

# AUSTRALIANA

FEBRUARY 2002

VOL. 24 NO. 1



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# AUSTRALIANA

FEBRUARY 2002

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## AUSTRALIANA CONTRIBUTIONS

Send editorial contributions and  
advertising for *Australiana*, preferably  
by email or on disc or CD to:

John Wade  
President, Australiana Society  
10 Porter Street  
BONDI JUNCTION NSW 2022

Tel (02) 9389 4404  
Mobile 0408 212 242  
email: johnwade@iprimus.com.au  
info@australiana.org

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*COVER Woolmers* at Longford, Tasmania.  
Photo courtesy Woolmers Trust, Longford.

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# The 1839 Gillows commission to furnish Woolmers in Van Diemen's Land for Thomas and Susannah Archer

John  
Hawkins

In September 2000, antique dealer John Hawkins visited *Woolmers* near Longford in northern Tasmania for the first time. Recognising the furniture as being by the Lancaster firm Gillows, he presents the results of his research into the *Woolmers* and Gillows archives to confirm this attribution. Though Gillows furniture survives in some of the grand houses of England, it is rare, if not unique, to find a middle-size house still with its original furniture.

From 1820 the number of free settlers with capital immigrating to the colonies of Van Diemen's Land and New South Wales increased dramatically. Many of them were of Scottish origin, for the government officials of both settlements, from Governor Brisbane down, were largely from Scottish backgrounds. The resulting close contacts with Scotland show up in the number of unassisted free Scottish settlers departing from the Edinburgh port of Leith.<sup>1</sup> The Scots, as in Edinburgh, created a New Town in both Hobart and Sydney. The New Town in Hobart<sup>2</sup> is particularly notable for its surviving stone Neo-Classical, single-storey townhouses based on Scottish designs<sup>3</sup>

(plates 1, 3, 4, 5). These emigrant Scottish families came with considerable capital and were mainly of the mercantile class. In 1822 a group application was lodged by '8 men of property all heads of families', who wished to go out 'as a group of about 60 persons, proposing to take with us a surgeon, a schoolmaster, and two or three artificers, servants, etc'.<sup>4</sup>

A change to the *Money Lending Act* in 1830<sup>5</sup> enabled Charles Swanston, Managing Director of the Derwent Bank, to claim that in Van Diemen's Land "a higher legal rate of interest could be obtained than in any other colony." As a result credit soon became lax and large sums of money were transferred from



Plate 1. *Arthur Lodge*, Edinburgh 1830. Part of Scotland's first villa development, this house was completed by 1830 on George Bell's Newington Estate. Built in the Greek Revival style for the Edinburgh City Treasurer David Cunningham to a design by the Edinburgh City Architect, Thomas Hamilton. The distinctive Edinburgh side panel glazing bars to the windows appear in Scottish-related Australian houses from the mid-1820s, as does the incised decoration to the pilasters and the use of pylon architraves to the windows. *The Scottish House Eclectic and Unique Interiors* by Ianthe Ruthven pp 108-113.

PHOTO: IANTHE RUTHVEN





**Plate 2.** *Woolmers* Northern Tasmania 1819-1839. Built for Thomas Archer, possibly from a design by his son William, it now stands as an addition to the original 1819 colonial bungalow; only the chimney stacks have been altered to match. The drawing room is situated nearest to the reader with the entrance porch to the left and beyond that, the dining room. The blind window to the drawing room may originally have been planned as a doorway to the proposed library.

PHOTO: WARWICK OAKMAN

connections in India, England and Scotland hoping to benefit from uncapped interest rates that reached 20 percent before the eventual collapse in the early 1840s. After 1830, with the introduction of assisted passage migration, the numbers of rich free settlers declined, but it was they<sup>6</sup> who gave impetus, fuelled by easy credit, to the building boom of the 1830s.

Thomas Archer (1790-1850) came to Australia from England as a free settler in 1812, rising to become

Acting Deputy Assistant Commissary General of Van Diemen's Land, as Tasmania was then known. He resigned his post in 1821 to concentrate on agricultural pursuits at *Woolmers* in northern Tasmania, where by 1819 he had constructed the existing colonial bungalow with its surrounding verandah (**plate 2**). Thomas successfully rode the boom of the 1830s, and by 1838 the estate comprised 33,555 acres of the finest riverside agricultural land in Tasmania.



**Plate 3.** *The Vine*, Dundee, 1836. Built for George Duncan MP, architect unknown. A single-story Greek Revival house five bays long and three bays wide with a Doric entablature around the building. The central atrium dome is copied from the Choregic Monument of Lysicrates, built in Athens c. 335 BC. The influence of Scottish Classical Greek Revival architecture is epitomised by Elizabeth Bay House, Sydney. With its central oval dome, cantilevered staircase, pylon door frames with surmounts and Scottish side-panel windows encapsulating the architectural detail of the Edinburgh New Town. This is as one would expect when a Scot, Alexander Macleay, brings a fellow Scot, James Hume, to Sydney to supervise the construction of his house between 1835 and 1839.

PHOTO: JOHN HAWKINS

**Plate 4.** *New Town Park*, Hobart, 1832 constructed as an addition to the existing cottage by the Scottish banker Charles Swanston and probably designed by another Scot, James A. Thompson. A classic Edinburgh villa design, the architectural devices are derived from the Greek Doric order and are carried out in two colours of stone, on bluestone foundations. The entrance front is composed of three bays divided by flat pilasters with incised modified Greek key decoration. Photographer unknown, from a glass plate stereoscopic negative c. 1860.

COLLECTION TASMANIAN MUSEUM AND  
ART GALLERY



Thomas' brothers William (1788-1879), Edward (1793-1862) and Joseph (1795 -1853) followed him, all settling close to *Woolmers*. William built *Brickendon*, a two-storey English farmhouse of brick construction in 1829. Joseph purchased part of Thomas' estate, renaming it *Panshanger* where he built (plate 5) a single-storey stone house in the Neo-classical style. It is possibly the finest example of a bleak, Scottish New Town Villa in Australia. The architect is unknown, but the Scottish builder Andrew Bell who constructed nearby *Ballochmyle* in the early 1830s is a possible candidate as is the Launceston architect and builder Samuel Jackson. The house is believed to have been completed before 1835,<sup>7</sup> so it may have been furnished with Australian-sourced furniture. At this date, both merchants and cabinet-makers were bringing substantial quantities of English furniture into Tasmania for direct sale or auction (plates 6, 7, 8). The English seem to have patronised leading London retailers such as Gillows and Seddons.<sup>8</sup> The Scots, through Swanston's Edinburgh agent George Mercer, may have patronised the cabinet-makers Trotter of Edinburgh and possibly James Mein of Kelso.

Tasmania's boom years from 1832-1840 tempted the Archer brothers to form a bank, Archers Gillies & Co. Within this short period of great prosperity from both banking and the land, Joseph Archer built *Panshanger* and Thomas Archer conceived and implemented the Italianate extension to *Woolmers*, with its contract for Gillows furniture.

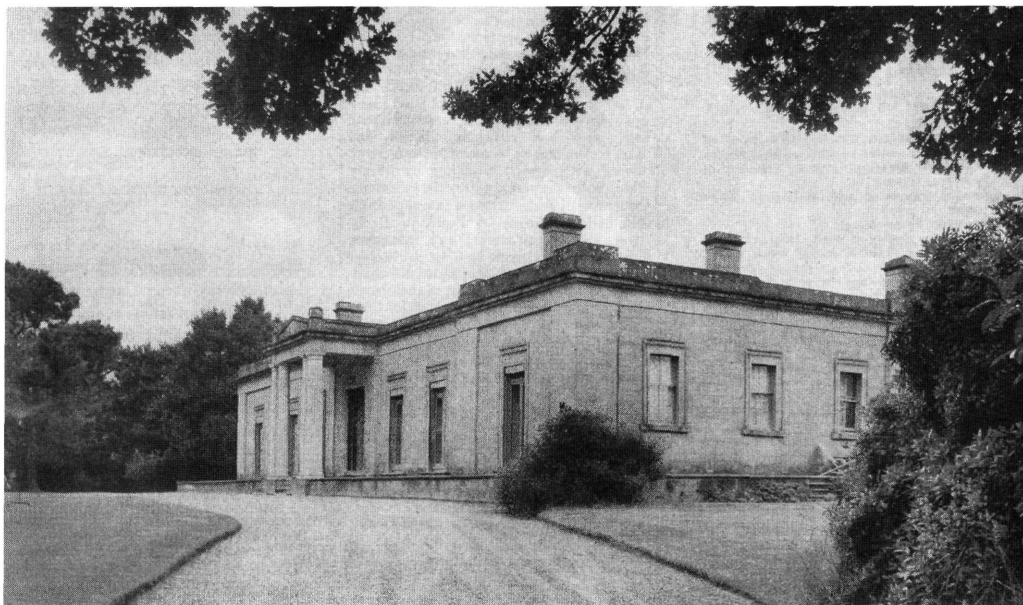
In February 1835, Joseph Archer and his wife, who had no children, were deputed by the brothers to return to England to settle the affairs in bankruptcy of their late father. They took two children with them, a Master Archer and Miss Archer sailing on the *Mansfield* (plate 8) from Launceston bound for London on 23 February 1835.<sup>9</sup> The boy was Master William Archer (1820-1874), Joseph's nephew and the eldest son of his brother Thomas, who was sent to England to train as an architect. William studied in London with the architect William Rogers (1794-1857) of Southern Lodge, North Brixton, for four years.<sup>10</sup>

We know that Joseph was in London with his wife and 15-year-old nephew William by September 1835, as he charged the brothers £284-11-7d for expenses between September 1835 and May 1836<sup>11</sup> in settling their father's affairs. He may have returned to Tasmania briefly in 1836, but was certainly in England again by 16 February 1837.<sup>12</sup> I suggest that Joseph, having recently completed *Panshanger*, was entrusted with obtaining designs for a major extension to *Woolmers*. William, by then training in London as an architect, probably provided the concept designs for the house. The addition of a Nash-type villa, similar to many being built to the east of London's Regent's Park, which sits uneasily when attached to a colonial bungalow surrounded by a verandah, seems proof of patrimony over experience.

No architectural drawings survive for the construction of *Woolmers*, but I suggest that the full extent of the planned building was never realised. The intention may have been to demolish the 1819 bungalow when the new house was built and replace it entirely with an Italianate mansion of rendered construction. Unfortunately, with the proposed cessation of transportation, a tightening of credit and the agricultural depression, the bank went bankrupt in 1844, costing Thomas £12,000 Joseph £12,000 Edward £16,800 and William £7,200,<sup>13</sup> putting paid to further family building activity. The looming crisis within the bank was probably apparent to the partners by late 1839. Thus the plans were curtailed and a much-reduced building survives, as an extension to the existing house.

