	£ 5-17-0	} due as a creditor	£ 1- 4-6
Dextor	£ - 7-6	Mrs Parker. At Parker & Bates}	£ 1- 1-0
D W Jamieson	£ -10-0	Wilson, New England	£ 1- 4-0
Mr Murray, Liverpool Street	£ 5- 8-0	Mandelson[h]n [Lewis] Goulburn [Tailor]	£ -10-0
Tolano [Skinner's Hotel, George		[O] Suter [40] Parramatta Street	£ 3-11-0
& Hunter Streets]	£ - 3-0	Rogers Commissariat Store	£ - 7-6
[Captain] Dumaresque [Dumaresq]		Thomson Clarence Street. Doubtful	
[MLC Dawes Point. PR. <i>Tivoli</i>		[John Thompson Testimonial?]	£ 8-14-0
Rose Bay]	£ 1- 5-0	Joseph, Goulburn	£ 1- 5-6
Richardson [possibly of Richardson		Cohen J. York Street [possibly Jacob	
& Wrench]	£ 2-10-0	Cohen, Jeweller 306 George St]	£ -10-0
Johnstone Liverpool	£ 2-15-0	?Mr Green's Office	£ 1- 2-6
Dr [Edward] Sachs		Thomson	£ -12-6
211 Castlereagh St] Doubtful	£ 9- 2-0	Joseph Simmons [37 Bent Street]	£ 5-10-6
[Edward] Wrench [of Richardson		M. Consett Stephen [Solicitor to	
& Wrench].		Hogarth & Erichsen,	
Wildfell, [Edgecliff Rd]	£ -15-0	117 Elizabeth Street. p.r.	
Capt. Bell Yarra Yarra	£ - 8-0	Glebe Heights Glebe]	£ 7- 1-6
Cohn	£ -12-0	[Edwin?] Lewin Tinsmith Geo St	
Dr [Frederic] McKellar		[Lower Campbell St?]	£ -12-0
[67 George St]	£ - 2-0	A McArthur, Darling Downs	£ 1-10-0
R [Randolph] J [John] Want		Lieut. Maher? 12 <sup>th</sup> Regiment	£ -13-0
[MLC, Solicitor 139 Pitt St]	£ 1- 6-6	A. Linker [John Frederik Lincker	
Bowes, Rockhampton	£ - 3-0	shipchandler. 158 George St]	£ -10-0
Weymouth, Melbourne	£ 10- 0-0	Mr Silvester, Herald Office	
Dr [William] Bland [MLC,		[Lewis Silvester compositor,	
Surgeon 152 Pitt St]	£ - 10-0	14 Wellington St]	£ -10-0
Keele, Kiandra Doubtful	£ 2- 7-0	[Sir] E[dward] Deas Thomson Esq.	
H [Henry] K James [Bishop's		[MLC, former Colonial Secretary]	£ -12-0
Registrar 303 Brougham St]	£ 2-19-6	Dr Berncastle [Surgeon Wynyard Square]	£ 1- 2-0
Dr [John] McFarlane		Capt. F A Fitzgerald, 12 <sup>th</sup> Regiment	£ -12-0
219 Macquarie Street	£ -10-6	Duffy	£ - 8-0
J [James] Simmonds Sydney		Rossiter [Jos. Cartwright Warehouseman,	
[Lessee of Victoria Theatre		311 George St & Wynyard Lane]	£ -10-0
129 Woolloomooloo St] Doubtful	£ 1-13-6	O'Reilly, White Swan Inn	£ -10-0

Nicholson, Waverley	£ 1-15-0
Capt. [Gother Kerr] Mann, North Shore [Captain Royal Engineers lived at <i>Greenwich House</i> Greenwich]	£ 2-10-0
Professor [John] Clarke Eliz. St. [Professor of Dancing Elizabeth St]	£ 15- 0-0
H C Wall Ipswich	£ 3- 0-0
Gordon	£ -10-0
Miss Pitts, Peel River	£ 3-10-0
Robertson	£ - 5-0
J S Gaslesk? at French Cafe [Café Français, 287 George Street]	£ -4-0
R Frazer - & Co, Queens Place	£ 17- 8-0
Rayne or Payne? Castlereagh Street	£ 2- 0-0
Mrs Henderson (Scott H & Co) [James Henderson. Bayswater Woollahra]	£ - 2-0
..bye? Doubtful	£ 3- 6-0
Kumeruer? Domain Terrace	£ 1- 5-0
Mackenzie	£ 1- 5-0

[The following were a possible contra in the accounts.]

Adolphus Blau	£ 4-9-0
Thomas James Felton	£ 3-6-0
Joseph Kohn & Co.	£ 35-0-0
Jules Lanseigne	£ 17-3-0
	£ 326-16-0
Doubtful	£ 25- 2-6

To have such a large list of debtors so poorly identified even as to their full names or addresses shows little or no attention to book-keeping detail and is probably the prime cause of the firm's downfall.

It is surprising that Dr William Bland, R J Want, Francis Merewether and Captain Dumaresq, all Members of the Legislative Council, the highest executive body in the Colony, could not be pressed to pay their debts. The same applies to Sir Edward Deas Thomson, the former Colonial Secretary and the only permanent member of the Legislative Council.

Captain Gother Mann<sup>31</sup> also patronised Sydney's leading cabinetmakers as evidenced by the worktable,<sup>32</sup> chiffonier<sup>33</sup> and secretaire bookcase all ensuite sold by Coleman Page on the death of his son, also Gother Mann at *Greenwich House*, Greenwich in 1949. Mr Tolano who ran Skinner's Hotel on the corner of George and Hunter Streets must have been at one time a good friend of Hogarth

for it was from this address that Hogarth applied for his naturalisation certificate. It is tempting to link "Thomson Clarence Street" with John Thompson, the former Deputy Surveyor-General who received a Hogarth and Erichsen silver centrepiece in October 1859<sup>34</sup> now in the Powerhouse Museum.

With debtors from Moreton Bay, New England, Rockhampton, Parramatta, Goulburn, Ipswich, Peel River and the Darling Downs, Hogarth's connections with country Australia in Queensland and New South Wales will one day be worthy of further investigation.

