

Picturing Indigenous Australia
in the British Museum

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Declaration of Authorship

I, Mary McMahon, declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

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Date: 09/06/2021

Abstract

Colonial depictions of Aboriginal people have been held in museums in the United Kingdom since the nineteenth century, often treated as supplementary to ethnographic object collections. Prior to entering these institutions, they played an influential part in ‘knowledge’ generation and imperial messaging in Britain. This thesis investigates the significant pictorial collection of early colonial representations of Indigenous Australians in drawings, paintings and print held in the Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas at the British Museum, to illuminate their role in colonial, imperial and Australian Indigenous histories. Together with images in the Department of Prints and Drawings at the Museum, and related institutions, this collection contains works by many well-known colonial artists working in early-nineteenth-century Australia. They demonstrate the range of visual records circulating to Britain in the early-nineteenth century and how pictorial works informed public understanding of colonial acts and ideas of humanity and civilisation, when both concepts were in flux across Britain’s empire.

To explore what pictorial records can tell us about perceptions of race and colonisation in the nineteenth century, this study asks how were images of Aboriginal Australians produced in the colonies c.1800-1860 collected and then circulated to Britain? How were they acquired and interpreted by British individuals, public audiences and institutions, and drawn into categories of ‘art’ and ‘ethnography’? What role did these visual images play in the broader aims and ambitions of the British Museum in the nineteenth century? This thesis examines sites of consumption in Britain: in colonial collections; scientific collections; exhibitions and the popular press; and in the museum. It argues that colonial representations of Indigenous Australians and the historic use of this material should be acknowledged in museums today and utilised to confront the legacies of colonial knowledge making.

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List of Abbreviations

AOA	Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas [BM]
BL	The British Library
BM	The British Museum
ILN	<i>The Illustrated London News</i>
NGA	National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
NGV	National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
NHM	Natural History Museum [London], Library and Archives
NLA	National Library of Australia, Canberra
P&D	Department of Prints and Drawings [BM]
RA	Royal Academy
RAI	Royal Anthropological Institute Archive
RCS	Royal College of Surgeons Archive
SLNSW	State Library of New South Wales, Sydney
SLV	State Library of Victoria, Melbourne
TMAG	Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart
UTAS	University of Tasmania, Hobart

Introduction

This thesis investigates the role of the visual record within colonial, imperial and Australian Indigenous histories. It analyses and mobilises European depictions of Aboriginal Australians produced in the early colonial period, now held in the pictorial collections of the British Museum and its associated institutions. The period in focus for the creation of these works, 1800 to 1860, falls after the earliest British exploration and settlement of Australia and extends into the first years of settler self-government, when ideas of humanity and civilisation were in flux in Australia and across Britain's empire. In this study I ask what the circulation of colonial representations of Aboriginal people in networks of trade, and the collection and interpretation of these objects by British scientists, collectors and public audiences, reveals about perceptions of race and colonisation in mid-nineteenth century Britain. It exposes tensions between art and science in these objects, or aesthetics and ethnography, and the impact of that categorisation in the British Museum.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have inhabited the land now known as Australia for over 60,000 years and are believed to be the longest continuous living culture on earth.¹ Over two hundred and fifty distinct language groups are understood to have existed in the continent prior to British settlement in 1788.² Predominantly hunter-fisher-gatherers, Australian Aboriginal people had and have highly sophisticated ways of taking care of the land and sea. Prior to British colonisation, Aboriginal groups were largely semi-nomadic, moving seasonally, and taking responsibility for the sustainability of the land, the animals and themselves. Some groups such as the Gunditjmara in Western Victoria lived more sedentary

¹ Billy Griffiths, *Deep Time Dreaming: Uncovering Ancient Australia* (Carlton: Black Inc., 2018), p.x.

² Bill Arthur and Frances Morphy (eds.), *Macquarie Atlas of Indigenous Australia: Culture and Society through Space and Time* (Sydney: The Macquarie Library Pty Ltd, 2019), second edition, p.76; Gaye Sculthorpe, Lissant Bolton and Ian Coates, 'Introduction' in Gaye Sculthorpe, John Carty, Howard Morphy, Maria Nugent, Ian Coates, Lissant Bolton, Jonathon Jones, *Indigenous Australia: enduring civilisation* (London: British Museum Press, 2015), p.16-17.

lives, building stone houses and fish traps using an economy based on farming eels.³ Holding complex spiritual beliefs requiring a relationship of care and respect for the land and their role within it, Aboriginal people recognised humans as one of many species and not superior to others.⁴ Living in diverse environments across the continent, the histories and material culture of groups differed greatly. Torres Strait Islanders, living on the many islands between the mainland of Australia and Papua New Guinea, had a distinctive culture focused principally on the sea. While some practices changed as a result of colonisation, others continue to be followed to this day.

This collaborative doctoral project was proposed in 2016 by Dr Gaye Sculthorpe at the British Museum, and Dr Zoë Laidlaw, then at Royal Holloway, University of London, now at the University of Melbourne. It is centred around a significant, large, and understudied pictorial collection held in the Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas at the British Museum.⁵ The breadth of this collection allows us to consider how portrayals of indigenous people made in the British Empire were used before the widespread adoption of photography: as visual records; artworks; commodities; curiosities; scientific or ethnographic sources; and as objects in a museum. Images could fall within multiple categories simultaneously or at different junctures in their movement and ownership. For example, visual records created during an exploratory voyage could be commodified on return to Britain, viewed concurrently as curiosities and scientific sources by audiences, and ultimately valued as ethnographic or aesthetic objects in an institutional collection. In their translocation from sites of production to consumption, images could be modified and distorted, both willingly and unintentionally by actors involved in their transmission. The reading of individual works is changed when brought together as a collection of assemblages, both public and private. New meanings have been given to early colonial depictions of Indigenous Australians upon their arrival or production in Britain. This study makes an original contribution to knowledge by using the British Museum's collection to elucidate how early nineteenth-century

³ Penny Olsen & Lynette Russell, *Australia's First Naturalists: Indigenous Peoples' Contribution to early Zoology* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2019), p.17.

⁴ Individuals and family groups have specific totems for which they care. These can be animals, insects, plants, weather elements, geographical features, human traits or cultural artefacts; Arthur and Morphy, pp.22-28.

⁵ It could therefore be regarded as part of a national collection.

images were obtained for British collections, and how they were categorised and used.

The Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas collection includes drawings, paintings, prints, sketchbooks and published illustrations of primarily Aboriginal people, with a lesser number depicting Torres Strait Islanders. It has only occasionally been studied by scholars, such as the anatomist and historian N.J.B. Plomley, and never as a complete assemblage.⁶ For most of its history this image collection has been treated as ancillary to the ethnographic object collection. Most of the works were acquired in the 1880s but were only first catalogued and digitised as part of a Getty Foundation funded project in 2009.⁷ Others were digitised during this collaborative doctoral project. This collection is considered alongside the smaller assemblage of related images held in the Department of Prints and Drawings at the museum.

In the thesis I introduce contextual criteria that influenced the production of colonial representations of Aboriginal people in the period 1800 to 1860. I examine how images and related objects were circulated to Britain and collected and displayed there in the early-nineteenth century. What motivated this movement? Which individuals facilitated the process? What practicalities affected their transfer? Works moved from Australia to Britain, and then between cities and rural areas. This speaks to broader patterns of collection and display, both in the art world and amongst those elite scientists and humanitarians who studied and deployed such images for the information they contained. Finally, this thesis asks how images were used in Britain to engage with national and imperial narratives of race and empire, exploring how images of Indigenous Australians were viewed, replicated and presented to British audiences, and what role these images played in the broader aims and ambitions of the British Museum in the nineteenth century. Concurrent

⁶ N.J. B. Plomley, 'Tasmanian Aboriginal Material in Collections in Europe', *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol.91, No.2 (Jul.-Dec. 1961), pp.221-227.

⁷ In 2007 the British Museum standardised the way new registration numbers were given throughout all departments. As these items were being recorded on the museum's database for the first time then, numbers beginning with Oc2006 were allocated, even though these were not new acquisitions. They had been held in the pictorial collection of the Museum of Mankind (the British Museum's Department of Ethnography) before being transferred to Bloomsbury in 2004. The registration number also included a collection code based on whether the item was a painting, print or drawing, eg. Oc2006,Drg.1. My thanks to curator James Hamill for this explanation.

events of great importance, such as the Slave Trade Act of 1807 and the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833 (which came into force in August 1834), influenced humanitarian concerns regarding the treatment of indigenous people throughout the British Empire. A select committee of the British Parliament investigated the condition of the indigenous populations in the British colonies between 1835 and 1837, producing the *Report of the Parliamentary Select Committee on the Aboriginal Tribes (British Settlements)*. This led to some changes in the colonies themselves, and the formation of the Aborigines' Protection Society in London in 1837. The study of indigenous cultures developed rapidly in the early to mid-nineteenth century as the influence of scientific racism became more structured and widespread.

Reception of colonial images of indigenous people in Britain is hard to evidence unless explicitly discussed by contemporary viewers, but the replication of images, circulation of displays, and reviews or personal records of spectators, suggest their popularity. The use of images in anthropological and ethnographic work indicated their potential for influencing broader understandings of race. Inclusion in imperial and colonial narratives of dominance and hierarchy suggest that colonial depictions of Aboriginal Australians helped to 'naturalise' the dispossession of indigenous peoples. As visual culture historian W.J.T. Mitchell has convincingly asserted, if the function of art was to precede empire, then its role was to 'provid[e] the ideological fantasies that make this process [of domination and exploitation] seem natural and inevitable'.⁸

Colonial imagery depicting Indigenous Australians circulated to Britain, where it was reproduced, collected and consumed in the early-nineteenth century. This thesis demonstrates that the movement of images to and within Britain was more prevalent than previously known; and this pervasiveness suggests an uncalculated influence on the wider British public. It complicates the narratives which British audiences would have received from each of Australia's colonies and makes evident that visual depictions of Aboriginal Australians should be explored within the wider representation of Australia in Britain in the years 1800 to 1860. Once accessioned by institutions like the British Museum, the categorisation of works could change over time, as subject matter, artist, or collector received emphasis. These shifts illuminate how imperial 'knowledge' was made and organised. The subsequent

⁸ W.J.T. Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), pp.145, 168.

division of works between museums with different foci demonstrated how images of indigenous peoples could be employed: as scientific or natural history source; as artwork; or as an illustration to document (or create) imperial history. The slippery nature of these categories is evident throughout this thesis.

0.1 Colonial images of indigenous peoples

Scholarship on the colonial representation of indigenous peoples is most pertinent to this project, particularly in Australian art history. Depictions of Aboriginal Australians by European artists produced before the establishment of the first Australian colony of New South Wales in 1788 have been discussed extensively in art-historical and historical scholarship.⁹ This work is relevant to the current study as exploration images remained in the visual memories of interested parties in Britain: the ‘public’; government; philanthropists; naval people; and learned societies. They were often reproduced into the nineteenth century. A small number of images of the people of ‘New Holland’ were brought back from the voyages led by James Cook to the Pacific, and even fewer made available to a wider European audience through print.¹⁰ The most reproduced image was by Sydney Parkinson, the artist on the first voyage, engraved by Thomas Chambers in 1773, which presented two Gweagal men ‘advancing to combat’. The print was reproduced in different sizes and formats, at times in conjunction with Parkinson’s depiction of a Māori man.¹¹ The juxtaposition of these cultures, at the earliest stages of their representation by European hands, introduced a comparative practice that would endure into the nineteenth century. Images made on exploratory voyages resulted

⁹ Including the following: Ian Donaldson and Tamsin Donaldson (eds.), *Seeing the First Australians* (Sydney; London; Boston: George Allen & Unwin, 1985); Bernard Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988), second edition; Rüdiger Joppien and Bernard Smith, *The Art of Captain Cook’s Voyages, Vol.1 and Vol.3* (London: Yale University Press, 1985-88); Maria Nugent, *Captain Cook Was Here* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

¹⁰ They include: BL, Add MS 9345 f.14v, ‘Sydney Parkinson’s Sketchbook’, Sydney Parkinson, 1770; BL, MS 15508 f.10, ‘Indigenous Australians in bark canoes’, Tupaia, 1770; BL, Add MS 15508 f.13, ‘Portrait of an Australian Aborigine’, Charles Praval, 1770-1771; Liz Conor ‘Found: the earliest European image of Aboriginal Australians’, *The Conversation* (November 5, 2018); Jocelyn Anderson, ‘Elegant Engravings of the Pacific: Illustrations of James Cook’s Expeditions in British Eighteenth-Century Magazines’, Issue 7, *British Art Studies* (November 2017).

¹¹ Sydney Parkinson, *A Journal of a Voyage to the South Seas, in His Majesty’s ship, the Endeavour* (London: Stanfield Parkinson, 1773); *Two of the Natives of New Holland, Advancing to Combat; New Zealand warrior in his proper dress & armour*, Thomas Chambers after Sydney Parkinson, [178-?]. National Library of Australia, nla.obj-135962431. Rex Nan Kivell Collection.

from short-term encounters, while those produced after the invasion of the First Fleet reflected longer-term interactions.

Investigations into images depicting the people of the Antipodes in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries necessarily start with the work of Bernard Smith, and his foundational *European Vision and the South Pacific* (first edition 1960, second edition 1988) and *Australian Painting* (1962, expanded with Terry Smith in 1992).¹² His publications responded to and rejected assertions made by earlier art historians that colonial artists had been unable to create distinctive art due to the dominant European influence. Smith argues, while colonial producers of Australian art had naturally drawn on European artistic traditions with which they would have been familiar, they also responded to the new physical environment, and the social context and composition of the Australian colonies, including cultural interaction between Indigenous Australians and colonisers.¹³ His work explores the relationship between the imperial centres and peripheries, demonstrating the influence that flowed in both directions, a view ‘remarkable in its consistency’ throughout his career.¹⁴ Smith worked on some of the images which feature in the current study, such as those held in the Natural History Museum.¹⁵ His publications made them better known to international art historical communities.

Many twentieth-century studies and monographs on colonial art in Australia addressed the life and work of individual artists working in the Australian colonies, predominantly free settler colonial artists, such as Augustus Earle, Conrad Martens and John Skinner Prout. Jocelyn Hackforth-Jones broadened this lens in *The Convict Artists* (1977), by focusing attention on the convict creators who made most of the images in the first fifty years of British occupation and received little recognition following their lifetime despite the quality of work produced.¹⁶ This group created most of the visual records circulated to Britain for scientific study, including representations of Indigenous Australians. This expansion of the artistic area of

¹² Smith, *European Vision*; Bernard Smith with Terry Smith, *Australian Painting, 1788-1991* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1992).

¹³ Smith, *Australian Painting*, p.vi.

¹⁴ Peter Beilharz, *Imagining the Antipodes: culture, theory and the visual in the work of Bernard Smith* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 185, 188.

¹⁵ Bernard Smith and Alwyne Wheeler (eds.), *The Art of the First Fleet & other early Australian drawings* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988); Bernard Smith, *Imagining the Pacific in the Wake of the Cook Voyages* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1992).

¹⁶ Some were professionally trained and had been convicted for forgery; Jocelyn Hackforth-Jones, *The Convict Artists* (Melbourne: Macmillan, 1977), p.10.

enquiry was furthered in 1992 by the extensive *Dictionary of Australian Artists* edited by Joan Kerr, which examined all known settler-colonial makers of two-dimensional images working in Australia before 1870. This significant publication evidenced a far more complex and creative artistic community than previously acknowledged.¹⁷ Together these volumes developed knowledge of the production and circulation contexts in which colonial images of Indigenous Australians were made. The life and work of individual colonial artists has continued to generate significant scholarship,¹⁸ while producers of prints and illustrations, until recently dismissed as 'low art', are gaining more attention in recent years.¹⁹

Studies concentrating on subsections of colonial imagery, have benefitted the study of representations of Aboriginal subjects by illuminating the artistic context of production. In *Images in Opposition* (1985), a study of landscape painting in Australia, Tim Bonyhady identifies three distinct kinds of representations of the land which were largely chronological: as an Antipodean arcadia, pastoral arcadia, or magnificent wilderness.²⁰ The traditional owners of the land were only incorporated in the first of these, in which the land was represented as untouched by European settlement and occupied only by Aboriginal Australians. Focusing on a singular medium has also shown how representations of Aboriginal people featured within patterns in particular kinds of work. For example, Roger Butler's *Printed* (2007) highlights the significance of the printed image in the replication of depictions of Indigenous Australians, and the circulation by which they reached their broadest audience in Britain. Recent scholarship on colonial photography, by scholars such as Jane Lydon, illuminates the influence of this medium on paintings and drawings

¹⁷ Joan Kerr, *The Dictionary of Australian Artists: Painters, Sketchers, Photographers and Engravers to 1870* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1992).