The family placed the furnishing order with the firm of Ferguson and Co. of Oxford Street, the London

partners for the Lancaster firm of Gillow(s) and Co.<sup>14</sup> No correspondence survives at either *Woolmers* or in the Gillows archives at the Westminster Public Library in London that fully documents this purchase. The Gillows archives cover, in the main, the workings of the Lancaster branch. This is a factual record of furniture produced by the firm, the cost of materials, the craftsmen involved and the clients for whom the items were made. Unfortunately the Estimate Sketch Books for the years 1837-49 covering folio numbers 5188 and 5621 are incomplete and the Oxford Street sketch books have not survived. Theoretically, if the item was made in Lancaster it should be traceable within the archives. I suggest that the only bespoke order was for the library bookcases and as a result, they were made in Lancaster, and therefore are fully documented. The balance of the furnishings which did not have to fit a specific space were purchased from Ferguson and Co.'s affiliated London sources.<sup>15</sup>



**Plate 5.** *Panshanger*, Northern Tasmania, 1835. Built for Joseph Archer, this house may well have been commenced some years earlier. Two other Northern Tasmanian houses of the early 1830s are possibly by the same hand: *Hythe* designed by Samuel Jackson (1807-1876), sketcher, architect, builder and pastoralist, who was born in London and arrived in Van Diemen's Land in August 1829 where he set up as a builder in Launceston before departing to Port Phillip in August 1835, and *Lake House*. All three houses are linked by similar design concepts and use either internally or externally of Edinburgh glazing bars, unfashionable after 1835. The creation of *Panshanger* places Joseph Archer and his architect at the cutting edge of contemporary fashion and taste, qualities later utilised by his brother Thomas for the creation and furnishing of *Woolmers*.

PHOTO: *THE AUSTRALIAN HOME BEAUTIFUL*, MAY 1951, p.12



The Estimate Sketchbook for the Lancaster business contains the sketch drawing of the "Library Bookcases". It bears the Folio number 5265 and is titled "Ferguson & Co. for Archer Esq" and annotated "black marble" (plate 9). The original cost sheet survives (plate 10) naming the cabinet-maker as Jno. Herbert. This sheet gives the prime cost, measurements for the timber used and describes the materials and fittings. Each bookcase cost £22-17-8½d and the Petty Ledger book gives the labour cost as "by 37 1/4 days at a mahogany bookcase (Archer) £7-13-0".<sup>16</sup> The dimensions of the surviving pair of bookcases at *Woolmers* match those given in the Gillows archive.

Gillows involvement is further confirmed by the survival at *Woolmers* of a Gillows concept plan for the proposed drawing room (plate 11). This could have been produced only from an architectural plan held in London. Thomas' second son, also Thomas, had departed on the *Auriga* for London in March 1837, possibly taking plans and a proposed furniture order with him.

The furniture plan shows a doorway, now a blind window, that may have been intended as the entrance to the Library on the original house plan. Gillows traditionally supplied these concept drawings to clients so they could envisage the furnishings, curtains and mirrors when placed within a room (plate 13).<sup>17</sup>

## SPLENDID COLLECTION OF **FURNITURE**

TO BE SOLD BY PUBLIC AUCTION,  
By Mr. J. A. EDDIE,

At his New Rooms, in St. John-street, on  
Friday, the 23rd instant, at 12 o'clock  
precisely,

**A**LL the very elegant FURNITURE imported  
from England per *Norval*, and made by  
the celebrated House of J. & G. SIDDON, of  
London—consisting of—

Splendid rosewood and mahogany book  
cases

Rosewood flower stands

Tables—Consisting of card, loo, occasional,  
writing, library, ladies' work, chess,  
invalid, fly, dressing, square, cottage,  
dining, long dining in sets from 14 to  
26 feet, circular, sofa, night reading,

and Pembroke

Rosewood fire screens

Cabinet bookstands, peeri passier, and  
what nots

Sideboards, beautifully carved, and plain,  
with every convenience, and of various  
sizes

Mahogany dinner carriage, and dumb  
waiters

Commodes, mahogany and rosewood, beau-  
tifully carved, with marble tops, and  
best plate glass

Sofas and couches, mahogany and rose-  
wood, of various patterns

Chairs—Consisting of dining, drawing, and  
bed-room, president, hall, and dentist  
chairs

Bedsteads of various patterns, with en-  
tains, bedding, &c., complete

Elegant wardrobes, dwarf and winged,  
closets, drawers, trays, &c.

Chests of drawers, tea poise, ottomans,  
bidets, elegant full length dressing  
glasses, steps and pedestals for bed  
sides, trays, conversation stools, bronze,

Tyron chaise longue, drawing room  
window curtains, with other useful and  
ornamental articles too numerous to men-  
tion.

The whole of the above articles are of the  
very best description.

An experienced person will be in attend-  
ance to pack up such articles as may be re-  
quired.

## Furniture for Sale,

*Big Private Bargain.*

**T**HE following articles of London made  
furniture, the property of a Gentle-  
man leaving town, are to be sold cheap.  
For particulars, apply to Mr. Woolley,  
Upholsterer, Macquarie-street. A set of  
mahogany pillar and claw dining table, for  
fourteen persons, made by Gillows, Oxford-  
street; a small size French-polished inlaid  
sideboard; a Grecian couch, stuffed with  
hair, with hair cushions, pillows, and  
cover; a mahogany wine cooler, or cellaret,  
hooped with brass; a mahogany library  
table, with drawers; a very large screen,  
covered with green baize; a patent portable  
iron bedstead, made by Pratt; in Bond-  
street, and Regent-street; two mahogany  
bidets, with pans, made by Gillows; a large  
size desert dressing glass; a set of hand-  
some sweet china; a pair of handsome  
plated candlesticks, with branches for three  
lights each; a cottage grate; a patent  
freezing machine (by Patterson) for cooling  
wine and liquors; a Turk, or self-acting  
machine, for making coffee.

Oct. 21, 1834.

[4002]

## SHIPPING REPORT.

LAUNCESTON, February 26, 1835.

### ARRIVALS.

On Wednesday, the schooner *Edward*, Jacobs, master,  
from Circular Head.

### DEPARTURES.

On Monday, the barque *Manfield*, Williams, master,  
for London. Passengers—Joseph Archer, Esq., and  
Lady, Miss Archer, Master T. Archer, Master Lytleton,  
Mr. John Tait, Dr. H. G. Brock, H. Barton, Rebecca  
Hardy.

On Monday, the barque *Margaret Graham*, Hamilton,  
master, for London.

### EXPORTS—CLEARED DURING THE WEEK.

Feb. 23.—*MANFIELD*, (barque) Williams, for Lon-  
don, 607 bales of wool, 186,810 lbs., 135 tons of bark,  
156 opossum skins, 4 logs sassafras wood, 1 bag sas-  
sfras bark, 19 bags feathers, 1 box seeds, 99 tons  
black oil, 2½ tons sperm oil—value of Cargo £18,889.  
Agents, Hewitt, Gore, & Co.

Feb. 23.—*MARGARET GRAHAM*, (barque), Ham-  
ilton, for London, 241 bales of wool, 53,020 lbs.,  
211 ton bark, 1 case stuffed birds, 247 logs cedar,—  
value of Cargo £5,637. Agent, J. A. Eddie.

far left

Plate 6. Newspaper advertisement.  
Listing furniture imported from  
London from the firm of London  
cabinet-makers T&G Seddon [sic]  
for sale in October 1835 by J.A.  
Eddie the Launceston auctioneer.  
This notice gives an indication of the  
market created by the new wealth  
then being generated. *Launceston  
Advertiser* 8 October 1835 p. 2.

top centre

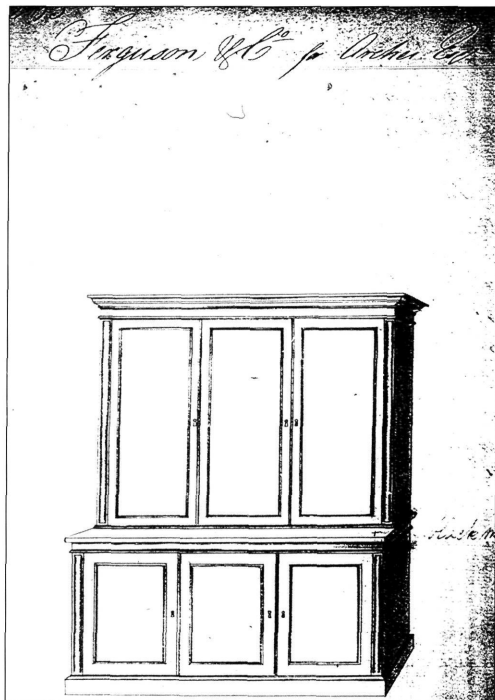
Plate 7. Newspaper Advertisement.  
Local cabinet-makers such as J.W.  
Woolley in Hobart were unable to  
compete in manufacturing terms  
with this flood of expensive imported  
English furniture. Woolley here  
advertises second-hand furniture by  
Gillows. *Tasmanian and Austral  
Asiatic Review* 24 October 1834.

bottom centre

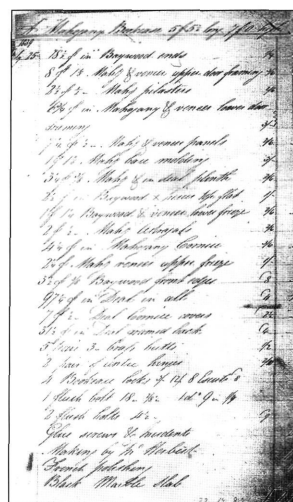
Plate 8. Newspaper Advertisement.  
The barque *Manfield* taking Joseph  
Archer, his wife, niece and nephew to  
London is shown as taking exports  
worth £18,889, mostly wool and  
whale oil but including tanning  
timbers and barks. It was these staple  
exports that gave certain Tasmanian  
families the money to build stone  
houses and furnish them with British  
furniture. *Launceston Advertiser*  
26 October 1835.

Plans for the Drawing Room, Dining Room and Library together with the architectural plans for the house would have been sent to *Woolmers* for approval by Thomas Archer, possibly from the offices of his son William, the apprentice architect in London. Changes in design were made, and as always, costs cut. I suggest that the proposed Library was deleted and the bookcases placed in the Dining Room. When the final order was agreed in late 1838, the piano was changed from an upright to a horizontal grand; the ottomans omitted as unsuited to bush living, and a grander mirror ordered to put over the previously-purchased marble fireplace. The rosewood seat furniture was made more feminine with the addition of carved, shaped aprons to the seat rails.

Joseph ordered two white Carrara marble fireplaces, flanked by Caryatids, one now at *Panshanger*. They arrived in advance of the main order as “4 cases of pictures, 16 cases of marble for T. Archer” on the *Arabian* in January 1839.<sup>18</sup> This model of fireplace was not uncommon in America.<sup>19</sup> Joseph Archer spent his formative years (1817–20) in America, and this sojourn may provide a connecting link for the order from Italy of this pair of fireplaces. The “4 cases of pictures” on the *Arabian* probably include the four Italian landscapes by Salvatore Rosa and the other Italian paintings still at *Woolmers*. The American Consul at Livorno from 1797 to 1840 was Thomas Appleton, whose notebooks survive covering his activities as a merchant exporting works of art, marble statuary and particularly marble chimneypieces.<sup>20</sup>



**Plate 9.** The Gillows Sketchbook Drawing Folio number 5265. This drawing is annotated “Black Marble.... for Archer Esq” and relates to the bookcases in the dining room; see item 5 Appendix 1.



