

1861 – Goldminer

What we see in this image

This unusual painting shows an unidentified Australian bushman, probably aged in his thirties and possibly a goldminer, his occupation suggested by the pick and shovel linked together and balanced on his left shoulder. If so, this is an early example of the goldminer subject moving from popular illustration to the more sophisticated genre of oil painting. The bushman is depicted with his [retriever] dog, standing in front of a bark hut with a blanket draped from the ridgepole, next to the stump of a felled tree used as a table set with a billy can, long-bladed knife and [salt cellar or tea caddy], with an Alpen scene stretching to the horizon behind him. He is recorded in the act of tamping tobacco down into the bowl of an ornately carved 'meerschaum'-style pipe which may indicate his European origins.

The man is dressed in a rather stylised and elegant version of goldfields dress, comprising an unusually spotless and voluminous long-sleeved white shirt left open at the neck and tucked into the waist band of his brown [wool] trousers which are themselves tucked into long brown leather boots extending over the knee. He holds a red flannel 'Crimean' shirt over his right arm and wears a light-coloured [cabbage-tree] hat with a low, round crown, covered with a loosely pleated ['pugaree'], and a narrow brim with a fly veil rolled up at the front. As was the custom in frontier societies, he is unshaven, with a full beard and his dark curly hair left long.

At this time, bushmen and miners wore the type of practical and durable work clothing which had begun to be mass-produced due to increased demand stemming from the California gold rushes (1849-1855) as well as Northern hemisphere conflicts

such as the American Civil War (1861-65) and the European 'Crimean' War (1853-56). The so-called 'Crimean' shirt was a wide, collared V-necked flannel shirt without buttons, the long sleeves of which were rolled up during work.

Popular in solid colours (usually red or blue) and often sashed or belted around the waist, it was often layered for warmth over boldly-patterned striped or checked linen or cotton shirts, and worn with a neckerchief that served as a sweat-rag. Straw hats completed the outfit, light-coloured to reflect the sun and broad-brimmed to shade the miners' faces.

Australian bush and gold mining life became the principal subject for popular artists such as S.T. Gill and George Lacy, as the notion of Australians as sturdy independent types defined by the bush experience began to take hold during the third quarter of the nineteenth century.

What we know about this image

James Anderson, portrait painter and member of the Royal Hibernian Academy, emigrated from Belfast, Northern Ireland to Australia in 1852-1853. A prolific portrait painter of the mid to late 19th century, this is an unusual painting for Anderson being a genre image rather than the formal portrait of colonel, statesman and clergy for which he is now mostly known.

Living in Victoria initially, by 1858 Anderson had moved to Sydney, where he continued to paint portraits advertising his studio premises at 389, George-Street in the 1861 Sands Directory of Sydney, and receiving good notices in the local press. ('..one of the finest specimen of oil painting seen...the likeness unmistakable whilst the colouring and effect of the painting show the executor to be a finished artist...', SMH, 17 Mar 1860, p. 5)

In 1861 Anderson was drawn into the controversy over a proposed portrait of the retiring NSW governor, Sir William Denison. While the local committee could not decide on a

suitable artist, its members clearly showed a preference for an English portraitist rather than a colonial painter. This prompted the well-known critic Joseph Sheridan Moore to write a pungent letter to the Sydney Morning Herald in January 1861, championing Anderson's cause and stating that, 'this "sending home to England" has been the ruin of all efforts to promote high art in its various branches amongst us'. Despite Anderson's worsening alcoholism, he formed close associations with several professional colleagues, including S.T. Gill (another alcoholic), and continued to receive commissions and produce portraits into the 1870s.

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1861 Goldminer

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Download Image



Creator
Anderson, James, fl. 1852-1877
Inscription
LHS: signed and dated: "Jms. Anderson / Pinxit / 1861"
Medium
oil painting
Background
none
Reference
Open

1860 – Sarah Osborne

What we see in this image

Grieving protocols intensified in the Australian colonies throughout the second half of the 19th century, following the model set by British monarch Queen Victoria, who assumed perpetual mourning after the death of her husband Prince Albert on 14 December 1861. Wealthy widows like Irish-born Sarah Osborne would have commissioned photographic mourning

portraits of deceased loved ones to send home to friends and family.

This painted memorial portrait may also have been based on a photograph, capturing her grief at the death (from stomach cancer) of her husband of 50 years, as well as the loss of her sixth son (18-year old John King Osborne) to consumption just three weeks later.

Sarah Elizabeth Osborne, nee Marshall (c.1807-1874) arrived in Australia from Ireland in 1829, with her husband Henry Osborne (1803-1859); the couple had nine sons and three daughters. An extremely wealthy man for his time, Osborne became a person of influence in the NSW Illawarra/Southern Highlands area. Elected a member of the Legislative Council in 1851, and elevated to the Legislative Assembly in 1856, Osbourne died on 26 March 1859.

Henry Osborne was the youngest of the ten children of Archie Osborne of Dirnaseer, County Tyrone, Ireland. Two of Henry's brothers had migrated to NSW and it was on the advice of one of them that Henry sold his farm and other property for about £3000, investing in a consignment of Irish linen and booking passage to Sydney on the Pyramus. Deeply in love with Sarah Marshall, daughter of an Irish clergyman, Henry's previous proposal had met with her father's refusal. When the Pyramus entered Belfast Harbour, Henry went ashore and immediately headed for Dromore, County Down, to persuade the Rev. Benjamin Marshall to agree to his daughter's marriage, to which he duly consented. Within a week the whole parish had set furiously to work to provide Sarah with a trousseau. This accomplished, the wedding took place on September 11, 1828.

The newlyweds set sail for Sydney where they arrived in May 1829. Osborne sold his linen at a handsome profit and went work on the property of Captain Thompson at Liverpool, where he gained valuable colonial experience before settling down to life as a pastoralist in 1833, on a grant of 2560 acres (1036 ha) in the Illawarra near the present town of Dapto, NSW, naming his property Marshall Mount. The Osborne's first home near Lake Illawarra was known as 'Pumpkin Cottage' (See: ML SV1B/Illa/2: watercolour by Robert Hoddle, 1832).

The Osborne's new residence Marshall Mount House was completed in 1841, built in the 'colonial style' of 'stone with lovely cedar doorways and an elegant staircase with slender balusters, an oval light over the deep set front door and French windows leading onto the stone paved verandah'. Now a suburb of Wollongong, located between the larger centres of Dapto and Albion Park, Marshall Mount house survives to this day, in poor condition.

Sarah died in England on 24 February 1874.

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1860 – Sarah Osborne

[Open in State Library of NSW catalogue](#)

Download Image



Creator
unknown
Inscription
none
Medium
oil on canvas
Background
none
Reference
Open

**1859 – Eleanor Elizabeth
Stephen**

What we see in this image

This right facing $\frac{3}{4}$ length portrait miniature shows Eleanor Elizabeth 'Nelly' Stephen in evening dress, at about 20 years of age. She is posed seated on an upholstered arm chair in a studio interior with a prop table to one side, covered in a green baize cloth and holding [writing] materials. Compared to daywear, Victorian evening dress was very revealing with low cut bodices intended to show the neck, shoulders and upper bosom, or décolletage, and shorter sleeve lengths exposing the arms.

Eleanor wears an elaborate, if somewhat austere, ball gown in a black and white colour palette which may be indicative of half-mourning – given the size of the extended Stephen's clan, it would have been rare for members of the family not to have been in mourning periodically. The silk taffeta dress has a low cut décolletage, trimmed around the wide neckline with a band of ruching, and a fitted bodice ornamented with an 'eschelle', or ladder, of ribbon bows above a pointed waist, the fullness of the skirt enhanced by triple-tiered flounces with scalloped edges. Her sheer white chemise is visible at the neckline and a pair of layered, gauzy undersleeves sit below short puffed sleeves trimmed with large, square handkerchief-like oversleeves, or 'jockeys'.

She wears her centre-parted light brown hair in the fashionable 'bandeau' style, with smooth sections wrapped over her ears and pinned behind, the remainder rolled and tucked into a hair net, or 'snood', of black [chenille]. She also wears a gold locket, suspended on a black ribbon, and a bracelet of wrought gold, perhaps one of a pair as her other wrist is obscured by the volume of her skirt.

This miniature portrait may have been commissioned to mark

Nelly's 20th birthday on 19 August 1859.

The Stephens are known to have frequented the George Street studio of Edwin Dalton, most expensive photographer in Sydney at the time and regarded by Lady Stephen as the best. Dalton was also known to be a miniaturist. On her last visit to the Dalton studio, Nelly also posed for two hand-coloured ambrotype portraits of varied size and casing, which show the subject in the same pose and wearing the same outfit as recorded in this miniature painting. It seems likely that all three likenesses were created in the same session or in sequence – it seems unlikely that the ambrotypes are the basis for the miniature, as the detail recorded in the painting is far superior to that of the photographs, but the photographs may have been used by the artist as a memory aid. Given the circumstances of Eleanor's untimely death just one year later, all three portraits were subsequently transformed into treasured 'memento mori'.

What we know about this image

Eleanor Elizabeth Stephen (1839-1861) was the eldest daughter of Sir Alfred Stephen, third Chief Justice of NSW (1844-1873), and his second wife Lady Eleanor Stephen, nee Bedford (1810–1886), who was mother to a large family of eight children of her own and seven stepchildren. While her husband was away in England for a year, Lady Stephen suffered the double deaths on the same day of her first born child and her own mother.

The events leading up to Nelly's sudden death on the 7 February 1861 are described in some detail in Lady Stephen's diary (MLMSS 777/3). Though her mother does not specifically define the fever as typhoid, Nelly's fatal bout of illness is documented as lasting from 26 January to 7 February 1861.

Initially, her sisters were allowed to sit with her but, by Sunday 3 February, Lady Stephen had banned them from the sick room for fear of infection. As Nelly's weakness and delirium intensified to the point of danger, the doctors considered removing her hair to lower her head temperature – an alarming sign to the family of her imminent death. Nelly's hair was cut off on 5 February and on 6 February the doctors 'seemed...to think there was hope for recovery'. But by the final morning they 'merely looked on...saying little' as about a dozen members of the family assembled in the sick room while prayers were read; 30 minutes later Nelly quietly ceased breathing. Mrs Bedford, on hearing of the death of her grand-daughter, succumbed to 'one of her spasms of pain' and died within the hour. Afterwards, Lady Stephen recorded that the family took their last looks at the two corpses 'again and again'.

See: Birth notice: 19 August 1839; Obituary, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 19 February 1861, p 7.

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1859 – Eleanor Elizabeth Stephen

[Open in State Library of NSW catalogue](#)

Download Image



Creator
Dalton, Edwin, fl. 1853-1865
Inscription
none
Medium
watercolour on ivory
Background
none
Reference
This miniature appears to be modelled on an ambrotype at MIN 202. See also: MIN 194: daguerreotype, c.1854; MIN 203: hand-coloured ambrotype, c.1859

1858 – Unknown Man

What we see in this image

In this right facing, $\frac{3}{4}$ length hand-coloured ambrotype portrait, the unknown male subject is posed seated on a floral upholstered chair with one hand on his thigh, and his other

arm resting on a small table covered in a similarly distinctive floral-patterned plush cloth – both the chair and the plush cloth are known studio props of the Sydney-based (American-trained) photographer Thomas Skelton Glaister. From April 1855 Glaister's American and Australian Daguerreotype Gallery was located at 100 Pitt Street, and concentrated its studio portraiture on Sydney society's elite. Although Glaister's photographs were expensive, he offered hand-colouring for no extra charge and quickly garnered a reputation for high photographic standards. The sitter wears a well-tailored, three-piece 'ditto' suit of light-coloured tweed cloth comprising a single-breasted frock coat with long narrow sleeves, a turn back collar and large self-covered buttons, fastened high at the base of the throat and then left open to reveal a matching single-breasted vest and pair of well-fitted trousers. He wears a fine white linen shirt with a stand collar and a pale blue silk neckcloth. A gold watch chain is draped across his torso from the pocket in which his watch has been placed, looped through a button hole at his waist and anchored with a T-bar in the shape of a [sword or rifle]. All outer garments for men were generally made of wool at this time and wrinkled easily without extraordinary care; the trouser press was not invented until the 1890s. Men were usually clean shaven in the 1850s, when soldiers returning from the battlefields of the Crimean War (1853-56) made beards acceptable in polite society; in the colonies miners, too, came back from the goldfields unshaven. Though hair length shortened through the decade, by the mid-1850s most respectable men were sporting long side burns or a fringe of beard around the cheeks and along the jawline.