¹⁸ Heather Curnow, *The Life and Art of William Strutt, 1825-1915* (Waiura, Martinborough, NZ: Alister Taylor, 1980); Jocelyn Hackforth-Jones, *Augustus Earle: Travel Artist* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 1980); Tony Brown and Hendrik Kolenberg, *Skinner Prout in Australia, 1840-48* (Hobart: Tasmania Museum and Art Gallery, 1986); David Hansen, *John Glover and the colonial picturesque* (Hobart: Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, 2003); Philip Jones, 'George French Angas: Colonial Artist at Large' in *Crossing Cultures: Conflict, Migration and convergence: The proceedings of the 32nd international congress in the History of Art*, ed. by Professor Jaynie Anderson (Carlton, Vic: Miegunyah Press, 2009); John Jones, *Robert Dowling: Tasmanian son of Empire* (Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 2011); Sasha Grishin, *S.T. Gill & His Audiences* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2015).

¹⁹ Relevant examples are addressed in the project 'Graphic Encounters: Colonial prints and the inscription of Aboriginality', an Australia Research Council project led by Dr Liz Conor, based in the Department of History and Archaeology at La Trobe University.

²⁰ Tim Bonyhady, *Images in Opposition: Australian Landscape Painting 1801-1890* (Melbourne; Oxford: Oxford University Press 1985).

of Indigenous Australians, which it increasingly replaced in the nineteenth century due to its perceived authenticity of representation.²¹

Exhibitions, often stimulated by anniversaries of significant events, have created opportunities to approach collections of objects. The years surrounding the bicentennial of the foundation of the first colony in 1788 saw the production of several significant exhibitions and publications which included representations of Indigenous Australians. Notable books were commissioned by institutions with relevant art collections. The first, Tim Bonyhady's *The Colonial Image* (1987) sought to increase the interest and appreciation of the breadth of genres conveyed in colonial paintings.²² Colonists who commissioned images in the colony wanted Australian subjects which European artists could not produce. These included depictions of Aboriginal Australians, often as ethnographic documents, but Bonyhady argues that otherwise the imagery largely ignored the European destruction of Aboriginal society.²³ *Drawing in Australia* (1989) by Andrew Sayers, first explored the history of drawing in a comprehensive manner and its significance in the first thirty years after British invasion when oil painting was rare.²⁴ Most European depictions of Indigenous Australians were executed in watercolour and other drawing materials. Other publications highlighted lesser-known collections in institutions. Bernard Smith and Alwyne Wheeler's *The Art of the First Fleet* (1988) introduced the collections of the Natural History Museum in London,²⁵ and Hendrik and Julianna Kolenberg's *Tasmanian Vision* (1987), included many artworks held in the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.²⁶ In recent years, the 200th anniversary of the encounter of Matthew Flinders and Nicolas Baudin in Australian waters, the 230th anniversary of the arrival of the First Fleet, and the 250th anniversary of Captain Cook's voyages in the Pacific, have all instigated exhibitions

²¹ Jane Lydon (ed.), *Calling the Shots: Aboriginal Photographies* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2014); Jane Lydon, *Photography, humanitarianism, empire* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016); Elizabeth Edwards and Christopher Morton (eds.), *Photographs, Museums, Collections: Between Art and Information* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015).

²² Tim Bonyhady, *The Colonial Image: Australian Painting 1800-1880* (Chippendale, Australia: Ellsyd Press, 1987).

²³ *Ibid.*, pp.9-10.

²⁴ Linked to the 1988 exhibition at the Australian National Gallery; Andrew Sayers, *Drawing in Australia: drawings, water-colours, pastels and collages from the 1770s to 1980s* (Canberra: Australian National Gallery, 1989).

²⁵ Smith and Wheeler.

²⁶ Hendrik Kolenberg and Julianna Kolenberg, *Tasmanian Vision* (Hobart: Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, 1987).

and publications in Australia and Britain.²⁷ When considered in relation to the 1988 anniversary, the more recent displays present a marked increase in the representation of the impact on Indigenous Australians and their experience of these moments of encounter.

Building on Smith's *European Vision*, research into the influence of colonial 'ways of seeing' and construction of Australian identity through art, has necessarily engaged with how relationships between Indigenous Australians and British invaders were represented. In *Seeing the First Australians* (1985), Ian and Tamsin Donaldson establish that the 'European' view of 'the first Australians' was never 'innocent' or 'neutral', and relationships of power reflected on the visual record.²⁸ Bringing established taxonomies, the colonial approach was 'comparative and classificatory'. Mary Eagle contends the prevalent notion that all Aboriginal Australians were 'downtrodden and despised' by British colonists in *A Story of Australian Painting* (1994). Rather she asserts that considering the knowledge and understanding of individual artists and Aboriginal sitters, brought nuance to these records of encounters of 'one culture appraised by another'.²⁹ Ian McLean argues in *White Aborigines* (1998), that through the establishment of penal settlements and the violence enacted upon Indigenous peoples, the British invaders brought a melancholy to the colonies. He asserted that colonial fears were reflected through the aesthetics of the grotesque used by artists to represent Aboriginal people.³⁰ McClean proposes that colonial artists moved through pastoral and picturesque imagery in search of redemption but did not always link the reduced inclusion of Indigenous Australians in the images to the realities of the context, such as their often-violent removal.³¹

Adopting a more inclusive scope than the 'Western' category of 'art' has been a concerted interest of many scholars in the twenty-first century, due to the long

²⁷ Jane Stewart and Jonathan Watkins (eds.), *Thomas Bock*, exh. cat. (Birmingham: Ikon Gallery, 2017); Tim Bonyhady and Greg Lehman, *The National Picture: the art of Tasmania's Black War* (Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 2018); Cathy Leahy and Judith Ryan, *Colony: Australia 1770-1861/ Frontier Wars* (Melbourne: National Gallery Victoria, 2018).

²⁸ These terms are all problematised and further nuanced in the text; Donaldson and Donaldson, pp.15-17.

²⁹ Mary Eagle and John Jones, *A Story of Australian Painting* (Sydney: Macmillan, 1994).

³⁰ Ian McLean, *White Aborigines: Identity Politics in Australian Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp.17-18, 25-29.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp.34-35.

exclusion of Indigenous art from analyses.³² Others have sought to establish the mutual ‘transculturation’ through the colonial encounter.³³ Scholars working in the fields of Aboriginal Studies and Indigenous histories have brought new approaches to the visual record. For example, Aboriginal historian John Maynard’s *True Light and Shade* (2014), examines images by the convict artist Joseph Lycett in light of Maynard’s knowledge of Aboriginal cultural practices.³⁴ Such significant studies identify details beyond the frames of most art historians. Other publications have focussed upon the Aboriginal people who sat for, or were recorded in, colonial works, framing their analyses around issues of gender and frontier violence.³⁵ The question of how to reframe colonial depictions in contemporary debates is ongoing.³⁶

The context of collecting and institutionalisation of colonial images of Indigenous Australians in Britain, the subject at the core of this thesis, is less well addressed in scholarship. Publications on particular collectors, collections, and museums have opened new lines of enquiry that explore the wider movement of objects from Australia to Britain (and within the latter).³⁷ In *Natural Curiosity* (2014) Louise Anemaat introduces the Derby Collection of 745 watercolour drawings of Australian natural history, created in the 1790s.³⁸ Her publication demonstrates the central role of copying in the exchange and circulation of images intended for scientific study in late-eighteenth and nineteenth-century Britain.

³² Andrew Sayers discussed this binary and incorporated Aboriginal art in his introduction to *Australian Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp.28-9; Howard Morphy, ‘Art Histories in an Interconnected World: Synergies and New Directions’, in *Crossing Cultures: Conflict, Migration and Convergence: The proceedings of the 32nd international congress in the History of Art*, ed. by Professor Jaynie Anderson (Carlton, Vic: Miegunyah Press, 2009), p.60.

³³ In his art history of Indigenous Australian art, McLean approached the arrival of European colonists in Australia as creating a ‘break in tradition’; Ian McLean, *Rattling Spears: A History of Indigenous Australian Art* (London: Reaktion Books, 2016).

³⁴ John Maynard, *True Light and Shade: An Aboriginal Perspective of Joseph Lycett’s Art* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2014).

³⁵ Shino Konishi, *The Aboriginal Male in the Enlightenment World* (London: Pickering & Chatto Publishers Ltd, 2012); Liz Conor, *Skin Deep: Settler impressions of Aboriginal women* (Crawley: University of Western Australia Publishing, 2016);

³⁶ Khadija Von Zinnenburg Carroll, *Art in the Time of Colony* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2014); Leahy and Ryan.

³⁷ John Roland Abbey, *Travel in Aquatint and Lithography, 1770-1860: From the Library of J. R. Abbey; a Bibliographical Catalogue* (London: Dawsons of Pall Mall, 1956); *Paradise Possessed: The Rex Nan Kivell Collection* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 1998); Lisa Di Tommaso, *Images of Nature: The Art of the First Fleet* (London: Natural History Museum, 2012).

³⁸ Louise Anemaat, *Natural Curiosity: Unseen Art of the First Fleet* (New South Wales: New South Publishing, 2014).

While there are histories of collectors, curators and departments of the British Museum, the images held in the Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas at the British Museum have been largely overlooked.³⁹ References to these images are primarily found in the work of Australian historian N.J.B. Plomley. His research on Tasmanian Aboriginal objects included their representation by colonial artists.⁴⁰ From the 1960s to the 1990s, Plomley amended his view over which UK collection held the original Aboriginal portraits created by Thomas Bock, now known to be the British Museum. In 1995, Ian Coates reviewed the Museum of Mankind's (British Museum) collection of objects, images and archival material relating to Indigenous Australia, producing a report for the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, and later publishing an article on drawings of Torres Strait Islanders by Tom Roberts.⁴¹ Beyond these texts, the lack of research into significant works in the British Museum reveals an absence in the record of a major institution. Work on colonial art in Australia has been overwhelmingly led by Australian scholars, bar British scholars such as Michael Rosenthal.⁴² This has led to an understandable focus on records held in Australia. The circumstances of this current collaborative doctoral project have allowed for sustained research into images in a British-based institution.

In his compelling study of European representations of Māori, *Colonial Constructs* (1992), Leonard Bell recognised that while artists may have felt empathy towards indigenous sitters, a 'prime feature' of colonial representations was 'the objectification of their subject' with the resultant records functioning as 'European

³⁹ Marjorie Caygill and John Cherry (eds.), *A.W. Franks: Nineteenth-century collecting and the British Museum* (London: British Museum Press, 1997); Neil Chambers, *Joseph Banks and the British Museum: the World of Collecting, 1770-1830* (London: Routledge, 2007); Ben Burt, *The Museum of Mankind: Man and Boy in the British Museum Ethnography Department* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2019); Daniel Simpson, *The Royal Navy in Indigenous Australia, 1795-1855: Maritime Encounters and British Museum Collections* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021).

⁴⁰ Plomley, 'Tasmanian Aboriginal Material'; N.J.B. Plomley, 'Thomas Bock's Portraits of the Tasmanian Aborigines', in *Thomas Bock: Convict Engraver, Society Portraitist*, exh. cat., ed. by Diane Dunbar (Launceston: Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, 1991), pp.37-39.

⁴¹ Ian Coates, 'A Report on Documents Relating to Australian Aboriginal Collections held by the Museum of Mankind, London, United Kingdom' (Unpublished, A Report to The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, July 1995); Ian Coates, 'Forgotten Torres Strait Treasures', *The Australian*, 4 March 2010.

⁴² Michael Rosenthal, 'The Penitentiary as Paradise', in *Double Vision: Art Histories and Colonial Histories in the Pacific*, ed. by Nicholas Thomas and Diane Losche (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Michael Rosenthal, 'A view of New Holland: aspects of the colonial prospect', in Christiana Payne and William Vaughan's *English Accents: Interactions with British Art, c. 1776-1855* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

cultural items, as aesthetic and commercial commodities'.⁴³ The current study supports this argument, but seeks to expand this framing to consider the role such images played in scientific collections and institutions.

0.2 Imperial networks and scientific collecting

This interdisciplinary project draws upon scholarship from the fields of imperial history, cultural studies, indigenous studies, settler colonial studies, history, art history, historical geography, material culture, and museum and collecting histories. At its broadest points this thesis engages with literature on imperial networks. Works such as Alan Lester's *Imperial Networks* (2001), and Zoë Laidlaw's *Colonial Connections* (2005), discuss the conceptualisation of the British Empire and its colonies, highlighting the complex and often contradictory identities of the people who located themselves within.⁴⁴

In recent years, historians of settler colonialism have sought to connect the history of the emergence of settler self-government with the history of the settlers' relationships with Aboriginal people, arguing that their previous separation distorted the historical record.⁴⁵ In *Taking Liberty* (2018) Ann Curthoys and Jessie Mitchell explicitly bring together these two fields using visual representations to inform their comparative analysis of multiple Australian colonies. A comparative approach was also adopted by Penelope Edmonds in *Urbanising Frontier* in her study

⁴³ Leonard Bell, *Colonial Constructs: European Images of Maori 1840-1914* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1992), pp.256-7.

⁴⁴ Sarah Longair and John McAleer (eds.), *Curating Empire: Museums and the British Imperial Experience* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012); Tim Barringer and Tom Flynn (eds.), *Colonialism and the Object: Empire, Material Culture, and the Museum* (London: Routledge, 1998); Alan Lester, *Imperial Networks: Creating Identities in nineteenth-century South Africa and Britain* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001); Zoë Laidlaw, *Colonial Connections 1815-45: patronage, the information revolution and colonial government* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005).

⁴⁵ Angela Woollacott, *Settler Society in the Australian colonies: self-government and imperial culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); Zoë Laidlaw and Alan Lester (eds.), *Indigenous Communities and Settler Colonialism: Land holding, Loss and Survival in an Interconnected World* (Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Penelope Edmonds, *Urbanizing Frontiers: Indigenous Peoples and Settlers in 19th- Century Pacific Rim Cities* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010); Penelope Edmonds, *Settler Colonialism and (Re)conciliation: Frontier Violence, Affective Performances, and Imaginative Refoundings* (Houndsmills; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); Ann Curthoys, 'Indigenous People and Settler Self Government: Introduction', *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*, Vol.13, No.1, Spring 2012; Ann Curthoys and Jessie Mitchell, *Taking Liberty: Indigenous Rights and Settler Self-Government in Colonial Australia, 1830-1890* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

of Melbourne and Vancouver.⁴⁶ Histories that detail the development of individual Australian colonies, in accord with research conducted during this project, indicate that colonies were conceptualised in distinctive terms by colonial and British audiences, challenging any expectations of greater homogeneity.⁴⁷ This is why location of production prior to circulation to Britain is considered in this thesis. As Nicholas Thomas has argued 'historically specific accounts can provide much insight into the varied articulations of colonizing and counter-colonial representations and practices'.⁴⁸

Narratives concerning audiences in Britain and imperial relationships developed between colony and metropole are addressed in volumes like Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose's *At Home with the Empire* (2006).⁴⁹ These relate to the transmission of messages via imagery and the movement of goods and people in this project. Scholarship on the impact of humanitarian interests and Aboriginal protection in the colonies and Britain have also had a bearing on the current study.⁵⁰ Writers of imperial history have drawn upon visual records to explore the circulation of ideas within Europe and beyond in the nineteenth century, but until recently, images have often served an illustrative role in this context, rather than actioned as primary sources for core data and analysis.

The changing demographics of the Australian colonies influenced European representation of Aboriginal Australians between 1800 and 1860. The Aboriginal population of Australia numbered around 500,000 prior to British invasion.⁵¹ In

⁴⁶ Edmonds, *Settler Colonialism*, p.13.

⁴⁷ For example: Grace Karskens, *The Colony: A History of Early Sydney* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2009); Paul Irish, *Hidden in Plain View: The Aboriginal people of coastal Sydney* (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2017); James Boyce, 'Fantasy Island' in *Whitewash: On Keith Windschuttle's Fabrication of Aboriginal History*, ed. by Robert Manne (Melbourne: Black Inc. Agenda, 2003), pp.17-78; James Boyce, *Van Diemen's Land* (Carlton: Black Inc., 2018), second edition; Leigh Boucher and Lynette Russell (eds.), *Settler Colonial Governance in Nineteenth-Century Victoria* (Acton: ANU Press and Aboriginal History Inc, 2015); Richard Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians: A History since 1800* (Crows Nest: Allen and Unwin, 2005).

⁴⁸ Nicholas Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p.ix.

⁴⁹ Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (eds.), *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830-1867* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

⁵⁰ Merete Falck Borch, *Conciliation, Compulsion, Conversion: British Attitudes Towards Indigenous Peoples, 1763-1814* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004); Samuel Furphy and Amanda Nettlebleck, *Aboriginal Protection and Its Intermediaries in Britain's Antipodean Colonies* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019).