**Plate 10.**  
The Cost Sheet.  
"A Mahogany  
Bookcase 5 feet 5  
and a half inches  
long and 7 feet  
high folio number  
5265", completed  
25 July 1839 by  
the cabinet-maker  
John Herbert.  
GILLOWS ARCHIVES,  
WESTMINSTER  
PUBLIC LIBRARY,  
LONDON

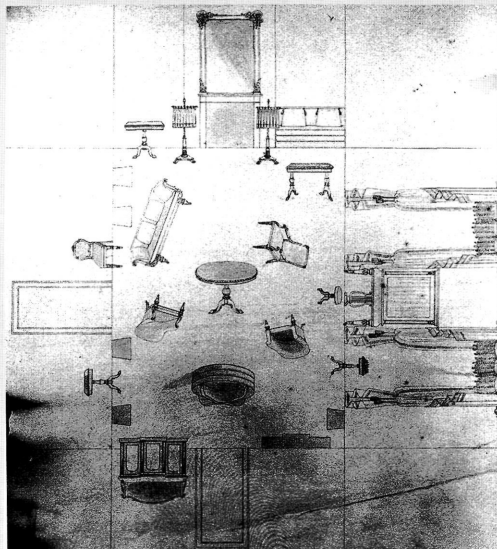
**Plate 11.** The Gillows design concept for the *Woolmers* Drawing Room, c. 1838. This is the only surviving Gillows concept plan for *Woolmers*. Three may have been drawn up, but those for the Dining Room and the Library are now missing. The plans had to comply with an existing architectural design positioning the Drawing Room with its full-length windows and entrance door off the Hall, correct as the building stands today. The door shown opposite the fireplace, now a blind window, would have led into a room, possibly a Library, that was never constructed. As the doors are not delineated, it must be assumed that mahogany doors were never requested or designed; the same applies to the window sashes. The concept design (plate 13) for an unknown English interior shows unusual six-panel doors and floor-to-ceiling sash windows, presumably part of the Gillows order. Hardware for the windows and doors at *Woolmers* arrived on the *William Wise* in April 1840, together with the roof slates and 58 cases of furniture.

Starting at the fireplace end of the room, a far grander mirror was ordered to complement the marble fireplace. This mirror, of carved wood rather than composition, is superbly gilded and burnished, but on arrival may have been found to be too large for the fireplace, as it is now mounted on rosewood brackets on the opposite wall to cover a blind window as viewed from the outside of the house.

The wall ottoman<sup>22</sup> to the right of the fireplace was not ordered, nor the circular example in front of the proposed door opposite; maybe Thomas and Susannah considered them unsuitable for Australian bush conditions. The banner pole-screens were ordered as shown. The centre-pedestal card table to the left of the fireplace was replaced by one with end supports, designed to match the writing table on the right-hand side of the fireplace. The six Drawing Room chairs maintain the original overall design but the seat rails are more decorated. The design for the couch/sofa was changed, as was the gentleman's chair, which was replaced by a prie-dieu chair. The design for the left-hand chair with an upholstered back was chosen, but as a pair with arms, and extended by the addition of a further pair without arms, all with seat rails to match. The central loo table was to have a less expensive plain border rather than the gadrooned border shown. The pair of chiffoniers was replaced by a single, more elaborate example, as the space was required for the Broadwood grand piano. Neither the centre-pedestal chess table nor the plant stand appear to have been ordered.

The two window valances and curtain poles survive as drawn. The upright grand piano between the windows, which is far more suitable to a room of this size, has been replaced by a horizontal grand piano by Broadwood. This decision must have been made when the idea of the room possibly a Library was abandoned, otherwise the entrance door shown would have been blocked.

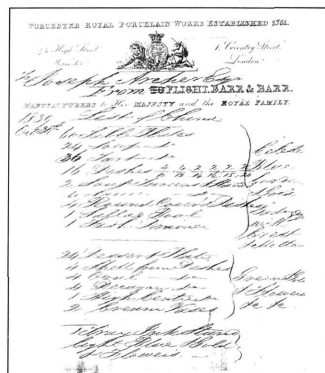
COLLECTION: WOOLMERS ESTATE



individually listed, described and photographed in Appendix I and the Heirloom Inventory is given as Appendix II. This list of Heirlooms covers all the Gillows purchases which, when decorated with the family crest to the hall chairs and sideboards, shows the pride felt by this family in their success as pioneers of the Australian wilderness.

## Acknowledgements

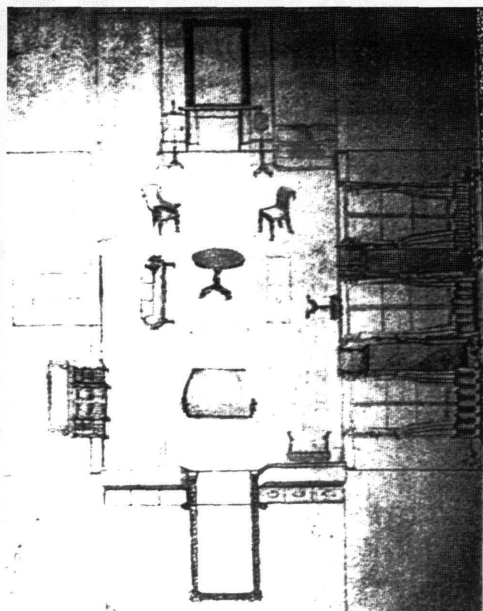
I visited *Woolmers* near Launceston in Tasmania for the first time in September 2000. During my conducted tour of the house it became apparent to me that the house contained a complete range of



**Plate 12.** The invoice to Joseph Archer from the Worcester firm Flight, Barr and Barr 1839. This invoice is for an armorial dinner service and a dessert service bearing the Archer crest and is dated 30 October 1839, some two months after Joseph's departure for Australia.

COLLECTION: WOOLMERS ESTATE





Gillows Dining, Drawing and Bedroom furniture. I informed the tour guides of my opinion and they expressed surprise. No-one had suggested this before. They asked if I was sure of my ground, and I assured them that there was probably documentation in existence to affirm my view. The Custodians of the *Woolmers* Trust have been most supportive in producing family documents and allowing me access to the Archer family papers at *Woolmers*. Particularly exciting was the discovery of the original Gillows concept plan for the Drawing Room that confirmed my original opinion.

I would like to thank Warwick Oakman of Hobart for all his efforts over the compilation of the inventory and photography at *Woolmers*; Robyn Lake of Launceston for her help with newspaper notices; and Susan Stuart, the Gillows Historian of Lancaster, for her advice and help with the concept room plans during my visit to Lancaster, and her assistance with the background of the Gillows cabinet-maker John Herbert.

Plate 13. A sample of a Gillows Room plan or design concept from the Oxford Street address, c. 1835.<sup>23</sup> This design concept by Gillows of about the same date comes from the Lancaster Museum and is included for comparison. The doors and windows are delineated, presumably because they are part of the proposed order. The wall ottomans, to the side and centre of the room appear to be standard drawing room furnishings. The chiffonier is more elaborate and has a proposed companion pair between the windows with differing designs for purposes of choice. Eight single chairs are needed for this larger room, rather than the six at *Woolmers*, and are of the same pattern as those in the *Woolmers* Dining Room. The tables and banner screens have matching centre pedestals, the card and writing tables in front of the wall ottomans are end-supported as those at *Woolmers*. The curtain poles and valances appear to be a near match to those in the Drawing Room at *Woolmers*. The grand piano is horizontal as behoves a larger three-windowed room. COLLECTION: LANCASTER CITY MUSEUMS

Supplement			
TO			
THE CABINET-MAKERS			
BOOK OF PRICES.			
INTRODUCTION.			
<p>THE Journeymen having suffered many inconveniences from the incomplete arrangement of the original book of prices, as not applicable to the fashion of the present day, did, by a Committee, prepare this supplement, to supply the deficiency, which having been laid before the Masters, was revised and sanctioned by them as a future rule of Settlement for the Cabinet prices of work.</p>			
EDINBURGH, July 8, 1825.			
GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.			
Work of black rosewood, to be extra from mahogany, per pound	0	2	3
Work of wainscot, to be in the pound less than mahogany	0	2	0
Ditto, when finished as mahogany	0	1	0
Ditto when stained with lime, to be the same as Mahogany			
All oak, birch, maple, and such kind of hard wood, to be less than mahogany	0	1	6

Plate 14. The *Supplement to the Cabinet Makers Book of Prices* Edinburgh 8 July 1825 General Observations. At this period, rosewood was considerably more expensive than mahogany, whereas oak was less expensive. The furnishing of *Woolmers* with rosewood in the Drawing Room, mahogany in the Dining Room and oak in the Bedrooms and Hall is as expected. However the Best Bedroom, which may not have been built, should be fitted out with either mahogany or rosewood furniture. The four surviving imitation rosewood bedroom chairs suggest rosewood and may testify to a cancellation of this part of the order by Thomas Archer when scaling-down the planned house.

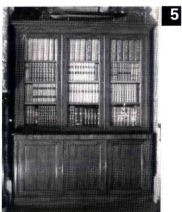
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## Inventory

[Not all items have an accompanying photograph]