What we know about this image

Thomas Glaister was the finest exponent of the ambrotype in Australia. In 1857 he advertised that his ambrotypes were twice the size of any other in Sydney and impervious to fading due to his exclusive enamelling process which, he claimed, not

only fixed the colours but added a 'brilliancy to the picture...having all the transparency of miniatures on ivory.' SMH, 21 November 1857. PHOTOGRAPHER: Thomas Skelton Glaister (1825 – 1904) worked for the Meade Brother's photographic studio in New York from about 1850 to 1854, when he arrived in Australia to work for Meade Brothers' Melbourne branch, located at 5 Great Collins Street. Glaister moved from Melbourne to Sydney in April 1855, establishing his own studio which he called the American Australian Portrait Gallery. On Tuesday 4 Dec 1855, Thomas Glaister advertised on the front page of Sydney's The Empire newspaper describing his 'American and Australian Daguerreotype Gallery', as having: splendid Photographic Rooms, with one of the best arranged and largest skylights in the colonies, at 100, Pitt-street, next door to the Royal Victoria Theatre, where he is now producing likenesses which are pronounced by good judges to be vastly superior in delineation, boldness, and the most lifelike to any ever before taken in this colony...Mr. G. has one of Haydon and Co.'s quick working cameras (the quickest now made), the only instrument of the kind in this country, by which pictures are taken in one fourth of the time required by other cameras... On 5 January 1856, the People's Advocate reported: Having recently paid a visit to Mr. Glaister's American and Australian Portrait Gallery, next door to the Victoria Theatre, we must pronounce it as the most complete and best arranged studio for taking likenesses in the photographic style, we have yet seen in Sydney... Glaister also provided advice for sitters on clothing that would reproduce well, including the suggestion that '...For gentlemen gloves should always be omitted; [and] dark vests, scarfs or handkerchiefs are preferable...' AMBROTYPE: By 1856 the daguerreotype had been superseded by a new wet-plate photographic process on glass known as the 'ambrotype' which quickly became the more fashionable process. Brought to Sydney in 1854 by James Freeman of Freeman Brothers, photographers in George Street, this special type of collodion process was faster than previous methods, with an exposure time less than 10 seconds,

and produced a glass negative which, when placed against a dark background, created the optical illusion of a positive image without the reflective issues of the daguerreotype. It could also be coloured and was a quarter of the price. The ambrotype proved popular with the middle classes but, as with the daguerreotype, it was destined to be short-lived as copies could not be made. COLLODION: The collodion positive, or ambrotype, was made by coating glass plate with a viscous liquid known as 'collodion', made by dissolving guncotton in alcohol and ether which, after the chemicals in the emulsion evaporated, left a thin clear light-sensitive film on the plate. This process required photographers to coat, expose and develop their plates while still wet (hence the term 'wet-plate' photography) working quickly before the collodion dried and lost its light-sensitivity. Photographers were slow to realise that the collodion negative could also be used to produce multiple positive prints which, once they did, would change portraiture for ever.

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1858 – Unknown Man

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Download Image



Creator
Glaister, Thomas, fl.1855-1870, attrib.] NB: identified by studio props
Inscription
verso: '6776'
Medium
photograph
Background
none
Reference
Open
See also DLPa 63

1858 – ‘Unknown Woman’

What we see in this image

In this right facing, $\frac{3}{4}$ length hand-coloured ambrotype portrait, the unknown female subject is posed with one hand holding a small posy of [silk] flowers in her lap. She is

seated on distinctive floral-upholstered chair with the other hand resting on a small table covered in a similar floral-patterned plush cloth – both the chair and the plush cloth are known studio props of the Sydney-based (American-trained) photographer Thomas Skelton Glaister. From April 1855 Glaister's American and Australian Daguerreotype Gallery was located at 100 Pitt Street and concentrated its studio portraiture work on Sydney society's elite. Although Glaister's photographs were expensive, he offered hand-colouring for no extra charge and quickly garnered a reputation for high photographic standards, producing portraits which were guaranteed never to fade.

The unidentified sitter wears a summer day dress in a fashionably gauzy, tartan-patterned, light-weight cotton fabric (possibly organdie) with the stripes arranged in a horizontal placement to accentuate the breadth of the silhouette – across the bust at the shoulder, around the width of the sleeves and the fullness of the plain, bell-shaped skirt. Her softly-pleated jacket bodice is buttoned to the neck, worn with a narrow lace collar fastened with a [gold] brooch, and caught in a series of tucks below the bust, bringing the fullness in at the waist and sewn down to form a deep point. The sleeve caps and cuffs of her $\frac{3}{4}$ length 'pagoda' sleeves are trimmed with contrasting bias bands of plain [organdie] and left open below the elbow above full white cotton undersleeves, or 'engageants', with white-work embroidered cuffs. The long, fine-linked gold chain around her neck may suspending a watch which would usually be tucked into a small 'watch' pocket set into the waistband of her dress.

She wears her centre-parted dark hair in the popular 'bandeau' style with smoothed front sections wrapped over her ears and pinned behind. The remainder of her hair is arranged in a large, twisted roll forming a 'halo' around the crown of her head, its shine suggesting that it has probably been oiled.

What we know about this image

The fashions of the 1850s demanded a horizontal emphasis, enhanced by the use of light-weight fabrics with patterns printed or woven in horizontal orientations. The invention in 1856 of the light-weight steel 'cage-crinoline' – hooped bands concentrically suspended from the waist by a series of tapes or sewn onto a single petticoat – reduced the weight of women's clothing by replacing layers of horsehair-stiffened (crinoline) petticoats without any loss of volume. As cage-crinolines could be produced quickly and cheaply they became the first fashion to be universally adopted by all ages and classes. Light-weight fabrics ensured a buoyancy of movement that enabled crinoline-supported skirts to attain an imposing width by the end of the decade.

PHOTOGRAPHER:

Thomas Skelton Glaister (1825-1904) had worked for the Meade Brother's photographic studio in New York from about 1850 to 1854, before travelling to Australia to work for Meade Brothers' Melbourne branch at 5 Great Collins Street. Glaister moved to Sydney from Melbourne in April 1855, establishing his own studio which he called the American Australian Portrait Gallery.

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Glaister also provided advice for sitters on clothing that would reproduce well including the suggestion that '...figured dresses with strong contrasts take well...[but] bonnets seldom should be worn, as they shade the face, and the style changes...'

AMBROTYPE:

By 1856 the daguerreotype had been superseded by a new wet-plate photographic process on glass known as the 'ambrotype' which quickly became the more fashionable process. Brought to Sydney in 1854 by James Freeman of Freeman Brothers photographers in George Street, this special type of collodion process was faster than previous methods, with an exposure time less than 10 seconds, and produced a glass negative which, when placed against a dark background, created the optical illusion of a positive image without the reflective issues of the daguerreotype. It was a quarter of the price and could also be coloured. The ambrotype proved popular with the middle classes but, like the daguerreotype, it was destined to be short-lived as copies could not be made.

Thomas Glaister was the finest exponent of the ambrotype in Australia. In 1857 he advertised that his ambrotypes were twice the size of any other in Sydney and impervious to fading due to his exclusive enamelling process which he claimed not only fixed the colours but added a 'brilliancy to the picture...having all the transparency of miniatures on ivory' (SMH, 21 November 1857).

COLLODION

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glass plate with a viscous liquid known as 'collodion', made by dissolving guncotton in alcohol and ether which, after the chemicals in the emulsion evaporated, left a thin clear light-sensitive film on the plate. This process required photographers to coat, expose and develop their plates while still wet (hence the term 'wet-plate' photography) working quickly before the collodion dried and lost its light-sensitivity. Photographers were slow to realise that the collodion negative could also be used to produce multiple positive prints which, once they did, would change portraiture forever.

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1858 – ‘Unknown Woman’

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Download Image



Creator
Glaister, Thomas, fl. 1854-1870 (attributed)
Inscription
Verso: 'm/a 6776' in pencil
Medium
Photograph
Background
none
Reference
Open
See also DL Pa 64

**1858 – Middleton family
portrait**

What we see in this image

This large, full-length hand-coloured ambrotype studio portrait is believed to depict three members of the Middleton family, dressed in fashionable 'at home' attire and posed with studio props to replicate a domestic setting. It shows one woman (left) standing next to a posing table covered in a patterned cloth, and another woman seated (centre) with a book in her lap, who is probably the wife of the man standing to her left with his arm reaching behind her, his other hand resting on the top rail of a chair set on a [patterned] carpet against a plain backdrop.

Both women appear to wear fashionable summer day dresses of similar [silk] fabric – but this may be an enhancement of the hand-colouring – with the wide, mid-arm length, bell-shaped 'pagoda' sleeves customary from the 1850s into the early 1860s, generally worn over white undersleeves, either closed or open at the wrist.

The sleeves of the woman on the left are fitted with tight, pointed caps around the upper arms, a style particularly fashionable in the late fifties, and trimmed with rows of black 'soutache' braid. Her loosely-pleated, high-necked jacket bodice is cut in the elegant style known as a 'basquine-body' which extends over the hips, the waistline marked by a [ribbon] belt with floating ends above a plain, pleated or gathered full skirt. She wears a deep [crocheted] white lace collar, fastened with an oval brooch, and a long black [jet/ribbon] suspending... her smoothly centre-parted hair is arranged with side ringlets and ribbon bows which may indicate her youth. Earrings??

The seated woman wears a much plainer style of gown, the high-necked bodice with elbow length sleeves, worn with full white undersleeves gathered into a band at the wrist, above a pleated corsage, tightly fitted through the torso and deeply pointed at the waist, over a plain, pleated or gathered full skirt. Her accessories comprise a white lace collar, fastened

with a [small] brooch, gold earrings and a long gold watch guard. Her centre-parted hair is arranged in the fashionable 'bandeau' style with smooth front sections wrapped over her ears and pinned behind. The full skirts of both female subjects would usually be supported by cage-crinolines worn with several petticoats to conceal the wires which may, in this instance, have been removed to accommodate the tight grouping of the portrait.

The male figure in this group wears an array of unmatched [wool] suitings typical of the period, comprising a single-breasted dark jacket with wide notched lapels worn with dark trousers and a light-coloured, single-breasted, shawl-collared waistcoat draped with a gold watch guard chain and fastened over a white shirt with a peaked, stand collar and black neck cloth tied in a flat bow. He wears his curly hair with a side parting and brushed back from his forehead above clean-shaven cheeks with a fringe of beard around the chin.

This new, looser style of jacket was known as the 'sack' and became available from the mid-1850s, identified by a more generous cut through the body and broader sleeves attached to a higher 'armscye' allowing greater comfort and movement.

What we know about this image

Sergeant John Middleton (1825-1894), baker, soldier and policeman, came to Australia in 1852. In 1861 he was wounded in the process of arresting the bushranger, Frank Gardiner, who subsequently escaped.