*Part 2 of this article will cover Hogarth's robbery, the second bankruptcy in New South Wales and the third bankruptcy in Victoria. I would like to thank John Wade for his editorial help and the discovery of the newspaper report of Hogarth's Lady Denison presentation. I would also like to thank Elizabeth Ellis at the Mitchell Library, Sydney for the reference in Freeman's Journal relating to the Randal Gold Cup.*

## Notes

- 1 *SMH* 13 Dec 1852 p. 2; Eva Czernis-Ryl, "Early Australian Statuette, A Story of Julius Hogarth and Ricketty Dick" *Australian Antique & Fine Art Dealers' Fair*, Sydney 1996, pp. 6-10.
- 2 Little is known of the background of Conrad Erichsen. His death certificate issued on 6 July 1903 gives his occupation as jeweller. He died of senile decay in the George Street Asylum, Parramatta. His father is listed as Neil Erickson (sic) a musician, his mother Anna Helena. Unmarried, he had spent 53 years in NSW and was born in Norway, place unknown.
- 3 Archives Authority of New South Wales, AO Rel 129, Colonial Secretary Register of Certificate of Naturalisation, Register 1, No. 781, Julius Hougaard,
- 4 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 19 February 1861, page 11, column 6. This newspaper reference refers to the presentation vase for Lady Denison, Hogarth having been commissioned by a number of her lady friends to manufacture a present prior to her departure. "The body of the vase is formed as a handsome emu's egg nestled in fern leaves of frosted silver, these being supported on a stem and base of bright silver, upon which are placed, in gold, the emu, the kangaroo, and the native companion [brolga]... The handles are formed of convolvulus stems, a black snake being cunningly entwined in each... The vase itself is fourteen inches in height,

- and, when placed on a stand of myall wood which is to be inlaid with gold and silver ornaments it will be two feet high." It bore a presentation inscription for the 19 January but as it was not ready presumably because of Hogarth's pending bankruptcy it was sent by ship a month later.
- 5 J B Hawkins, *Nineteenth Century Australian Silver*, vol 2, p 270, "Specimen of Electrotypes", Quist; "Inkstand and Emu Egg, mounted" exhibited by Flavelle Brothers; "Bracelet and Brooch manufactured from Australian Gold" by Messrs. Finckh and Bockemann; "Two Emu Eggs mounted" exhibited by Brush and MacDonnell.
  - 6 Item 338, *The International Exhibition of 1862, The Illustrated Catalogue of the Industrial Department Vol III, Colonial & Foreign Divisions*.
  - 7 J B Hawkins, *op. cit.* vol 1, pl 101.
  - 8 This was ordered from Hogarth in 1856, *ibid.* vol 1, p 132.
  - 9 *Ibid.* pl 187.
  - 10 NSW State Records Bankruptcy Papers Julius Hogarth and Conrad Erickson [sic] No. 5254 2/9022.
  - 11 *ADB* vol. 2, p. 504f *q.v.* James Tegg.
  - 12 *ADB* vol. 6, p. 191f *q.v.* Montagu Stephen.
  - 13 Valued by Mr Henry Cockburn of the firm Cockburn and Israel Auctioneers of 345 Pitt Street for a fee of 10 shillings on 11 January 1861.
  - 14 *SMH* 26 January 1859. *SMH* 8 October 1857 notes the first recorded mounted emu egg designed by Thomas Rudd and made by Mr L. Harvey.
  - 15 *SMH* 11 February 1861. This report gives the makers as Clarke & Ghost, the firm being listed at 348 George Street in *Sands Directory 1863*.
  - 16 Sands & Kenny 1858-59.
  - 17 Sands & Kenny *Sydney Directory* 1858-59, 1861. In 1857 he was listed at 119 South Head Road.
  - 18 A. Schofield & K. Fahy, *Australian Jewellery* p. 182.
  - 19 For their mark see, J B Hawkins, *op.cit.* vol 1, pl 103. Sands and Kenny's *Sydney Directory* has the firm at 96 Market St in 1863, 71 Market St in 1864, 69 Market St in 1865, and anchored at 6 Hunter Street from 1866.
  - 20 On the Auer centrepiece, see J B Hawkins, *op.cit.* vol 1 p 132f. For an illustration of the firm's trade label at this address *ibid.* vol 1, colour pl 6.
  - 21 *SMH* 19 Feb 1861 p. 11, premises where the emu-egg vase presented to Lady Denison by her lady friends could be inspected.
  - 22 A. Schofield & K. Fahy, *Australian Jewellery* p. 161.
  - 23 Cavill, Cocks & Grace, *Australian Jewellers, Gold and Silversmiths, Makers & Marks, q.v.* Hafer.
  - 24 Sands & Kenny *Directory* 1858-9.
  - 25 Sands & Kenny *Directory* 1863.
  - 26 For biography of the firm see J B Hawkins, *op. cit.* vol 1, pp 179-81.
  - 27 Sands & Kenny, *Directory* 1858-59, Salamon Edward, York & Wynyard Streets, auctioneer.
  - 28 *Town & Country Journal*, 13 December 1890.
  - 29 *The Dictionary of Australian Artists*, edited by Joan Kerr, *q.v.* "Smedley, John. Painter and Architect". The panorama is reproduced from the original in the *New South Wales Railways Budget 1905*. The *Freeman's Journal* 24 November 1855 refers to the Randle [sic] testimonial "Through the politeness of the Artist, William Dexter, Esq., Professor of Drawing and Painting, Lyndhurst College, we have been gratified with the sight of his highly appropriate and truly national prize design of a testimonial to be presented to Mr Randle... it must however be borne in mind that the sum of £600 collected for this testimonial has been altogether made up by persons in Mr Randle's employ... The design executed by Mr Dexter... represents a large vase with semi globular lid, but which, by the cunning of true artist genius, so far imposes on the mind at first sight, that one at once concludes he sees only a part of a complete globe. This effect is produced by the rich border of gum tree leaves ... from which spring the Kangaroo and Emu, the globular lid is surmounted by a figure representing Justice awarding the crown to Merit. On the sides of the cup are two medallions one for the inscription the second containing reversed initial Rs for Randle and Railway ... A sketch of the Sydney and Parramatta Railway encircles the cup, it will appear in basso relievo on the work when executed in gold." The only man in Sydney who could have made this at this date was Julius Hogarth, but I have been unable to find a reference to its completion.
  - 30 Captain Blix is presumably the successor to Captain Wiseman of the steamer *Grafton*, who first saw the wreckage of the *Dunbar* on 21 August 1857. In 1874 Captain Blix was elected the first President of the Sydney Scandinavian Society, and conductor of its male choir; Olavi Koivukangas and John S. Martin, *The Scandinavians in Australia*, AE Press, Melbourne, 1986, p. 82.
  - 31 *The Dictionary of Australian Artists*, edited by Joan Kerr, *q.v.* G.K. Mann (1809-1899).
  - 32 Fahy and Simpson, *19th Century Australian Furniture*, plate 464.
  - 33 Christie's St Aubin's Without, Scone, December 1984, Lot 236 and introduction by J B Hawkins.
  - 34 J B Hawkins, *op.cit.* Vol 1, p. 138, plate 99.