## Dining Room

ITEM DESCRIPTION	SIZE	MARKS, STAMPS ETC	NOTES	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION
Library armchair, the back of deep yoke form on turned lappet-carved front legs and swept rear; scrolled volutes to arms, upholstered red morocco leather with crimson gimp. Mahogany primary & secondary timber, oak struts to frames.	H 2'9" W 2'4" D 2' (850 x 710 x 610 mm)	Stamp to rear seat rail G.MUNRO; stamp to inside seat rail 4514; gilt metal castors stamped COPES PATENT; pencil inscription to seat rail 1397.	The only chair of this form currently at <i>Woolmers</i> , upholstery and legs match associated set of dining chairs. Possibly for an unbuilt library. London made and bought in.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.
12 mahogany framed saddle-back dining chairs with lappet & 'Centurion Skirt' to front legs, outswept rear legs; upholstered, red morocco leather with crimson gimp; mahogany primary timber, beech secondary timber.	H 2'11" W 1'7" D 1'7" (890 x 480 x 480)	6 chairs signed in ink to inside seat rail 'Hopkins'; 3 chairs signed by both 'Hopkins' & 'L. Pond'; 1 chair with anchor carved in back to commemorate the 1867 visit of HRH the Duke of Edinburgh.	Made in London. A further 8 cedar chairs added c. 1867 with similar upholstery but of poorer quality construction, for the 1867 visit of the Duke of Edinburgh, possibly by the Launceston cabinetmaker Samuel Joscelyne.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.
Mahogany extending dining table supported on 8 turned tapering legs with 'Centurion Skirt' motif to top and gilt brass castors to legs. Mahogany primary & secondary timber. Gilt metal table clips. 4 original leaves and 3 later cedar leaves, later cedar pedestal & runner extensions.	H 2'6" W 5' L closed 4'10" (760 x 1520 x 1470) W of orig. leaves 2'3" W of replacement leaves 1'6"	Pencil inscription to hall end on top of rails near hall door. Pencil inscription to fireplace end of top of rails near the fireplace. Pencil inscription to centre original rail 'Archer Woolmers Estate'.	Telescopic dining table to seat 12, extended in Tasmania c. 1867 by adding extra rails, leaves and centre pedestal platform base in Australian cedar for 1867 visit of HRH Duke of Edinburgh, possibly by the Launceston cabinetmaker Samuel Joscelyne.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.
Pair of mahogany twin pedestal sideboards with carved and panelled backs, pilasters to uprights of doors, with mahogany linings and pine secondary timber. LH cupboards with cellarettes, gilt metal hardware. Backs with carved Archer crest on shield-shaped panels. Two drawers to friezes.	H 4' L 6'7" D 2'4" (1220 x 2010 x 710)	LH sideboard with pencil inscription under drawer lining 'James Wybeck'.	One of a pair of high quality mahogany fitted sideboards contained within purpose-built alcoves, they illustrate how furniture is an extension of the architecture of the house Crests carved at date of manufacture.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.
Pair of mahogany 3-door double height bookcases with fitted black Ashford marble tops, pilasters applied to doors. Gilt metal hardware, locks and original blued steel keys. Shelves adjust on slate pegs. Mahogany linings and deal secondary timber.	H 7' (2130) H of marble 2'9" (840) L 5'5" (1665) D 1'11" (585) D of shelves 1'3" (380)	None found.	High quality mahogany bookcases with fitted black marble tops, all contained within purpose built alcoves contemporary with date of construction.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah. Ref: Ferguson & Co. for Archer Esq. Gillow Archive, Westminster Public Library, London. Reel 50. Drawing for a 3-bay library bookcase with solid panels to lower doors. See accompanying cost estimates for materials, completed cost £22/17/8, maker John Herbert The solid panels shown in the drawings may indicate a proposed supply of several bookcases of this type for a complete library.



## Dining Room [continued]

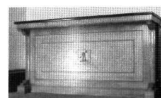
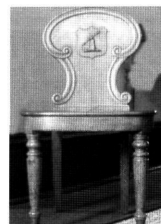
ITEM DESCRIPTION	SIZE	MARKS, STAMPS ETC	NOTES	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION	
Pair of gilt metal and pine rods with lotus capital finial ends and gilt metal rings and brackets.	L 7" (2130)	None found.	This pair of high quality gilt metal curtain poles, rings and brackets demonstrate the extensive nature of the complete commission.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah. The existing drapery later.	6
Fitted Brussels carpet (?)		None found.	Original to room, possibly supplied by Ferguson & Co.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.	7
Polished steel and cast iron hob grate, surround & fitted pan, decorated with applied acanthus leaves. With en suite tongs, poker & shovel & neo-Gothic steel fender.	Grate 3'8" x 3'8" (1120 x 1120), fender 5'4" x 11" x 1" (1625 x 280 x 305)	None found.	Original to room, possibly supplied by Ferguson & Co.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.	8

## Entry Hall

Pair of oak hall chairs with kidney-shaped back and rounded seat, outswept rear legs and turned front legs, Archer crest to back.	H 2'11" W 17" D 17" (890 x 480 x 480)	One stamped to underside of seat rail 'HW', one with pencil inscription to underside of seat 'HRH'.	Similar to a design by J.C. Loudon, <i>Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm &amp; Villa Architecture &amp; Furniture</i> , 1833 fig. 1859, p. 1040f. Inscription may relate to 1867 visit of HRH the Duke of Edinburgh.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.	9
English oak fitted cabinet for the storage of dining table leaves. With black Ashford marble top, door to LH end and baize-lined slides. Archer crest to panel. Deal secondary timbers. The panelled front, top & base supported by volutes & pilasters. Gilt metal hardware and locks.	H 3'2" L 5'9" D 19" (960 x 1800 x 480)	None found.	J.C. Loudon <i>op. cit.</i> entry 2084 figs 1880-1881, p.1047 refers to sideboard cases with hinged tops.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.	10







## Drawing Room

Brazilian rosewood folding card or games table with rounded rectangular top opening to reveal a well and baize surface. Supported on finely carved and turned end standards with cabriole legs ending in carved paw feet with inset brass castors. Mahogany linings, original wool baize.	H 29" W 3' D 20" (750 x 915 x 510)	None found.	This item en suite with the following 2 tables.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah. Drawn on Gillows room plan.	11
Brazilian rosewood writing or sofa table with original red morocco gilt tooled inset leather top, with two concealed drawers to frieze. Supported on finely carved and turned end standards with cabriole legs ending in carved paw feet with inset brass castors. Mahogany linings, mahogany and oak secondary timber.	H 29" L 3'8" W 29" (750 x 1120 x 740)	None found.	This item en suite with the above.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.	12












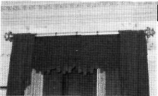


## Drawing Room [continued]

ITEM DESCRIPTION	SIZE	MARKS, STAMPS ETC	NOTES	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION
Brazilian rosewood carved and veneered drawing room loo table, with circular veneered top, crossbanded apron and tilt-top action, central turned & gadrooned column above 3 cabriole legs ending in carved paw feet & inset brass castors. Mahogany secondary timber. Gilt metal hardware.	H 29" Diam 53" (740 x 1350)	None found.	This item en suite with the above.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah. 
Brazilian rosewood music canterbury, fretted panel to sides of laurel wreaths crossed by arrows containing a frieze drawer, on 4 turned feet with brass castors, pine secondary timber.	H 1'8" W 19" D 15" (510 x 480 x 380)	None found.	Based on a design by J.C.Loudon, <i>op. cit.</i>	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah. 
Brazilian rosewood Improved Semi-Grand piano manufactured by John Broadwood & Sons, London c. 1839 with acanthus leaf carving to the keyboard ends and tops of legs. Supported on three reeded, turned and tapering legs with brass castors. With brass and boxwood inlay to the name plate to the fall. 6 octaves F-F. Shaped boxwood fronts to keys. Lyre form support to sostenuto and sustaining pedals.	H 3' L 74" W 4" (910 x 2235 x 1220)	Inscription to fall to key board 'Improved Semi-Grand. Patent John Broadwood and Sons. Manufacturers to Her Majesty, Great Pulteney St Golden Square, London'. Inscribed under LH rest plank & under RH end key 75'.		Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah. An upright drawing room grand shown on furniture plan. Gillows knew what was required as the room is too small for a piano of this form. 
Brazilian rosewood circular piano stool with revolving adjustable seat upholstered in red morocco leather with silk tufts, on turned & carved lotus column with carved lotus petal base on three swept carved feet.	Ht 18" Diam 13" (460 x 330)	None found.	Possibly by Gillows. En suite with above but probably supplied by Broadwood.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah. 
Grecian overmantel mirror with central scrolled cresting and acroteria to ends, supported on lappet & lotus pilasters. Original gilding & plate, the whole supported on shelf supported by scrolled volutes.	H 7'8" W 6' D 5" (2340 x 1830 x 130) H of shelf 2'10" W 6'4" (860 x 1930)	None found.	Gilded pine, <i>not</i> composition, of superb quality.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah. Drawn on Gillows room plan over the fireplace but of a simpler form. 
Six drawing room chairs in carved Brazilian rosewood, with padded backs framed with channelled motif & stylised anthemion the seat rails and corners of frames with similar decoration. Front legs turned with bulbous carving to the tops. Drop-in seats in rose roller-printed cotton flock over the original scarlet silk. Mahogany & beech secondary timbers, blued steel fixing screws to drop in seats.	H 2'11" W 17" D 17" (890 x 430 x 430)	Six chairs stamped to under side of front seat rail with sequential Roman numerals.	I 'H' & 'Hopkins' in pencil J/A' in pencil II 'JT' & 'Hopkins' in pencil 'J/A' in pencil III 'Hopkins' in pencil 'Heath' in pencil 'H' in black chalk IV 'HT' 'H Tranbyle Sept 3, 1839' in pencil 'x' in black chalk V 'J/A' in pen VI 'TA' & 'H' in black chalk, 'JA' in pen.	These chairs provide a key date for the order of furniture and fitting out of the Archer's new reception rooms, chair IV presumably being completed by H. Tranbyle on 3 Sept 1839. En suite with 21, 22, 23 & 24. Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah. Drawn on Gillows room plan with plain seat rails. 




## Drawing Room [continued]

ITEM DESCRIPTION	SIZE	MARKS, STAMPS ETC	NOTES	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION	
Brazilian rosewood chiffonier with turned rosewood gallery to top, mirror back supported on tall carved and turned rosewood columns over arched mirror doors flanked by reeded, carved and turned columns with lappet bases, beaded capitals and bases. Contains fitted shelves in mahogany. Secondary timbers ash and pine, gilt metal hardware and blued steel screws.	H 5' W 4'4" D 16" (1525 x 1320 x 405)	None found.	Outstanding quality but a standard pattern and somewhat old-fashioned for this date it replaces the pair shown on the Gillows room plan probably for an equivalent cost.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.	 19
Pair of Grecian firescreens in Brazilian rosewood with ormolu engine-turned mounts, the silk banners on brass rods (the originals removed and conserved) on carved and turned lotus & beaded columns and a tripartite base with volutes.	H 4'8" W 23" (1430 x 590)	None found.	Based on a design by J.C. Loudon, <i>op. cit.</i> Metalware similar to a fire screen supplied by Gillows for Raby Castle, Co. Durham.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah. Drawn on Gillows room plan. Originally matched scarlet silk of window curtains and upholstery. Original silk banners have been stored.	 20
Pair of Brazilian rosewood framed easy chairs with padded spoon shape backs, carved 's' shaped scrolled arms, serpentine seat rails and stylised anthemion motif to corners of front seat rail on out-swept rear legs. Gilt metal bucket castors to front & trail castors to rear. Beech and mahogany secondary timbers, rose roller-printed cotton flock over the original scarlet silk.	H 3' W 2'3" D 3' (920 x 690 x 920)	None found.	Upholstery on webbing on top of frames.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah. Drawn on Gillows room plan with plain seat rails in two forms. A matching pair chosen rather than two singles.	 21
Brazilian rosewood framed Grecian sofa or single-end chaise with padded back, seat and end, the carved seat rail with stylised anthemion motif to corners, serpentine rails and turned tapering carved legs with concealed brass castors. Secondary timber ash, later springs, rose roller-printed cotton flock over original scarlet silk.	H 2'4" L 6'4" D 2'4" (720 x 1930 x 720)	None found.	Sprung with recovering, en suite with 18, 21.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah. A more Grecian style model shown on Gillows room plan.	 22
Brazilian rosewood framed single easy chair with padded back and seat. The carved seat rails with stylised anthemion motif to corners, serpentine rails and turned tapering legs on gilt brass castors Secondary timber ash. Rose roller-printed cotton flock over original scarlet silk. Copes patent castors.	H 3' W 21" D 2'4" (920m x 530 x 720)	Pencil inscription 'Archer Esq' Castors stamped 'Copes Patent Castors Strong'.	Upholstery on webbing on top of frames. One only, en suite with 18, 21 & 22.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.	 23
Brazilian rosewood framed single prie dieu chair with padded back and seat. The carved seat rails with stylised anthemion motif to corners, serpentine rails and turned tapering legs on gilt brass castors Secondary timber beech, rose roller-printed cotton flock over original scarlet silk. Copes patent castors.	H 34" W 20" D 2'4" (860 x 510 x 720)	Inscription in black chalk 'ARCHER', castors stamped 'Copes Patent'.	Upholstery on webbing on top of frames. En suite with 18, 21, 22 & 23. A comfortable chair for ladies with voluminous skirts.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah. Drawn on Gillows room plan with arms and plain seat rail.	 24