John Middleton (1825-1894) was born in Foulsham, Norfolk, England. Having worked as a baker, he enlisted in the 5th Regiment in 1843. He served in Ireland and later in Mauritius, where in 1848 at Port Louis he married Ellen (1827-1904), née Hartley of Lancashire. They sailed with two children in the *Alecto* as steerage passengers and arrived at Melbourne on 13 October 1852. Middleton later joined the Victorian Police

Force.

In November 1854, at Diamond Swamp, NSW, Middleton became a trooper with the Western Road Patrol, promoted to sergeant in 1855. Serving at Blackheath from 1857 and at Hartley from 1860, he was keen and ambitious, recording his daily movements and those of other officers in his diaries (MLMSS 1876). The outbreak of gold-mining on the famous Turon fields resulted in turbulent times and conflicts with bushrangers who infested the country. In 1861 Middleton was sent to Tuena, NSW, close to the hide-outs of 'highway-men' in the Abercrombie Ranges.

In May-June 1861 with Constable Hosie he looked for Bathurst-born bushranger, Johnny Peisley (1835-1862), considered by many to be the first true Wild Colonial Boy. On 15 July the troopers rode to Bigga and next day went to William Fogg's sly-grog shop where they surprised Frank Gardiner who shot Middleton three times, in the hand, mouth and hip. Middleton managed to arrest Gardiner and left for Bigga to get help and reinforcements. In the meantime Hosie allegedly took a bride and allowed him to escape. In 1864 Middleton was a main witness for the Crown in the trials of Gardiner but contradicted himself in evidence. In 1875 he was awarded a silver medal by the government for gallant and faithful services in capturing bushrangers.

Middleton made his home in Orange in 1865, where he became an alderman and mayor in 1891, and died aged 68, on 6 November 1894. He was survived by his wife, and a family of five sons and four daughters.

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1858 – Middleton family portrait

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Download Image



Creator
unknown
Inscription
none
Medium
photograph
Background
none
Reference
Open

1858 – Sergeant William Ormrod

What we see in this image

This front facing $\frac{3}{4}$ seated 'ambrotype' shows a male subject who looks to be aged in his 50s, which may place some doubt on its attribution as Sergeant William Ormrod. As the identity of the photographer is also unknown, this portrait is best dated by its photographic format and the sitter's clothing. The subject is posed in the act of paying a social call, as indicated by the top hat placed crown side down on the table beside him, though this clothing accessory may also be a studio prop.

At the time this image was made, Sergeant William Ormrod would have been aged about 35, and it is possible his wartime service in Crimea may have taken a toll on his appearance. Whatever his true identity, however, the man in this portrait wears an ensemble of mismatched suitings typical of the 1850s, including the typically generously-cut 'sac' coat which only emphasises this sitter's thinness. This wider, looser style of coat was popular from the second half of the decade into the 1860s. The subject of this portrait wears his longline version fastened high at the neck with a single button below a narrow collar, over dark wool trousers, a [matching] single-breasted waistcoat with a gold watch chain and fobs, and a white shirt with a turn down collar and ribbon necktie.

He wears the full beard of a returned soldier, his longish greying hair brushed back from his forehead with a side parting, and curling over his ears.

What we know about this image

Sergeant William Ormrod (c.1823-1878) is thought to have served in the Crimean War (1853-1856) and to have come to Australia from India, to buy horses. Staying on with Governor Fitzroy, he later started the first brickworks in Ryde. In 1858, he married Amelia Dorcas Troughton (1835-1914), who is believed to be a daughter of Dorcas (c.1808-1880) and James (c.1809-1873) Troughton of Parramatta.

At the time of his death, aged 55, in 1878, Ormrod's profession was given as foreman at Stewart's cedar yard, Pitt Street. Buried in the graveyard of St Anne's Church, Ryde, he left an estate that included a substantial amount of property in Glebe.

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Hover on image to zoom in



1858 – Sergeant William Ormrod

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Download Image



Creator
unknown
Inscription
none
Medium
photograph
Background
none
Reference
See also: MIN 99; ML 459: Amelia Dorcas Troughton, later Ormrod

1858 – Margaret Moore Smail, and her children

What we see in this image

This charming family portrait shows Margaret Moore Smail, aged

about 32, with two of her five children: John standing to her right, aged about 7, and Isabella Rhubina, aged about 4, on her left. Emancipist artist Joseph Backler was a prolific and highly-regarded portrait painter, with his client base drawn from those who had also done well in the colonies: publicans, builders, millers, ship-owners, shop-owners, and farmers. The most distinctive feature of Backler's work was his careful delineation of the faces of his subjects which did not tend to flattery. Mrs Smail and her children are conventionally posed in a domestic setting furnished with a [cedar] sofa, probably of colonial manufacture upholstered in black [horsehair], an architectural column with red curtain drapery and a landscape vista behind.

Mrs Smail wears a one-piece home dress in a soft, light-weight gauzy, floral-patterned grey fabric, made closed to the throat with a pointed white work collar, fastened by a large triple-lobed chased gold brooch, above the bodice with its sloping shoulderline and wide, double-layered capelet trimmed with braid and fringing, applied over the bust pointed waistline, full spreading skirts and pleated, split 'pagoda' sleeves, the whole ensemble trimmed with rosettes, bows and streamers of grey [silk] ribbon. She wears her centre-parted dark hair in a moderate version of the 'bandeau' style, wrapped over her ears above pendant gold earrings, and tucked into a low bun at the nape of her neck, around which is draped a long, gold watch chain hanging well below her waist, and suspending a heavy gold watch with which the two children are playing.

John wears typical attire for boys during their toilet training years and before they were breeched (ie. put into breeches or trousers) at around 5-6 years of age. His full-skirted, short-sleeved dress is constructed in a jaunty combination of grey and pink fabrics with military style trims and a wide shallow neckline above a fitted, pleated bodice with a narrow peplum at the waist, his white undergarment just visible at the neck and edges of his sleeves. He holds a toy

whip in his right hand, a suitably masculine attribute, and his short blonde curly hair has been brushed into a side parting – a useful indicator of gender in an era when all girls wore their hair with a centre parting.

Isabella wears a toddler's dress of yellow fabric with bands of black ribbon marking its v-shaped plastron bodice above a loose skirt and short, shirred sleeves; her curly blonde hair is arranged with a gender-appropriate centre parting.

What we know about this image

Irish-born Margaret Moore (1826-1870) was the daughter of a farmer. She arrived in NSW from Enniskillen, County Fermanagh, in 1844. Alexander Smail (1816-1867) was born in Scotland and migrated to Australia on the Herald in 1844 with his first wife Violet, nee McCleod (1821-1847), and two of their ten children, Robert (1840-1871) and Violet Jnr (1843-1844) who died shortly after the family's arrival in February. Another son, Alexander Jnr, was born in Sydney (1844-1906), before the death of Mrs Smail on 27 June 1847. Later that year Alexander Snr married Margaret Moore. The couple had at least three sons and two daughters including John (1850-1920), Isabella Rhubina (1853-1945) and Fanny Jane (1857-1920).

Alexander Smail set up a bakery in Bathurst Street in 1844, moving the business to Argyle Street at Miller's Point in 1851, where he remained until his death in 1867. He was elected Alderman for Gipps Ward from 1 December 1864 to 4 September 1867, and died on 8 October 1867. At the time of her death in 1870, Margaret Smail owned a store and bakehouse and two allotments on the north side of Argyle Street, a parcel of land on the south side of Argyle Street, Millers Point, and 10 acres at Clarence Town, near Maitland.

John Moore Smail was chief engineer for the Water Board, in charge for 20 years of both Sydney's water supply and its sewerage system. Educated at Fort Street and Sydney Grammar,

through the influence of his father, a City of Sydney alderman (1864-1867), John was apprenticed to the City Engineer whose department controlled Sydney's water supply. In 1879 he was appointed the first engineer of the newly created Sewerage Board; he also later became engineer-in-chief for the Water Board. John Smail was the first president of the Institute of Local Government Engineers of Australasia and its first Life Member, a member of the Association of Municipal and County Engineers of Great Britain, and a member of the Royal Society of Australia. He conducted routine biological testing of the Sydney sewerage network and inspected similar systems in Europe and America. An officer in the army reserve and a magistrate, at the time of his death on 17 June 1920, he was engineer-in-chief to the Metropolitan Board of Water Supply and Sewerage.

Isabella Rhubina Smail married William Davidson in 1883, and died at Drummoyne in 1945.

ARTIST:

Joseph Backler (1813?-1895) arrived in Sydney in the Portland on 25 May 1832. Convicted in 1831 for issuing forged cheques, the 18-year-old was sentenced to death, later commuted to transportation for life. Indents describe him as being able to read and write and list his profession as a landscape painter. Continually in trouble, Backler was not granted a ticket-of-leave until February 1842. From 1843 he was assigned to Sydney frame makers and carvers, Messrs Cetta & Hughes, and in that year also advertised his services as a 'Portrait, Miniature and Landscape Painter, in oils and watercolours'. He was finally granted a conditional pardon in 1847. Probably the most prolific oil painter in early colonial Australia, Backler made his name as a portrait painter and more than 120 of his works survive.

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1858 – Margaret Moore Smail, and her children

[Open in State Library of NSW catalogue](#)

Download Image



Creator
Backler, Joseph (1813-1895)
Inscription
LLHS: 'J. Backler 1858'
Medium
oil painting
Background
none
Reference
Open 1
Open 2
See also: ML 646: Alexander Smail (1816-1867)

1858 – Dr Edward Swarbreck

Hall

What we see in this image

This $\frac{3}{4}$ length standing, professional or 'occupational' portrait shows Dr Edward Swarbreck Hall, aged 54, who was house surgeon of the Hobart Town Hospital. He is posed next to a piece of scientific apparatus with two large anatomical illustrations (one human and one zoological) behind him with diagrams relating to herpetology (snakes) and lepidopterology (moths/butterflies).

Dr Hall is dressed in a two-piece 'business' suit of dark wool, comprising the more formal style of double-breasted tail coat with notched lapels and turn back collar, and matching trousers, worn with a double-breasted waistcoat in a darker fabric (possibly silk) buttoned over a white linen shirt with a high collar and a black silk neckcloth. He is clean shaven and wears his greying hair with a side parting, brushed back from his forehead and curling over his ears.

This image is a rare example of a 'chromatype' photoprint – a direct positive print onto paper from a glass collodion negative using chromium salts as the sensitive ingredient – of which only a few dozen specimens survive. It is signed and dated by Tasmanian photographer Frederick Frith who invented the process in 1856. An early demonstration of the potential of paper photography (though perhaps looking more like a painting than a photograph) the size and vitality of this new photographic format, in comparison with the miniature scale of daguerreotypes and ambrotypes, would have been quite stunning at the time.

Frederick Frith (1819-1871) was always more interested in painting than in photography, and throughout his career his

most memorable images were his carefully composed and delicately overpainted portrait photographs which, though these images look very much like watercolours, were actually created photographically:

Taken...[in] a sitting of 5 seconds...portrayed in the very aspect and attitude of the instant of depiction and with the most minute expression of the moment...truly a gallery of living portraits of our most distinguished citizens and colonists, and may be seen in the manner as they lived...' (The Hobart Town Daily Mercury, August 12 1858, pge 6)

What we know about this image

Pioneering medical scientist and moral activist, Dr Edward Swarbreck Hall (1805-1881) studied medicine in Dublin and London, becoming a member of the Royal College of Surgeons and a licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries. Coming into contact with the poverty, filth and unhealthiness of slum life in the backs streets large industrial cities like Liverpool, where he also saw the devastating effects of outbreaks of disease like smallpox and typhoid fever, Hall became aware of the peculiar problems of large numbers of orphan and destitute children herded together in charitable institutions and realised the importance of diet and nutrition in relation to health.