⁵¹ Arthur and Morphy, p.64; Sculthorpe *et al.*, *Indigenous Australia*, p.17.

areas such as New South Wales, the population was decimated by the arrival of the British, which introduced diseases that ushered in a period of great change, both in numbers and in the interactions between original inhabitants and colonisers following this loss. The demographic of the colonising population changed from being majority convict and military or naval servicemen to majority free colonists within this period. With this transition the identities of those living in Australia became more complicated, with some continuing to identify as British long into the twentieth century, referring to Britain as the ‘mother country’ and participating in military conflicts, and those who variously viewed the country as a defined entity and considered themselves as Australian.⁵² An ‘Australian’ set of myths emerged, predominantly white and male.⁵³

This changing relationship to the imperial centre influenced the ‘othering’ of the Aboriginal people on the outskirts of the developing settlements and cities, affecting colonial perceptions of land ownership and responsibility to the original occupants.⁵⁴ The Aboriginal custodians of the land played a role in the colonisers’ conceptual construction of each colony. In imagery they were often used to represent an opposition or antithesis to the colonial lifestyle. Alan Lester has argued that ideas of the British metropolitan identity were forged in response to others and ‘otherness’, and against ‘diverse colonial settings’.⁵⁵ This was true of the identities of individual colonists, which developed in relation to metropolitan social and political groups, and the colonies themselves. They were mutually constituting, facilitated by networks and the transmission of knowledge to and from distant colonies.

This research prioritises the role of visual representations as conduits for information, or ‘immutable mobiles’, a term defined by Bruno Latour in *Science in Action*.⁵⁶ In this the relationship between colonial artists and British scientists is an important factor. Many of the earliest representations of Indigenous Australians

⁵² Simon J. Potter, *News and the British World: The Emergence of an Imperial Press System, 1876-1922* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), pp.1-8.

⁵³ Membership to the Australian Natives’ Association, founded in 1871 as the Victorian Natives’ Association, was restricted to white Australia-born men.

⁵⁴ Another potential line of enquiry would be to compare the ‘othering’ of Aboriginal Australians with the ‘othering’ of convicts in settler society.

⁵⁵ ‘Preface’, Lester, *Imperial Networks*.

⁵⁶ Bruno Latour, *Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers through Society* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987).

were produced on exploratory voyages or expeditions into the interior. In these contexts, artists were members of the scientific team and their role in producing faithful representation was a core part of bringing information about distant lands and peoples back to the imperial centre. This overlap endured, as early descriptive scientific art influenced later representations of Aboriginal people. The challenges of depicting people, and analysing objectivity are noted by Andrew Sayers in *Australian Art* (2001), in which he writes that the detached approach artists could take to ethnographic material culture could not be easily applied to people.⁵⁷

In Britain, in a combined reading alongside written records, verbal testimonies and object and specimen collections, colonial representations of indigenous peoples influenced colonial and imperial debates and practices. Edward Said theorised in *Orientalism* (1978) that the construction of a national identity or culture ‘involves establishing opposites and “others” whose actuality is always subject to the continuous interpretation and reinterpretation of their differences from “us”’.⁵⁸ This critical reappraisal has been applied to the role of images in colonial history in notable studies.⁵⁹ This thesis supports the argument that images played a central role in the development of scientific racism, particularly in the fields of ethnography and anthropology. In these settings images acted as sources for the development of narratives predicated on beliefs of human similarity or difference, and through their replication and circulation helped those theories to spread. Historian Bronwen Douglas has described the ‘modernist scientific notion of race’ as ‘an abstract system of knowledge’ which emerged in the late eighteenth century but became structured and embedded in the nineteenth century.⁶⁰ This transition into a pseudoscientific structure led to denoted markers of difference, such as skin colour, being presented and made more legible in visual works, as evidenced in the sources discussed in this project.⁶¹ In London, and smaller cities in Britain, this imagined hierarchy was

⁵⁷ Andrew Sayers, *Australian Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp.28-9.

⁵⁸ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), p.332.

⁵⁹ Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1998); Nicholas Thomas, and Diane Losche (eds.), *Double Vision: art histories and colonial histories in the Pacific* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

⁶⁰ Bronwen Douglas, ‘Introduction: Foreign Bodies in Oceania’ in *Foreign Bodies: Oceania and the science of race 1750-1940*, ed. by Bronwen Douglas and Chris Ballard (Canberra: ANU Press, 2008), pp.4-5.

⁶¹ Roxann Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000); David Bindman, *Ape to Apollo: Aesthetics and the Idea of Race in the 18th Century* (London: Reaktion Books, 2002); Angela Rosenthal, ‘Visceral Culture: Blushing and the Legibility of Whiteness in

further reinforced through visits from indigenous peoples from across the globe, and through displays such as international exhibitions.⁶²

0.3 Sources and structure

The pictorial collection held by the Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas in the British Museum, includes depictions of indigenous people from each of these areas of the world, and also from Asia. Of the Australian works, the images were produced in New South Wales, Tasmania, Victoria, South Australia, and the Torres Strait Islands.⁶³ This project also discusses relevant works held in the Department of Prints and Drawings, to explore the categorisation of objects on their entrance to the museum, and the influence of institutional histories upon their analysis. Readers may be familiar with some of these images in other contexts, but this thesis will ground their current location in the British Museum. As the pre-1800 visual record has been well explored, this project focuses on the early nineteenth century, concluding with works produced in 1860 when photography started to become the primary colonial medium for recording Aboriginal sitters.⁶⁴ The discussion concerning the collection of colonial images produced in this period in Britain stretches later into the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This period encompassed great upheaval for the Aboriginal population in the regions discussed in this thesis. The British colonists' colonial identity and relationship with the 'mother country' also changed significantly in this time.

Visual records act in this project as an entry point for analysis. In the image the artist presents a moment of encounter but also reveals a process of production. While the sitter is evidently key to the representation, the records give only a limited idea of the interactions of which they were a product, offering more information about the realities and concerns of the creator than answers to questions about those they depicted.⁶⁵ The images reflect the artist's training, and their awareness and

Eighteenth-Century British Portraiture', in Deborah Cherry's *Art: History: Visual: Culture* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005).

⁶² Robert D. Grant, *Representations of British Emigration, Colonisation and Settlement: Imagining Empire, 1800-1860* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Sadiah Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade: Exhibitions, Empire, and Anthropology in Nineteenth Century Britain* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2011); Coll Thrush, *Indigenous London: Native Travelers at the Heart of Empire* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2016).

⁶³ Anonymous or unnamed images may include examples from other Australian colonies.

⁶⁴ Works discussed that fall after this point are clearly identified in the text.

⁶⁵ Mitchell, pp.28-56.

inheritance of an artistic tradition. Sometimes they can suggest the artist's existing knowledge and expectations of the subject they depicted, and their understanding of what they were seeing. The format, content and presentation of an image can indicate the setting in which it was expected to be read, allowing a present-day viewer to make informed speculations about the audience for an image. The work displays practical realities, such as the availability of materials at the time of making, and the subsequent movement of the finished object through networks. The two-dimensional nature of these objects made them more portable, readily circulated and copied. Examples could act simultaneously as record and propaganda, they could be fleetingly made or crafted over time, and they were replicated in 'high' and 'low' art for audiences of different genders and classes. While the images embody some of this information, suppositions are supplemented, confirmed, and complicated through primary sources, secondary literature and analysis.

My investigation began with a survey of the pictorial collections held at the British Museum. These, together with related examples held in the British Library and the Natural History Museum, provided the largest and most rewarding assemblage available for this research, and the best catalogued to be found in the United Kingdom.⁶⁶ My research also sought to establish the wider context in which Britons encountered depictions of Aboriginal Australians. New fields of publication emerged in Britain in the early nineteenth century, including illustrated newspapers which offered spaces for images. After religion, between 1814 and 1846, geography, travel and history were the most popular subjects of publications, all of which included examples of Australian subject matter.⁶⁷ Progressively efficient technology lowered the costs and increased the circulation of images and published works in Britain and across the empire. Lower prices and rising literacy helped segment British audiences into market groups. In the 1810s high priced books 'accounted for the largest percentage share', by 1835 medium priced books were the most produced, and by 1855 these had been overtaken by low-priced books.⁶⁸ In the early nineteenth century, newspapers were taxed through a stamp duty intended to keep

⁶⁶ Large sections of the British Museum's collection were moved to the newly built Natural History Museum in South Kensington in 1881 and the British Library when it relocated to St Pancras in 1997. The implications of this are discussed in Chapter Two.

⁶⁷ Simon Eliot, 'Some Trends in British Book Production, 1800-1919', in *Literature in the Marketplace: Nineteenth-Century British Publishing and Reading Practices*, ed. by John O. Jordan and Robert L. Patten (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p.36.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p.40.

them more costly. This 'tax on knowledge' peaked in 1815, was reduced in 1836, and repealed in 1855, boosting sales and circulation.⁶⁹

Image networks extending beyond London are introduced in the thesis through newspapers and publications, circulating exhibitions, and works in Australian collections formerly held in nineteenth-century British collections. The analysis creates a framework through which to investigate collections at other British institutions, and further work might reveal patterns of collecting that counteract the metropolitan or London-based focus that emerged in this work.⁷⁰ The model could be translated to visual records of other indigenous people produced in colonial and imperial environments.

The 'lives' of colonial images of Aboriginal people produced in the British Empire and circulated to Britain where they were read and collected, are an under-utilised resource for exploring knowledge exchanges in the imperial world.⁷¹ This project considers the role of these images in scientific practices in nineteenth-century Britain, and how they worked within British collections to construct or convey knowledge. Many such works fulfilled their primary purpose by transmitting information about the Australian colonies, including the relationship between the British invaders and the original owners and occupiers of the land. As settlements and colonies became more established, some works were created for the expanding colonial audience, while others still circulated in the British Empire and directly to Britain. While the images were produced to be read in all these environments, the audiences' interpretations of them could diverge.

These colonial representations when brought to Britain came to stand for complex and diverse cultures, playing a role in the simplification and dehumanisation of the individuals depicted. Significant work in recent years has sought to return a voice or identity to the Aboriginal Australians depicted in these images.⁷² In many Australian

⁶⁹ Martin Hewitt, *The Dawn of the Cheap Press in Victorian Britain: The End of the 'Taxes on Knowledge', 1849-1869* (London and New York: Bloomsbury academic, 2013).

⁷⁰ Early research at other British institutions revealed that, as at the British Museum, these works have been less valued and consequently were often unregistered or unrecorded in collection databases.

⁷¹ Igor Kopytoff, 'The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process' in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. by Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp.64-92.

⁷² Maynard; Lydon, *Calling the Shots*; Bonyhady and Lehman; Greg Lehman, 'Benjamin Duterrau: The Art of Conciliation', *Journal of War & Culture Studies*, Vol.8, No.2 (2015),

collections, when working with or requesting to view works such as these, a researcher now may be put in touch with an Indigenous curator or access officer at the institution to discuss the content and to ensure work is being carried out in a respectful manner.⁷³ More researchers today recognise the need at all stages of research to be responsible and respectful of indigenous communities, both those living at the time when the images were made and today, particularly within work which engages with violent colonial acts. The development of appropriate protocols has been the subject of ongoing discussion and practical exploration.⁷⁴ By tracing how colonially made depictions of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders entered pictorial collections in Britain, and how they were understood by different parties, this research seeks as a major aim both to increase knowledge and awareness of these works and their meanings through time.

The structure of the thesis foregrounds the British Museum's collection and contextualises the objects held within. The first chapter introduces the production of colonial images of Aboriginal Australians and their circulation to Britain from the three colonies most highly represented in the British Museum: New South Wales; Tasmania (formerly Van Diemen's Land); and Victoria (formerly the Port Phillip District). The movement of works from these locations and motivations behind their transfer are discussed, looking to the role of individual agents in colonial and scientific collecting. The second chapter examines the history of the entrance of these colonial images into the British Museum. Here, I explore the wider context of the ethnographic collections at the museum, how these visual works were organised, read and understood in the nineteenth century, and how they were split over time between the Museum of Mankind, the Bloomsbury site, the Natural History Museum, and the British Library. In the third chapter I explore the use of images in British scientific collections, taking as a case study the collection of Joseph Barnard Davis, who brought together most of the pictorial works that would later enter the British Museum. I interrogate how an individual's motivations influenced how

pp.109-124; Shino Konishi, Maria Nugent, and Tiffany Shellam (eds.), *Indigenous Intermediaries: New Perspectives on Exploration Archives* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 2015).

⁷³ My research benefitted from such discussions during a 2018 research trip to Australia.

⁷⁴ Howard Morphy 'Open access versus the culture of protocols' in *Museum as Process: Translating Local and Global Knowledges*, ed. by R.A. Silverman (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015); Howard Morphy, *Museums, Infinity and the culture of Protocols: Ethnographic Collections and Source Communities* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020); 'First Peoples: A Roadmap for Enhancing Engagement in Museums and Galleries' <https://www.amaga-indigenous.org.au> [accessed 20 June 2020].

works were read, organised, and arranged. Chapter Four looks beyond the museum to the settings through which colonial images of Indigenous Australians became more ‘popularly’ known in Britain: in exhibitions, publications, and the popular press. Within these formats, images were used to generate profit, but they simultaneously acted as message carriers regarding the people they represented. Exploring these alternative sites of engagement and the images they displayed, illuminates the broader British context for the collection in the museum. The final Chapter discusses the British Museum’s collection in its present state, looking to recent displays which have provided a forum to re-introduce colonial artists and address colonial legacies with contemporary Aboriginal communities in mind. It considers how the works can be better known today.

This project is situated at the intersection of nineteenth-century ideas of colony and empire. Britain and Australia were complex entities and existed in multiple forms throughout the period in focus.⁷⁵ Colonial representations of Aboriginal people acted throughout as objects in transition, moving within networks as circulating commodities, and read as observational record, scientific source, tool of propaganda, illustration, and artwork. They could hold multiple identities, and carried different meanings for their creators, viewers, readers, replicators, owners, and those they represented. This is still true today, as they are perceived differently through the eyes of Aboriginal descendants, museum visitors, curators, researchers, and archivists.

Notes on terminology

The terminology used in this thesis follows guidance published by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS).⁷⁶ The term ‘Aboriginal Australian’ is used when discussing Aboriginal inhabitants of the whole country of Australia, save for Torres Strait Islanders who live today both in the Torres Straits and within mainland Australia.⁷⁷ ‘Indigenous Australians’ refers to both Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders. The term ‘indigenous’ (in its

⁷⁵ Simon J. Potter, ‘Empire, Cultures and Identities in Nineteenth and Twentieth-Century Britain’, *History Compass*, Vol.5, Issue 1 (December 2006), pp.51-71.

⁷⁶ ‘Indigenous Australians: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’ page on the AIATSIS.gov.au website [accessed 31 October 2019].

⁷⁷ AIATSIS guidance notes gives preference to the term ‘Aboriginal people’ over ‘Indigenous Australian’.

lower-case form) is used in this thesis when referring to the first peoples of multiple countries. For each location discussed, location specific terminology for Aboriginal groups is introduced. Across Australia, Aboriginal identities directly link to their language groups and traditional country, so where possible, more specific Aboriginal group names have been used. As Aboriginal Australians did not write their languages, when they were recorded by observers at the time or by later linguists, different spelling conventions have been used to represent the sound of these languages and the names of clans and individuals.⁷⁸ Many sitters in the images discussed herein have multiple recorded names, both Aboriginal (in various European spellings), and also European-‘given’.⁷⁹ The European act of naming Aboriginal people was often the ‘first act of taking possession’ and an overt form of colonisation, regularly seen in the written and visual record.⁸⁰

The term ‘British’ is used when the people or group referenced were exclusively from Britain, and ‘European’ when referencing the British, Irish and other European groups which settled in Australia from 1788 onwards. I have consciously adopted the terms ‘coloniser’ and ‘invasion’ to highlight throughout the thesis the power dynamics and intent of those first outsiders entering the land, and their relationship to the Aboriginal people already living there. The terms ‘settler’ and ‘settler colonialism’ are used in reference to British and European migrants who permanently resided and established settlements in Australia, or when engaging with settler colonial literature.

The terms ‘representation’, ‘depiction’, ‘image’, ‘picture’, and ‘work’ are all used to reference visual records of Indigenous Australians. The term ‘artwork’ or ‘art’ is a judgment based on European principles and definitions and is therefore only adopted when referencing works displayed or discussed in relevant contexts, such as exhibitions. Similarly, ‘illustration’ is only used when the image was created to accompany a written record, in newspapers or publications. The term ‘object’ is used when discussing images in physical terms, such as when the discussion surrounds their role as moveable items or commodities, rather than their content. The original titles of illustrations have been used within the text and the appendices.