## Drawing Room [continued]


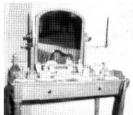
ITEM DESCRIPTION	SIZE	MARKS, STAMPS ETC	NOTES	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION	
Set of 4 faux rosewood-grained beech bedroom chairs with open kidney-shaped backs with stylised anthemion motifs to centre and good quality carving to mid rail, on turned outswept front legs joined by stretchers, rose roller-printed cotton flock over original scarlet silk.	H 2'6" W 16" D 16" (760 x 400 x 400)	One with 'H' inscribed in ink and 'JT' in pencil.	Upholstery on webbing on top of frames. These are a standard form of Gillows bedroom chair.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.	 25
Pair of gilt metal curtain rods with lotus finial ends and gilt metal rings on gilt metal brackets. Original scarlet silk drapery subcurtains & bullion fringe.	L 7' (2135)	None found.	Remarkably high quality. The drapery, bullion fringing and subcurtains survive.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah. Drawn on Gillows room plan.	 26
Fitted Brussels carpet.		None found.	Original to room, possibly supplied by Ferguson & Co.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.	 27
Polished steel and cast iron hob grate, surround & fitted pan, with applied acanthus leaf decoration. With en suite tongs, poker & shovel & fender.	Grate 3'8" x 3'11" (1120 x 1190) Fender 5'4" x 11" x 12" (1620 x 280 x 310)	None found.	Original to room, possibly supplied by Ferguson & Co. Fender & grate do not fit opening or mantelpiece, described as being in the 'Old Louis' style.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.	 28

## Bedroom of the late Miss Archer



English oak four post bedstead and hangings with moulded applied pediment, turned tapering columns to the front & square rail shaft and reverse tapering shafts to the base. Box and steel castors and brakes to front and rear. Plain fabric-covered posts to head. Secondary timbers ash & pine. Remains of pink cotton dimity under existing late 19th century flower-printed cotton hangings.	H 9' L 7" W 5'6" (2740 x 2135 x 1680)	None found.	Large roller castors and brakes similar to that on bed supplied by Gillows to Raby Castle, Co. Durham. En suite & identical to bedstead for principal bedroom.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.	 29
Full-height cheval or dressing mirror in English oak with gilt brass sconces and hardware and rosewood handles to sides. The rectangular plate supported on 4 downswept legs ending in brass ends and castors.	H 5'4" W 3' D 22" (1630 x 920 x 560)	None found.		Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.	 30
Chest of drawers in English oak with gilt metal fittings and rosewood turned handles, comprising 3 drawers to the top over 3 further full-width drawers on turned tapering feet.	H 3'6" W 3'10" D 22" (1070 x 1170 x 560)	None found.		Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.	 31



## Bedroom of the late Miss Archer [continued]

ITEM DESCRIPTION	SIZE	MARKS, STAMPS ETC	NOTES	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION
Toilet mirror in English oak with turned rosewood handles, rounded top to mirror, column supports and platform base with gilt brass flanking candle sconces.	H 2'3" W 2'3" D 11" (690 x 690 x 280)	None found.		Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.
				 32
Dressing table in English oak with rectangular gallery to top over two drawers with turned rosewood handles on four turned tapering legs with gilt brass castors and shaped undertier shelf.	H 2'6" W 3'6" D 2' (760 x 1070 x 610)	None found.	En suite with similar table in dressing room.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.
				 33

## Dressing room of the late Miss Archer

Dressing table in English oak with rectangular gallery to top over two drawers with turned rosewood handles on four turned tapering legs with gilt brass castors and shaped undertier shelf.	H 2'6" W 3'6" D 2' (760 x 1070 x 610)	None found.	En suite with similar table in bedroom of late Miss Archer.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.
				34
Chest of drawers in English oak with gilt metal fittings and rosewood turned handles, comprising 2 drawers to the top over 3 further full-width drawers on turned tapering feet.	H 3'6" W 3'7" D 22" (1070 x 1090 x 560)	None found.	Identical to that in the bedroom of the late Miss Archer.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.
				35
Wardrobe in English oak with outswept shaped pediment over 3 full-length doors with inset fielded panels on plinth with fitted shelves etc. inside. Gilt metal hardware and blued steel screws & keys.	H 6'6" W 6'3" D 2' (1980 x 1910 x 610)	None found.		Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.
				 36
Bedsteps/bidet made of English oak of rectangular form with sliding fitted lid supported on 4 ring-turned tapering legs, with original Wedgwood Queensware pan.	H 18" W 2' D 14" (460 x 620 x 360)	Bidet unmarked, base of pan impressed 'Wedgwood'.	None but part of bedroom suite.	 37

## Bedroom of the late Mr Thomas Archer

English oak four-post bedstead and hangings, moulded applied pediment with turned, tapering columns to the front & square rail shaft and reverse tapering shafts to the base. Box and steel castors and brakes to front and rear. Plain fabric covered posts to head. Secondary timbers ash & pine. Remains of pink cotton dimity under existing late 19th century flower-printed cotton hangings.	H 9' L 7' W 5'6" (2740 x 2140 x 1680)	None found.	Large roller castors and brakes similar to that on bed supplied to Raby Castle, Co. Durham. En suite & identical to bedstead for principal bedroom.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.
				38

## Bedroom of the late Mr Thomas Archer [continued]

ITEM DESCRIPTION	SIZE	MARKS, STAMPS ETC	NOTES	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION
Bedsteps in English oak comprising three treads, now missing fabric treads, with fretted carrying handles to sides, on four turned tapering legs. With Wedgwood chamber pot.	H 2'4" W 1'9" D 2'4" (710 x 580 x 710)	None found – pot impressed Wedgwood.	En suite with above.	None but part of bedroom suite.

39

## Service room off rear hall, document & record store

English oak fancy or bedroom chair with tapering rectangular back and plain midrail, the seat with caned panel, on tapering outsweped legs, & 5 others (1 broken).	H 2'10" W 18" D 20" (860 x 460 x 510)	Remains of a paper label to underside of seat rail, but no inscription or printing found.	En suite with above.	Listed in an inventory compiled after the death of the late Thomas Archer, 1850, for his widow Susannah.
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40

# APPENDIX II

## Inventory of Heirlooms under the Will of the late Thomas Archer, Esquire.

[The numbers in brackets correlate with the Inventory, Appendix I.]

### Drawing Room

2. Two window curtains complete with gilt poles. [26]
1. One circular rosewood table with oil baize cover. [13]
1. One rosewood chiffonier. [19]
1. One ditto card table with oil baize cover. [11]
1. One ditto sofa writing table with cover. [12]
1. One ditto couch. [22]
2. Two ditto large easy chairs. [21]
2. Two ditto small easy chairs. [23] [24]
6. Six ditto chairs stuffed back and seats. [18]
4. Four imitation rosewood chairs [small size]. [25]
1. One rosewood semigrand piano forte. [15]
1. One Canterbury. [14]
1. One music stool. [16]
2. Two square footstools rosewood feet. [missing]
2. Two rosewood banner fire screens. [20]
1. One large mirror gilt framed. [17]  
The couch, chairs, screens & footstools have all loose throw-over chintz covers. Brussels carpet [27], hearth rug, fender & fire irons. [28]
4. Four large landscapes – oil paintings. [copies of known paintings by Salvatore Rosa]
1. One marine painting oil, 'Ships in the Harbour' by Monsu Alto, circa 1707. [Now L.H.S. Hall.]

### Dining Room

2. Two window curtains brass rods complete. [6]
2. Mahogany sideboards – with crests – [4]
1. One telescope [mahogany] dining table [having five leaves besides the two ends and an extra cedar table made for, and which can be used as, a centre for the same.] [3]
12. Twelve mahogany chairs. [2]
8. Eight cedar chairs to match. [2]
2. Two mahogany bookcases. [5]
1. One cedar sofa. [stylistically c. 1867, for the Duke of Edinburgh's visit]
1. One fire screen. [missing]
1. One arm chair. [1]  
Brussels carpet [7], hearth rug, fender & fire irons. [8]
3. Three large landscapes – oil paintings. [now: R.H.S. Hall by Bartolomeo Peron, a Venetian landscape painter; wall Hall by Guiseppe Zais, another Venetian landscape painter]
1. One small portrait on oak panel – oil painting.

### Books in No. 1 Book Case

[I have not listed the books.]

### Books in No. 2 Book Case

[I have not listed the books.]

### Hall

- One oak case with marble top for leaves of dining table. [10]
- Two oak hall chairs. [9]
- One brass hat & umbrella stand. [missing]
- One hall lamp. [missing]

### Furniture in two best Bedrooms

2. Two oak four post bedsteads dimity curtains. [29] [38]
  1. One cotton mattress.
  1. One hair ditto to each bedstead.
  2. Two pillows.
  1. One bolster.
2. Two Japan wood boxes. [missing]
2. Two oak chests of drawers. [31] [35]
  1. One oak wardrobe. [36]
6. Six dimity window curtains brass rods & rings.
8. Eight oak cane seated chairs. [40, seven missing]
2. Two oak dressing tables. [33] [34]
2. Two oak [dressing table] glasses. [32]
1. One cheval glass. [30]