Arriving at Hobart Town with his wife in November 1832, Hall took up duty as a medical officer, advertising his services in the Courier on 27 September 1833. Appointed as house surgeon to the Hobart Hospital early in 1853, it was during this time that Hall began to make a comprehensive statistical study of Hobart with a view to sanitary reform. In July 1856, Hall's scientific approach to problems of public health based on objective statistical enquiry were documented in his article, 'On the Medical Topography and Vital Statistics of the City of Hobartton, Tasmania, and its Southern Sub-Districts for 1855', published in the Australian Medical Journal in a series of parts between 1856 and 1858.

It was through Hall's efforts that questions of sanitation and public health in Hobart Town soon became matters of world-wide scientific discussion and investigation – recording 883 deaths out of a population of 26,095 and equalling a mortality rate 34/1000 which exceeded the 25/1000 deemed acceptable in European cities like London – proving that Hobart was statistically pre-eminent for its excessive mortality.

In 1861 Hall became chairman of the executive committee of the new Benevolent Society. His untiring advocacy of public health reforms was chiefly aimed at assisting helpless children, and he was largely responsible for the compulsory Vaccination Act that, at his death, was being rushed through parliament.

In 1923, J.H.L. Cumpston (1880–1954), the first Director General of the Australian Commonwealth Department of Health writing in the periodical Health (Dec 1954), named Hall 'The First Australian Sanitarian':

The honour of being the first man in Australia to preach the gospel of public health with an inspired intelligence and courageously to fight for health reforms in the face of great obstruction belongs to [Dr Edward Swarbreck Hall, M.R.C.S., of Hobart.](#)

CHROMATYPE

In colonial photography, the term 'chromatype' referred to the process of creating direct positive prints onto paper from glass collodion negatives made by using chromium salts as the sensitive ingredient. It produced a type of thin, matt olive-toned albumen or salted paper print which was usually subtly overpainted in oil or watercolour. Even when the colouring medium is delicately applied, in some cases the overpainting completely obliterates the photographic base and it can be hard to distinguish an image as a chromatype.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Frederick Frith (1819-1871) was a successful portrait painter and professional photographer in colonial Melbourne and

Hobart. Born in the UK, he was from an English family of miniature painters and silhouettists and worked as a painter in Melbourne in 1853 where he claimed to have practiced in London, Brighton, Scotland and Ireland. Initially establishing himself as a portrait and animal painter, in 1854 Frith moved to Hobart Town where he collaborated briefly with the Duryea brothers and Archibald MacDonald, and then with John Matthieson Sharp from 1855 to 1856; Sharp had just bought a short-lived Calotype Gallery established by English photographer Walter Dickenson. Together, Frith and Sharp made coloured portraits and landscape views, Sharp taking the photographs and Frith colouring them and advertising their Chromatype Gallery at 110 Collins Street in the Hobart Town Advertiser on 20 July 1855.

Establishing his own studio in 1856, Frith's brother Henry had joined his enterprise by 1857. Marrying Emma Golding in Holy Trinity Church, Hobart Town on 11 October 1858, Frith continued the Hobart Town studio as well as advertising his abilities as a painter, but the firm's painted photographs seem to have been far more popular with the public. This was hardly surprising given Frith's painting prices, although his coloured photographs were also expensive.

By August 1858, Frith was advertising:

...The great advantage of these processes is the striking accuracy of their results; thus we have the statesmen, the warrior, the poet all portrayed in the very aspect and attitude of the instant of depiction and with the most minute expression of the moment...truly a gallery of living portraits of our most distinguished citizens and colonists, and may be seen in the manner as they lived... (The Hobart Town Daily Mercury, 12 August 1858, p. 6)

In December 1858, The Cornwall Chronicle was reporting that 'portraits of the elite of the Tasmanian community...any subject whatever can be taken so quick ['a sitting of 5 seconds'] in the new process of Messrs Frith & Co. (25 December 1858, p.

6).

In 1859, operating as Frith Brothers with an additional studio in Launceston, the pair produced the first commercial albums of views of the state, entitled Tasmania illustrated, and by 1861 Frith was claiming he could produce his images on plates (china), ivory, paper or leather. In 1862 Frith moved back to Victoria, while his brother Henry remained in Launceston, where he was involved in a public stoush with Alfred Bock over the correct use of the 'sennotype' process. Frith continued to operate until in 1867, when he sold his negatives to George Cherry and moved to New Zealand.

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*Dr. Edward Swarbreck Hall
"Medico-Vital Statistics of the Southern Hemisphere"
(Lancet)
"The First Australian Sanitarian"
(Australian Journal of Health, April 1923)
Age 54*

1858 – Dr Edward Swarbreck Hall

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Download Image



Creator
Frith, Frederick (1819-1871)
Inscription
Signed and dated, lower edge, either side: 'Fred. Frith 1858'; below image in [later] calligraphic hand: 'Dr Edward Swarbreck Hall / "Medico Vital Statistian [sic] of the Southern Hemisphere" / (Lancet) / "The First Australian Sanitarian" [sic] / (Australian Journal "Health" April 1923) / Age 54'
Medium
Photograph
Background
Given to J.H.L. Cumpston in old age by E.S. Hall's son on seeing Cumpston's article about Hall published in Health, v.1, no.4, April 1923.
Reference
Open 1
Open 2

1858 – Jane Allen

What we see in this image

This front-facing, $\frac{3}{4}$ length oil portrait shows Jane Allen, aged 53, seated in an easy chair, richly upholstered and buttoned in a colourful silk [brocade] fabric, and set against a masonry wall with a view on the right, behind her, suggestive of a domestic garden. In 1861, a Sydney Morning Herald review had reported that the portrait artist, James Anderson, 'had portrayed on canvass many of our citizens, and always with the greatest success—his works being as much esteemed for their artistic finish as for their correct likeness'.

For this portrait, Mrs Allen has chosen a striking [silk] afternoon gown, providing clear evidence (contrary to the opinions expressed in many nineteenth century sources) that some older woman did continue to wear fashionable attire, even after 35 years of marriage. As befitting a woman of her elite financial and social position in the colony, Mrs Allen would have had access to expensive materials and a very good dressmaker; this dress through its 'bespoke' manufacture certainly represents a generous outlay of time, money and skill.

Boldly-striped silks like this were extremely popular at this date. With its pattern of broad and narrow stripes and strongly contrasting colour combinations, the imported fabric was probably woven rather than printed and, in this instance, possibly from France rather than from China. Cut in the latest shape – a new shorter type of corset without a centre 'busk' was introduced in 1853 – this lessened the restrictive fit and length of earlier styles allowing the dress bodice to sit closer to the natural waistline. The dressmaker has also maximised the vivid geometric arrangement of the fabric, making a highly effective use of different directional placement of the stripes to emphasise the fashionably fuller bust and narrow waist of the style.

Jane wears a narrow flat lace collar at the neck of her gown, fastened with a large oval [agate/hair] brooch in a chased gold setting, rimmed with seed pearls or diamonds, above sheer dark red [silk organza] ribbon streamers cascading over a panel of carefully-aligned chevrons pieced along the centre front seam of the bodice corsage, with pleats fanning up from the waist on either side forming a V-shaped 'plastron' spreading over the sloping shoulder line and strengthening the overall geometric impact of her dress, the chevron band continuing down the front of the full spreading skirt with panels of vertically aligned stripes on either side pleated into the pointed waistline.

Her 'pagoda' sleeves are cut on the cross grain, again maximising the boldness of the overall design, and worn with white undersleeves closed at the wrist. Adding to the richness of the textile display, draped around her lower back and forearms Jane wears an expensive imported wool shawl of variously-coloured woven striped bands patterned with paisley motifs. She also displays an engagement ring and wedding band in her left hand and a long, fine gold chain around her neck, hanging below her waist, perhaps suspending 'pince-nez' spectacles.

Her centre-parted grey hair is arranged in long side ringlets in a somewhat dated style – perhaps holding onto the hairstyle of her youth which was a common affectation of older women – and covered with an elaborate indoor cap of white silk (blonde) lace, trimmed with silk floss fringe and a pair of long [handmade] lace lappets [possibly antique] hanging down over her shoulders on each side.

What we know about this image

Jane Allen, nee Bowden, (1807-1893) was a daughter of Wesleyan schoolmaster Thomas Bowden, and came to Sydney in 1811, aged 4. On 24 July 1823 she married George Allen (1800-1877) who had arrived in the Mary Anne in January 1816. The first

solicitor to receive his legal training in the colony, Allen was the founder of the oldest legal firm in Australia (Allen, Allen & Helmsley). Articled to Frederick Garling in July 1817, George was admitted to practise as a solicitor on 24 July 1822. His first office was on the corner of George and Hunter Streets, and later in Elizabeth Street from 1825. He was appointed an MLC in 1856.

George Allen joined the Methodist Society in 1821, and was soon a leading member, becoming intensely religious. By 1831 he owned three houses in Sydney, held an estate of thirty acres (12 ha) at Botany Bay, and had acquired ninety-six acres (39 ha) three miles out of town at the Glebe, where he built a large house known as 'Toxteth Park', in which he would live with his family of fourteen children – comprising five sons & five daughters surviving to adulthood – for the rest of his life. A visitor to the estate in the 1870s described 'a large gathering of distinguished people, the ladies dressed as well, perhaps as expensively as the ladies of New York' and Mrs Allen as 'the pleasantest, most amiable and motherly lady'. Jane Allen lived on the Toxteth Estate for 60 years and survived her husband for 16 years.

See also: George Allen journals, 1819-1875 (MLMSS 477)

ARTIST

James Anderson (d. 1882) was a prolific portrait painter of many important colonial subjects in the mid to late 19th century. Born in Belfast, Northern Ireland, by 1858 Anderson was in Sydney, exhibiting a portrait of the American consul, Mr Merrill, at Buist's shop in George Street which the Sydney Morning Herald praised as a 'clever and effective portrait ... by an artist who has only recently arrived from Victoria to follow his profession in this colony'. (30 October 1858)

By 1860, Anderson's studio was above Peek & Fotheringham's George Street Auction Rooms. Inspecting Anderson's portrait of William Macpherson, a reporter from The Southern Cross stated that it had, 'all the accessories of skilled art, careful

drawing, delicate manipulation, masterly effects, of light and shade, [which] render the study ... valuable as a work of art independently of its worth as a faithful likeness'.

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1858 – Jane Allen

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Download Image



Creator
Anderson, James (fl. 1852-1877) d.1882
Inscription
J. Anderson, Pinxit., [1859]
Medium
Photograph
Background
none
Reference
Open 1
Open 2

1857 – ‘Anne Namoi [Ann Naomi] & Jane Nobbs’

What we see in this image

This $\frac{3}{4}$ length double portrait shows Jane Agnes Nobbs, aged 21,

and Ann Naomi Nobbs, aged 19, great-granddaughters of Bounty mutineer, Fletcher Christian. The image is one of a series of photographs of the Pitcairn Islanders taken, following their removal to Norfolk Island in June 1856, at the time of the visit of the Governor-General Sir William Denison in late 1857; the specific circumstances of this quite extraordinary photographic session, on 25 September 1857, are described in a letter from the photographer to the Rev. Thomas Boyes Murray, dated 27 November 1857.

In this portrait, Jane Nobbs is seated on the right, with Ann standing on the left. Both sisters wear loose-fitting day dresses of printed cotton made with a square yoke set in across the shoulder line, with a centre front button closure and narrow band collar, over a voluminous front panel gathered into the yoke above the bust to create a cascade of fabric falling to the floor. In a surprising concession to current trends, the $\frac{3}{4}$ length sleeves are cut in the fashionable 'pagoda' shape and the women wear their dark hair in the popular 'bandeau' style, with smooth front sections wrapped over their ears and pinned behind into a low bun at the nape of the neck. They also wear a plain or patterned scarf tied around their necks. Perhaps to aid the photographer in achieving sufficient contrast in the image, Jane has draped a plain dark [silk/polished cotton] shawl around her shoulders.