# EXHIBITIONS

## ***Les Sauvages de la Mer Pacifique***

*Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney & National Gallery of Australia, Canberra*

The Art Gallery of NSW and the National Gallery of Australia have both put on display their French wallpapers showing a kind of historical panorama of European discoveries among the islands of the Pacific. Made near Lyon in France by Joseph Dufour & Co to designs by Jean-Gabriel Charvet, they show a colourful pageant of Noble Savages in luxuriant exotic surroundings. The 48 page catalogue with coloured illustrations is a good read and excellent value at \$9.95.

## ***Potteries of Brunswick***

*McClelland Gallery, Studio Park Languarrin Vic.*

An exhibition on the potteries of Brunswick in Melbourne, from 27 February until 16 April 2000. We've missed it, but there's a publication available entitled *The Potteries of Brunswick* by Gregory Hill for \$32 plus postage and handling.

## ***The World Upside Down, Australia 1788-1830***

*National Library of Australia, Canberra*

Another splendid exhibition with the National Library of Australia in Canberra trotting out a further selection of the superb early Australian historical material in its collection, following on the selections from the Nan Kivell Collection last year. Many of the

images are familiar from illustrations in books, but rarely seen in the flesh where they can be appreciated at their real size. The 58 page publication comprises seven essays and a check list of the exhibits, price \$19.95

## ***Mirror with a Memory: Photographic Portraiture in Australia***

*National Portrait Gallery, Canberra*

Canberra's National Portrait Gallery in Old Parliament House cleverly makes use of the rabbit warren of rooms by splitting this exhibition into two. Posed, contrived 19<sup>th</sup> century portraits reflect the older technology and are often nostalgic but often disturbing beneath the surface. This contrasts with 20<sup>th</sup> century material which can be more directly confronting – none more than the strategically placed title photograph. The show draws on public and private collections, juxtaposing professional photographer's work with amateur examples reflecting ordinary Australians' portraiture. The 84 page catalogue continues the strong publishing program of the NPG.

## ***Colonial to Contemporary***

*Powerhouse Museum, Sydney*  
Anne Watson gave Society members a preview of this exhibition in March, but now it's open and shows the rich spectrum of Australian material acquired by the Powerhouse Museum in the past ten years. There's too much material to mention here, with jewellery, furniture, silver, gold, lots of ceramics and fabrics from 1800 to 2000. It's well worth another visit.

# NEWS

## **Greg Peters' Churchill Fellowship**

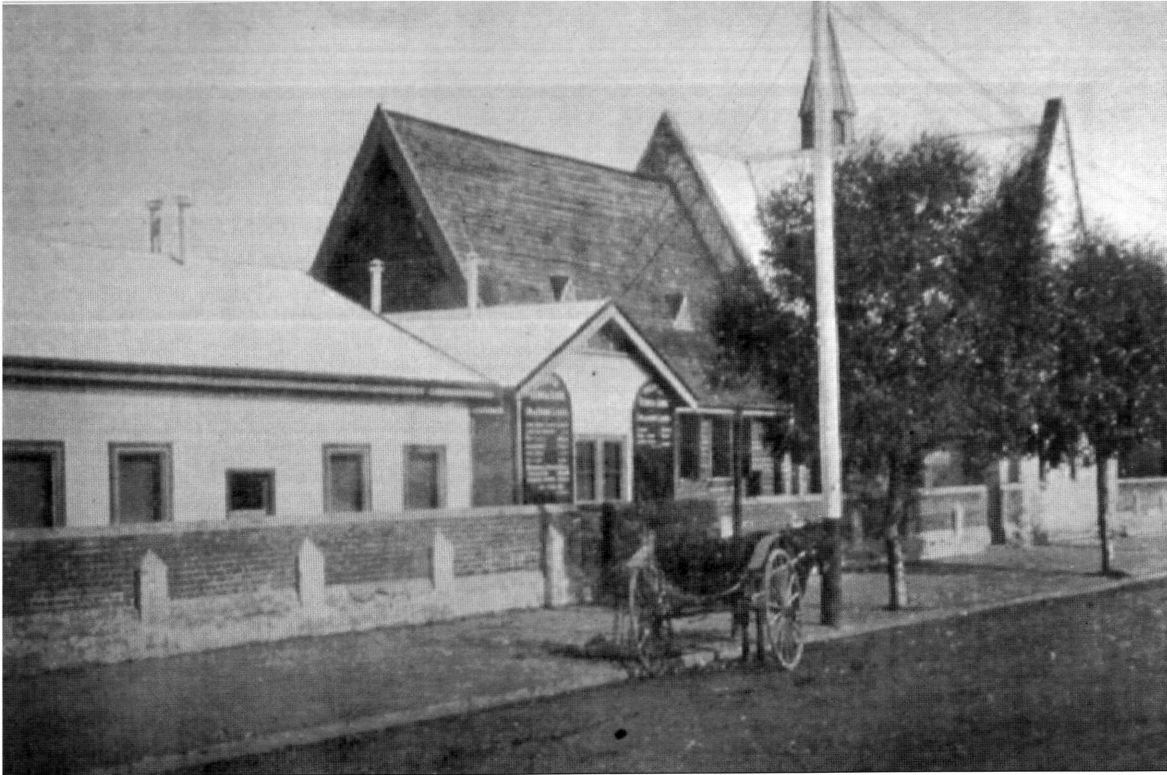
Australiana Society member Greg Peters has been awarded a Churchill Fellowship in 2000 to pursue his interests in furniture conservation in Britain, Germany and France.

A furniture conservator for five years in Canberra, Greg will now be learning techniques of fine cabinet work, understanding the history of European furniture design, and keeping abreast of the latest developments in conservation ethics. He will pay special attention to regulation of the furniture conservation trade, and how to set benchmark standards.

On returning to Australia, Greg aims to put into effect the practical knowledge he has gathered in work experience placements, and to establish links between our furniture conservators, heritage organisations and user groups to share and increase knowledge in the field.

## **The Search for Endeavour**

Archaeologists from the Australian National Maritime Museum will head off in July to resume the search for Captain Cook's *Endeavour* in the waters off Newport, Rhode Island. Cook's ship, renamed *Lord Sandwich*, was one of ten transports scuttled by the British to blockade Newport's outer harbour against the French in August 1778. The location of the scuttled ships is now known, and this year the team will survey all the likely wrecks to narrow down the possibilities among the 4,000 wrecks at Newport. Follow progress of the excavation on the website [www.cookships.org](http://www.cookships.org).