⁷⁸ Arthur and Morphy, pp.76, 250.

⁷⁹ In others the sitter remains anonymous and have been given a descriptive title rather than their name.

⁸⁰ Leonie Stevens, *Me Write Myself: The Free Aboriginal Inhabitants of Van Diemen’s Land at Wybalenna* (Clayton: Monash University Publishing, 2017), pp.xi-xii.

In some cases, the language incorporated is now acknowledged as offensive and derogatory and the images today would often be displayed with a warning to viewers. For historical accuracy within this study, I have retained such language rather than skew the original presentation of these representations.

0.4 Approaching a colonial collection

My interest in this project was born from my previous research relating to European images produced in the Pacific, and through issues which have gained prominence during my professional working life in museums, notably contemporary discussions about ‘decolonising’ the museum, which challenge ideas of race and colonial legacies within such institutions. I was drawn to the images at the centre of this project as, despite the evident scale and variety, they were unknown to me, rarely discussed in available literature, and never as a collection. I began this project with the desire to uncover the point at which silence had entered the lifecycle of these objects and to understand how or why that had occurred. While, for a project such as this, one might attempt to position oneself outside the museum to strive for objectivity, I am aware this project has relied on records created within the museum and is facilitated by the privileged access to collections afforded by my collaborative doctoral project status and additional exhibition project work I undertook during my candidature. During this process I had freedom to critique the past practices of the museum without constraints.

Throughout this project it has been of primary importance to me to show due respect to the lives and histories of the Aboriginal sitters represented in the images discussed, and to the contemporary communities of whose ancestors are represented. No historian researches, reviews and writes history with complete objectivity, and each brings their own collection of experiences to bear upon their interpretation. As a white British student, discussing colonies formed through British invasion of the country now known as Australia, and the consequent oppression of Indigenous Australians, I have sought throughout the project to be conscious of, and challenge, my positionality, drawing on the work of scholars of Indigenous history, and seeking out and adopting appropriate terminology. I have benefited throughout from the guidance of my supervisor Dr Gaye Sculthorpe who is a Pakana woman (an Aboriginal woman from Tasmania), and from discussions with Aboriginal curators in Australia, such as Zoe Rimmer at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, as well as with Indigenous visitors to the museum. I

acknowledge however my background and education lie in the country at the centre of the empire that enacted this violence. This project also primarily draws on the collections of the British Museum, an institution which has been critiqued for its imperial links and its categorisation of the world in line with beliefs founded in the Enlightenment.⁸¹ The process of researching and reading these collections has raised many questions concerning the structural racism at the heart of historical studies and heritage institutions. Throughout this thesis I have sought to be explicit about my approach towards these images and to make clear the reasons for my interpretation.

The issues of representation and erasure highlighted by this project, engage with the broader context of Britain in its current moment of upheaval. This project was started shortly after the referendum on Britain's membership of the European Union, held on 23 June 2016, and it will draw to a close following the final phases of the process known as 'Brexit'. While these events relate to the relationship between Britain and Australia predominantly through the ongoing negotiation of a trade relationship, the intervening period of social and political disruption has also brought discussions of 'nationalism', 'patriotism' and 'race' to the heart of contemporary debate. This has undoubtedly influenced the progress and concerns of this thesis.

⁸¹ John Giblin, Imma Ramos, and Nikki Grout, 'Dismantling the Master's House: Thoughts on Representing Empire and Decolonising Museums and Public Spaces in Practice. An Introduction.' *Third Text*, Vol.33, Issue 4-5, pp.471-486.

Chapter One

First Peoples and first colonies: producing imagery for British audiences

Colonial images depicting indigenous peoples recorded, ordered, and conveyed messages about First Peoples to locations across the British Empire. These images were produced to fulfil a range of tasks, but primarily functioned as sources of knowledge about distant places, utilised in the public or scientific spheres for entertainment, education, and study. As transmitters of information, they supported the role of the colonies in international networks of knowledge and trade, as new peoples, lands, and animals were noted, researched, depicted and then circulated. In travel and exploration, the visual record was seen as a tool of inscription, but it was highly influenced by subjective acts of expression and interpretation. Two-dimensional objects served as sources for the study of human difference, but were sites that could be manipulated, subject to styles and fashions in the art world. These images fall between categories of ‘art’ and ‘ethnography’, revealing the restrictive nature of such classifications. As constructions they may be truthful reflections of what their creator saw, but there is a difference between what was there and what was understood, and therefore possible to represent. Images were ultimately composites of sketches, memory and imagination.

To explore what and why colonial images of Indigenous Australians were made and moved to Britain, this chapter introduces the contexts of production and circulation of colonial representations now held in the British Museum. To demonstrate the influence of place and historical context of manufacture, I discuss image production in New South Wales, Tasmania and Victoria in the period 1788 to 1860. These are the colonies most highly represented in this pictorial collection. In each case I discuss the Indigenous presence in the area prior to British invasion, then consider patterns of interaction between British colonists and Aboriginal peoples, and influential factors on colonial representations. This is drawn together in a discussion of common threads and outliers between the three locations. An extensive scholarly discourse surrounds the context of colonial image making in Australia, particularly in the field of art history; and many historians have in recent decades also examined this period of Aboriginal-colonial relations. While it is not in the remit of this thesis

to explore this literature and debate in detail, it is necessary to outline key factors that influenced the form of objects and their production, including the willingness of Aboriginal sitters, and the availability of artists, materials, audiences, commissioners, collectors and purchasers.

From the arrival of Captain James Cook and his crew in Australia in 1770 and then at a far greater rate after the invasion by the First Fleet and establishment of the first British colony in 1788, colonial images were created to record the Indigenous peoples of Australia and their way of life and customs. With the return of the first ships to Britain, representations of Australia and its First Peoples began to move in networks of scientific collecting and imperial knowledge circulation. Many images returning to Europe in the early-nineteenth century were linked to exploratory or naval surveying voyages which gathered and mobilised information about ethnography, botany and zoology.¹ In the process of translation from human to visual record, the person represented was necessarily simplified. Colonial networks transformed these visual images ‘made on the spot’ into ‘authoritative knowledge’.²

Bruno Latour has described these fixed but movable inscriptions as ‘immutable mobiles’, that presented new information as ‘proof’ in the development of scientific practice.³ Two-dimensional images could be moved more easily than other specimens without damaging the information they provided (though there were risks to being moved by a ship, such as saltwater damage). Once arrived in Britain they could be read by viewers, condensed, and combined with other forms of record. They could be reproduced and then presented in another setting. For these works to be legible or consumable in Europe, ‘optical consistency’ was important.⁴ Artists used recognisable formulae when recording landscapes throughout the British Empire and beyond, such as the picturesque. Although reflecting local variation in the details, this schema supported an easily consumable illusion of ‘coherence and control’. Jeffrey Auerbach describes this as a ‘construction of affinities’ rather than a focus on ‘otherness’ which allowed the European or colonial

¹ Ethnography was not as visually codified a discipline as botany and zoology; Andrew Sayers, *Australian Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp.28-9.

² Felix Driver and Luciana Martins, ‘John Septimus Roe and the Art of Navigation’, *History Workshop Journal*, No.54 (2002), pp.146, 157.

³ Bruno Latour, ‘Drawing things together’ in *Representation in Scientific Practice*, ed. by Michael Lynch and Steve Woolgar (Cambridge, MA; London: The MIT Press, 1990), pp.24-26.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.27, 44-46, 55.

viewer visual comfort.⁵ In the representation of people, ‘physical type’ portraits were increasingly used for consistency in the nineteenth century, depicting head and shoulders, both face on and in profile. This allowed for comparison and categorisation when images were brought together.

Developments in materials, printing and transport in the early-nineteenth century resulted in an increase in the production and circulation of images, and the development of imperial networks which facilitated their movement. This chapter explores processes and practicalities of the production and movement of colonial images to Britain: by whom, in what form, and for what reason. Scholarship on the creation and circulation of colonial representations of Indigenous Australians in the early to mid-nineteenth century has commonly focused on the artists, but my research on the provenance of works now held in the British Museum has drawn out these themes through the example of George Augustus Robinson, an influential colonial agent and collector in Tasmania and Victoria.

1.1 Context and image production in New South Wales

In the greater Sydney region of what is now known as New South Wales there were twenty-nine Aboriginal groups, with bonds between them created through various forms of exchange, such as marriage. The language groups of the area included: the Eora on the coast; the Tharawal to the South; the Dharug to the northwest (the largest group); and the Gandangara to the southwest.⁶ Networks of trade and exchange stretched great distances along the coast of Australia and inland. The Eora, saltwater people, lived in the place chosen for the first British settlement at Port Jackson and were often the subject of early colonial artworks. Their subsistence relied on the rich resources of the harbour, rivers and adjacent lands.

The First Fleet of eleven ships, led by Governor Arthur Phillip, reached Botany Bay in New South Wales on 24 January 1788. In search of better resources, they relocated further north to Port Jackson, arriving on 26 January. From the early years of invasion and settlement colonial images created in New South Wales represented

⁵ Jeffrey Auerbach, ‘The picturesque and the homogenisation of Empire’, *The British Art Journal*, Vol.5, No.1 (Spring/Summer 2004), pp.48, 52-3.

⁶ Grace Karskens, *The Colony: A History of Early Sydney* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2009), p.37.

the ‘new’ land and the Aboriginal men and women living there. No official or professional artist was sent with the First Fleet, unlike previous and contemporary exploratory voyages, indicating that recording the land in artistic terms was a low priority in the establishment of this penal settlement. In the first twenty-five years after invasion, almost all visual records of the colony were made by naval officers, military surveyors, and convicts with artistic and engraving skills derived from earlier careers.⁷ Many members of this last group had been transported for forgery and used their skills to produce a superior quality of drawings and watercolours.



Fig.1.1 *Blueit, native of Botany Bay, New South Wales*, John William Lewin, 1810, watercolour, 275 x 212 mm, BM, 1893,0803.49 © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Colonial representations of Aboriginal people from this period held in the British Museum and its related institutions, include drawings by convict artist Thomas Watling,⁸ free artist John William Lewin (Fig.1.1),⁹ prints published by Absalom West,¹⁰ and other anonymous examples.¹¹

The impact of British settlement upon the Aboriginal population in *Warrane* (Sydney Cove) was swift. In 1789 a smallpox epidemic decimated the Aboriginal population, while violence by invaders had an initial impact more locally. As land proved hard to cultivate and supplies from overseas were irregular, the colonial settlement expanded to the lands surrounding Sydney. Attacks from Aboriginal groups often occurred on the outskirts of the established settlement and were understood as a form of retaliation for land taken by the British.¹² Periods of economic hardship

⁷ Such as Royal Navy Officer George Raper, the artist of The Raper Collection, held at the Natural History Museum in London.

⁸ For example: NHM, ‘The Watling Collection’.

⁹ BM, *Blueit* 1893,0803.49; *Tomnaa*, 1893,8083.50.

¹⁰ BM, 1869,0213.29 to 31, 36 to 44, Absalom West’s *Views of New South Wales*.

¹¹ It was common for early convict works to be anonymous; BM, Oc2006, Drg.42-43.

¹² Local food resources had been reduced by the growing settlement and colonists attempted to stop the Aboriginal communities reaching the water and food they had relied upon; Tracey Banivanua Mar and Penelope Edmonds, ‘Indigenous and settler relations’, in *The Cambridge History of Australia*, ed. by Bashford and Macintyre (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp.343-4.

and political unrest in Britain in the 1820s and 1840s, resulted in increased emigration to Australia stimulated by the aspiration for land, money and the opportunity to live in healthier climes.¹³ Private settlement companies encouraged and facilitated emigration from the British Isles from the 1830s. The reduction of the Aboriginal population and growth of British emigrants affected the availability of Indigenous sitters for artists seeking to produce images, and subsequent buyers or consumers.¹⁴

In recent years historians have used images to contest the long-held assertion that Sydney abruptly became a 'white city' after British invasion and settlement, with Aboriginal people simply fading out of the picture and the pictorial record. Historian Grace Karskens has demonstrated how Aboriginal people adapted to urban settler Sydney quickly and many remained resident. Using visual representations, alongside written descriptions and other records, she showed that Aboriginal people far outnumbered Europeans in the early years of the colony and built longstanding relationships over the following decades.¹⁵ Paul Irish has addressed in detail Aboriginal presence in nineteenth-century Sydney, and challenges the myth 'that Aboriginal culture has never changed and cannot change without ceasing to be 'authentic''.¹⁶ His research showed that Aboriginal people maintained their bond with the area, drawing on its resources and interacting with the colonists and their settlement. Thus, the potential for depicting Aboriginal sitters in New South Wales from 'the life' continued into the nineteenth century.

Art historian Elisabeth Findlay asserted that Aboriginal portraits were 'amongst the safest and most lucrative products' from the mid-1820s to the 1840s and the trade of these 'helped keep printing firms afloat' in New South Wales.¹⁷ Many Australian-made prints made their way to Britain, including these products. Drawings related to a print series made by Charles Rodius in the 1830s (Fig.1.2), and examples of

¹³ This was intensified by the demobilisation and movement of soldiers and sailors following the Napoleonic wars; Karskens, *The Colony*, p.4; Angela Woollacott, *Settler Society in the Australian Colonies: Self-Government and Imperial Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p.1.

¹⁴ Worsening or fluctuating relations would also have impacted the willingness of Aboriginal people to sit for colonial image-making.

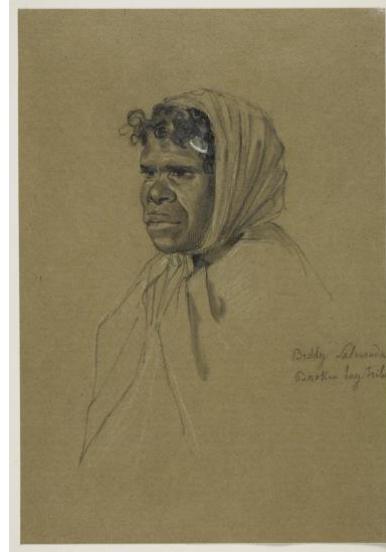
¹⁵ Karskens, *The Colony*, p.12.

¹⁶ Paul Irish, *Hidden in Plain View: The Aboriginal People of Coastal Sydney* (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2017), p.7.

¹⁷ Elisabeth Findlay, 'Peddling Prejudice: A Series of Twelve Profile Portraits of Aborigines of New South Wales', *Postcolonial Studies*, 16:1 (2013), p.2.

W.H. Fernyhough's *A series of twelve profile portraits of the Aborigines of New South Wales* (1836) are held in the British Museum (Fig.2.7).¹⁸ New European arrivals in New South Wales in the 1820s and 1830s expressed surprise at the visible presence of Aboriginal people living in and around Sydney, highlighting the limits of communication between the colony and Britain about the realities of colonial life. Recurring negative remarks on the 'undressed state' and 'inebriation' of some Aboriginal people, were represented in contemporary images.¹⁹

Fig.1.2 *Biddy Salamander*, Charles Rodius, 1834-35, pen, black and white chalk with stump, heightened with white, 263 x 181mm, BM, 1840,1114.69 © The Trustees of the British Museum.



As more land was colonised Europeans came to recognise different Aboriginal groups, and some images reflect this information. With the expansion of the colonial frontier other considerations influenced the form and tone of representations, such as violence between colonists and Aboriginal people, and competition for resources, particularly land. As British colonisation intensified and expanded into areas of New South Wales further from Sydney in the 1830s, it engendered great violence. Two events of 1838, the Waterloo Creek massacre in January and the Myall Creek massacre in June, put a spotlight on the level of violence directed towards Aboriginal people, and were reported on in Britain. In 1841 in London, Phiz (Hablot Knight Browne) created an illustration for *The Chronicles of Crime*, under the title 'Charles Kinnaister, and others: Executed for the Murder of Australian Aborigines', accompanied by text on the Myall Creek massacre. Historian Jane Lydon has explored how it framed 'colonial atrocity as convict crime' by

¹⁸ Rodius, BM, 1840,1114.64 to 81; Fernyhough, BM, 1875,0508.43-44, Oc2006,Prt.340 to 351, and 1893,0803.51 to 59.

¹⁹ Such as Augustus Earle's 'Natives of N.S. Wales as seen in the streets of Sydney'. An example in the British Library; BL, [Eight lithograph views in New South Wales, with descriptive letterpress: London, 1830], General Reference Collection 1899.cc.74.(2).

projecting it on to a ‘class of already guilty’.²⁰ The acknowledgement of violence or intimidation by colonists towards Aboriginal people is limited in the published visual record.