According to the Rev. T.B. Murray, 'The features of the Pitcairners, both men and women, were more strongly European than I had expected. They were tanned and brown skinned, but most were no darker than sunburned, brown-haired Englishmen. The women looked more Polynesian than the men... [and] wore loose cotton dresses..', Pitcairn – The Island the People and the Pastor, 1859, London, England.

From the early-nineteenth century, missionaries introduced Pacific communities to highly modest versions of a type of European women's 'undress' known as the 'Mother Hubbard' – so called after the nursery rhyme illustrations of 'Old Mother

Hubbard' published from 1805 – in the belief that the adoption of such clothing by indigenous groups was a sign of civilised Christian behaviour. These long, loose-fitting dresses with full sleeves and a high- yoked neckline were customarily made from dark serviceable materials for weekday wear and white for Sundays. Designed to be worn unbelted, this relaxed style of 'housedress' eliminated the need for restrictive corseting and was routinely worn indoors by most women, especially during pregnancy, and invalids. It helped revolutionize women's fashion through its reference to freedom of choice for women, not just in fashion but also in other spheres of life.

What we know about this image

Ann Naomi Nobbs (1838-1931) and Jane Agnes Nobbs (1836-1926) were two of the ten children of George Hunn Nobbs (1799–1884) and Sarah Christian (1810-1899), grand-daughter of Bounty Mutineer, Fletcher Christian. On December 25, 1857, Ann marry Caleb Quintal (1837-1873) on Norfolk Island, raising a family 9 children; Jane married John Quintal on August 25, 1861; the couple had 7 children.

George Nobbs had first arrived on Pitcairn Island on 5 November 5, 1828, at age 28, and married Sarah Christian in Tahiti on 18 October 1829. By 1838 he had become the acknowledged leader of the Pitcairn community. For over twenty years he taught the youth, ministered to the sick and consoled the dying on the Island. Travelling to England, he was ordained as a minister in 1852.

It was largely on the advice of Nobbs and Admiral Moresby (father of the photographer) that the Pitcairn community elected to migrate to Norfolk Island on 8 June 1856, following the suggestion of the Colonial Office that Norfolk Island was 'fit for the reception of a small body of settlers now existing at Pitcairn Island'. Sir William Denison (1804-1871),

Governor-General of Australia (1855 to 1861), was authorized to control the removal and resettlement of the whole community of 194 persons.

On 25 September 1857, the 'Iris', arrived at Norfolk Island with Sir William Denison and naval officer and photographer Matthew Fortescue Moresby (1828-1918) aboard. Denison recorded that, since 'Moresby had brought a photographic apparatus on shore, I decided to get good likenesses of as many of the islanders as we could ... After a good deal of trouble we got several groups of both males and females; and here and there single photographs'.

Moresby had visited Pitcairn Island several times during the early 1850s, and enjoyed 'taking walks over the Island, sketching, talking and singing', becoming very fond of the Pitcairners: 'truly a more innocent and delightful race could not exist'. On this occasion Moresby himself reported that, 'I turned Mr Nobbs' study into an impromptu dark room and then took some pictures. Of course in taking groups with children, some of them moved'. In 1859, the Rev. T.B. Murray, confirmed that 'ten well executed photographic groups and simple portraits, accomplished by Mr Fortescue Moresby under the above disadvantages, have since reached the author's hands'.

Nobbs continued his former work as pastor and teacher on Norfolk Island until 1859, when Denison sent Thomas Rossiter to act as schoolmaster and store-keeper, increasing Nobbs's salary as chaplain. A century and a half later, the descendants of Nobbs and his wife Sarah are among the largest and most influential of the 'founding father' families which still dominate most aspects of life on this self-governing island territory.

Ref: (See ML A 2881: G. H. Nobbs papers, 1836-79, <http://archival.sl.nsw.gov.au/Details/archive/110362728>

Pitcairn Island Recorder, 1838 (SLNSW)

Sir William Denison was Governor General of Australia from 1855 to 1861. Married in 1838, to Caroline, nee Hornby, daughter of a naval officer, Denison took up the post of Lieut. Governor of Tasmania In 1847, bringing with him to Australia his wife and four children, including the sketcher Mary Charlotte Denison.

PHOTOGRAPHER:

Matthew Fortescue Moresby (1828-1918) (known as Fortescue or 'Forty'), sketcher, amateur photographer and clerk, was the second of the three sons of Admiral Sir Fairfax Moresby and Eliza Louisa, née Williams, of Bakewell, Derbyshire. Sir Fairfax was commander-in-chief in the Pacific in 1850-53 and all his sons served in the region. Moresby was secretary to his father on board HMS Portland in 1852-53, and In 1856-60 Moresby was based at Sydney, as paymaster-in-chief under the command of Commodore William Loring of the flagship 'Iris', where he seems to have begun taking photographs; it is not known from whom he learned the art of wet-plate work but it may have been from his friend E.W. Ward.

NB: Photographs taken by M.F. Moresby on a number of South Pacific islands visited with the Iris, including the Solomon's, New Hebrides and the Pitcairners of Norfolk Island are found in the Macarthur Family's Camden Park albums: ML PXA 4358/Vol.1: Album of views, illustrations and Macarthur family photographs, 1857-66, 1879, by various photographers. <http://archival.sl.nsw.gov.au/Details/archive/110326756>

[Two unidentified groups on a veranda possibly Pitcairn Islanders]

[Four unidentified groups possibly Pitcairn Islanders]

These were, however, not the first photographs to be taken of the islanders. (See A.P.R. October 1956, pp. 588-597 for an illustrated article on Moresby by K. Burke.)

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Ann Namer & Jane Hobbs

1857 – ‘Anne Namoi [Ann Naomi] & Jane Nobbs’

[Open in State Library of NSW catalogue](#)

Download Image



Creator
Matthew Fortescue Moresby (1828–1918)
Inscription
Lower edge: M F M
Medium
Photoprint
Background
To follow
Reference
Open

**1857 – Troughton sisters: (l)
Amelia Dorcas Ormrod, (c) Mrs
[Mary] Carr, (r) Clara**

Troughton

What we see in this image

This delicately hand-tinted ambrotype portrait is highly unusual as the date and location of the photograph can be confirmed by the presence of a copy of the 1857 Sydney Post Office Directory, quite deliberately positioned to ensure its legibility, in the lap of the woman seated on the left identified as Amelia Dorcas Ormod, nee Troughton. For their front facing $\frac{3}{4}$ length group portrait the three female members of the Troughton family (thought to be sisters) wear very similar styles of day dress, with jacket-style bodices and full skirts. All the dresses have sloping shoulder lines and three-quarter length pagoda sleeves, trimmed at the elbow with ruched or fringed oversleeves and worn with ruffled and flared white undersleeves, with loose pleats (which may or may not conceal centre front fastenings) fanning up the corsage from the waist and spreading over the shoulders. Amelia, aged 22, wears the plainest gown with a white peter-pan style collar and a ribbon tie, and two rows of braid trimming the edges of her sleeves. Her sisters, [Mary] and Clara, standing to the right, wear dresses of light-coloured checked cotton and dark silk taffeta respectively, both with shirred panels at the waist, Clara's silk gown with matching silk fringed trim on the edges of the sleeves. All three women wear their hair in the popular bandeau style of the mid-1850s, for which smooth front sections of hair have been wrapped over the ears and drawn back to the nape of the neck, the remainder arranged behind in a longer and deeper roll; the sheen of their hair suggests that it has probably been oiled. Perhaps to accommodate the tightness of the pose, their unornamented dome-shaped skirts are somewhat lacking in fullness, despite being finely 'gauged' (ie. cartridge pleated) at the waist,

and would appear to be worn without the customary 4 or 5 layers of crinoline (ie. horsehair) petticoats necessary – before the advent of the sprung-steel cage crinoline in 1856 – to achieve the fashionable 1850s silhouette.

What we know about this image

The three women are believed to be the daughters of James (c.1809-1873) and Dorcas (c.1808-1880) Troughton of Parramatta. James Troughton may have been a minister. An inscription on the back of the framed portrait identifies the woman on the left of the group as Mrs Amelia Dorcas Ormrod, nee Troughton (1835-1914) with Mrs [Henry] Carr of Mudgee at the centre and Clara Troughton on the right. Though no wedding rings are visible in this image, Mrs [Henry] Carr, nee [Mary] Troughton, had married in 1855, and by 1858 Amelia Troughton (see MIN 99) was married to Sergeant William Ormrod (see MIN 103) who had served in the Crimean War (1853-1856), and died in 1878, he is buried in the graveyard of St Anne's Church, Ryde.

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Hover on image to zoom in



1857 – Troughton sisters: (l) Amelia Dorcas Ormrod, (c) Mrs [Mary] Carr, (r) Clara Troughton

[Open in State Library of NSW catalogue](#)

Download Image



Creator
Glaister, Thomas fl.1854–1870 attrib.
Inscription
On reverse:
Medium
photograph
Background
N/A
Reference
N/A

1857 – James Johnson, survivor of the wreck of the Dunbar

What we see in this image

This right facing $\frac{1}{2}$ length photographic portrait shows Irish

Able-seaman James Johnson, aged 25, posed in front of a plain studio backdrop. The sole survivor of the clipper Dunbar which ran aground outside Sydney Harbour, below South Head, on the night of 20 August 1857, Johnson was rescued from the cliff face two days later and became a known personality in the colony. This large format hand-coloured ambrotype would have been much too costly for the sitter to commission. Its unusual close-focus suggests it was probably taken for promotional purposes by entrepreneurial photographer Thomas Glaister, to entice Sydney citizens curious about the tragedy to the display of famous faces at his Pitt Street Excelsior Photographic Galleries. Johnson wind-burned cheeks and chapped lips provide stark evidence of his ordeal. He is simply clothed in a thick, woollen single-breasted pilot's coat with a built-in shoulder cape and narrow turn-back collar, over a white shirt and scarf neck tie, presumably all brand new and supplied 'ready-to wear' by a Sydney outfitter. His thick, dark wavy hair has a right parting and his whiskers are trimmed into a full fringe beard. Before 1860 only wealthy people could afford to commission portraits which makes this an exceptionally rare photographic record of the appearance of a mid-nineteenth century working class man.