*Plate 1. The former Government Laboratories and Boys School which became Perth Technical School in 1900. It was here the Society of Arts held their annual exhibition from 1898. Reproduced from Perth Technical School Annual Report 1904.*

# Art and Design in Western Australia

**Part 2**

A Golden  
Decade

*Dorothy Erickson*

**T**his is the second of a series of articles covering artists and designers in WA to 1914, excerpts from the book edited by Dr Erickson *Art and Design in Western Australia: Perth Technical College 1900-2000*, published by Central TAFE, Perth this month.

**The Art School beginnings:  
Frederick Williams, Art  
Director**

Responsible Government was introduced in 1890 allowing the colony some control over its own destiny. The first Director General of Education, James P. Walton, was appointed in 1895 and set many schemes in motion including technical classes which were started in 1898 as evening classes run by local committees.<sup>1</sup> As part of this, an evening Technical Art School was instituted in Perth where "design and drawing for all artistic purposes are taught" to both sexes. The teachers were **F. M. Williams (Plate 7)** and a **Mr Hedderwick**.<sup>2</sup> Fremantle's Technical Drawing Class, taught by **Francesco Vanzetti**, was restricted to males only.

A more official start to what was to be called Perth Technical School was made in 1900. Alex Purdie was appointed in February as the first Director General of Technical Education enrolling the pupils for the school that would "re-open in March."<sup>3</sup> The official opening was however delayed until 16 May. The building used was the former Perth Boys School in St George's Terrace and associated Public Works Department offices to the east of this (**Plate 1**). Advertisements placed in *The West Australian* on 16 May 1900 read: "Classes for instruction in theory and practice of woodwork and metalwork, also in woodcarving. Art classes and classes for mechanical drawing."

Of the 69 students who enrolled in the school that year,

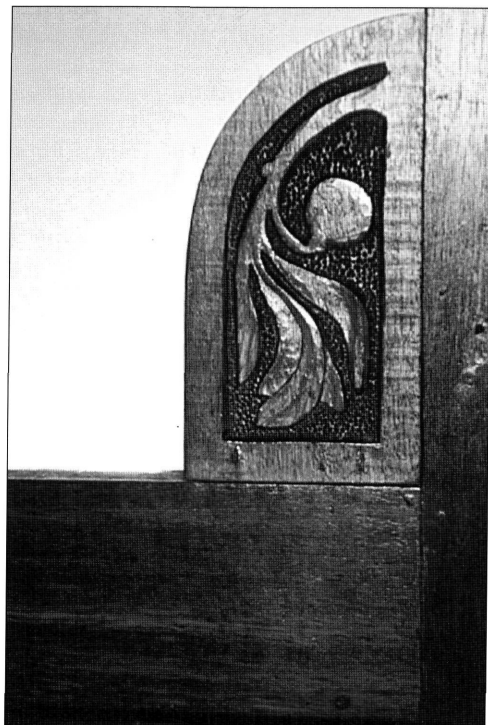
an average of 16 were in the Art classes, another seven were in Woodcarving and a further five in trades Metalworking. The Art classes, which were Drawing, were held Tuesdays and Thursday evenings from 7.30 - 9.30 pm. They cost 10/6d per term and were taught by Williams over 39 weeks. The School filled a need. It grew rapidly.<sup>4</sup> In 1901 it offered Drawing from the Cast and Design for Industrial and Artistic Purposes.

The philosophy behind the early courses was similar to British institutions of the same period.<sup>5</sup> When Williams wrote the prospectus for 1901, he stated that the School did not set out to teach trades as this was the province of apprenticeships, but that it did offer

"to those apprenticed to, or engaged in the trades, a chance of bettering their education or learning the scientific principles underlying many of the operations of their trades. ... (it) will endeavour to offer to all youth of this city a chance of profitably occupying their winter evenings to their mental and ultimately often pecuniary advancement." <sup>6</sup>

**Woodcarving**

Trade Staff included Englishman **William Howitt**, the teacher of Woodcarving for the first six years.<sup>7</sup> Woodcarving began as a structured two-year course for the trades with 32 graded exercises to be undertaken<sup>8</sup>. Students supplied



**Plate 2.** *Mattie Furphy: carved terminal bracket from her bouse in Clement Street Swanbourne. Photograph Robyn Taylor.*



**Plate 3.** J. W. R. Linton, bracket, polychrome woodcarving, c. 1916-22, size 332 x 230 mm. WA Museum, photograph Douglas Elford.

their own wood and tools purchased from Sandovers at a cost of 17/6d. Many took the classes but few took the exams so examples of their work are now hard to locate. However decorative terminals to wooden piers in student **Mattie Furphy's** house in Clement Street, Swanbourne were probably carved at the Tech (**Plate 2**). The similarity in the design to an exam exercise of 1904 (**Plate 4**) cannot be ignored. **James Linton's** superior handling of a similar exercise underlines his own design skills (**Plate 3**).

**William Howitt** (1846-1928), a nationally known woodcarver, taught first in the trade then in the art section of the School until 1906. Howitt studied art in England and was employed in decorating ships and restoration of ecclesiastical interiors. He migrated to Melbourne in the late 1880s where he worked for five

years on furniture for St Paul's Cathedral and then on other commissions. He came to Western Australia in 1896 at the height of the gold rushes. At the Paris Exhibition of 1900 he won a silver medal for a plaque of Faust's *Marguerite Leaving the Church* and another for a marquetry table and a font carved from jarrah made for the Forestry Commission.<sup>9</sup> His carved panels show a delicacy of touch and mastery of technique. In Perth art critic Leslie Rees commented on the *Marguerite* writing "Although the carving is at no point more than three-eighths of an inch in relief, the girl appears to stand remarkably boldly out of the picture."<sup>10</sup> Technical excellence was his forté.

Much of Howitt's commissioned furniture was in a Medieval or Neo-Renaissance style. Leslie Rees wrote

"Howitt was a man possessing remarkable dexterity with the chisel, which he used in making furniture, decorative panels and ornaments. So much so did he love to carve that his work sometimes becomes florid through excess of design."<sup>11</sup>

Linton did not approve of Howitt's teaching, writing in 1905

"due to the apathy of the students in the direction of design. With one exception, there is no attempt to bring out that individuality which every man or woman possesses; and I am very much afraid that the class will never go very much (if at all) above mediocrity unless a great effort is made in this direction. To copy the works of great masters is undoubtedly very good, but if in so doing we sacrifice our own individuality, it must surely mean retrogression, and we shall have justly earned the title of mere copyists."<sup>12</sup>

The classes were then reorganised under Linton with an additional instructor, **George Stirzaker**, who taught across three campuses Perth, Fremantle and Midland from 1904 to 1914.<sup>13</sup> By 1911, as Society of Arts exhibition reviews demonstrated, an improvement was very obvious. Linton took on these duties during WWI and was followed by William Murray and Harold Englund in the 1920s.