Subsequent governors of New South Wales, Sir Ralph Darling, Sir Richard Bourke, Sir George Gipps and Sir Charles Augustus Fitzroy, oversaw a period of great expansion and population growth from the mid 1820s into the 1850s, despite a significant economic depression in the early 1840s. Fitzroy’s governorship saw the beginning of a period of greater political and economic freedom for colonists in New South Wales. In 1850 the Australian Colonies Government Act set the scene for the Constitution Act of 1855 which made New South Wales an autonomous parliamentary democracy. The following year gold was discovered at Ophir near Bathurst. Shortly thereafter discoveries of gold near Melbourne began to draw residents and artists away from Sydney, although the overall population of New South Wales continued to grow, expanding the number of people who would produce and acquire depictions of Aboriginal people. The interest in the gold fields came to dominate images produced in the colony, lowering the proportion of works depicting Aboriginal men and women in New South Wales.

1.2 Context and image production in Tasmania

Tasmanian Aboriginal people have lived in Tasmania for at least 40,000 years.²¹ Between ten and twelve thousand years ago a rise in sea level flooded the land to create what is now Bass Strait, cutting off Tasmanian Aboriginal people from the mainland. Historian Lyndall Ryan and others have described nine nations in Tasmania at the time of European settlement in 1803, each having a number of clans within. While the original nation names are not known, their locations were: Oyster Bay, North East, North, Big River, North Midlands, Ben Lomond, North West, South West Coast, and South East.²² It is thought there were between six and

²⁰‘Phiz’ in *The Chronicles of Crime, or The New Newgate Calendar* (London: Pelham and Browne, 1841); Jane Lydon, ‘Colonial “Blind Spots”: Images of Australian Frontier Conflict’, *Journal of Australian Studies*, Vol.42, Issue 4 (2018), pp.409-427.

²¹ Also referred to as *Trownuna* in *palawa kani*.

²² For a more detailed list with areas and clan names see Ryan, *Tasmanian Aborigines*; ‘Tribal boundaries of the Tasmanian Aborigines’ map in James Boyce, *Van Diemen’s Land* (Carlton: Black Inc., 2018), New Edition.

eight thousand Aboriginal people in Van Diemen's Land at the time of British invasion.²³

Established in 1803, Van Diemen's Land, later Tasmania, would become the second British colony in Australia when separated from New South Wales in 1825. Prior to permanent British settlement, encounters between Aboriginal Tasmanians and Europeans during exploratory voyages had resulted in images.²⁴ When Captain James Cook met with Aboriginal Tasmanians on his third voyage to the Pacific, artist John Webber recorded the scene at Adventure Bay on Bruny Island in 1777.²⁵ In 1793 on D'Entrecasteux's voyage in search of missing French explorer La Perouse, artist Jean Piron drew Aboriginal people. These drawings were later engraved for Labillardiere's published account of the expedition, *Relation du voyage a la recherche de la Perouse* (1800). During six weeks spent in Van Diemen's Land in early 1802 on board Nicolas Baudin's expedition in the *Le Géographe* and *Le Naturaliste* (1800-1804), Nicolas-Martin Petit produced a series of portrait studies of Aboriginal Tasmanians, and Charles-Alexandre Lesueur created scenes and landscapes.²⁶ They had been instructed to produce highly detailed studies of the people they encountered.²⁷ Europeans subsequently engaged in whaling and sealing around Bruny Island before British settlement. While previous encounters with the French and British sailors were largely peaceful, with the development of whaling and sealing violence became more common. Aboriginal women and children were abducted from coastal tribes to be used as 'wives' and labour for sealing, a practice which continued for some decades.

²³ Mar and Edmonds, p.347.

²⁴ The first Europeans to meet Aboriginal Tasmanians were the French sailors from Captain Marc-Joseph Marion du Fresne's expedition of 1772. It became a hostile encounter and resulted in the death of at least one Aboriginal Tasmanian. Tobias Furneaux, commander of HMS Adventure which accompanied Captain James Cook's *Resolution*, explored large parts of the south and east coasts of Van Diemen's Land in 1773.

²⁵ *Captain Cook's Interview with Natives in Adventure Bay, Van Diemen's Land, 29 January 1777*, John Webber, c.1777, National Museum of the Royal Navy, Portsmouth, 269947.

²⁶ Originals are held in the Musée d'Histoire Naturelle du Havre collection, acquired in the late 1870s. A recently rediscovered group of five works by Petit and Lesueur were sold in Paris, and then by Hordern House in 2018; Deutscher and Hackett in association with Hordern House, *Highly Important Works of Art: The Baudin Expedition to Australia (1800-1804)*, Auction catalogue, Melbourne, 28 November 2018.

²⁷ Joseph Marie Degérando, *The observation of savage peoples [translated from the French]* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969); Philip Jones, 'In the Mirror of Contact: Art of the French encounters', in *The Encounter, 2002: Art of the Flinders and Baudin Voyages*, ed. by Sarah Thomas (Adelaide: Art Gallery of South Australia, 2002), p.164.

In the early years of the nineteenth century up to 1826, European artistic depictions of Aboriginal Tasmanians were rare. Van Diemen's Land was a convict society with limited need for imagery. Its role as the primary penal station in Australia may have resulted in less demand from British audiences. Visual records of specifically Van Diemonian content circulated in Britain before and soon after British settlement, but not emanating from the island. Some of the earliest examples were reproductions in publications following voyages of exploration by other European powers, such as Labillardiere's published account. As Baudin died before his expedition returned to France, and the artist Petit died shortly after, the account was written by the naturalist on the voyage François Péron in *Voyages de découvertes aux Terres Australes*. Louis de Freycinet, with Lesueur produced the accompanying *Atlas* in Paris, which included fourteen engravings of members of Tasmanian and Port Jackson Aboriginal communities (Fig.1.3). Costs delayed this volume and meant another planned separate volume on ethnography was never produced. Some of the plates, finished as early as 1807 or 1808, were first included in the second edition by Freycinet in 1824. Works after Webber, Labillardiere, Lesueur and Petit were republished during years when little content was sent from Van Diemen's Land to Britain in the 1810s and early 1820s.



Fig.1.3 *Nouvelle-Hollande: Terre d'endracht. Cabanes des naturels de la presqu'île Peron*, Victor Pillement and Denis Née after C.A. Lesueur, 1807-1811, engraving, 210 x 256mm (sheet), BM, 2016,2024.3, Author's photograph, 2017.

Intense violence occurred between the British colonists and Aboriginal Tasmanians during the period 1824 to 1832. Free settlers, pastoralists and convicts participated in an extensive 'land-grab', driving Aboriginal people from their lands and killing many.²⁸ In retaliation they also attacked and killed settlers and their families. Governor Arthur adopted increasingly strong measures in efforts to remove Aboriginal people from the island: partitioning the island into districts in April 1828, bringing in martial law for three years from November 1828, and in November 1830 using the 'Black line' of soldiers and 'able-bodied' male colonists to march through the bush in an attempt to force Aboriginal people onto the Tasman Peninsula where they could be corralled. This was a failure. Local authorities supported a so-called 'friendly mission' led by 'Aboriginal protector' George Augustus Robinson and a group of Aboriginal guides.

Robinson arrived as a free émigré in Hobart on 20 January 1824, and in 1829 was appointed by Arthur to take charge of a ration station for Aboriginal people on Bruny Island. In April he met Aboriginal woman Trukanini and Aboriginal man Wurati who became the core figures in his 'friendly mission' of conciliation. Over four years from January 1830, Robinson and his guides located, made contact with and explained the governing policy to Aboriginal people they met across the island in a series of expeditions, negotiating the movement of some three hundred people from their homelands. Robinson and Arthur sold the Aboriginal population a mistruth that they would soon be able to return to their traditional lands. Instead, from 1832 they were removed to islands in Bass Strait, and then to an establishment on Flinders Island, named Wybalenna or 'Black man's House', to isolate them for the supposed protection of both themselves and the settler-colonists. They were overseen by a government-appointed protector. Their numbers swiftly depleted, living in squalid conditions with disease abundant. By the time Robinson became commandant of the Aboriginal establishment in late 1835, the Aboriginal population had fallen to 123, dropping to 60 people by the time he left to become Chief Protector of Aborigines at Port Phillip (later Victoria) in February 1839.²⁹ The

²⁸ Penelope Edmonds, *Settler Colonialism and (Re)conciliation: Frontier Violence, Affective Performances, and Imaginative Refoundings* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p.137.

²⁹ Ann Curthoys and Jessie Mitchell, *Taking Liberty: Indigenous Rights and Settler Self-Government in Colonial Australia, 1830-1890* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), p.42.

Aboriginal people at Wybalenna resisted their incarceration, using forms of protest such as petitions to object to the poor living conditions and strict rules.³⁰

Visual records of Aboriginal Tasmanians produced between 1803 and 1860 were limited when compared with mainland Australia. Only from the 1820s, and increasingly the 1830s, were a number of images created, primarily in the form of portraits or landscapes. The removal of Aboriginal people to Flinders Island placed them at a distance from European image makers, thereby further limiting their representation in colonial imagery. The early 1830s saw the arrival of two well-established artists from London: sixty-four-year-old John Glover in February 1831, and sixty-five-year-old Benjamin Duterrau who landed in Hobart the following year. Both drew on their experiences of exhibiting at London's art institutions to establish themselves in Van Diemen's Land.³¹ Both depicted Aboriginal people in their images, although Duterrau's works centred these figures, while Glover typically deployed them as 'staffage' in his finished paintings, albeit 'with genuine ethnographic intent'.³² Glover's work has become central to the colonial imagining of Tasmanian Aboriginal people, despite most of it being produced after the people themselves had been removed to Flinders Island. The purported observational nature of his images is thus shown to be false, rather they were composed from earlier sketches and observations, reinserting men and women into the landscapes.³³ In a large-scale oil painting titled *The National Picture* (now lost), Duterrau sought to create a symbolic representation of the roles of those involved in the 'conciliation', although it ultimately served as a group of Aboriginal portraits with Robinson placed firmly at the centre of the story.

Only two European artists visited Wybalenna: John Skinner Prout and Francis Simpkinson de Wesselow, nephew of Lady Jane Franklin, together accompanied by superintendent Dr Joseph Milligan in February 1845.³⁴ Prout had published the first

³⁰ Leonie Stevens, *Me Write Myself: The Free Aboriginal Inhabitants of Van Diemen's Land at Wybalenna* (Clayton: Monash University Publishing, 2017); Curthoys and Mitchell, pp.148-151; Tim Bonyhady and Greg Lehman, *The National Picture: the art of Tasmania's Black War* (Canberra: NGA, 2018), p.232.

³¹ Bonyhady and Lehman, p.78.

³² *Ibid.*, p.181; David Hansen, *John Glover and the colonial picturesque* (Hobart: Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, 2003), pp.242-247.

³³ Aboriginal traces were recorded in Glover's landscapes, albeit potentially unknowingly, as botanical representations and shaped landscapes reflected the practices of firestick burning; Julia Lum, 'Fire-Stick Picturesque: Landscape Art and Early Colonial Tasmania', *British Art Studies*, Issue 10 (November 2018).

³⁴ UTAS, RSA B 18, Letter from F.G.S. De Wesselow to H.H. Montgomery, 10 July 1900.

half of a lithographic scenery book *Tasmania Illustrated* the year before, and included a depiction of the 'Residence of the Aborigines, Flinders Island' in the second part, published in 1846.³⁵ He also produced twenty-one portraits of Aboriginal men and women, which are now held in the British Museum and will be discussed further in Chapter Three.

Most colonial depictions of Aboriginal Tasmanians produced before 1837 were associated with George Augustus Robinson's so-called 'friendly mission', and many of the colonial images of these men and women now in Britain were brought by him on his return in 1852.³⁶ In a series of sketchbooks he produced a high number of visual records of his mission, largely in the form of small rough sketches, and documenting the Aboriginal people he encountered (Fig.1.4).³⁷ His depictions included Aboriginal men and women from around Shoalhaven and Jervis Bay in New South Wales, who had been brought to Van Diemen's Land.³⁸ Robinson also purchased and received works during his time in Van Diemen's Land between 1829 and 1839, including: a work by W.B. Gould in 1833 (Fig.1.5);³⁹ a painting of Wurati gifted by Duterrau presented 'in token of that gentleman's services in the colony in conciliating the hostile blacks' (Fig.1.6);⁴⁰ and a group of five works in chalk and crayon attributed to Thomas Lempriere (Fig.1.7).⁴¹

³⁵ Prout taught drawing and created an amateur sketching club in Hobart, becoming the centre of an artistic community that stretched to Launceston; Roger Butler, *Printed: Images in Colonial Australia 1801-1901* (Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 2007), p.76.

³⁶ Gaye Sculthorpe published a study of Robinson's ethnographic collection in 1990, although this did not address his pictorial collection; Gaye Sculthorpe, 'The ethnographic collections of George Augustus Robinson', *Memoirs of the Museum of Victoria (Anthropology & History)*, Vol. I, No.1 (1990), p.37; Lyndall Ryan, 'Robinson, George Augustus (1791-1866)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed, 2004 [accessed 22 November 2017].

³⁷ Drawings now held in the British Museum and Mitchell Library, SLNSW.

³⁸ Bonyhady and Lehman, p.180.

³⁹ BM, Oc2006, Drg.40, the signature of the artist can be identified in the jacket of the sitter; RAI, MS 145, Cat. No. 32, described as 'coloured drawing of an Australian in a Sailor's dress; RAI, MS 147, 29 March 1867; This portrait was likely acquired by Robinson from the artist at Macquarie Harbour between 1832 and 1835, as Robinson asked Gould to paint other Aboriginal portraits at this time; *National Treasures from Australia's Great Libraries* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2005), p.36.

⁴⁰ BM, Oc2006, Ptg.22; The *Hobart Town Courier* reported on 22 April 1836 that the artist had 'painted a splendid full size painting of the native chief Woureddy'; Duterrau produced a series of four large oil portraits depicting Aboriginal Tasmanian men and women who accompanied Robinson; Tim Bonyhady, 'The First Aboriginal Memorial' in *Heads of the People: A Portrait of Colonial Australia*, ed. by Tim Bonyhady and Andrew Sayers (Canberra: National Portrait Gallery, 2000), pp.13-27

⁴¹ These were attributed to Lempriere by Gaye Sculthorpe, based on Robinson's journal entry of 11 October 1833, where he wrote 'Mr Lempriere promised to take the portraits



Clockwise from top left:

Fig.1.4 Drawing, G.A. Robinson, 1829-1839, graphite on paper, 160 x 90mm, BM, Oc2006,Drg.104.

Fig.1.5 *Tom*, William Buelow Gould, 1833, watercolour on paper, 134 x 100mm, BM, Oc2006,Drg.40

Fig.1.6 *Woureddy* [Wurati], Benjamin Duterrau, 1834, oil on canvas, 940 x 840mm, BM, Oc2006,Ptg.22.

Fig.1.7 Drawing, Thomas Lempriere, 1833, chalk and crayon, 137 x115mm, BM, Oc2006,Drg.45.

All © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Two busts of Trukanini and Wurati produced by the sculptor Benjamin Law in 1835 also entered Robinson's collection (Figs.1.8 and 1.9), demonstrating that three-dimensional representations were also being created and collected.⁴² Sculptures are commonly linked to the memorialisation of individuals, and this is indicated in these examples through the inclusion of adornments, necklaces and skins. In the late-

of the aborigines for my benefit', and were referenced in the 1839 publication by Thomas Lempriere, 'The Penal Settlements of Van Diemen's Land', p.23.

⁴² BM, 2009,2025.1 and 2.

eighteenth and nineteenth centuries sculptures of peoples from around the world were produced to inform ethnographic studies through their record of head shape. These were sometimes included in displays on the history of human variation and circulated and collected so they could be viewed comparatively. Law's busts travelled extensive distances. His wife Hannah wrote that the casts of Trukanini and Wurati were being shipped to India, Sweden, England and Scotland. Philip Palmer sent one to Cambridge, and Governor Arthur ordered a second for officials in London.⁴³ This geographical spread highlights extensive global networks through which visual representations of Aboriginal Tasmanian could move, particularly in exchanges between Australia and Western Europe. This movement was simplified and extended when remediated into more portable two-dimensional images. Pierre-Marie Alexander Dumoutier, the phrenologist on the French expedition led by Jules Dumont d'Urville, which visited Van Diemen's Land in 1840, acquired copies of the busts. These were then photographed in Paris by Louis-Auguste Bisson, and the daguerreotypes lithographed by Leveille. The resultant prints were included in the expedition's anthropological atlas, published in parts in 1845.⁴⁴



Fig.1.8 *Truganini* [Trukanini], BM, 2009,2025.1.
Fig.1.9 *Woureddy* [Wurati], BM, 2009,2025.2.
 Both Benjamin Law, 1835(?), plaster, 750 x 460 x 270mm,
 © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Intending to publish a record of his mission upon his return to Britain, Robinson commissioned a series of images to illustrate the volume. John Glover painted *Natives at a corrobory, under the wild woods of the country* (1835, Fig.1.10) for the book's

⁴³ Bonyhady and Lehman, pp.81-2.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.153.

frontispiece, describing it as presenting how the Aboriginal Tasmanian people entertained themselves 'before being disturbed by the White People'.⁴⁵ The image intended for the back of the book was by Charles Merrett, Glover's only known Australian pupil, which depicted a group of six Aboriginal Tasmanians 'bewailing the loss of their country' (Fig.1.11).