What we know about this image

The tale of the wreck of the Dunbar is part of Sydney's history. It led to both massive outpourings of public grief and developments in maritime safety. At least two other Sydney photographers were eager to cash in on the short-lived celebrity of James Johnson (1837-1915) the sole of the Dunbar shipwreck; J.W. Denslow photographed Johnson in a casually seated pose while Freeman Bros. advertised a 'collodiotype on paper' (SMH, 29/8/1857, p. 8). For many years after his ordeal, Johnson was the lighthouse keeper at Newcastle and, while in that position, succeeded in saving the lives of others. He died at his home in Dulwich Hill at the age of 78. SHIPWRECK: The Dunbar was named after its wealthy owner Duncan

Dunbar, and said to be the largest vessel ever built at the Sunderland shipyard in north-eastern England. Completed in 1854, when the Australian gold rushes created a demand for passenger ships, it was used as a troop ship for the Crimean War prior to its first voyage to Sydney in 1856. On the night of Thursday 20 August 1857, after 81 days at sea, the Dunbar arrived off Sydney Heads just before midnight, to treacherous weather conditions with heavy rain squalls impairing vision and obscuring the cliffs at the entrance to Port Jackson. Captained by James Green, a veteran of eight previous visits to Sydney, in conditions of such poor visibility the Dunbar collided with a cliff near South Head, several hundred metres north of the Macquarie lighthouse. The impact brought down the topmasts, mounting seas stoved in the lifeboats and the Dunbar was heaved broadside to the swells. Lying on its side, the ship began to break up almost immediately. One crewman, James Johnson, found himself hurled onto the cliffs where he managed to gain a finger hold. Scrambling higher, he became the sole survivor amidst a sea of bodies comprising the remaining 58 crew, and all 63 passengers many of whom were established residents of Sydney. Dawn gradually unveiled the enormity of the tragedy to the community of Sydney. Thousands were drawn to the scene and the morbid task of identifying relatives, friends and business associates soon began. James Johnson clung to his precarious hold on the rock ledge until the morning of 22 August, two days after the ship wreck, when he was noticed from the cliff top with the shout: 'A Man on the rocks! A live man on the Rocks! There he is! there he is!' Johnson was rescued 'with not as much as a scratch about him and otherwise quite well'. He later explained that his greatest fear was that [as there were a great many bodies near him...] he would not be seen/found and he would be starved. (SMH, 24, 25/8/ 1857) INQUEST TESTIMONY: 'Coming into Sydney under topsail a few minutes before twelve o'clock on Thursday night Captain Green must have taken the bluff at the north end of the Gap for North Head and in ordering the helm to starboard when the ship struck the rock and almost immediately

broke up. About thirty years of age and a strong and powerfully built Irishman, Johnson with the old boatswain and two Dutch seamen were about the last who were washed from the wreck, they four holding on a piece of plank from which the two Dutchmen were soon washed, a huge sea then threw Johnson and the boatswain on shore amongst some pieces of timber from which Johnson scrambled to a higher shelving rock to avoid the next sea, which he did but the old boatswain, less active, was carried away and perished. Johnson then climbed to a higher still position and being much exhausted laid down and slept. The next day he saw a steamer go into the heads, he signalled but was not seen. Friday night passed in this state. On Saturday morning he endeavoured to get along the rocks he could see people on the cliffs above but could not make himself seen until a brave lad (Antonio Wollier, an Icelander) who had gone down Jacob's Ladder and along the rocks, noticed Johnson waiving a handkerchief relief came and he was soon after hauled up to the cliffs which were about 2000 feet high.'

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1857 – James Johnson, survivor of the wreck of the Dunbar

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Download Image



Creator
[Glaister, Thomas fl.1855-1870, attrib.]
Inscription
n/a
Medium
Photograph
Background
Subject in posed in front of a plain studio backdrop.
Reference
Open

1857 – John F. Mann.

What we see in this image

This front facing $\frac{3}{4}$ length hand-coloured daguerreotype portrait shows surveyor John Frederick Mann, aged 38, in a seated pose with one arm resting on a section of turned wooden balustrading, set against a plain backdrop. Though the sitter wears no wedding band, it probably dates from around the time of his marriage in April 1857. It was taken at the Sydney studio of Freeman Bros (William and James) – the Gallery of

Photographic Art – located at 231 George Street.

In this image, Mr Mann exhibits the relaxed, life-like attitude for which Freeman portraits were renowned. He is shown wearing an unmatched ensemble of suiting components characteristic of the 1850s, comprising a well-cut, narrow-sleeved, double-breasted frock coat of fine dark wool with a notched collar and wide cuffs, light tweed trousers and a single-breasted waistcoat in pale silk, figured with a small scale [printed or woven] all-over pattern, with two welted pockets and a self-covered button fastening, worn over a fine white linen shirt with a peaked collar and a dark silk neck cloth tied in a loose bow.

He wears his side-parted, light brown hair brushed back from his forehead and curling over his ears; his beard, side-whiskers and moustache are not overly groomed but neatly and naturalistically trimmed.

What we know about this image

John Frederick Mann (1819-1907), explorer, surveyor, sketcher and amateur photographer, was born in London on 16 December 1819, the fourth son of Major-General Mann, Royal Engineers. Educated at Gibraltar in Spain where his father was stationed, he entered the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, in August 1834; he later abandoned his military career in favour of working on the Trigonometrical Survey of Britain. In 1841 he sailed to Sydney in the Palestine arriving on 6 March 1842. In October 1846, Mann joined Leichhardt's second expedition as second-in-command.

On 20 March 1848, Mann was appointed as a surveyor in the Department of the Surveyor-General, under Sir Thomas Mitchell, and posted to the Counties of Murray, St Vincent and Argyle; on 16 April 1857 he married Camilla Victoria (1835-1863), third daughter of Sir Thomas Mitchell, at St Mark's Church, Darling Point.

The couple travelled from Sydney to Southampton on SS Oneida, 4 June-25 Aug. 1857, and then through England and Scotland, returning to Australia in the Livingstone (Jan-April 1859). (MLMSS 327/BOX 1 /1: J. F. Mann diary, 16 April 1857 – 10 September 1862)

During the family's time in England, Mann took photography lessons from a 'Mr Rolph'. Advertisements appearing in the Sydney Morning Herald from August 1857 advised potential enthusiasts that amateurs would be 'supplied with the necessary apparatus and chemicals' and 'Instruction...in every branch of the art' of collodion photography at Freeman Brother's 231 George Street studio. Camilla Mann's youngest sister, Blanche Mitchell (1843–1869) recorded in her diary on 24 August 1858 that she had: 'Walked out to Milly's... Watched John prepare his photographic apparatus, making the bath solution, which is composed of distilled water, nitrate of silver and alcohol ...' Thurs 6th September [1858] '... Saw John taking views with his camera. At present they are not very good owing to defective collodion, but time will improve it much'. (MLMSS 1611 /Item 2)] No surviving photographs by John Mann are known.

After Camilla's death in childbirth in 1863, Mann resigned from permanent employment as a NSW government surveyor, thereafter working as a contract surveyor into the 1880s. Mann never remarried, raising his two sons and one daughter with the aid of an English nurse; he died at his Neutral Bay home, 'Carthona', on 7 September 1907.

PHOTOGRAPHER

William Freeman (1809-1895) arrived in Sydney in April 1853, and worked first at John Wheeler's Sydney Photographic Rooms in Bridge Street, where his brother James (1814-1870) joined him in October 1854; the studio later moved to 231 George Street. By early 1855, the company was known simply as Freeman Brothers. Many of Sydney's wealthy citizens became regular visitors, choosing Freeman's 'Gallery of Photographic Art' as

the place to have their daguerreotype portraits made.

Sydney newspapers reported that portraits by Freeman Bros 'appear to be distinguished by the naturalness of their expression...They also have a method of colouring that is very pleasing...' (Sydney Morning Herald, Sat 13 Jan 1855, p.3). The Empire, on 6 Jan 1855, recorded that a portrait of Governor-General Sir Charles FitzRoy was deemed 'an exceedingly correct likeness' and 'highly creditable to the artists'.

By mid-1855, Freemans' was offering portraiture by the new, faster collodiotype process, popularised under the American 'ambrotype' brand name and brought to Sydney by James Freeman in 1854. Invention of the 'wet-plate collodion' process in 1851 enabled a photographic image to adhere to a glass plate for the first time. This special type of collodion process produced a glass photonegative which, when placed against a dark background, created the optical illusion of a positive image without the reflective issues of the daguerreotype, and could also be coloured.

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1857 – John F. Mann.

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Download Image



Creator
Freeman Brothers
Inscription
Gilt stamp on red morocco case: 'Freeman Brothers' with kangaroo and emu crest.
Medium
Photograph
Background
none
Reference
Open 1
Open 2
Open 3

1857 – ‘Fashion Plate, World

of Fashion'

What we see in this image

This hand-coloured fashion plate is designed to illustrate a series of garments worn for a specific occasion or activity, either at home, out visiting or taking a walking. Such illustrations were intended to show the clothing illustrated as it should be worn, with all the trimmings, hair styles and accessories essential to create a complete picture of the well-dressed woman, man or child. *Le Monde Elegant* (trans. *The World of Fashion*) contained five fashion plates in each of its monthly issues, unlike most other fashion magazines at this time which carried only a single illustration per issue.

In this image, the lady of the house (on the right) stands on an enclosed verandah leaning out of a set of French windows framed by an arched opening. She wears a lilac [silk] home dress lavishly trimmed with triple horizontal bands of black (ribbon/velvet) zigzag stripes applied concentrically to the hem of its 'basque' bodice, along the edges of split 'pagoda' sleeves and around the circumference of the skirt flounce, the scalloped edges of which are all trimmed with matching black silk fringe. A coordinating panel of black [ribbon/velvet] chevrons is arranged over the corsage, rising up from the waist and marking the shoulders, extending across capped 'mancherons', or 'jockeys', sitting out over the sleeve head. She wears full, white undersleeves – their volume constrained by bands at the forearm and wrist trimmed with small pink ribbon bows above soft scalloped cuffs which fall over the hands – with a matching scalloped white work collar and pink silk ribbon bow marking the high neckline.

Her dark hair is arranged in a gently waved version of the fashionable 'bandeau' style, with a large roll encircling the

back of the head creating a 'halo' effect. Handing a fashionably dressed doll to a young girl, she also demonstrates the influence of maternal example in the process of inculcating 19th century ideals of femininity on the impressionable minds and pursuits of the young.

The girl, probably aged about 10, wears a scaled down version of the complex clothing of her female role models, comprising a low-necked, knee length day dress of grey [silk] with a short-sleeved 'basque' bodice and full skirt, trimmed with silk fringing and black braid applied in latticed panels, above white-work embroidered pantalets and slim-fitting, square-toed black patent ankle boots worn with white stockings. Her V-shaped bodice is outlined with striped green silk gauze ribbon bows and streamers. She wears a double string of [coral] beads and a pale straw hat trimmed with ribbon bows, pink silk roses, a white feather and gauze streamers hanging down at the back.

The female figure on the left is described as wearing a 'Promenade Costume' comprising a 'walking out' dress and fitted short coat, known either as a 'pardessus' or 'paletot', and varying from hip to knee or $\frac{3}{4}$ length. This black silk, lace trimmed version follows the fashionable silhouette of the day with its double-flounced skirt, inserted sleeve head and $\frac{3}{4}$ length pagoda sleeves accommodating those of the full-skirted gown of horizontally striped [silk] worn beneath. Her ensemble is further accessorised by a low-crowned blue silk hat with a flounce of black lace applied to the wide curving brim, trimmed in front with black velvet, and on the right side with a blue and black feather; small blue flowers are arranged on each side under the brim, and a pair of pale blue satin ribbons are tied in a bow under her chin.

During the early Victorian period hats were quite out of fashion, with the bonnet considered the only proper outdoor headwear for any lady. From about 1857 hats became fashionable again for younger women but only for informal wear in the

garden or on the most informal occasions in the country and at the seaside. Straw was the most usual material, though plush and silk were also used for carriage or promenade wear. As seen in this image, hats were commonly low-crowned with wide brims sweeping into upward curves, the edges often bound with ribbon, trimmed around the crown or under the brim with ribbon puffs, flowers and lace, with broad ribbons hanging from the back or from each side which might be tied in a bow under the chin or allowed to float freely. Very often a long feather curved around the crown and a curtain of lace, often several inches deep, was attached to the edge of the brim.

What we know about this image

Fashion notes 'of interest to female readers' were printed in Australian papers extracted from popular periodicals like the 'World of Fashion'. Colonial newspapers also routinely carried advertisements by local booksellers noting the arrival of the latest issues of leading European fashion magazines: 'Periodicals for May incl. the World of Fashion – received on monthly basis', Sydney Morning Herald, 11 Jul 1857, p.9.

The Mitchell Library holds a copy of the World of Fashion (vol. 23, Nov. 1846) which bears the signature 'D.S. Mitchell' for Mitchell Library benefactor David Scott Mitchell, and is provenanced to the library of his mother, Augusta Mitchell.