Unlike the Perth classes, woodcarving taught by Stirzaker at Fremantle and Midland was



## Art Classes.

Examiners—F. M. WILLIAMS; J. W. R. LINTON.

## FREEHAND DRAWING.

## First Grade.

Time ... One hour.

APPLIED ART.  
WOODCARVING.

## First Year.

Time ... Three hours.

## Second Year.

Time ... Three hours.

## Third Year.

Time ... Three hours.

## METAL WORK (REPOUSSE).

## First Year.

Time ... Five hours.

## EMBOSSED LEATHER.

## Second Year.

Time ... Five hours.

## DESIGN.

## First Year.

Time ... Three hours.

## DRAWING FROM THE CAST.

## First Grade.

Time ... Two hours.

Decorative floral cast, charcoal medium; the drawing to be in outline only; the whole drawing to be indicated, and at least one-half finished.

## Second Grade.

Time ... Three hours.

Decorative scroll, charcoal medium; the whole of the cast to be indicated with shadows and at least one-fourth finished.

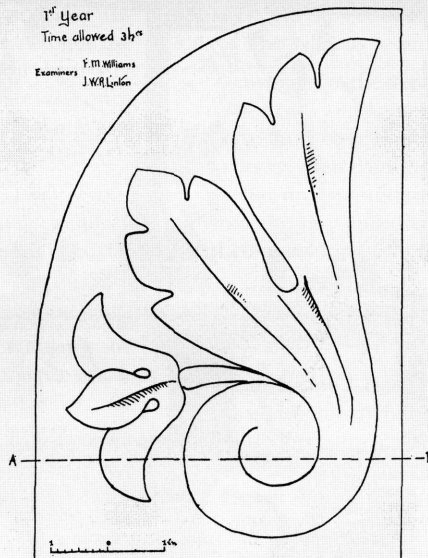
## Third Grade.

Time ... Three hours.

Subject: the Dancing Faun, charcoal medium; the whole figure to be blocked in with the shadows and about one-fourth finished; the hands and feet must not be omitted, although necessarily finished.

Particulars are given on the accompanying diagrams, which were the subjects of examination.

## Woodcarving

1<sup>st</sup> YearTime allowed 3h<sup>rs</sup>Examiners  
F. M. Williams  
J. W. R. Linton

Draw in freehand, upon the panel, the above design.

A border 2 inch is to be left round the panel: the ground is to be 1/2 inch deep.

Model the design as far as time will permit. You are not required to complete the panel; but one portion at least must be finished, and the other parts should show the different stages of your method of work.



Plate 4. Exam in woodcarving 1904. Perth Technical School Annual Report 1905.

mainly intended for amateurs - business and professional men, with a junior class for boys to which women were admitted. One female who enrolled was **Pansy Francis** (1884-1973), eldest daughter of a sea captain. She had remained at home to help look after the household and their gracious home *Hazelmere* in South Street, Fremantle. She studied woodcarving under Stirzaker at Fremantle in 1908 and worked in the medium from 1908 into the 1930s making furniture for her own use and as presents for family members.<sup>14</sup> Her own settle, in the WA Museum, was deeply carved with pansies (Plate

9). The Museum also has a tapering jarrah plant-stand carved on four sides with Western Australian wildflowers<sup>15</sup> and a music cupboard carved with Pan playing his pipes. A fine chest carved with irises, an elegant hall seat carved with lilies and an ornate china cabinet carved with dolphins are other examples of her industry.

#### A New Art Master: James Walter Robert Linton

When after two years Williams retired through ill health, he recommended James Linton (Plate 6) as his replacement. Linton had trained as an architect

and painter before coming to Western Australia in 1896. His art training was taken under a number of the more progressive teachers of the time, notably the Frenchman Alphonse Legros.<sup>16</sup> His father's presidency of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colour<sup>17</sup> enabled the son to mix with many prominent figures in the London art and design world, collecting memories which served him well.<sup>18</sup> The charismatic Linton was a gifted raconteur and a generous and entertaining teacher who inspired a fierce loyalty in his former students.<sup>19</sup> Kate O'Connor, for instance, regarded Linton highly.



*Plate 5. The Applied Art Room, Perth Technical School from the Annual Report, 1904 and 1907.*

Linton urged Australians "To create and develop a national art. He says 'create', 'do not imitate'."<sup>20</sup> Few of his students however had intentions of becoming professional artists. Most took the subject as part of another course or out of dilettante interest. Despite this his enthusiasm and dedication were infectious. He passed his teaching methods on to other memorable teachers, women such as Flora Landells, née Le Cornu (1888-1981) and [Frances] Cecil Eagleton, née Ross (1890-1976).<sup>21</sup>

Enthusiastic and conscientious, Linton worked hard to develop the courses. Having been trained at a time

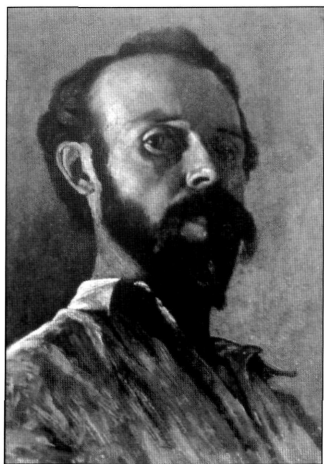
when artists and architects were interested in many areas of design he was able to cover the wide spectrum of teaching required in a school with a single instructor. He was already interested in making domestic art for his home. It was a simple matter to incorporate design for the applied arts into his teaching. It was a little harder to actually teach techniques but he practised and soon incorporated practical classes into the courses.<sup>22</sup> Linton concurred with Hackett and Woodward's philosophy of using art to assist industry and improve domestic surroundings. In his first Technical Art School report he wrote of

"difficulties which must

necessarily exist in a new country, where art generally is so little understood, and its importance, as an adjunct to our industries, but slightly appreciated. ... the self-satisfaction exhibited over inferior copies of other artists' work ... are in themselves difficulties which will need all the assistance of those here who hold in reverence art for art's sake."

<sup>23</sup>

Linton's teaching philosophy was revealed in an interview he gave to "a Correspondent" from *The West Australian* in 1904. He was quoted as saying: "It is best to lead by gentle means and by showing great examples."<sup>24</sup> Hal



**Plate 6.** J. W. R. Linton: *Self portrait* c1898. Private collection.

Missingham, a student in the 1920s, confirmed that he continued to believe in drawing as the basis of all art work "he was insistent that the whole business

of art was based on drawing, more specially life drawing. ... A long apprenticeship of hard study was obligatory."<sup>25</sup> He also taught the students the technical aspects of preparing canvases etc. and once a week the students' work was discussed in an open forum.