Susan Archer

Witness Richard Smith

The cedar furniture was probably added for the visit of HRH Prince Alfred, the Duke of Edinburgh in 1867, which required more chairs and the extension of the dining table.<sup>24</sup> Susannah's signature, abbreviated to Susan (1801-1875), has been written by someone with a frail hand.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> David S. Macmillan, *Scotland Australia 1788-1850*, pp. 132-172 notes that in 1822 the first Public Company formed in Great Britain to carry goods and passengers to Australia was The Australian Company of Edinburgh and Leith; 1,380 £100 shares were sold to 92 Edinburgh or Scottish Partners. Four ships, the *Greenock*, *Triton*, *Portland* and *City of Edinburgh*, were purchased or built for the trade with the aim of each ship making the round trip annually and a company ship leaving Leith, the Port of Edinburgh, every three months. The Company regarded its main sphere of operation to be Van Diemen's Land.
- <sup>2</sup> One of the finest houses in the New Town Hobart was *New Town Park*, an addition to an existing Indian bungalow (*Prospect Farm*) by Captain Charles Swanston, Managing Director of the Derwent Bank. Born in Berwick, Scotland, Swanston arrived in Hobart in 1829 and added the surviving Greek Revival villa probably designed by the convict architect James A. Thompson by 1832. Thompson, a native of Haddington, 20 miles south-east of Edinburgh, was working in the Scottish Edinburgh villa tradition. Swanston records in the letter books of the Derwent Bank an order to his Edinburgh agent George Mercer on 26 December 1832 for '3 marble mantel pieces, grates, fenders and fireirons to match', 'an 8 day ornamental timepiece', 'set of bronze chimney ornaments', '1 x box of gentlemen's eau-de cologne'. Information kindly supplied by Warwick Oakman, current owner of *New Town Park*.
- <sup>3</sup> Ianthe Ruthven, *The Scottish House* p. 109. "Arthur Lodge on the Newington Estate Edinburgh was commenced in 1825; this estate was conceived as Scotland's first villa development probably based on Nash's Regent's Park Village, London."
- <sup>4</sup> Macmillan *op. cit.* p 92.
- <sup>5</sup> *Usury Laws Act* II Geo. IV, No. 6, 24 Apr. 1830.
- <sup>6</sup> Macmillan *op. cit.* lists the number of free Scottish, English and Irish applicants requesting permission to settle in NSW and thereby gaining grants of land between 1815-1833. This free settler class had to possess minimum capital of £500 to obtain a land grant. The number of applicants to 1817 averaged about 50 rising to 133 in 1819, 237 in 1820, 232 in 1821, 276 in 1822, 201 in 1823, 191 in 1824, and steadily declining to 56 in 1830. In 1824, 40% of these applicants were Scottish.
- <sup>7</sup> E.G. Robertson & E. Craig, *Early Houses of Northern Tasmania* p 156 and the evidence of a three-colour lithograph 53.3cm x 66cm, Titled: *Panshanger, Tasmania. The Seat of Joseph Archer Esquire. Painted by W. Lyttleton Esquire 1835*. For a biography of Samuel Jackson, see *The Dictionary of Australian Artists* (ed. Joan Kerr) and *Historical Records of Victoria* vol. 3, pp. 472f, which provides a photograph of Jackson and depicts his panorama of Melbourne dated 1841. This was drawn from the walls of the Scots Church while he sat in a revolving barrel. Jackson was the architect of the Scots Church and his panorama is centred by the completed Independent Chapel on the other side of Collins Street which is notable for its Greek Revival façade with many similarities to *Panshanger*.
- <sup>8</sup> *Launceston Advertiser*, 3 Sept 1835 & 8 Oct 1835. Reference Robyn Lake.
- <sup>9</sup> *Cornwall Chronicle*, 28 Feb 1835 "Passengers Joseph Archer Esq and Lady, Master & Miss Archer, ... Mrs Tart, H. Barton, Rebecca Hardy servants to Mr Archer." Reference Robyn Lake.
- <sup>10</sup> *The Archers of Van Diemen's Land*, p. 161. William's architectural commissions are mostly Italianate and include *Mona Vale* at Ross for his brother-in-law R.Q. Kermod.
- <sup>11</sup> *ibid.* p. 64.
- <sup>12</sup> *ibid.* p. 113, a letter of this date he wrote while in Brighton.
- <sup>13</sup> *ibid.* p. 125.
- <sup>14</sup> *The Tasmanian and Austral Asiatic-Review*, 24 Oct 1834 shows Gillows was a name well-recognised for quality in Tasmania at this date. Reference Robyn Lake.
- <sup>15</sup> The Estimate Sketch Books (344/104) 1837-1849. the Petty Ledger (344/79) for 1834-39, the General Ledger (344/57) 1813-1840, and the Cashbook 344/41,42,43 for 1834-47 complete the appropriate documents surviving within the Gillows archives for the dates relevant to this essay.
- <sup>16</sup> Petty Ledger book 1834-1839 p. 285. John Herbert was apprenticed to L. Redmayne in 1820. He made a rosewood work and drawing table for Sir B. Heyward who had ordered it from Ferguson and Co. of Oxford Street in September 1840. He made an oak pedestal of drawers for Ames Esq. a customer of Ferguson and Co. in April 1839; and a rosewood commode for Ferguson and Co. in June 1840.
- <sup>17</sup> Two collections of these drawings are known, one in the Victoria & Albert Museum Library and the other in the Lancaster Museum, numbering nearly 1,000 room plans.
- <sup>18</sup> *Cornwall Chronicle* 9 Jan 1839, p. 2. Reference Robyn Lake. See also T. Lane & J. Serle, *Australians at Home* plate 294 for an 1893 photograph of the drawing room centred by the fireplace.
- <sup>19</sup> Wendy Cooper, *Classical Taste in America 1800-40*, catalogue of an exhibition at the Baltimore Museum of Art 1993, p 47. Item 24 is the Van Rensselaer statuary marble fireplace of almost identical form. The author lists a further five statuary marble fireplaces imported at this period into America.
- <sup>20</sup> "The account books of Thomas Appleton of Livorno", *Winterthur Portfolio* 9, 1974, p. 144f. I have not inspected these notebooks but Joseph is believed to have lived in Italy for some time. See *The Archers in Van Diemen's Land*, p 111.
- <sup>21</sup> *Cornwall Chronicle* 2 May 1840 lists cargo for J. Archer as follows: "3 kegs of arsenic, 43 cases of wine, 31 packages of hardware, 2 bundles of fry pans, 7 iron plates, 28 cases of slates, 1,000 bricks, 8 sheets of lead, 58 packages of furniture". Reference Robyn Lake. I suggest that the bricks were fire bricks and that the iron plates were for the fire backs, the hardware was for the doors and windows, and the slates and lead for the roof. The deletion of the Library may have seen the second fireplace sent to *Panshanger* for it appears on inspection to have been fitted into the room later. A gentleman would have a black fireplace in his dining room as currently at *Woolmers*, and with no Library the white mantelpiece was surplus to requirements. Joseph Archer with his wife and three servants arrived in Hobart on the barque *Emu* from London on 17 March 1840, the vessel having left on 1 September 1839.
- <sup>22</sup> The ottoman, a long upholstered seat with or without back seating several people, originated in Turkey. Loudon in his *Encyclopaedia* of 1833 entry 2106, p 1060, describes ottomans as 'stuffed seats for several persons to sit upon at once which may be placed against the walls of a room or in the open floor'. Designs for ottomans occur in Sheraton 1791-94, Hope 1807 and Smith 1808.
- <sup>23</sup> Lancaster City Museums, LM 55.20/123. The plan is neither annotated as to the customer, or dated.
- <sup>24</sup> I am grateful to Robyn Lake for her suggestion that the most likely Launceston maker is Samuel Joscelyne.

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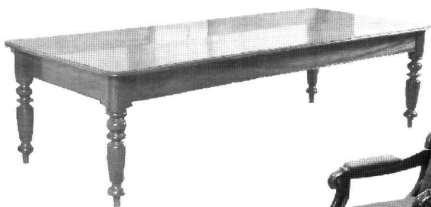
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Another impact of World War I was on the number of coins the Birmingham Mint was able to produce. A large portion of their production capacity was devoted to the brass and copper industrial products urgently required by England's munition works, as well as to silver blanks required by the Royal Mint for the Imperial and colonial coinages. An order for a modest number of Australian florins was also received - the 1914 H Australian florin is easily the rarest of all of the coins produced by the Birmingham Mint that year, and certainly ranks among the rarest coins they have ever produced.

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Actual Size



**R.A. Fredman**

**How a cabinet-maker in colonial Australia took a design for a bookcase based on George Smith's English pattern book of 1826, and then adapted it for local requirements.**

# A BOOKCASE FOR A STUDY

Very few early pieces of Australian furniture exist where the design was copied directly from one of the English pattern books published in the first half of the nineteenth century. The bookcase illustrated (plates 1 & 11) is a rare form and is the most significant copy from a pattern book found in Australia to date. Without doubt, it was based on a design that appears in George Smith's *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterers' Guide* (1826) as plate XLI.

Analysis of Smith's design and this bookcase yields an interesting perspective on society and cabinet-making in Australia at that time. Unique pieces such as this would have been constructed only on a commission basis, and involved careful forethought and planning before any timber was cut. By trying to understand this process, we gain an appreciation of the constraints and impositions of the period.

Copies of this 1826 pattern book are known to have been in Australia about the time of the bookcase's construction.<sup>1</sup> As Caressa Crouch<sup>2</sup> has pointed out, the Tasmanian cabinet-maker Alexander Watson, who died in 1832, had a copy of Smith, which sold for £2/6/-, and a "Price Book" which sold for £2/5/- when his effects were auctioned.

As is still the custom today, both the client and cabinet-maker used a pattern book to communicate a vision of the desired outcome of a commission. It is very convenient for both parties to commence a contract with a professional design and to supplement the design with specifications relating to variations from it. In this case, the original design appears to have been either beyond the scope of the cabinet-maker to build, or for the client to fund, so variations based on size and embellishments were introduced.

The other pieces of Australian furniture which borrow elements from pattern book designs are

primarily small tables.<sup>3</sup> The exception is a pair of Gothic bookcases with features from Smith's *Designs* (1808), illustrated in *Australian Furniture: Pictorial History and Dictionary, 1788-1938*, pp. 166 & 167, now owned by the Australiana Fund. However these bookcases by Joseph Sly are not as faithful to the original design as the piece which is the subject of this article. Furthermore, the Gothic elements were common to a number of designers thus depriving the pair of bookcases of some uniqueness in the world of furniture.

## **Smith's Design**

The following advisory note accompanies Smith's design for the bookcase in the Guide, shown in plate 10:

*This design is intended to occupy a principal situation in the spacious library or study. In the composition of this ornamental piece of furniture, the Grecian style has been adopted; and at the same time every attention been*

*bestowed in its construction, to render it as a whole, and in all its parts, useful as well as elegant. The whole of the ornamental embellishments are given on an enlarged scale in so ample a manner, together with a plan of the bookcase; and a scale as well for the elevation as for the enlarged parts, as to render further observation unnecessary, the whole being plain by inspection.*

The 1826 *Guide* was Smith's second pattern book.<sup>4</sup> The early nineteenth century was a time of great change in furniture and interior design, and in his Introduction he advises readers that his first book of 1808 had been rendered "wholly obsolete" by "the change of taste and rapid improvements which a period of twenty years has introduced". Smith explains that the change was brought about by "the travels of scientific men" and new archaeological discoveries at Pompeii and in Egypt.

Although written for cabinet-makers, the *Guide* contains few furniture designs in its 153 plates. Contemporary works such as John Loudon's *Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture and Furniture*, first issued in 1833, were much more comprehensive in this regard. Instead, Smith dedicates much of the book to the theory of geometrical and perspective drawing. These skills were deemed necessary because of their "peculiar advantage to the Cabinet-maker and Upholsterer, in the embellishment of his designs".