See: [RB/Q050/W927](#): The World of fashion, monthly magazine, of the courts of London and Paris: Fashions, literature, music, fine arts, the opera, and the theatres. Description based on: January 1, 1845. Held: Jan. 1, 1845-Dec. 1, 1845; Jan. 1, 1847-no. 285 (Dec. 1, 1847); no. 287 (Feb. 1, 1848)-no. 288 (Mar. 1, 1848); no. 327 (Mar. 1, 1851); no. 334 (Oct....).

ARTIST:

Isabelle Desgrange was one of the more notable and prolific fashion plate artists of the mid-nineteenth century; a daughter of Adèle Anaïs Toudouze, herself a popular artist of the period, Desgrange produced plates for Le Follet, The Queen

and *Le Monde Élégant* (trans. *The World of Fashion*). *The World of Fashion* (1824-1891) continued as the *Ladies' Monthly Magazine* in 1851, then as *The World of Fashion* from 1852 -79, and *Le Monde Elegant* (trans. *World of Fashion*) from 1880-91.

Rather than in a definite or publicly recognized locale, the scene recorded in this fashion plate could take place at any domestic garden in Paris, or any other fashionable place. The flatness of space, two-dimensional nature of the dresses, and stiffness of the figures, as well as their psychologically detached appearance, are all highly characteristic of fashion plate art. The position of figures in these plates has been carefully considered in terms of fashion display and the composition arranged to emphasise the individual details of the clothes and the characteristics that make each garment fashionable. Rendered with meticulous attention so that each dress stands out assertively from the background, the texture of the clothing is subtly detailed through the artist's play on light and shadow.

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MAISON MARTIN MARGIELA
PARIS



1857 – ‘Fashion Plate, World of Fashion’

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Download Image



Creator
Isabelle Desgrange, née Toudouze (French, fl.1850–1907) attrib.
Inscription
Imprint at base of image: ‘April 1857’
Medium
Hand-coloured engraving
Background
Subjects are placed in a typically anonymous domestic garden setting.
Reference
Le Monde Elegant, or The World of Fashion: A Journal of the Courts of London and Paris.

1856 – Possibly Francis Rawdon Hume & his wife Emma, nee Mitchell

What we see in this image

This $\frac{1}{2}$ length seated double portrait is a rare record of a prosperous colonial couple, smartly and expensively attired in fashionable outwear suitable for paying formal afternoon calls. It is believed to show Mr and Mrs Francis Rawdon Hume. The sitters in this image face towards each other, a conventional pose for married couples. They appear to be aged around 50 and 40 years, conforming to the known age difference of about 12 years between Mr and Mrs Hume, which would seem to support this attribution.

Mr Hume wears a double-breasted, dark woollen [sac] coat with notched shawl lapels and the newer style of looser fitting sleeve seen after 1854, over a single-breasted dark waistcoat and fawn coloured trousers, and a crisp white shirt with high-standing shirt collar points rising out of a black neck cloth. His silk top hat is placed on the table, resting upside down on its crown as it would be in a drawing room situation. He wears his greyish blonde curling hair brushed back from a receding hairline above clean shaven cheeks and a fringe beard.

Mrs Hume wears a fashionable spring bonnet in the face-framing, shallow-brimmed style of the mid-1850s. Fitted with a fine black hail spot net/lace veil to protect the face against wind and sun, it is set back far enough on the head to display the inner brim filled with lace frills. Curving close to the face, but sufficiently flared to show off her strawberry

blonde hair arranged in the smooth 'bandeau' style, a pair of pale silk ribbon strings attached with loops at ear level are tied in a crisp bow under her chin.

Her pale [silk] day dress has a form-fitting bodice in the popular jacket style, the centre front opening marked with a [ruched] trim. She wears a dark silk shawl draped around her shoulders, tucked under the elbows and over the forearms in the approved manner, revealing flaring white undersleeves and a heavy gold bangle above her hands, clad in snug-fitting, fawn-coloured, wrist-length kid-gloves, clasped in her lap over the scalloped and pinked edges of a flounce, likely to be one of a series arranged in tiers, over the length of her full skirt.

What we know about this image

Francis Rawdon Hume (1803–1888) was born at Toongabbie, NSW, a son of Andrew Hamilton Hume who had arrived in Sydney to take up agriculture and other colonial appointments in 1790, and a younger brother of Hamilton Hume, the explorer.

F.R. Hume was a farmer with successive land holdings in the NSW Southern Tablelands. On 12 October 1830, he married Emma Mitchell (1815-1887), daughter of Mr. William Mitchell, a fellow Southern Tablelands landholder at Brisbane Meadow. The couple had 14 children (8 daughters and 6 sons), the youngest of whom was born at 'Castlesteads' the Hume family's property at Burrowa, NSW, in March 1854. Mr and Mrs Hume died at Burrowa within 12 months of each other, aged 85 and 73 respectively.

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1856 – Possibly Francis Rawdon Hume & his wife
Emma, nee Mitchell

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Download Image



Creator
Unknown
Inscription

n/a
Medium
Photograph
Background
To follow
Reference
To follow

1856 – Cricket ground, Richmond, Victoria

What we see in this image

This image shows the large groups of spectators attending the first inter-colonial cricket match between New South Wales and Victoria, which was played on Wednesday 26 March 1856; the crowd displays little interest in the game as a fieldsman desperately chases the ball to the boundary.

The people in this image are dressed in an array of clothing typical of the era. The male spectators all wear tall hats and suits or unmatched sets of long line 'sac' jackets and

trousers, with or without waistcoats, over white shirts and dark neckties. The small boy standing in the centre of the image, watching the game with his back to the artist, wears a blouse and knicker suit and a tasselled cap.

The women and girls wear an assortment of jackets or capes and bonnets – one also carries a tiny, fringed [collapsible carriage] parasol to shade her face from the sun – and light-coloured dresses with dome-shaped skirts held out by numerous stiffened petticoats. From 1852, there was a fashion for flounces arranged in horizontal tiers to enhance the fullness of the skirt circumference, which could reach up to four or five yards (4.5m). There was also a marked preference for lightweight fabrics made 'a disposition', ie. dress lengths woven or printed with a narrower version of the motifs and borders of the overall textile design for use on flounces, sleeves and bodice trimmings.

The fashionably dressed group in the left foreground have been identified as Commissary-General Coxsworthy and family. Ferguson Thomas Coxsworthy (1799?-1874), 'long resident in Canada', was appointed Officer in Charge of the NSW Commissariat under Governor Fitzroy, arriving in Sydney with his wife Julia, nee Godard (1806 -?) and five daughters, on 16 November 1852. By 1856, Coxsworthy had been promoted to Commissary General and relocated to Melbourne. The tall young man walking between the two smaller girls maybe James Coxsworthy, the couple's second eldest son, who died at sea, off the coast of Tenerife, in 1857.

What we know about this image

With tickets priced at 1 shilling, and ladies free of charge, 5000 people are known to have gathered in Richmond Park, at the outer eastern end of the current Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG), to watch the first day of play between New South Wales

and Victoria which saw the NSW team ultimately victorious.

The MCG Committee had made great preparations to ensure the comfort of the crowd. In addition to the clubhouse with veranda which had been built in 1854 (seen on the left in this image), newspapers reported that 'the ladies will find marquees [out of view in this image on the right of the wickets], a band and the establishment of Woolcott and Mansfield, the confectioners, besides seats to enable them to view the play without fatigue...' (The Age, 26/3/1856, p.3). The band is shown playing under the shade of a large tree, in centre of the image, and was provided by the 40th regiment which was stationed in Victoria at the time

The artist, John Black Henderson (1827-1918) was a late colonial-era painter, sketcher, comic illustrator, amateur photographer and surveyor, who migrated to Victoria in 1851, where he worked on the Ballarat goldfields for several months before joining the Victorian Government Survey Office in Melbourne. Henderson is best known for his retrospective watercolour of the Eureka Stockade Riot at Ballarat, 3 December 1854 (DG SSV2B/Ball/7) – 'painted from sketches done on the spot a few hours after the event, the dress of the miners and the uniforms of the soldiers being accurate'.

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1856 – Cricket ground, Richmond, Victoria

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Download Image



Creator
Henderson, John Black (1827–1918)
Inscription
LRHS pencil in later hand: '1855'
Medium
Watercolour Drawing

Background
In the foreground of this sketch are several notable persons of the period of whom the family of Commissary-General Coxsworthy may be specially mentioned. The band playing is that of the British regiment stationed in Victoria' (See The Home, 2/10/1934, p.32.)
Reference
Open

1856 – Unidentified family group

What we see in this image

This unidentified albumen photoprint was taken from an album which bore the signature of public servant, author and painter John Rae, a self-taught early amateur colonial practitioner of collodion photography. The subjects of this unknown family portrait are posed, either seated or standing, in a domestic garden setting with the wall of a building and a plain dark drop sheet forming a backdrop. All appear to wear comfortable, well-worn clothing reflective of informal everyday dress in the mid-nineteenth century.

The family group is comprised of eight people (two parents and

six children) from left to right:

a girl [aged 8], standing in right facing profile, wearing an ankle-length plain [cotton] day dress, the full skirt worn without petticoats and the fitted bodice with a closed neckline trimmed with a separate narrow white band collar, above a corsage of gathered pleats, fanning up from the waist over the shoulder, and 3/4 length pagoda sleeves with a fitted sleeve head worn without undersleeves;

a mother, seated on the left, wearing a plain silk/sateen day dress with an unornamented full skirt worn with minimal petticoats, and an open bodice with a fan front rising from a deeply pointed waistline, trimmed with looped passementrie braid which also trims the edges of her full length 'pagoda' sleeves, worn with closed undersleeves of matching fabric gathered into a cuff at the wrist, her lace-edged collar fastened at the neckline with a gold brooch. She wears her centre-parted hair with a side curl over each ear, anchored at the temples with barrettes, the crown of her head covered with a [mesh cap] trimmed with artificial flowers;

two older (teenage) daughters, standing behind their parents, one leaning left arm on father's left shoulder, both wearing similar styles of plain [cotton] day dress with bodices gathered into pointed waists and fan fronts trimmed with scalloped and Vandyked edges respectively, opening over either a white or self-fabric chemisette, closed at the neck with a ribbon tie or white collar band fastened with a brooch, their 3/4 length pagoda sleeves worn with and without undersleeves above bead or [seed] bracelets (possibly homemade). The girls have also chosen slightly different hair styles, one with waved sections of hair laid over the temples above a pair sausage curls, the other following the popular bandeau style of wrapping smooth sections of hair over her ears and drawn back to the nape of the neck;

a father, seated at centre, with an older (teenage) son, standing behind leaning his right arm on his father's right shoulder, the eldest son seated on his father's right, and the

youngest son [aged 10] standing in left facing profile, wearing a type of short jacket, cut along the line of female fashions, reserved for juveniles under the age of 12. The other male members of the family wear an array of single-breasted, narrow-sleeved woollen jackets and trousers over white shirts with pointed collars, individualised by their choice of waistcoat (either in velvet, brocade or cloth) and neck cloths or silk bow ties of varying magnitude and stylishness. The two older men wear square-toed, elastic-sided leather boots and display their fob chains, anchoring pocket watches, draped across their torsos. All wear their hair with low right hand partings.

What we know about this image

John Rae (1813-1900) migrated to Australia from Scotland in 1839 to work in Sydney. By 1843, he had been appointed Sydney's first Town Clerk and later occupied in various public works positions. He was also a talented amateur artist, painting watercolours of Sydney streets and making a camera obscura to contribute to his panorama of Sydney Harbour – perhaps his best-known work is his 1850 watercolour of the turning of the first sod for the first railway. In the 1850s Rae became interested in, and taught himself photography, initially to record details for later paintings. In September 1855 he gave two lectures on the subject of photography at the Sydney Mechanics School of Arts, subsequently excerpted in the Sydney Morning Herald (see 14/9/1855, p.8; 21/9/1855, p.2.) encouraging other amateurs to take up collodion work.