Above: **Fig.1.10** *Natives at a corrobory, under the wild woods of the Country [River Jordan below Brighton, Tasmania]*, John Glover, c.1835, oil on canvas, 770 x 1140mm (frame), ML 154, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales.



Left: **Fig.1.11** *The Natives of Tasmania bewailing the loss of their country*, Charles Merrett, 1837, watercolour on paper, 93 x 112mm, BM, Oc2006, Drg.83 © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Thomas Bock was commissioned by Robinson to produce a series of portraits of Aboriginal men and women who had accompanied Robinson from 1831 to 1835 for the publication. These included fourteen front facing portraits and five in profile, which he sold to Robinson for £3 or £4 each (see Figs.1.12 and 1.13, works listed

⁴⁵ Glover's painting was bought by the Mitchell Library in 1939; Bonyhady and Lehman, p.199; SLNSW, Mitchell MSS A7058, p.398, John Glover letter to George Augustus Robinson; SLNSW, Mitchell MSS A7058, CY 1472, p.329, John Glover to George Augustus Robinson 16 July 1835.

in full in Appendix 2).⁴⁶ Lady Jane Franklin, wife of the lieutenant governor, Sir John Franklin, requested Bock to make copies of these portraits, much to Robinson's displeasure.⁴⁷ Both sets of profiles were produced in 'neutral tint', described in 1882 by the Reverend Henry Dowling as intended 'to show more distinctly, the peculiar conformation of the jaw'.⁴⁸ This note reflected the growing interest in physiognomic details and study of the development of the human species, both in Europe and across the British Empire. Lady Franklin allowed Bock to make further copies for Reverend Dowling who was about to return to Britain, which the artist duly produced for 35 guineas.⁴⁹ She also commissioned a watercolour from Bock in 1842 of the Aboriginal child Mithina (or Mathinna), at that time living in the Franklins' home at government house.⁵⁰



Fig.1.12 *Trugernanner (aka Truggernana or Truganini)* [Trukanini], Thomas Bock, 1833, watercolour on paper, 292 x 222mm, BM, Oc2006,Drg.56
Fig.1.13 *Profile of Trugernanner (aka Truggernana or Truganini)* [Trukanini], Thomas Bock, 1831-1835, watercolour on paper, 288 x 164mm, BM Oc2006,Drg.62
 Both © The Trustees of the British Museum.

⁴⁶ Jane Stewart and Jonathan Watkins (eds.), *Thomas Bock*, exh. cat. (Birmingham: Ikon Gallery, 2017), pp.64-67; BM, PIC DOC 171_OC8, Letter A. Bock to Davis, 14 May 1856.

⁴⁷ Bock copied nine of the watercolour heads, and all five profiles for Lady Franklin; UTAS, RSA B 18, No.13, Letter from H. Dowling to Mr. Barnard, 6 March 1882; UTAS, RSA B 18, No.16, Letter from H. Dowling to Mr. Barnard, 6 April 1882.

⁴⁸ UTAS, RSA B 18, No.13. Letter from H. Dowling to Mr. Barnard, 6 March 1882. Dowling was seeking to sell the images for 50 guineas. He wanted to gift them but could no longer afford to and didn't want them sold out of the colony.

⁴⁹ Ibid; Painted copies made by Dowling's son are now held in the British Museum: BM, Oc2006,Ptg.3-9, 18-19.

⁵⁰ Stewart and Watkins, pp.18, 53; See Penny Russell, 'Girl in a Red Dress: Inventions of Mathinna', *Australian Historical Studies*, 43:3 (2012), pp.341-362.

From the 1830s it was accepted by many commentators in Britain that there had been violence committed against the Aboriginal people of Van Diemen's Land on a tragic scale, indicative of wider atrocities enacted across the Australian colonies. From 1835 to 1837 the condition of the indigenous populations of British colonies was investigated by a select committee of the British Parliament. The subsequent 1837 *Report of the Parliamentary Select Committee on the Aboriginal Tribes (British Settlements)* concluded that while the indigenous peoples were deemed 'savages', they were ultimately the wronged party.⁵¹ Primary sources documented the active killing of most Tasmanian Aboriginal people, followed by a short period of attempted assimilation at Flinders Island and decline at Oyster Cove from 1847. While it is clear reports of violence reached Britain, depictions of violence were rare.⁵² The impact of British invasion was suggested obliquely in images presenting the subjugation of the sitters, represented in European clothing and given European names.

The Wybalenna settlement at Flinders Island was closed in October 1847 by the new governor Sir William Denison, perhaps in an attempt to distance himself from the treatment of Aboriginal people by previous governments.⁵³ The forty-seven Aboriginal men and women that remained were moved to an abandoned penal establishment at Oyster Cove on the mainland, south of Hobart.⁵⁴ Some members of the settler colonial populace expressed 'outrage' at this return, while others were unthreatened.⁵⁵ Institutionalised violence was enacted against those that returned to the mainland by colonisers. The Aboriginal death rate at Oyster Cove was extreme and children were moved to the Orphan Asylum in Hobart from December 1847. Repeated requests from the Aboriginal community to join descendants and relations on the Bass Strait islands were refused. From 1856, the Tasmanian government had little Aboriginal policy at all.⁵⁶ Aboriginal people were brought to Hobart Town as spectacles 'to mark special occasions' in the 1850s and 60s, while the skeletal

⁵¹ *Report of the Parliamentary Select Committee on the Aboriginal Tribes (British Settlements)*. Reprinted with Comments by the Aborigines Protection Society (London: William Ball, 1837); Manne, p.8.

⁵² Three scenes of an *Aboriginal raid on Milton Farm* (two in pencil, one in oil) around 1832 are believed to have been commissioned by John Allen and created in London. These are discussed in greater detail in Bonyhady and Lehman, pp.132-135, 244.

⁵³ Julie Gough, 'Forgotten Lives - the First Photographs of Tasmanian Aboriginal People', in *Calling the Shots: Aboriginal Photographies*, ed. by Jane Lydon (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2014), p.27.

⁵⁴ This high death rate resulted from inadequate food and contaminated water, along with limited medical care and poor housing; *Ibid.*, p.40; Mar and Edmonds, p.349.

⁵⁵ Curthoys and Mitchell, pp.203-4; Bonyhady and Lehman, p.226.

⁵⁶ Curthoys and Mitchell, p.22.

remains of their friends and family were sent overseas by colonial figures in scientific networks.⁵⁷ Some images moved to British institutions along the same routes as human remains, even alongside them. As will be discussed in Chapter Three, they had the potential to be used together for evidentiary purposes in the study of human variety and racial origins. The notorious decimation and dehumanisation of Tasmanian Aboriginal people by colonists affected how the images and those they depicted were described and discussed in contemporary colonial and imperial histories in Europe.

As the number of surviving Aboriginal Tasmanians declined, the narrative of the 'last of their kind' became increasingly prevalent in European and settler-colonial depictions. In 1876 Trukanini, described erroneously as 'the last Tasmanian Aborigine', died in Hobart. British colonial commentators reported the Aboriginal peoples of Tasmania were to be 'extinct'. The existence of the Aboriginal sealing community in Bass Strait was not acknowledged by colonial contemporaries 'thereby implicitly, if not explicitly, den[ying] their [A]boriginality.'⁵⁸ Today's *Palawa* communities, descended from Aborigines living in the Bass Strait and two Aboriginal women living on the main island, expose this false narrative.⁵⁹ Their continued presence reflects their resilience against events now widely recognised as genocidal.⁶⁰

1.3 Context and image production in Victoria

The area now known as Victoria had nearly forty different Aboriginal language groups and clans prior to European colonisation, each with its own systems of belief, governance and culture. The Kulin Nations of south-central Victoria, had the 'closest contact with Europeans in the years between 1835 and 1851'.⁶¹ They are a

⁵⁷ Gough, p.36.

⁵⁸ Bonyhady and Lehman, p.227.

⁵⁹ Aboriginal women lived with sealers on the Furneaux Group of islands; A reserve was created on Cape Barren Island in 1881; See also Lyndall Ryan, *Tasmanian Aborigines: A History Since 1803* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2012); Today the self-name used by Aboriginal Tasmanian people is *palawa* and the reconstructed *palawa kani* language name for Tasmania is *lutriniva*. These terms are used when referencing the contemporary Aboriginal community of Tasmania.

⁶⁰ Henry Reynolds, *An Indelible Stain?: The Question of Genocide in Australia's History* (Ringwood: Viking, 2001); Tom Lawson, *The Last Man: A British Genocide in Tasmania* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2014).

⁶¹ Jane Lydon (ed.), *Calling the Shots: Aboriginal Photographies* (Canberra, ACT: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2014), p.103; Leigh Boucher and Lynette Russell (eds.), *Settler Colonial*

confederation of five related Aboriginal language groups: the Woiwurrung (or Wurundjeri) around what is now central Melbourne, the Boonwurrung around Port Phillip Bay, the Taungurong to the north, the Wathaurung around the region to the southwest (now Geelong), and the Dja Dja Wurrung to the northwest (now Bendigo), and were most likely to be portrayed in early European images of the Port Phillip District.⁶² The land now known as the city of Melbourne was historically a place for the Kulin Nations to gather for ceremonies, celebrations, and trade, particularly on the lands near the Yarra River.

The colonisation of New South Wales at Sydney had reached the Aboriginal people of the Port Phillip District, now Victoria, prior to 1835. Aboriginal networks facilitated the transfer of information about the first British colony, but also transmitted diseases brought by colonists, such as influenza, tuberculosis, and smallpox which in 1788 to 1789 and again in 1829, sharply reduced the Aboriginal population of Victoria, by some estimates from 60,000 to 10-15,000 people by 1835.⁶³ There are no known European depictions of Aboriginal Victorians from the Port Phillip District produced before 1835. This absence of a visual record despite exploration and attempts at settlement in the area reflect the limited interaction of Aboriginal groups with Europeans, and a lack of interest from the British in recording the cultural differences between Aboriginal groups they encountered. This absence of images would be rectified shortly after the British invasion and settlement of the Port Phillip District.

On 29 May 1835 John Batman, a pastoralist, 'pioneer' and member of the Port Phillip Association, entered Port Phillip Bay as one of the 'overstraiters' who came across from Van Diemen's Land.⁶⁴ On 6 June he signed two treaties with members of the Kulin Nations 'purchasing' land around Melbourne and Geelong in exchange for goods, before returning to Launceston to mount an expedition to settle.⁶⁵ On 26 August Batman's treaty was annulled by the New South Wales government, who

Governance in Nineteenth-Century Victoria (Acton: ANU Press and Aboriginal History Inc, 2015), p.8.

⁶² Boucher and Russell, p.1.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp.3, 10; Mar and Edmonds, p.342.

⁶⁴ An organisation of settler-colonists from Van Diemen's Land which sought to establish a new free settlement.

⁶⁵ These were the only treaties made with Aboriginal people during the British invasion of Australia. As land ownership and legal contracts were European concepts, the treaties would not have meant the same to the Kulin representatives as they did to Batman.

deemed that the land already belonged to the British Crown, and in September 1836 Captain William Lonsdale was sent from the foundational colony in Sydney to establish law and order in the expanding settlement.⁶⁶ The first known British portraits of Aboriginal people from this region were made between October 1836 and 1837 in Hobart, Van Diemen's Land by the artist Benjamin Duterrau. The sitters were *Derah Mat* [Derrimut] of *Port Phillip*⁶⁷ and *Bait-Bait Banger*. Derrimut was a leader of the Boonwurrung, who had accompanied Fawkner on a visit to Hobart in 1836, where they met Lieutenant Governor Arthur.⁶⁸

Concern for Aboriginal welfare led to the establishment of the Port Phillip Protectorate in 1839, formed from the recommendations of the 1837 House of Common's *Report*. George Augustus Robinson was appointed Chief Protector of Aborigines at Port Phillip.⁶⁹ Four additional Assistant 'Aboriginal Protectors' were appointed by the Colonial Office in London in 1839 to mediate between the Kulin Nations and the colonial government. The original 'itinerating policy', which allowed Aboriginal groups to move between sites, was changed to fixed stations of abode following conflicts between Aboriginal and European people.⁷⁰ Leaders of the Boonwurrung and Woiwurrung rightly viewed the Protectorate system as a threat to their lives and connections to Country. The Kulin Nations fought to ensure their own survival and the survival of their culture from the earliest years. Billibellary (c.1799-1846), ngurungaeta (Kulin leader) and senior man of the Wirundjeri-wilam clan of the Woiwurrung, helped to choose the site of the Merri Creek Station as a location for an Aboriginal reserve. He worked with William Thomas, the Assistant

⁶⁶ In October a second Van Diemonian, John Pascoe Fawkner, son of an English convict, arrived in Port Phillip; Richard Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians: A History since 1800* (New South Wales: Allen and Unwin, 2005), pp.12-14.

⁶⁷ SLNSW, DG 371, *Chief Derah Mat [Derrimut] of Port Philip*, 1836.

⁶⁸ Duterrau painted him naked except for a possum skin cloak and displaying his scars of initiation, despite Derrimut dressing in European attire when in Hobart; Bonyhady and Lehman, p.84.

⁶⁹ Robinson brought fourteen Aboriginal Tasmanians from Flinders Island to Port Phillip to aid his mission in February 1839. In 1841 two of these men and three women were tried for the murder of two whale-hunters. The two men Tanaminawayt (Tunnerminnerwait, Peevay or Jack) and Malapuwinarana (Maulboyheener or Robert), were convicted of murder and became the first two people hanged in the Port Phillip District. The event was depicted many years later by W.F.E. Liardet, SLV, H28250/14; See Kate Auty and Lynette Russell, *Hunt Them, Hang them: 'The Tasmanians' in Port Phillip 1841-42* (Melbourne: Justice Press, 2016).

⁷⁰ First the Battle of Yering, between people of the Wurundjeri nation and the Border Police on the outskirts of Melbourne on 13 January 1840; Followed by the 'Lettsom incident' of October 1840, two military raids by the British into campsites of Kulin men and women supposedly in response to frontier violence; Broome, p.31.

Protector responsible for the Yarra and Western Port clans who mediated disputes, acted as interpreter, and lobbied the government on behalf of the Kulin people.⁷¹ Thomas protested the continued sale of Aboriginal land to colonists but was largely unsuccessful.⁷² By 1848 George Augustus Robinson had lost the support of the government as colonial settlement spread quickly in Melbourne. The Protectorate was deemed a failure and formally dissolved in 1849.⁷³

As in New South Wales, recent scholarship of Victoria's history has countered the longstanding narrative that Aboriginal men and women were swiftly pushed to the 'fringes of colonial society' in Port Phillip upon European arrival, by demonstrating that Aboriginal presence in Melbourne remained a concern to authorities well into the 1850s, albeit reduced in numbers and more likely to be transitory.⁷⁴ This is supported by evidence from contemporary images. Historians Ann Curthoys and Jessie Mitchell have argued that the legacy of the Protectorate, the presence of an assertive Aboriginal population, and a substantial middle-class white population, allowed the humanitarian influence to hold more sway in Victoria than the other Australian colonies.⁷⁵

A small number of trained artists arrived and worked in the Port Phillip District between 1835 and 1851, some of whose images soon after reached Britain.⁷⁶ Although European depictions of members of the Kulin Nation were limited in the first years of the Port Phillip District, they quickly showed more variation in subject matter than those produced in Van Diemen's Land before 1851. Free Victorian colonists, perhaps, were more concerned to make claims about their prosperity in 'foundational' imagery than those of the penal colony of Van Diemen's Land. Early published exploratory accounts incorporated representations of Aboriginal people. In 1836 the Surveyor-General of New South Wales, Thomas Mitchell, conducted an expedition, later publishing his findings in London. Mitchell included information and numerous images he had made in 'Australia Felix', a term he coined

⁷¹ Giordano Nanni and Andrew James, *Coranderrk: We Will Show the Country* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2013), p.6.

⁷² Laidlaw and Lester, p.27.

⁷³ Boucher and Russell, p.31.

⁷⁴ Edmonds, *Urbanizing Frontiers*, pp.6, 88; Boucher and Russell, p.27.

⁷⁵ Curthoys and Mitchell, p.23.