Smith digresses to give a fascinating insight into European cabinet-making politics of the time. English furniture is referred to as the best, albeit "fit for purpose". The French "are rarely to be distinguished for their care in construction", however they excel in "whatever relates to articles for feminine use". Germans

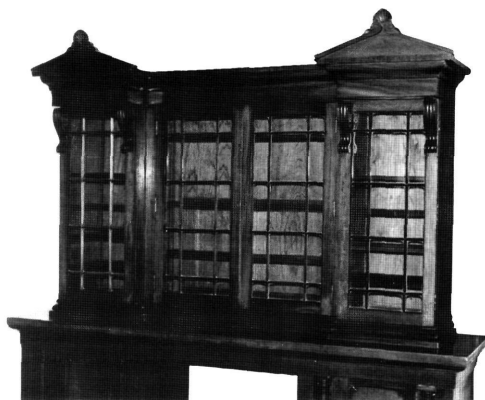


Plate 1. Australian Red Cedar Breakfront Bookcase, detail of upper section showing breakfront.

possess "the grand essential towards producing good work, viz. that of patience". Has anything changed?

Fashion in the early nineteenth century was greatly influenced by the work of furniture and interior designer Thomas Hope<sup>5</sup> (1768-1831) and by the arrival in England of the Greek marbles secured by Lord Elgin, British envoy to the Sultan of Turkey. Smith refers to the influence of these and of the Greek vases<sup>6</sup> collected from ancient tombs in Italy by Sir William Hamilton, Britain's Ambassador at Naples. During this period, a number of decorating styles competed for prominence. The *Guide* consequently gives examples of rooms decorated in several different styles including Egyptian, Greek, Etruscan, Roman, Gothic and Louis XIV. The Greek Revival style was very popular in the Late Regency period and this style was selected for the subject bookcase.

Smith's design is accompanied by a scale indicating that the finished bookcase should be 12 ft 2 in. wide, 7 ft 9 in. high, 1 ft 9 in. deep and 2 ft 11 in. to the shelf. He gives no explanation for the dimensions, which for a piece so large would have been arguably more logical if rounded to the nearest foot. The drawing of the main elevation is supplemented around the periphery with detailed drawings of the recommended embellishments for the woodcarver

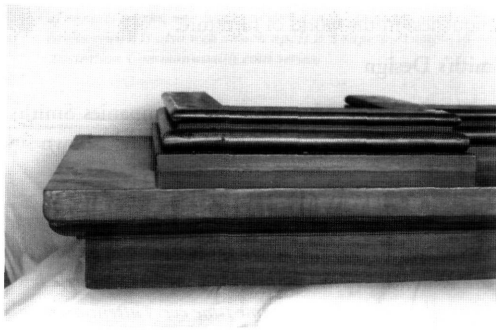


Plate 2. Australian Red Cedar Breakfront Bookcase, detail of impost profile, mirroring Smith's design.



and turner. Variation is not encouraged, although the “trusses” (better known today as corbels, scroll brackets beneath an overhang) are shown on the side in one detail drawing (left) and on the front of the doors in another (right).

Smith’s Greek Revival theme of the bookcase was to be carried out with stylistically-complementary decorative additions. The design provides spaces for the open display of Neo-Classical busts (the desirable display positions are plotted in plan view), ornaments (Greek vases) and globes.<sup>7</sup> Storage for portfolios, papers and books is incorporated in the cupboards. The sorts of books it might have held are suggested by advertisements that booksellers placed in the colonial press of the time – encyclopaedias, histories, geography, classics such as Homer and Shakespeare, novels by Walter Scott, sermons, architectural treatises and dictionaries.

Rudolf Ackermann, a London magazine publisher, published a design for a bookcase for a study in 1824. He provides more precise instructions with his design; it should be used for “the reception of gems, medals, and minerals, than for books merely; and also for portfolios of drawings, prints, and such objects of study which are not usually provided for in bookcases”. He recommended busts of Milton and Newton; “when decorated with propriety” the bookcase becomes “an ornamental appendage”.<sup>8</sup>

### The Australian Adaptation

The Australian bookcase is constructed wholly from quality cuts of red cedar (*Toona ciliata*). The dimensions are square and simple: 8 ft 0 in. high, 8 ft 0 in. wide, 2 ft 0 in. deep with the shelf 3 ft 0 in. above the ground. The upper section is breakfront in plan (plate 1), with the centre recessed as in Smith’s design, but glazed in a pattern which appears elsewhere in his book. The vertical edge of the main shelf is crossbanded, but otherwise the bookcase is largely devoid of complex cabinet-making detail. Where it was expedient, the profiles recommended in the drawing have been copied exactly (plate 2). Other profiles have been reproduced with minor modification (plates 3 & 4). Overall, there is very little deviation from the spirit of the original design.

It is particularly pleasing to find the bookcase has not been “restored” at any stage. This enables us to be



Plate 3. Australian Red Cedar Breakfront Bookcase, detail of truss side view, showing minor modification of Smith’s design.

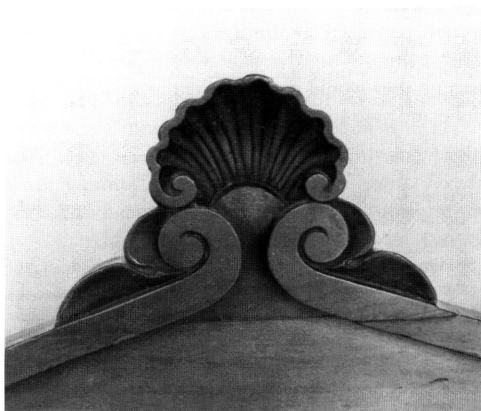


Plate 4. Australian Red Cedar Breakfront Bookcase, detail of acroterion ornament of pediment, closely mirroring Smith’s design. Note the join line just below the scrolls.

relatively certain that what we see is largely its original form, unadulterated by any owners or dealers wishing to “improve” it. The polish is old and uniform, apart from where some damage has been repaired. These repairs are very old and do not detract from the integrity of the whole.

The extent to which the Australian cabinet-maker adapted Smith’s design to the production of his bookcase is of great interest. The lack of refinement in some of the detail such as the pediment construction (plate 6), and the avoidance of difficult processes such as veneering suggest to me that it was not made in Sydney or Hobart. In my opinion, in one of these major centres, the construction of such a grand piece of furniture would have had the attention of skilled craftsmen with this expertise. Hence we are likely to be examining the technique of adaptation by a competent cabinet-maker in a provincial workshop, with limited specialist skills available to him.

Either the client or his cabinet-maker had a problem with the dimensions recommended in the *Guide*. This was resolved by adopting the smaller and simpler 8 ft square profile. All internal dimensions were subsequently scaled to match, with practical modifications such as wider top wing-cupboards to make them more useable, and a lower height for these cupboards to allow for the incorporation of a deep ogee moulding (plate 6) in the pediment. I interpret this moulding as an addition in the interests of fashion prevailing at the time of manufacture. The inner columns on the base were deleted, possibly because they would compromise the already-reduced globe and vase space on the plinth.

Plate 6. Australian Red Cedar Breakfront Bookcase, detail of side view of pediment. The lower end of the top member is exposed end-grain, which is a sign of provincial cabinet-making.

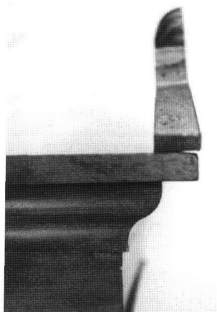


Plate 7. Australian Red Cedar Breakfront Bookcase, detail of upper glazed door.

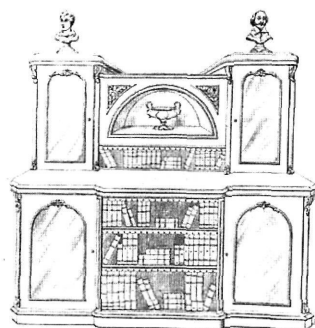


Plate 5. Design from *Designs for Furniture* by William Smee, 1850.

The resulting bookcase is in accord with a scaled down version of the original, but because of the reduced width would not accommodate busts on the upper shelf. Perhaps the client didn’t have this purpose in mind, but selected the design for some other “principal situation”. The globe shelf however was still useable and a pair of globes (terrestrial and celestial) would not have been uncommon at the time. At least one cedar globe-stand has been found in Australia<sup>9</sup> and many would have been imported. One can only assume the bookcase did the job required, as it has survived unaltered and presumably was in continuous use for over 150 years.

The treatment of the upper doors varies considerably from Smith’s design, probably for practical reasons. Radiating veneer and rounded glazing on the doors on the outer compartments as specified was difficult without the right skills and



**Plate 8.** Australian Red Cedar Breakfront Bookcase, detail of lower cupboard showing columns as per Smith but without the lotus carving. Note the exquisite corner figures, probably from another source.

equipment, so this item was deleted. Glazing was instead executed using a rectangular glazing pattern similar to another bookcase (plate XXIII) in the *Guide*. The doors to the centre compartment may have been a change to suit Australian conditions where insect and rodent attack can easily damage books. The glazing bars and astragal bar (plate 7) are a simple triangular profile and made in a tight fiddleback-grain cedar that appears in smaller members throughout the piece, including the lower door panels (plate 8). This continuity of uncommon timber grain assists in verifying that all elements of the bookcase are contemporaneous with the original.

It seems that there was no competent wood-carver available where the bookcase was made, so those embellishments in the design that required the skills of a carver had to be rationalised. This appears to have been achieved by utilising a combination of (a) purchasing select carvings from elsewhere, (b) the cabinet-maker undertaking some of the easier carving himself, and (c) leaving some elements plain rather than embellished. As a consequence of (c), the paterae (turned and carved dishes applied to flat vertical surfaces for decoration), the egg-and-dart moulding on the “impost” and cornice, and the lotus pattern on the column capitals have been deleted from the design.

The corbels (plate 3) do not demonstrate a practised hand, so it is likely that the cabinet-maker carved them himself. However the scallop shell acroterion ornament on the pediment (plate 4) is well carved and is more likely the work of a professional wood-carver. It has been carved on a separate piece of timber that has been incorporated into the construction with a joint just below the carving. On close examination, Smith's elevation shows this ornament should actually be a



**Plate 9.** Australian Red Cedar Breakfront Bookcase, detail of sawtooth shelf supports and original reeded shelf edge.

palmette, a Classical representation of a sacred tree. The exquisite corner carvings on the lower doors (plate 8) are also by a professional hand and vary again from the original design. These special items may well have been purchased off-the-shelf from one of the cabinet-making establishments in a centre such as Sydney.

A unique reference that explains how the bookcase could have been made survives courtesy of Annabella Boswell née Innes, a girl born in 1826 who kept a diary of her life in Australia in the 1830s and 1840s. In what is now known as *Annabella Boswell's Journal* she gives a detailed account of how the furniture was constructed for her family's first house, *Glen Alice* via Bathurst in the 1830s:

*Our house was very well furnished, and we had had great pleasure in seeing the manufacture of much of the furniture from a large log of cedar which was brought up from Sydney in one of our own drays while the house was being built. There was a saw pit not far from the house, and on to the frame which surrounded it the log of cedar was rolled, and there cut into boards of the required thickness. These boards were seasoned for the*

proper time, and then worked up by a cabinetmaker, who was engaged from Sydney to make what was required. He was assisted by our carpenter, George Miller. They had some good designs to work from, and the result was a handsome sideboard, a large wardrobe, a chest of drawers, and other things.<sup>10</sup>

## Dating

This type of grand Grecian "bookcase for a study" design is unique to Late Regency times and would have been popular only over the relatively short span of this period, which assists greatly in determining a likely date of manufacture. In contrast, items such as chests of drawers in their various forms had long periods of popularity.