MLMSS 6998: John Rae – Letterbook, 1840-1854

In these letters Rae writes about his personal affairs, his lectures at the Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts, and his experiments with various photographic techniques. There are also sketches by Rae of the camera he designed (p.678).

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1856 – Unidentified family group

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Download Image



Creator
[Rae, John]

Inscription
To follow
Medium
Photograph
Background
Removed from album with John Rae's signature. See also: P1 / 2039: a4447039
Reference
To Follow

1856 – A primrose from England

What we see in this image

This coloured lithograph of 'A Primrose from England' was created in 1856, engraved from the original oil painting first exhibited at the Royal Academy in London in 1855. The central feature in this painting is a larger-than-life primrose in full flower. The artist Edward Hopley was inspired to create his painting by reports of an actual event: he transportation of a primrose from England to Melbourne made possible – to the profound excitement of the colonial populace – by the

invention of the Wardian Case in 1933. The image was so popular when it was exhibited that it was quickly made into a lithograph print for the mass market.

Though the original painting was created in England, the artist has been careful to craft an image that offers a richly layered narrative on the dual theme of immigration and colonization, using his subject as a vehicle for exploring the emotions associated with the nineteenth century emigrant experience. He portrays a diverse and multi-racial, cross-section of migrants, each stereotypical of his or her class or station in life, gathered round the Primrose, with individuals from different social strata intermingled in a potentially chaotic space, while others crowd the doorway anxious to gain access to the colony's latest European import.

Standing on deck (the smoke stack of the steamship just visible in the top left hand corner) from the far left:

a flashily-dressed continental gentleman [possibly French – suggested by the blue ribbon cockade on his hat] pays his silver coin entry fee;

a sailor [indicated by his black-tarred boater style hat] collects the coin sitting at the entry way barred with a double-barrelled shotgun held by a tall, bearded man in shirt sleeves and waistcoat, standing against the door marked 'STORE';

a cluster of people fill the doorway with a bespectacled older man, a younger man, a servant class woman and a Chinese man (his plaited 'queue' wrapped around his head) and the headgear of others visible including a soldier's shako, the rim of a woman's straw bonnet and a man's top hat.

Inside the store room, near the door and standing along the back wall, from left to right are:

a Scotsman [denoted by his 'scots' bonnet or tam-o-shanter] holding up a little girl with gold ringlets wearing a [coral] necklace and cream dress cut low across the shoulder line and

trimmed with a band of striped ribbon;

an elderly man wearing an apron [probably a shopkeeper] with a battered top hat and spectacles;

two sea-faring types in knitted caps and sweaters;

a tall, dark-bearded [adventurer/pro prospector] twirling his moustache, wearing a light straw hat and a striped jersey under a coarse wool coat sashed at the waist [over a pair of pistols], a black leather gilt-buckled belt slung around his hips;

an Indian man with a moustache wearing a striped turban and double-breasted wool coat, left unbuttoned to reveal his western style clothing;

an Indigenous man wearing a blanket-like garment and carrying a tall staff.

In the foreground, from the right to left:

an emigrant family of five comprising a mother seated on an ornately carved chair wearing a floral-trimmed bonnet and shawl over a green dress;

her older son seated on a striped carpet bag at her feet, wearing a straw boater style hat with a ribbon band and a warm, woollen coat over a cotton shirt, cuffed trousers, striped socks and black patent leather ankle-strapped shoes;

the father seated on an expensive looking brass-studded steamer truck and clad in the practical [earth-coloured moleskin] clothing of a farmer including a round-crowned [leather] hat and a shawl-collared coat and trousers, his watch fobs dangling below a double-breasted, collared waistcoat, with a blue scarf tied in a bow at the neck;

his legs are wrapped around the torso of his young daughter who wears a red dress cut low across the shoulder line, with a yellow and blue striped scarf draped around her neck, above white socks and black ankle-strapped shoes;

another, smaller boy in a boater style hat is yet to be breeched, and wears a dress under his velvet cape with a hood, above striped socks and ankle-strapped patent leather shoes;

an [agricultural] labourer [perhaps a shepherd] wearing a

reddish brown felt cap and travelling with his a black and white collie dog tethered to a plaited leash.

In the centre of the scene, gathered around the flowering plant in its terracotta pot, on a steamer trunk functioning as an altar, are the three women including:

a golden-haired 'Madonna-like' girl wearing a blue dress kneels, her hands clasped in adoration, her head and shoulders draped in a cream shawl with a deep paisley border;

and two women opposite – [a mother and daughter or sisters] the elder, leaning over to admire the bloom, wears a pale pink bonnet of shirred silk, its inside edges trimmed with white flowers, above her ensemble of matching yellow silk gown and jacket/cape with 'pagoda' sleeves, trimmed with fine black lace, her arm around the waist of her younger companion who is bare-headed, revealing her stylishly-arranged dark hair and long gold pendant earrings, above an elegant day dress of [shot] purple [silk] with wide 'pagoda' sleeves and white, ruffle-edged undersleeves, open at the wrist to reveal slender forearms and an ornate gold bangle set with red stones.

What we know about this image

English artist Edward Hopley (1816-1869) knew a winning story when he read about the Melbourne primrose; his painting (now in the collection of the Bendigo Art Gallery) was displayed at 1855 Royal Academy Exhibition with an explanatory text:

'Dr Ward mentioned to the Royal Institution, that a primrose had been taken to Australia in a covered glass case and when it arrived there, in full bloom, the sensation it excited as a reminiscence of 'fatherland' was so great, that it was necessary to protect it by a guard'. (GLEANINGS, Mount Alexander Mail, 9/9/1854, p.7.)

The 'Wardian Case' had revolutionised the transportation of plant specimens throughout the British Empire; the glass case

enabled plants, such as the primrose, to survive the long sea journey to Australia with a minimum of watering. The arrival in the Australian colonies from England of a primrose in perfect health gave British migrants a belief in the future of their adopted country; if the fragile the primrose could flourish in the new land, so too could other English life forms such as the women, at the centre of the image, who are themselves symbols of European civilisation, domesticity and fertility.

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1856 – A primrose from England

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Download Image



Creator
Dicksee, J.R. (1817–1905), after Edward Hopley (1816–1869)
Inscription
Title and imprint: 'From the original picture in the possession of T.W. Kennard Esq.'
Medium
Hand-Coloured Lithograph
Background
To follow
Reference
Open

1855 – Maria Isabella Bligh, nee Fennell

What we see in this image

This right facing $\frac{3}{4}$ length seated portrait shows Maria Bligh, aged 29, her right arm resting on a small round 'posing table' covered with the brightly-patterned plush cloth that identifies it as a prop of the American and Australian Daguerreotype Gallery, Thomas Skelton Glaister's (1825-1904) studio of located at 100 Pitt Street, Sydney, from April 1855. Glaister was trained as a professional photographer in New York and concentrated his studio portraiture on Sydney society's elite. Although Glaister's photographs were expensive, he offered hand-colouring for no extra charge and quickly garnered a reputation for high photographic standards, producing portraits which were guaranteed never to fade.

Mrs Bligh wears a light-coloured [silk] day dress seemingly well-suited to a Sydney summer, though perhaps not best suited for a daguerreotype portrait which, according to Glaister's advice, recommended:

Dark dresses of any material...are preferable for Ladies and Children...figured dresses, with strong contrasts take well; dresses with much lustre take brighter than those with none...Bonnetts seldom should be worn, as they shade the face...A figured shawl or mantilla gives a pleasing effect to the picture...

Maria's dress has a plain, wide-spreading pleated skirt with the bodice, or corsage, left open to the waist, its front edges probably fastening with hooks or buttons but folded back to form revers and worn over a chemisette of white eyelet-

worked [cotton] with a pointed, turn-down collar fastened with a gold brooch. The $\frac{3}{4}$ -length 'pagoda' sleeves are open and full, with ruched self-fabric trimming the cuffs, worn with a pair of white [cotton] undersleeves fitted over the forearms and closed at the wrist.

She wears a dark-coloured shawl of light-weight silk draped around her shoulders, folded in half to create a doubled triangle with two rows of scalloping trimmed with fine lace, the lower edge forming a border, and held demurely in place by her crossed arms. Daguerreotypes, being positive mirror images, are laterally reversed – which means wedding rings customarily worn on the left hand (as seen in this image) will appear to the viewer to be worn on the sitter's right hand.

Her dark hair is centre-parted with side loops, brushed smoothly over each ear and spreading onto her cheeks (perhaps a side effect of wearing a close-fitting bonnet), the remainder coiled/braided into a soft bun pinned at the back of the neck.

What we know about this image

In February 1847, at Scone, NSW, Maria Isabella Fennell (1826-1867) married Richard John Bligh (1819-1869), eldest son of Richard and Elizabeth Bligh and a grandson of Gov. William Bligh. The couple had 8 children: their first born in Nov 1847 at Warialda, NSW, where Bligh worked as a Commissioner for Colonial Lands (C.C.L.) and magistrate (1847-1856) attempting to bring justice to bear on white settlers who killed Aboriginal people. Bligh had arrived at the new settlement in the Gwydir squatting district in 1845, erecting a camp on the banks of the Reedy River. At least one other daughter Edith (March 1853), and a son Neville (March 1855-1891) were also born at Warialda.

In about 1856, Bligh moved with his family to the Twofold Bay

area, where he worked as a doctor and Medical Attendant to the Twofold Bay Benevolent Asylum; a lengthy testimonial in Nov 1859 (SMH) noted the much lamented departure for Sydney of Dr Bligh and his family after five years in the district. He is later listed in Sydney [SMH, 1862] as 'Richard Bligh Esq. Surgeon, Paddington'. On 5 June 1867, Maria Bligh died, aged 40, at her home at 163 Kent Street Sydney. Richard Bligh of 'Riverstone, Clarence River' died two years later.

PHOTOGRAPHER:

On Tuesday 4 Dec 1855, Thomas Glaister advertised his 'American and Australian Daguerreotype Gallery' on the front page of Sydney's The Empire newspaper describing his:

splendid Photographic Rooms, with one of the best arranged and largest skylights in the colonies, at 100, Pitt-street, next door to the Royal Victoria Theatre, where he is now producing likenesses which are pronounced by good judges to be vastly superior in delineation, boldness, and the most lifelike to any ever before taken in this colony...Mr. G. has one of Haydon and Co.'s quick working cameras (the quickest now made), the only instrument of the kind in this country, by which pictures are taken in one fourth of the time required by other cameras...

On 5 January 1856, The People's Advocate reported:

Having recently paid a visit to Mr. Glaister's American and Australian Portrait Gallery, next door to the Victoria Theatre, we must pronounce it as the most complete and best arranged studio for taking likenesses in the photographic style, we have yet seen in Sydney...

DAGUERREOTYPES:

The process of making a hand-coloured daguerreotype starts with a silver-plated copper plate. Once the plate has been sensitised and exposed, the image is developed, fixed and washed. The surface of the daguerreotype to be hand-coloured is coated with a thin film of gum arabic and left to dry. The

colourist then breathed on the treated plate to make it sticky and applied dry powdered pigment with a fine paintbrush onto the image surface. The finished daguerreotype portrait was then covered by a sheet of protective glass, sealed to prevent tarnishing and marking of the delicate surface, and mounted either in the customer's choice of decorative frame or leather-bound case lined with dark velvet, plush or satin which served the dual purpose of providing a matt surface to reflect back onto the mirror-like plate to aid viewing and to protecting the glass cover.

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1855 – Maria Isabella Bligh, nee Fennell

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Creator
Glaister, Thomas, fl. 1854-1870, attrib.
Inscription
Ink on plush lining of case: 'M.I. Bligh/Dec 1853' (sic)
Medium
Photograph
Background
To follow
Reference
Open