Innovations for 1903 (**Plate 8**) included commencement of day time classes as well as the practical classes in applied art. The course offered

"a thorough training of students in the practice of art, professional or amateur ... in these branches of the applied arts to give the students sufficient knowledge to enable them to put to some practical use their study of the fine arts."<sup>26</sup>

Classes were taken four days

a week, 10.00 - 12.30, 2.00 - 5.00, 7.30 - 9.30 pm from Tuesdays to Thursdays but only until 5 pm on Fridays. The syllabus required


"Drawing from the decorative casts, heads and figures, after this a short course of artistic anatomy; then painting from still life, drawing and painting from the life, and the study of composition.

"Modelling will be carried on in conjunction with these Art Classes.

"A Landscape Class will be formed for those who wish to take up this particular branch of art. A separate day will be set apart for this work, when students will be taken to some convenient sketching ground, where they may study from nature."<sup>27</sup>



**Plate 7.** F. M. Williams, *Design for a Salver and Cup*. WA Society of Arts Catalogue 1901.



**Perth Technical School.**

**Technical Art School**

**DAY AND EVENING CLASSES.**

MR. JAMES LINTON, Art Instructor.

DRAWING and PAINTING from the Cast, Still Life, and Life  
CLAY MODELLING and DESIGN  
A Landscape Class is held Every Thursday.

To aid the Students in Composition, a Subject is given every three weeks for Landscape and Figure, these sketches being submitted for criticism at the end of three weeks. Any Student of the Day or Evening Classes is Free to Compete.

WOOD-CARVING—A Class in this subject is held under Mr. Wm. Howitt.

**ALEX. PURDIE, M.A.,**  
DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

*Plate 8. Advertisement for Perth Technical School, WA Society of Arts Catalogue 1903.*

Kate O'Connor remembers going out around the Swan River under the lee of Mt Eliza. A Linton pencil and watercolour sketch captures the moment. O'Connor's pastel, *Old Pensioner*, exhibited with the Society of Arts in 1903 was a school exercise. Another old pensioner was earning money as a model ten years later when Cecil Ross drew him.

Students studied Design which included

"historic ornament and principles of ornament, the drawing of scale plans, elevations and sections of the work to be designed, and detailed drawings of the different parts. ... Where the student wishes to apply the knowledge and skill acquired to his or her daily occupation, special attention is given to encourage the development

of original design for that purpose."<sup>28</sup>

Linton had absorbed the English designer and illustrator Walter Crane's lessons of many years before - that a geometric plan was the backbone of decorative design. The lines of the quandong plants in the decorative brackets in the WA Museum reflect the curves of the circle, yet are so disposed as to fill the corner of the square, giving an impression of angularity. They were probably made as a demonstration piece between 1916 and 1922 when Linton taught woodcarving at the Tech<sup>29</sup> (*Plate 3*). It was the sort of design work he encouraged the students to undertake.

Student attendances averaged 25 in 1902. Only two attempted to do any applied work besides woodcarving but Linton strongly encouraged others, writing that the students had

"worked with interest and a determination to overcome the difficulties they had only half realised when they first entered the school. Decorative work ... It is hoped that next year more of the students will turn their attention to this branch of the fine arts, as it is this work which will have the most effect on the future of Art in this State."<sup>30</sup>

Linton was rewarded with an increased number of students who, he said "without exception, worked with an enthusiasm that deserves the successful results attained."<sup>31</sup>

The studio (*Plate 5*) was completely renovated in the 1902-3 summer holidays to cater for this

"and, with its large stock of excellent casts, forms one of the most attractive departments of our school."<sup>32</sup>

"On the social side, the year has been as successful as in school work proper, unbroken harmony being maintained between staff and students, and all working strenuously to maintain and increase the prestige of the school. The crowning social function was the Second School Dinner, held at the Fountain Café, when his Lordship the Bishop of Perth took the chair."<sup>33</sup>

Many of the art students were local social luminaries such as Bessie Rischbeith, Kate O'Connor, Mrs Nathan Knight, Alice Richardson (later Mrs Bessell-Browne), teacher Alice Glyde and the artists Gertrude Ford and





**Plate 9.** *Pansy Francis, jarrah settle carved with pansies c 1908, 1185 x 1100 x 470 mm. WA Museum, photograph Douglas Elford.*

Monna Beel. Ernestina Levinson and Mr G. C. Austen were also students. Linton socialised with the students and married one, Charlotte Barrow.

By 1903 the numbers had risen to 34 on average and it became necessary to limit enrolments. This year students Kate O'Connor and Mrs A. Morrison jointly won Bishop Riley's prize for Applied Art. A box made and exhibited by O'Connor is thought to be that in the WA Museum. Scholarships were introduced to reward the best students.<sup>34</sup> Star pupils of 1905 were **Flora Le Cornu (Landells) (Plate 10)**, Alice Richardson and Tom Paterson.

In 1905 the director of Perth Technical school Alex Purdie wrote that



**Plate 10.** *Flora Le Cornu (Landells), Still Life with Geraniums, oil on canvas 495 x 745mm, 1905. Collection Arthur Dall.*

"This department has made more progress than any other part of the School, and this is chiefly due to the energy and enthusiasm of our Art Instructor Mr J. W. R. Linton. ... The chief development has been in the direction of applied art, and it seems likely that this will form one of the largest departments of the School work ... It is certain that this Art School and its instructor will play no small part in the development of public interest in the tasteful adornment of the interiors of our homes."

Linton's classes were influential and this is further explored in the next instalment.

#### Notes

- 1 *Education Dept Report* 1899 vol. 1, no 15 p. 42. Newspaper reports "Society of Arts. Annual Meeting" *Morning Herald* 18 Mar 1899 indicate classes were to start in April 1899.
- 2 *The West Australian* (WA) 4 Dec 1899 p. 3.
- 3 WA 13 Mar 1900.
- 4 By 1915 this had risen to more than 200 in total.
- 5 For instance Reading University under Walter Crane aimed "to make the study of the principles of art and the practice of drawing a part of general education; ... promoting the study of art as applied to handicrafts, manufactures, and industries" (*The Studio* 1898 p. 202).
- 6 *Perth Technical School Annual Report* (PTSAR) Feb 1901 p. 11.
- 7 Classes were taken in Roe St behind the James St Boys School. By 1903 all were housed on the one site absorbing the rooms of the

Geological Survey.