⁷⁶ Artist George Henry Haydon produced images of early Melbourne and its Aboriginal occupants from 1840 to 1845; K.R. Haydon, 'George Henry Haydon (1822-1891): An Anglo-Australian Life' (unpublished doctoral thesis, King's College London, University of London, 2007), p.314.

to describe the lush lands he encountered in Western Victoria. While traversing a broad geographical area from Sydney south to Melbourne, Mitchell identified depictions of Aboriginal Victorians according to their location, such as ‘Female and child of Australia Felix’.

Robinson may have continued to draw in Victoria. If so, images such as Fig.1.14, signed ‘G.A.R.’ suggest he was producing work of a higher skill than in Tasmania.⁷⁷ Joan Kerr has argued that the initials on this drawing indicated ‘no more than his original ownership’, which seems probable given the evident change of style.⁷⁸ Robinson purchased depictions of Aboriginal people directly from William Strutt, the first highly trained artist to settle in the Port Phillip District.⁷⁹ Strutt arrived from Europe in 1850 having previously studied and worked in Paris and London. He created many artworks in his first year, including numerous depictions of the Native Police Corps.⁸⁰ Strutt encountered difficulty in printing his work due to the limited skill of local practitioners, but in 1851 produced prints of *Moornwillie* (Charles Never, the Police Corps tailor, Fig.1.15), and of two Aboriginal policemen *Cobunguam and Munight* (Fig.1.16). The artist’s detailed images of *Warandrenin* (1852, Fig.1.17), *Morum-morum-been* (1852, Fig.1.18), and *Parn-garn* (1851, Fig.1.19), suggest Strutt’s



Fig.1.14 *Aborigines of Australia Felix*, G.A. Robinson, 1839-1852, ink on paper, 240 x 304mm, Oc2006, Drg.116
© The Trustees of the British Museum.

⁷⁷ If so this would have been due to his having a stable residence in Melbourne with access to artistic materials, in contrast to his small sketches in Van Diemen’s Land.

⁷⁸ Joan Kerr, *The Dictionary of Australian Artists: Painters, Sketchers, Photographers and Engravers to 1870* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp.677-678.

⁷⁹ A note in Robinson’s journal of 19 May 1852 records his purchase of three portraits for ‘£2.2.0’; Ian D. Clark, *The Journals of George Augustus Robinson, Chief Protector, Port Phillip Aboriginal Protectorate*, Volume six (Clarendon: Heritage Matters, 2000), p.40.

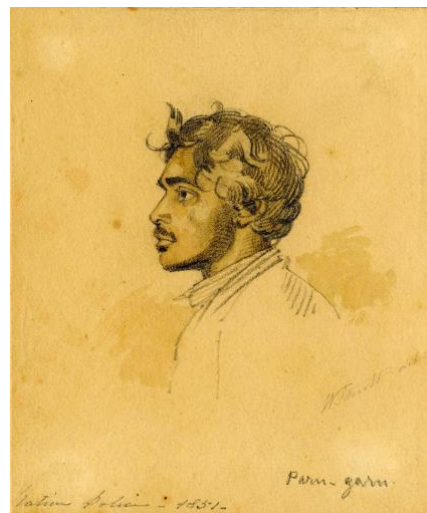
⁸⁰ Heather Curnow, *The Life and Art of William Strutt, 1825-1915* (Waiura, Martinborough: Alister Taylor, 1980), pp.14-16.



Fig.1.15 *Moornwillie*, 239 x 177mm, BM, Oc2006,Prt.237;
Fig.1.16 *Corungiam*[sic] and *Munight*, 204 x 163mm, BM, Oc2006,Prt.236.
 Both William Strutt, c.1851, lithograph © The Trustees of the British Museum.



Clockwise from above:
Fig.1.17 *Waran-drenin*, aka *Mary and wife of Morum-morum-been*, 1852, watercolour on paper, 215 x 146mm, BM, Oc2006,Drg.41.
Fig.1.18 *Morum-morum-been*, 1852, graphite on paper, 201 x 164mm, BM, Oc2006,Drg.720
Fig.1.19 *Parn-garn*, 1851, graphite on paper, 150 x 124 mm, BM, Oc2006,Drg.719.
 All William Strutt © The Trustees of the British Museum.



interest in the careful representation of Aboriginal people he observed.⁸¹ His close observation is evident in the portrait of *Waran-drenin* through the detailed arrangement of the pieces of her possum skin cloak and marks indicating its texture, which sharply contrast with the hair and delicate features of the sitter and her necklace. George Augustus Robinson returned to settle in England with the images he had gathered, where they remained unseen by the public during his lifetime. They entered the British Museum collection in 1883 (see below).

Shortly after the separation of Victoria from New South Wales in 1851, the discovery of gold saw the colonial population swell to almost half a million over ten years.⁸² The range of formats and subject matter in the visual record became more varied and numerous. New arrivals in the colony included visual record makers and audiences for the images they made. The gold rush provided a new source of subject matter for visual records and illustrations. Artist S.T. Gill produced *Sketches of the Victoria Gold Diggings* (1852), which was printed in London in two parts, and *The Diggers and Diggings of Victoria as they are in 1855* printed in Melbourne. Some of his images presented the multicultural mix of miners on the goldfields. Gill's 'License inspected'

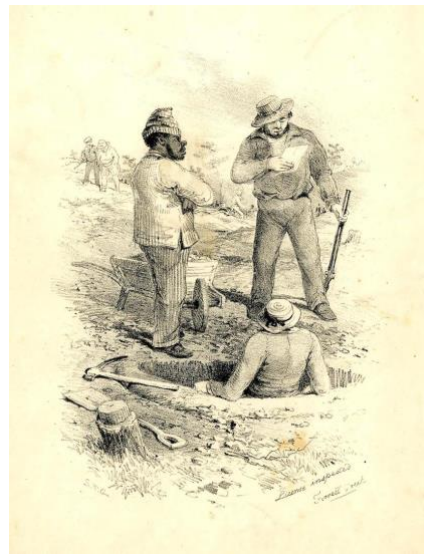


Fig.1.20, 'License inspected' from *Sketches of the Victoria Gold Diggings and Diggers as they are*, S.T. Gill, 1852, lithograph, 220 x 166mm, BM, 1969,0614.32 © The Trustees of the British Museum.

'License inspected' is unusual for featuring an Aboriginal man partaking in the activity rather than watching, which in itself was a rare subject to see in print (Fig.1.20). Scenery or view books were popular from the 1850s, and S.T. Gill published *The Australian Sketchbook* in 1865.⁸³ Both 'License inspected' from *Sketches of the Victoria Gold Diggings* and plates from his later work the *Australian Sketchbook* (1865) are held in the British Museum. While highly trained artists made their way to Victoria to seek their fortune in the 1850s, others left for Britain shortly thereafter, such as Robert

⁸¹ BM, Oc2006,Drg.41, Oc2006,Drg.719 and Oc2006,Drg.720.

⁸² W. Vamplew (ed.), *Australians: Historical Statistics* (Sydney: Fairfax, Syme and Weldon Associates, 1987).

⁸³ BM, 2016,2036.1 to 5.

Hawker Dowling, whose works in the museum collection will be discussed in the following chapter.

The societal upheaval that followed the discovery of gold caused significant disruption in Aboriginal society and resulted in a further process of removal and negation of Aboriginal rights.⁸⁴ By 1853 the Aboriginal population had fallen below 2,000 people.⁸⁵ Despite this, Aboriginal people remained 'highly visible in the landscape', continuing to live in and travel to the town of Melbourne, where they were viewed by settler-colonists as 'an unwelcome and uncontrolled feature of urban street life'.⁸⁶ In 1858 a Select Committee of the Legislative Council on the Aborigines was established in recognition of 'the great and almost unprecedented reduction in the number of the Aborigines ... attributed to the general occupation of the country by the white population'.⁸⁷ The inquiry that followed suggested reserves should be established and given to specific groups in their own territories across the state of Victoria to 'protect' Aboriginal people from corrupt colonial influences and harsh treatment.⁸⁸ The Ebenezer Mission was established on the traditional country of the Wotjobaluk in the northwest in 1859 and the following year the Central Board for the Protection of Aborigines was established.⁸⁹ Colonists continued to encroach on land assigned to Aboriginal people by the government, in some cases physically claimed by European squatters. Billibellary's son Simon Wonga (c.1824-75) petitioned the colonial government to set aside land for his people. By 1863 the Kulin families had set up a camp at the confluence of the Yarra River and Coranderrk Creek. At a public levée hosted by the governor, Sir Henry Barkly, for Queen Victoria's birthday in May 1863, Wonga sent a deputation of Woiwurrung, Taungerong and Boonwurrung people into Melbourne bearing gifts for the Queen, to establish their claim to this land. After presenting their gifts they 'addressed the Governor directly on the matter of obtaining land'. As a result of this gesture, on 30 June 1863 the temporary reservation of 2300 acres establishing the Aboriginal station of Coranderrk was reported in the *Government Gazette* of Victoria, and the Queen sent a promise of protection. Laidlaw and Lester described Kulin families that founded Coranderrk as viewing themselves as 'pioneers of a self-

⁸⁴ Fred Cahir, *Black Gold: Aboriginal People on the Goldfields of Victoria, 1850-1870*, Vol.25 (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 2012).

⁸⁵ Boucher and Russell, p.11.

⁸⁶ Lydon, *Calling the Shots*, p.107; *Ibid.*, p.31.

⁸⁷ Nanni and James, p.11.

⁸⁸ Bunjilaka display, Melbourne Museum [Visited November 2018].

⁸⁹ Lydon, *Calling the Shots*, p.113.

governing community, and as free men and women.⁹⁰ This was later well depicted by visiting photographers.

* * *

New South Wales and Tasmania developed over time from penal stations to settler colonies, while from the outset the intent in Victoria was to create a convict-free space and profit from the extensive land available for pastoralism. By the 1830s the lucrative economic opportunities of the Australian colonies were clear, and ex-convicts and free men and women moved at speed to obtain land. This swift land grab was accompanied by frontier violence such as the Eumarella wars fought by the Gunditjmara people in Western Victoria, and the removal, erasure and regulation of Aboriginal nations, often confined to Aboriginal settlements. The differing circumstances for the foundation of the settlements of New South Wales in 1788, Van Diemen's Land in 1803 and the Port Phillip District in 1835, influenced events that subsequently took place there and the images produced in response in the period to 1860. The self-conscious construction of narratives of 'prosperity' and 'civilisation' are evident from the 1820s in New South Wales and Tasmania, and in Victoria from the 1840s, but to a much greater extent in the 1850s and 1860s. Patterns in representations indicate there was an agreed idea of what a colonial city should look like at this time: the necessary buildings; arrangement of streets; and how Aboriginal Australians should be incorporated in the vision, or erased from it.

Colonial depictions of Aboriginal people in New South Wales and Victoria showed more similarity in subject matter and format than in Tasmania. Landscapes were a common subject for colonial images produced in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, playing a role in claiming and controlling the land. Narratives of European control over nature, the success and sustainability of new colonies, and ownership were asserted through images depicting the land as settler occupied and ordered. It was rarely observed or acknowledged that Aboriginal people had changed the shape of the landscape over centuries using controlled fire.⁹¹ Aboriginal

⁹⁰ Established for the surviving members of the Wurundjeri and other Woiwurrung speakers, Coranderrk would eventually extend to 4850 acres near Melbourne; Laidlaw and Lester, p.27.

⁹¹ Howard Morphy and John Carty, 'Understanding Country', in *Indigenous Australia*, by Sculthorpe *et al*, p.21; Bruce Pascoe, *Dark Emu: Aboriginal Australia and the birth of agriculture* (Broome: Magabala Books Aboriginal Corporation, 2018).

men and women were regularly incorporated in such landscape scenes, often in the foreground of the compositions, their presence serving as an acknowledgement of the 'former' occupation of the land, and its present usage. These representations offered an implicit commentary upon different kinds of living, indicating how the land had transformed from one inhabited by 'savages' to one tamed by and suitable for European living. More images were produced in Victoria than in Tasmania in the period 1835 to 1865, in part due to the displacement and decline of the Aboriginal population, and the growing colonial population of Victoria, especially following the goldrush. The development of a 'European' foundation story and colonial narrative were evident in illustrated publications and other artworks. The overwhelming vision, particularly in New South Wales and Victoria, became one of colonies defined by wealth and opportunity. Increasingly this overshadowed the depiction of Aboriginal people within the cityscape, who were mostly rendered invisible.

In each colony the visual record made of Aboriginal people was influenced by three key factors: the availability of sitters, artists, and materials. While customary practices between different Aboriginal groups varied widely, this diversity was rarely evidenced or acknowledged in images seen by a wider British public. The importance of the availability or willingness of Aboriginal people to sit for images is evidenced in the Tasmanian context where the removal and decline of Aboriginal Tasmanians from the spaces of colonial artmakers, largely in Hobart and Launceston, limited the possibility for observational recording after 1835, such as the rare occurrence of Prout's visit to Flinders Island in 1845. Representative images were still created despite this absence, indicating that demand remained, even when constructed visions unrelated to contemporary reality. Photography slowly emerged from the 1840s onwards as a new medium for recording Aboriginal people, offering, it was thought, more 'authentic' or accurate results.⁹²

The impact of British colonisation was evident in depictions of Aboriginal men and women adopting aspects of European dress, the annually gifted government issue blankets, or the colonial act of giving Aboriginal people 'names of settler

⁹² For most of its early years the technique of photography was 'another slow and expensive way of making an image', so not threatening to the printing industry. The first genuinely portable camera became available in the 1880s; Antony Griffiths, *The Print before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking 1550-1820* (London: The British Museum Press, 2016).

attribution'.⁹³ Homi Bhabha has described this 'mimicry' as 'one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge'.⁹⁴ On one level the adoption of European items has been interpreted as an attempt to gain access to power by copying people in power. Bhabha argued that it could also be read as subversive, disrupting the authority of this power by exposing its artificial nature, constructed as it was through symbolic expression. With European associations of clothing with 'civility' and a lack of clothing with 'savagery,' analyses have tended to equate the depiction of Aboriginal men wearing jackets without trousers as a sign of low station. Historian Grace Karskens has challenged these interpretations of Aboriginal people depicted in dishevelled Western clothing. She pushed back against the action of wearing European clothing as 'empty mimesis', instead arguing that it confirmed an exchange of goods, potentially a strategic gift to forge alliances, or the continuation of a tradition.⁹⁵ In considering how clothes were worn she argues that the realities of the adoption of this clothing - how loose-fitting clothes would be more comfortable to people who previously went unclothed - may explain how the garments were worn by Aboriginal people and therefore depicted by colonial artists. Looking at the development of images from early encounter to the 1830s she charted an increasingly grotesque caricaturing of Aboriginal people, with dishevelled clothing being equated with poor morals.⁹⁶

Historian Angela Woollacott has established how for the most part Aboriginal people and British colonists lived and worked around and with one another, describing it as a difficult relationship of simultaneous cooperation and violence.⁹⁷ Many colonists knew Aboriginal people personally, relied on their labour, yet at the same time, could accept violence towards them as supposedly necessary.⁹⁸ Zoë Laidlaw and Alan Lester asserted that although the historiography suggests Aboriginal Australians were as a whole mired in the chaos of colonization, there is evidence that on an individual level some adapted to their new situation to find a way of fulfilling colonist expectations while maintaining their own culture and

⁹³ For example, SLNSW, ML 1253, *A group of Australian Aborigines, possibly in Sydney*, c.1849, one woman wears a blanket with initials 'BO', for British Ordinance; Settler-colonial given names were often 'derogatory'; Woollacott, p.9.

⁹⁴ Homi Bhabha, 'Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse', in *October*, Vol.28, Discipleship: A Special Issue on Psychoanalysis (Spring, 1984), p.126.

⁹⁵ Grace Karskens, 'Red coat, blue jacket, black skin: Aboriginal men and clothing in early New South Wales', *Aboriginal History*, Vol. 35 (2011), pp.1-36.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ Woollacott, p.9.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.208.

story.⁹⁹ Aboriginal people showed resilience in the face of overwhelming odds, suggesting that neither their population nor their culture simply ‘declined’; rather they experienced a longer process of depopulation and adaptation. This was evident in the visual record, in the continued depiction of Aboriginal people throughout the period. However, images of Aboriginal people decreased in number in the 1850s and 1860s and represented a small proportion when considered in relation to images with Australian subject matter that did not include Aboriginal sitters. Visualisations of Australia would become increasingly focused on the settler-colonial experience, particularly following the discovery of gold.