Various designers published designs for Grecian bookcases for studies during the Late Regency period, such as that in 1826 by Peter and Michael Angelo Nicholson<sup>11</sup> (plate 12). These designs quickly went out of fashion, as evidenced by their absence from subsequent pattern books. This places our bookcase in

*Bob Fredman is an engineer and farmer in rural Queensland. He brings the skills of scientific analysis and interpretation to the study of early Australian furniture in his quest for a higher standard of scholarship among collectors in this most important of applied art and heritage fields.*

*He frequently contributes thought-provoking and well-researched articles to Australianiana, and was a popular lecturer at the Australian Society's 2001 conference.*

the second quarter of the nineteenth century. For comparative purposes, a markedly different, 1850 design is shown in the book by William Smee of Finsbury Pavement (plate 5).<sup>12</sup>

There is further evidence of the date of manufacture to consider. The addition to the design of the deep ogee (also known as *cyma recta*) moulding, which was a popular feature of the Victorian era, below the

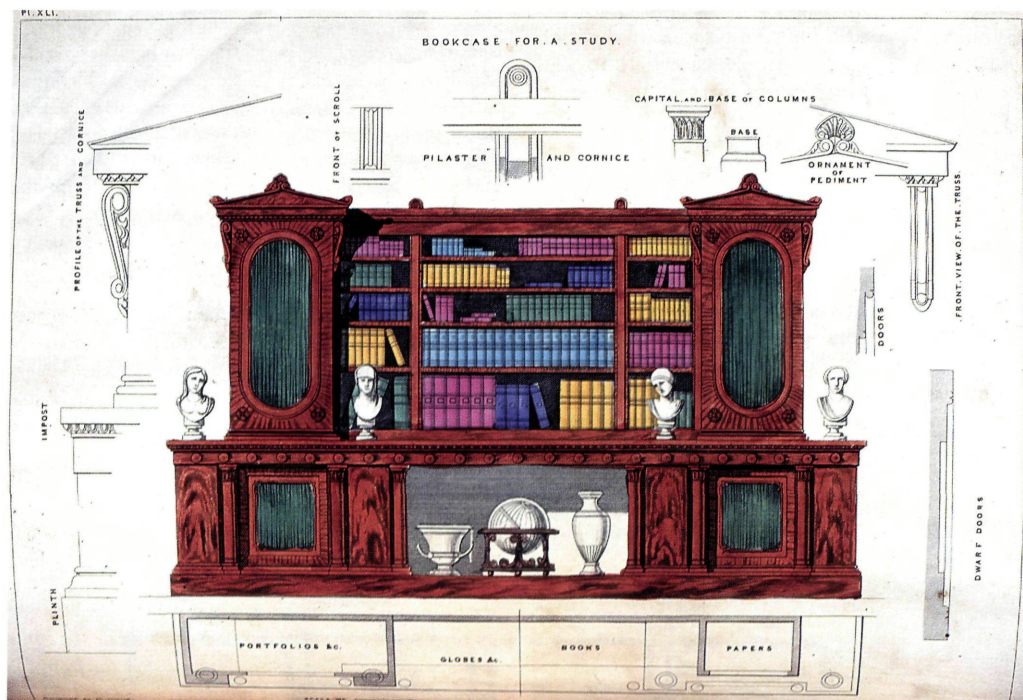


Plate 10. George Smith, *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterers' Guide*, 1826 pl. xli, "Bookcase for a Study". Courtesy Historic Houses Trust of NSW.



pediment implies a date at the very end of the period of Regency influence, nearer the middle of the century. The existing original hardware (three locks, escutcheons, door bolt and screws) and shelf structure (plate 9) support this general date. A date later than the 1830s is also indicated by the lack of essential Regency cabinet-making detail. Although a provincial piece, if made in the 1830s the cabinet-maker would have incorporated at least some of the Regency elements, such as thin member sections, stringing or ebonising, that characterise practices of this decade and earlier. Hence a date late in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, c. 1840-1850 is likely on the evidence available, although it is acknowledged that the severe 1840s depression would have curtailed extravagant commissions during this time.

### The Original Building

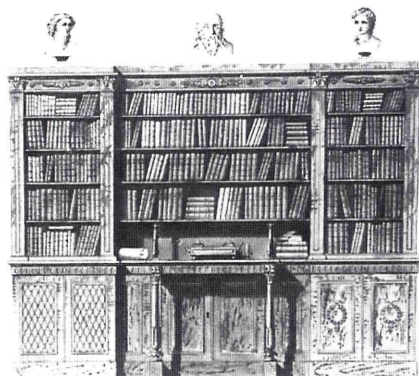
A bookcase of this scale pre-supposes a grand house, office or public building, and possibly one with Greek Revival architecture. Clearly it incorporated a sizable study. Further, the original owner/occupier was possibly a person of influence.

This is not an off-the-shelf bookcase but a piece where the client (quite possibly an architect fitting out a house) wanted this design copied and adapted by the cabinet-maker. The adaptations reflect the wishes of the client, the skills of the cabinet-maker involved in its creation, and its Australian context. As has been shown, it was made several years after Smith's original design was published, and at a time when the pure Greek Revival style was waning in Britain. The prolonged popularity of Greek Revival style is a feature of Australian architecture and the bookcase date is complementary to this trend.

John Hawkins' article on *Woolmers* shows that the Archers ordered pair of mahogany bookcases, at a cost of nearly £23 each, for the Library, but with the Depression of the 1840s and the crash of their Bank, the Archers scaled back their plans and deleted the Library from the house. The bookcases, already ordered, were shoved into the Dining Room.



Plate 11. Australian Red Cedar Breakfront Bookcase, 1840-1850, ht 2.46m (8 ft 0 in.), private collection.



H. Fisher 1826

Plate 12. Design from *The Practical Cabinet-Maker, Upholsterer and Complete Decorator* by Peter and Michael Angelo Nicholson, 1826.

## Provenance

One can only speculate on the provenance of this bookcase. It is sufficiently impressive not to have gone unnoticed wherever it was domiciled, so its existence may be recorded somewhere. All that is known to date is that antique dealer the late Stanley Lipscombe recalled in the 1970s that the bookcase was in a house in Port Macquarie many years previously. Port Macquarie fits the description of a possible origin, because it was settled in 1821 and was relatively isolated from Sydney with access primarily by sea. In 1833, the convict population was moved to Moreton Bay and a number of free settlers moved onto rural land in the district.

The bookcase could have resided in a house at Port Macquarie such as Government House or *Lake Innes House*, one of the homes Annabella Boswell lived in. She describes this house and life in it in the 1840s in her *Journal*. She describes an isolated but large, well fitted-out mansion. She refers to a painting (certainly a copy, though she did not recognise it as such) by Italian master Paolo Veronese, and other “good pictures” hanging in the house in 1843. In the Library “there were three large bookshelves from the floor to the ceiling filled with many choice books”,<sup>13</sup> so this bookcase would not have been out of place in that house at that time. Unfortunately, there is no mention of a large breakfront Grecian bookcase in the *Journal*, so the provenance remains an ongoing mystery waiting to be solved.

## Conclusion

In summary, the bookcase is likely to have been manufactured in provincial Australia late in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, to a design from George Smith’s *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer’s Guide* of 1826. It was adapted by the local maker, taking into account the local timber, the Australian climate, his skills, the client’s needs, the local interior decoration style and the evolution of fashion. It is complete and authentic, and is important in Australian furniture history.

## Acknowledgements

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to examine and research this piece. My sincere thanks go to the owners who were happy to accept from the outset the potential consequences of close scrutiny. The consequences were positive, and we all are richer for the opportunity.

I would like to thank John Wade and Kevin Fahy AM for their advice in the compilation of this article. Any further advice from readers will be gratefully received.

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P. Aguis, *Ackermann’s Regency Furniture*, Crowood Press, Wiltshire, UK, 1984.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Kevin Fahy & Andrew Simpson, *Australian Furniture, Pictorial History and Dictionary 1788-1938*, Casuarina Press, Sydney 1998, p. 12 & n. 5 on p. 16.
- <sup>2</sup> Caressa Crouch, “Master Cabinetmaker Alexander Watson of Van Diemen’s Land and his tools, A detailed description”, *Australiana* August 1996, vol. 18 no. 3, pp. 68-75, esp. 74f.
- <sup>3</sup> E.g. card and console tables, Kevin Fahy & Andrew Simpson, *op. cit.* pp. 384, 385, 388, 412, 413. The front legs of two cedar hall tables from the dining room at Hannibal Macarthur’s *The Vineyard* and now at *Elizabeth Bay House* are based on a design by George Smith; Scott Carlin, *Elizabeth Bay House, a History and Guide*, Historic Houses Trust of NSW, Sydney, 2000.
- <sup>4</sup> The first was *A Collection of Designs for Household Furniture and Interior Decoration*, 1808.
- <sup>5</sup> Several examples of Thomas Hope’s Greek Revival furniture are in the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney.
- <sup>6</sup> These vases were then believed to be Etruscan, as they were found in Etruscan cemeteries, but originally most had been made in Athens and exported to Italy.
- <sup>7</sup> The auction of the contents of Captain Piper’s marine villa in Sydney in 1827 included “a pair of globes, celestial and terrestrial, £32” *The Australian*, 6 June 1827 p. 3.
- <sup>8</sup> Rudolf Ackermann, *Repository of Arts*, 1824, plate 135.
- <sup>9</sup> Private collection, Sydney.
- <sup>10</sup> Annabella Boswell, *Annabella Boswell’s Journal*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1965, p. 38f (in the 1981 edition).
- <sup>11</sup> Peter and Michael Angelo Nicholson, *The Practical Cabinet-Maker, Upholster and Complete Decorator*.
- <sup>12</sup> W. Smee & Son, *Designs of Furniture*, London, 1850.
- <sup>13</sup> Annabella Boswell, *op.cit.*, p. 55f.



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Robert Lyall (1803-1886)

A London butcher convicted of "feloniously receiving stolen goods" on 28 October 1830 and sentenced to be transported for 14 years. This rare and highly evocative large glass plate Ambrotype (210x160) encapsulates the hardships endured through 14 years of convict life as etched into the face of the owner of the Westbury Inn, Westbury, Tasmania. His race horse "Messenger" won the William Edwards embossed Silver Cup in the late 1850s at the Launceston or Hobart races, resulting in this photograph, probably taken by Alfred Bock, between 1858-60. For similar cups see J.B. Hawkins *Nineteenth Century Australian Silver*, plate 179 - The Cavalry Cup, plate 180 - The Queensland Turf Club Corinthian Cup 1858 and plate 184 - The Melbourne Hunt Club Cup c. 1859.