- 8 New casts and models were made in 1910.
- 9 Howitt also exhibited in Glasgow, Roubaix, Panama, Adelaide and London winning other medals.
- 10 WA 30 June 1928. This panel has not been located.
- 11 Leslie Rees, "Perth", *Art in Australia* 3rd Series no 26, Dec 1928. Photographs held by the Art Gallery of WA provide evidence of this.
- 12 *Perth Technical School Annual Report* 1905 pp. 25-26. Howitt ceased to teach after 1906.
- 13 George Stirzaker appears to have ceased teaching in 1915 when some people with Austrian or German names were interned. J. Abercromby taught woodcarving at Fremantle from 1912-24.
- 14 Other furniture is in the collection of the family.
- 15 WA Museum accession no Ch 82.187.
- 16 For further information on his painting and training, see Anne Gray, *Line, Light and Shadow: James W. R. Linton: Painter, Craftsman Teacher* Fremantle, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1986.
- 17 He was also a member of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society from 1884-1891.
- 18 Leighton, Burne-Jones, Wilde, Whistler, Crane, Orrock, Bragwyn, Clausen, Orpen - according to Leslie Rees in "An art writer of the 1920s looks back", *Art Gallery of WA Bulletin* 1979, pp. 34-39.
- 19 Hal Missingham, Jean Lang and others paid tribute to his teaching.
- 20 "Ladies Column" *Daily News* 27 Aug 1902.
- 21 Frances Cecil Ross was the eldest daughter of the feminist Edith who started one of the earliest private schools for girls in Western Australia, now St

Hilda's. Cecil is a family name.

- 22 The South Australian equivalent concentrated on design for many years, and English courses, in particular that at the Royal College, were not as advanced in drawing from life or in practical instruction as this provincial outpost. See Christopher Frayling, *The Royal College of Art. 150 Years of Art and Design*, London, Barrie and Jenkins, 1987, pp. 66-84.
- 23 PTSAR 1903 p. 20.
- 24 WA. 23 July 1904 p. 48.
- 25 Anne Gray, *op cit.* p. 45.
- 26 PTSAR Feb 1902 p. 38.
- 27 PTSAR Feb 1902 p. 38.
- 28 PTSAR Feb 1902 p. 38.
- 29 They can be seen above a door in a photograph on page 36 in Gray's *Line, Light and Shadow*.
- 30 PTSAR 1903 p. 20.
- 31 PTSAR 1904 p. 23.
- 32 PTSAR 1903 p. 13.
- 33 PTSAR 1903 p. 11.
- 34 *Government Gazette* WA 1904 p. 3103.

#### Dr Dorothy Erickson

Dorothy Erickson is an artist and art historian resident in Perth. Dr Erickson was awarded her Ph D from the University of Western Australia for her thesis on gold and silversmithing in Western Australia. She is a former editor of *Craftwest*, Western Australian editor for *Artlink* and contributor to many journals including *Craft Arts International*. She is just completing a history of design in Western Australia with profiles of 50 contemporary designer makers.

Dr Erickson has a busy schedule exhibiting her jewellery in Japan, Melbourne, Vienna and Sydney last year, with new shows coming up in Japan and Vienna.

William  
Kerr

## Colonial Silversmith 1838-1896



*Judith Green*

**W**illiam Kerr was notable for his extravagant designs of presentation epergnes with multiple cast figures and themed landscapes. Judith Green, granddaughter of the silversmith's sister Rebecca, recounts his story from family history and her own research into birth, marriage, death, and land records. The photographs were supplied by Lois Bedggood, wife of William Kerr's great grandson.

William Kerr, colonial silversmith, came to Australia from Ireland at the age of three. His father, grandfather, and great grandfather were bootmakers from Londonderry. William and his family emigrated to New South Wales in 1841 as bounty immigrants, escaping from the poverty of Ireland, and encouraged by the bounty agents' exhortation that they were going

to found a country. The family was beset by hardship and tragedy during their early years in Sydney but William emerged as a fine colonial craftsman. His work in silver, where he replicated Australian flora and fauna - tree ferns, kangaroos and emus - and used opal, shells and emu eggs to ornament his work, reflects the flowering of his spirit in a new found home.

William Kerr was born in Donegal, Northern Ireland and baptised on 1 July 1838. He was the second son and third child of Andrew Kerr and his wife, the former Eliza Mary Laird from Donegal. The Kerrs were lowland Scots who had settled in Northern Ireland in the 17th or 18th centuries under the Plantation system. The Lairds had small holdings of land in the Parish of Templemore, which straddles the counties of Donegal and Londonderry.

Both families were staunch Presbyterians, thrifty and hardworking, and in the view of Dr John Dunmore Lang, ideal settlers for New South Wales. In 1839, the Kerr family applied to emigrate to New South Wales under the Bounty Immigration Scheme. The Australian colonies were short of labour for the burgeoning pastoral industry, and paid a bounty for labourers



landed in good health. The Kerrs were barely literate, and the bounty agents claimed that the Kerrs were farm workers to increase their chances of selection. They also falsified their ages. The older members of the family stated that they were much younger than they really were, as there was an age limit for bounty immigrants.

William's grandfather, Robert Kerr, had arrived with his family in 1840, on board the *Crescent*. Accompanying Robert were his son John, his unmarried daughters Elizabeth, Rebecca, and Mary, and his married daughter Margaret with her husband, Anthony Doak, and their four children. Andrew and Eliza Kerr with their three children Jane, James and William, set sail the following year. They embarked on the *New York Packet* which left Greenock on 8 July 1841 with 284 immigrants and passengers on board. They had a terrible trip; provisions were inadequate, and smallpox broke out. The ship's surgeon contracted smallpox, and Andrew Kerr, who was in charge of many of the unmarried bounty women, had to tend the sick. The Kerr family was fortunate to survive, as so many died during the voyage or in quarantine.

The *New York Packet* arrived in Sydney on 23 October 1841, and was quarantined for over six weeks, together with the pilot. Terrible as the voyage had been, worse was to follow in quarantine. An epidemic of typhus broke out and the treatment of the time, bleedings and emetics, must have been appalling for the already weakened immigrants. The *New York Packet* surgeon was later



**Plate 2.** The Kerr family. Harry Kerr is the jaunty man with the stick at left, Sarah Kerr at right. Courtesy Lois Bedgood.

charged with incompetence.<sup>1</sup> The ship was released from quarantine on 18 December 1841, and the immigrants released about 1 January 1842. The bounty was refused on Andrew and his family because the shipping company had not provided proper care. Possibly the ruse of age falsification was also uncovered. This left Andrew free

to take employment in the city instead of working as a farmhand in the country.

Andrew Kerr's brother Robert arrived later in 1842 without mishap, and the brothers set up as boot-makers in the Woollloomooloo area. In 1848 the Kerr families bought houses with shopfronts in William and Palmer



**Plate 3.** Sarah Kerr (third from right) celebrating 60<sup>th</sup> birthday with her sons and family on 1 January 1905. Courtesy Lois Bedgood.



Streets on part of the Woolloomooloo land granted to Alexander William Riley and established small businesses. Eliza Kerr died on 28 June 1852 and her husband's sisters Margaret Doak and Rebecca Kerr assumed the care of her young family. Margaret and Rebecca were remarkable women, ambitious but also generous. They bought properties as dowries for the young women in the extended family, and ensured that all the young men were trained for professions.

William Kerr and his brothers, James and Andrew, became watchmakers and worked together in a shop in Palmer Street. Sadly, James died from consumption on 19 June 1858 aged 22, and Andrew died on 3 November 1863 aged 21. William then established a small jewellery business at 68 William Street, in partnership with Frederick Morris. The business, known as Kerr & Morris, Working Jewellers, lasted for about a year<sup>2</sup>. Frederick Morris then established his own business in Oxford Street, but remained on good terms with William, because Frederick named his first son after his former partner. In 1864, William went to work for Hardy Bros., Jewellers of Hunter Street, and for eleven years he was their principal manufacturing jeweller<sup>3</sup>.

In 1863 William Kerr bought a house in Moncur Street Woollahra, and lived there for six years until he sold the house for £130 to Frederick Pitt Pines, a pianoforte salesman. William then bought a substantial property in Wharf Road Balmain with a waterfrontage to Snails Bay. He sold this property in 1875 to Lucius O'Brien, a barrister, for



*Plate 4. The enamelled silver shield presented by "The Citizens of Sydney to HMAS Sydney ... to commemorate the first visit of the Commonwealth Fleet" 4 October 1913, made by W. Kerr. Collection Department of Defence, photograph courtesy Australian National Maritime Museum, Sydney.*

£820, and used the capital to establish his own business in the city. He rented and lived above the shop at 574 George Street, opposite St Andrew's Cathedral, and in 1882, opened a second shop in King Street. In 1883, the principal business was relocated to 544 George Street opposite the Town Hall<sup>4</sup>.

William Kerr's marriage to Sarah Thornton (*Plate 1*)

broadened William's horizons. Sarah was the daughter of Thomas Thornton, a builder, and a relative of George Thornton (1819-1901). When William Kerr married 19-year-old Sarah on 6 September 1864, he was introduced into a world of politics, business, freemasonry and sport. George Thornton was first chairman of Woollahra Council, Lord Mayor of Sydney,

Member of the Legislative Council, businessman and sportsman. By moving in this world, William Kerr was able to obtain many commissions for presentation pieces, epergnes to decorate official dining tables, and sporting trophies. Much of his business was in making Masonic medals.

The exuberance of the Thornton world is evidenced in William Kerr's sporting trophies which display cricket matches, bowling tournaments and horse races. George Thornton was a Commissioner for the 1879 International Exhibition at which William Kerr was a successful exhibitor, winning awards for his silver statuette of Captain Cook and for jewellery pieces. William Kerr became a patron of the sport of cycling when his son Walter became a champion cyclist. Walter is remembered as the first cyclist to ride over the Blue Mountains.

William Kerr was short in stature but an impressive looking man with luxuriant auburn hair and bright blue eyes. A jovial, generous man, he remained close to his sisters and all the members of his extended family (*Plate 2*). The Kerrs enjoyed each other's company, and were supportive of one another in business ventures. They all had a keen eye for business. William's sister Eliza married a builder, Angus Stewart, and taking advantage of the building booms in 19th century Sydney, the families became astute land speculators. William's aunts, Margaret Doak and Rebecca Kerr had become successful dressmakers and milliners in Sydney, and had established a drapery shop in Pitt Street. Margaret and Rebecca borrowed £400, and with William

bought speculative land with water views around Sydney Harbour. They held land at Balmain, Mosman and Hunter's Hill. For a time, William and Sarah Kerr lived with their children at Wharf Road, Balmain, and at *Riversleigh*, 12 Ferry Street, Hunter's Hill.

It was at William's home in Wharf Road, Balmain, that his sister Rebecca married Charles Vandenberg, whose family in London had been Dutch goldbeaters. The Vandenberghs had emigrated in 1854, lured no doubt by gold discoveries, but had settled on a farm at Robertson in the Southern Highlands of New South Wales. William often stayed with Rebecca's new family, walking in the rainforests of the Jamberoo and Kangaroo Valley national parks, and translating the tree ferns, rock lilies and lyre birds into his silverware.

William Kerr died on 9 August 1896 from throat cancer and was buried in Waverley Cemetery. Three of his sons, Harry C., William T., and Walter L., continued the family business after their father's death. They continued the close connection with the Town Hall; they made the gold links for the city's mayoral chain and in 1913 made the massive silver shield (*Plate 4*), with over 400 ounces of silver, presented by the citizens of Sydney to the new light cruiser, HMAS *Sydney*.<sup>5</sup>

In 1922 they bought the freehold of the George Street shop for £24,000. They closed the shop in George Street in 1938, and in the same year they gave his 1879 cricket trophy to the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences together with his

exhibition certificate.<sup>6</sup> The two elder brothers retired, but Harry C. Kerr moved to Park Street where the business was carried on by his son H. F. (Bill) Kerr.<sup>7</sup>

When William Kerr died at Sydney in 1896, his estate was sworn at under £2,681. Today his major works, some of which are in the Sydney Town Hall collection (a trowel and three epergnes, all connected with Mayor C. J. Roberts) and the Powerhouse Museum are valued at more than \$500,000.

### Judith Green

Judith Green is a descendant of William Kerr's sister Rebecca and a keen researcher. Graduating from the University of Sydney, she has worked in the libraries of the Australian National University and the University of New England. She now lives in Adelaide.

### Notes

- 1 J. D. Foley, *In Quarantine*, pp 39-41.
- 2 Kevin Fahy, "The Roberts' Presentation 1879" *Australiana* vol. 11 no. 2 June 1989, pp. 41-46.
- 3 Advertisement, *Illustrated Sydney News* 16 October 1875 and 7 February 1876.
- 4 Fahy, *op cit.* p 46.
- 5 The shield was transferred from the Naval Steps at Fort Macquarie to the ship, commanded by Captain J. C. Glossop, on 18 March 1914. *SMH* 19 March 1914.
- 6 J. B. Hawkins, *19th Century Australian Silver*, vol. I, pl. 145; John Wade, *Sydney International Exhibition 1879*, Sydney, Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences 1979, p. 34.
- 7 J. B. Hawkins, *19th Century Australian Silver*, vol. I, pp. 162-172, esp. p. 164.



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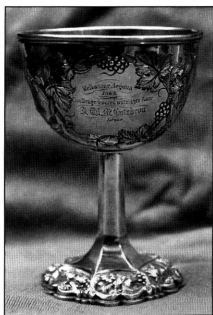
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Exhibition* 1988, cat. no. 191, illustrated p. 42.

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