The perception and knowledge of the Australian colonies in Britain transformed over time, and not in a straightforward manner, from distant locations of punishment in the early-nineteenth century to successful colonies. The same institutions modelled on British counterparts were created in different colonies: royal or learned societies, museums, libraries, universities, and botanical gardens. Such societies and institutions resulted from, and fed into, scientific and artistic networks between the Australian colonies, Britain, and the wider British Empire. The colonies were locations where ‘discoveries’ could be made in fields such as botany, zoology and geology, and they acted as hubs within networks of knowledge and trade that facilitated the movement of images, objects, specimens and information. While the Australian colonies aspired to develop their own unique identity, their concurrent anxieties about maintaining links to Britain likely arose from their shared cultural background, and Britain’s role as a global power at the centre of a complex and dynamic empire. Demonstrating each colony’s prosperity through the circulation of visual records of development and ‘civilization’ and export of goods to Britain, suggests a continued desire to seek approval or establish their place in the wider circulation of goods within the empire. Britain was seen as the ‘mother country’ well into the twentieth century. Images increasingly side-lined the original owners of these lands and used them as a visual reference to mark a division between the use of the land before and after British invasion. Works by colonial artists commonly projected a narrative of the superiority of European colonists over the original inhabitants of Australia. This resulted from and fed into increasingly racialised hierarchies about indigenous peoples that were fermenting in Britain, overshadowing those calling for more humanitarian endeavours.

⁹⁹ Laidlaw and Lester, pp.6-23.

1.4 Collection and circulation of images

Images were part of a long-distance network of information, ideas and goods which existed from the foundation of the colony of New South Wales.¹⁰⁰ From 1788 to 1860, shipping was the only means of transport to and from Australia.¹⁰¹ Historian Angela Woollacott described ships as the colonists' 'lifeline to relatives and friends', noting the 'imperial network had links in many directions' as opposed to simple flows between imperial centre and periphery.¹⁰² Technological developments saw the length of these voyages shortened over time, as sailing ships were replaced by steam ships from the 1850s.¹⁰³ So, while the First Fleet took eight months to make the journey to Port Jackson, an early steamship of 1852 could make the same voyage in 80 days. Within the British Empire, Australia became an increasingly significant commercial site for the exchange of commodities, and a key staging point for access to New Zealand and the Pacific. Images moved alongside other goods and specimens; accompanied by individuals. Many goods that travelled to and from Van Diemen's Land and the Port Phillip District did so as an additional leg of the journey established between Britain and New South Wales. Contacts between Britain and the colonies increased and diversified as individual and institutional connections grew and the population of Australia increased.

For most in Britain in the late-eighteenth century, depictions of Aboriginal people in publications that followed the voyages of James Cook and other European explorers were their only visual reference point for Aboriginal Australians. For almost eighteen years the images and drawings from these expeditions constituted British depictions of Australia. Those early representations were made after fleeting encounters with Indigenous Australians, and commonly focused on animals, plants and scenery. After 1788, colonial depictions could result from longer-term interactions or observations, and while still reflecting a limited understanding of Aboriginal practices, were more likely to have arisen from repeat observation and engagement with Aboriginal people. From the beginning of British settlement,

¹⁰⁰ Lisa Ford, *Settler Sovereignty: Jurisdiction and Indigenous People in America and Australia 1788-1836* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: Harvard University Press, 2010), p.8.

¹⁰¹ Official records of ships arriving in Sydney Harbour began in 1799; Karskens, *The Colony*, p.64.

¹⁰² Woollacott, pp.12-13.

¹⁰³ Matthew C. Potter, *British Art for Australia, 1860-1953: The Acquisition of Artworks from the United Kingdom by Australian National Galleries* (Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2019).

people returned to Britain with images from the colonies, to be consumed by relatives, sold to interested audiences, or worked up for exhibition or publication (as will be discussed in Chapter Four). Authors of First Fleet publications, such as Governor Arthur Phillip and John White, travelled home with images intended to illustrate their accounts of New South Wales.

Copying took place in London and in the Australian colonies to further circulate images. Drawings were ‘passed around in [British] scientific circles’, copied, and ‘dispersed into public and private collections’ in Britain, thereby moving far beyond their initial sphere of production.¹⁰⁴ This should not be overstated however, as images tended to remain within groups connected to learned societies, such as the Royal Society and the Linnean Society, who received images through the well-connected Joseph Banks, President of the Royal Society and advocate for the penal settlement in New South Wales.¹⁰⁵ Until his death in 1820 Banks remained an important contact and recipient of objects from Australia, demonstrating the central role patronage could play in the movement of images. Early governors were keen to satisfy his interests, and Governor Phillip sent drawings directly to him.¹⁰⁶ Works representing Aboriginal Australians from Banks’s collection would be the first to enter the British Museum. Representations of the first Australian colony were also produced in Britain by artists who had never visited Australia, often drawing on works by those who had.¹⁰⁷

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, visual records representing Indigenous Australians circulating to Britain were commonly connected to expedition accounts. Artists, often formally trained, were members of the scientific team that accompanied these expeditionary or naval survey voyages, charged with recording faithfully what they encountered. Depicting samples or specimens ‘too heavy or fragile to survive the return trip’, these images were in Europe considered a legible

¹⁰⁴ The extent of copying is discussed in Louise Anemaat, *Natural Curiosity: Unseen art of the First Fleet* (New South Wales: New South Publishing, 2014).

¹⁰⁵ Bernard Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988); pp.163-164, 166.

¹⁰⁶ Anemaat, p.159.

¹⁰⁷ For example, *Sydney Cove 1794*, Edward Dayes (?) after Thomas Watling; Ian Mclean, ‘The expanded field of the picturesque: contested identities and empire in *Sydney Cove 1794*’, in *Art and the British Empire*, ed. by Tim Barringer, Geoff Quilley & Douglas Fordham (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2007), pp.23-36.

and collectable form of scientific record.¹⁰⁸ A combination of factors influenced the use of visual representation to record or ‘collect’ information about newly-encountered peoples: the unwillingness for indigenous people to travel to an unknown location (though there are rare examples of individuals travelling to Britain, such as Woollarawarre Bennelong),¹⁰⁹ the practicalities of sustenance and maintaining the health of an individual on a voyage, and the moral or ethical concerns of removing people from their lands. Portraits of people were read alongside pictures of ‘new’ plants and animals, and portable specimens in Britain. Roxann Wheeler has described the taxonomies of plants and animals created from these objects as seemingly more ‘compelling’ to contemporary audiences than those of humans.¹¹⁰

Bruno Latour described the process of gathering images and objects during fleeting interactions on expeditions as part of a ‘cycle of accumulation’. Those items were collated into precise information in Europe that would simplify subsequent voyages, and when carried on return trips could be further compared, updated and amended.¹¹¹ It was through this cycle and the networks which facilitated it that Europeans became familiar with distant people and places in the Pacific. Latour identified three necessary features for these records or ‘specimens’. They must be: rendered mobile so they can be brought back; kept stable so they would not be distorted, corrupted or decayed in transit; in a form that is combinable, allowing them to be collected or reorganised.¹¹² It is through the change of form into a two-dimensional visual record that people could be mobilised and their image kept ‘stable’. Once produced on a manageable scale on paper, canvas or other support they were easily moved and combined with other kinds of collections. Images were made more mobile and consistent (in their reproduction) through technological developments such as the printing press. This accumulation of information, when

¹⁰⁸ Bruno Latour, *Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers through Society* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), p.215.

¹⁰⁹ As discussed in Sadiah Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade: Exhibitions, Empire, and Anthropology in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011); Coll Thrush, *Indigenous London: Native Travelers at the Heart of Empire* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2016).

¹¹⁰ Roxann Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), p.29.

¹¹¹ Latour, *Science in Action*, pp.215-220.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p.223.

organised and combined created structures or taxonomies of ‘knowledge’ that made it possible to engender action from Britain across a distant empire.¹¹³

Works produced as part of scientific explorations, such as Charles-Alexandre Lesueur’s scenes (Fig.1.3), were viewed as distinct from other artistic work through the adoption of a detached scientific interest when depicting subjects ‘from the life’. The supposed neutrality this afforded was presumed to give the record reliability, as the creator would have no motive to exaggerate or invent but rather would strive for precision as a tool of science. Despite this assertion, scientific interest or ‘curiosity’ was directly linked to imperial ideology and Enlightenment ideals. The gathering of specimens and their taxonomic organisation developed from cabinets of curiosity, which also acted as a forerunner for museum collections founded in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The term ‘curiosity’ has held different values through time. Its nineteenth-century usage has been critiqued for its association with a superficial search for novelty, to find and record things deemed new or unfamiliar. Of most relevance to this thesis are the legacies of ‘cross-cultural curiosity’ that have been more recently critiqued, in what Nicholas Thomas has described as ‘accounts of non-European cultures... directly or indirectly intended to affirm the dynamic and progressive qualities of the West’.¹¹⁴

Pictorial works produced in the three colonies I have discussed were mostly two-dimensional and more portable than other forms of decorative arts, such as Benjamin Law’s sculptures, or art and artefacts made by Aboriginal people. Prior to 1801, when the first free professional artist in Australia, John William Lewin, produced the first artistic print there, all printed representations of Australian subject matter had been made in Europe, and overwhelmingly in Britain, reflecting a process of transmission from the location of the original drawing, to the location of printing.¹¹⁵ Thereafter, printed works made in Australia had the potential to be sold in Britain, though prints continued to be made in Britain after this point, as artists remained concerned about the skill of printmakers and availability of materials in the Australian colonies. In 1850 Conrad Martens discussed clumsy work

¹¹³ Ibid., pp.228, 232, 254.

¹¹⁴ Nicholas Thomas, *The Return of Curiosity: what museums are good for in the 21st Century* (London: Reaktion books, 2016), pp.11-13.

¹¹⁵ Lewin printed the first illustrated book in Australia, *Birds of New South Wales and their Natural History* (Sydney: George Howe, 1813). This had been previously published in London in 1808.

produced by the Sydney printer John Allan, stating he felt there was then ‘no good printer’ in the colony of New South Wales.¹¹⁶ Drawings and paintings could be categorised as singular examples, although in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries copying of drawings was standard practice.

From the 1850s, the rush for gold meant more people moved between the Australian colonies and Britain than ever before. This increase of emigrants with relatives or networks back home expanded the audience in Britain interested in the experience of living in Australia, both as acquaintances of those who had left and as prospective travellers. It also increased the numbers of people returning to Britain, potentially with travel souvenirs such as images.¹¹⁷ As pictures commonly remained with individuals who had made, gathered or commissioned works to return to Britain with, their owners influenced the future trajectory of these images, and how they were contextualised and understood in narratives about the colonies and studies of human diversity.

Colonial artists influenced what happened to their depictions after they were made. Many returned to Britain with their works and used them as the basis for generating further sales, such as Joseph Lycett’s *Views of Australia; or New South Wales & Van Diemen’s Land delineated*, published in parts in Britain between 1824 and 1825. Artists also sent works for replication in Britain, such as the 1827 panorama of Sydney and the 1831 panorama of Hobart displayed in London, both produced from drawings by Augustus Earle. Not all artists made further use of their works on their return. Simpkinson de Wesselow returned to England with images he made in Hobart, and in 1900 he donated two large volumes of them to the Royal Society of Tasmania after efforts by Bishop H. H. Montgomery ‘to secure treasures of art for the use of future generations’.¹¹⁸ De Wesselow noted that these works had been ‘packed away

¹¹⁶ Michael Organ, *Conrad Martens’ Prints: Lithographs, Engravings & Etchings 1830 – 1878* (unpublished, University of Wollongong, 1992).

¹¹⁷ With increased movement works could travel to Britain without the artist’s knowledge. For example, the artist Eugene Von Guérard was unhappy to hear that William Strutt had seen a copy of Von Guérard’s *Australian landscapes* in Britain in 1872, as he was displeased with the quality of the finished prints (and their meagre sales); SLNSW, Mitchell Library, Strutt Papers, a letter from Eugene von Guerard to William Strutt, 13 August 1872; Butler, p.177.

¹¹⁸ UTAS, RSA B 18. Letter from H.H. Montgomery to ‘Beattie’, 20 April 1912. Montgomery described collection items as being ‘swept away to Sydney owing to the greater wealth’.

almost ever since [his] return', indicating a lack of interest in the subject matter, or awareness of his images, in Britain.¹¹⁹

Other forms of visual record could make their way to Britain in a more methodical fashion. Newspapers from the Australian colonies circulated to Britain, albeit in smaller numbers than those travelling in the other direction and with a limited number of illustrations. Around the middle of the century the Australian press boomed, particularly in Melbourne and Sydney, although Australian illustrated newspapers were often short-lived due to financial failures, labour shortages, interruptions to the supply of materials, unsuitable machinery, and 'consumer dynamics'.¹²⁰ References in British papers announced the arrival of Australian publications. The *Leeds Intelligencer* in January 1854 stated '[w]e are also to have an *Illustrated Sydney News*, and a friend of mine has been conspiring with me with the view of starting an Antipodean edition of *Punch* at the beginning of the year.'¹²¹ Newspapers and magazines produced in the colony of Van Diemen's Land rarely included depictions of Aboriginal people and largely republished content from the Sydney and Melbourne press.¹²² Tasmanian content could be drawn upon, as in the example from the 1860s of the image of William Lanne, "King Billy", reputed to be the 'last' Aboriginal Tasmanian man, in the *Illustrated Australian News* and a print after a photograph of the 'Last Aboriginal Tasmanians' which was reproduced in the *Illustrated London News*.¹²³ The *Illustrated Melbourne Post* was sold in Britain and, while the newspaper did not list where it was sold, copies did record the ship which took them from colony to metropole.¹²⁴ Images in the *Illustrated Melbourne News* gained a reputation for quality and a high level of production, similar to the *Illustrated London News*. One reviewer described the illustrations as 'excellent specimens of the

¹¹⁹ UTAS, RSA B 18. Letter from F.G.S. De Wesselow to H.H. Montgomery, 10 July 1900.

¹²⁰ The first regularly illustrated example in New South Wales, the *Illustrated Sydney News*, began in 1853; Peter Dowling, 'Destined not to survive: The illustrated newspapers of colonial Australia', *Media History*, Volume 3, Number 1-2 (1995), pp.85-98; Thomas Smits, 'Looking for the Illustrated London News in Australian Digital Newspapers: Colonial readership and the formation of imagined communities, 1842-1872', *Media History*, Vol. 23, No.1 (2017), pp.80, 92-3; Lurline Stuart, *Nineteenth Century Australian Periodicals: An Annotated Bibliography* (Sydney: Hale and Iremonger, 1979).

¹²¹ *Leeds Intelligencer*, 7 January 1854.

¹²² In 1834, in the engraved frontispiece to the *Van Diemen's Land Annual*, Thomas Bock depicted two Aboriginal Tasmanians, one standing man and one seated woman. Bock also produced illustrations for James Ross's *Hobart Town Almanack* (1829-); Smits.

¹²³ ILN, 7 January 1865, p.13; BM, ETH DOC 915.

¹²⁴ For example, in 1869 *The Illustrated Australian News for Home Readers* was carried each month by either the RMS Malta, Avoca, Bombay, and Geelong.

pictorial art'.¹²⁵ According to an article first published in *The Age*, the number of colonial publications dispatched from Australia to Britain climbed from 41,537 in 1851 to 650,000 in 1862, reflecting the increased traffic of goods between these two countries.¹²⁶

1.5 Conclusion

While the purported original intent for the colonisation of Australia was to create a penal settlement, it was also intended to give Britain a foothold in the Pacific for further exploration and trade. The expansion of the subsequent European population and need for greater areas of land saw the emergence of new colonies, each seeking to create a distinctive identity from their neighbouring locations. New South Wales and Tasmania both made efforts to amend their association with penal punishment, and Victoria sought to avoid the movement of convicts to it, though this ultimately failed. Over time the relationship between the Australian colonies and Britain developed from an imperial centre with penal outposts, to colonial cities of progress and opportunity. Images created in Australia in the period 1788 to 1860 were initially transmitted through personal, albeit sometimes official, relationships, intended to highlight the 'newness' and 'unusual' aspects of this land to a European eye. The visual record later became part of an organised imperial trade in information and goods.

Latour has described information collected scientifically on exploratory voyages as a 'compromise between presence and absence', which allowed for things to be 'brought in [to the centre] without physically being brought in'.¹²⁷ This can be directly linked to the images in this thesis, which captured details of people, the land or events but failed to represent the complexities of the Aboriginal peoples or customs they depicted, or the specific locations of production. Colonial images played an important role in networks of knowledge that existed between outposts of the British Empire and its centre in London. Initially images were intended to document new lands, plants, animals and people and transfer that information back to the 'centre' of empire, in tandem with physical specimens. In Britain they were copied and further circulated, read, arranged and organised in taxonomies of knowledge. As the information they contained became 'known', images were

¹²⁵ *The Scotsman*, Wednesday 17 March 1858; Smits.

¹²⁶ 'English Periodicals and Newspapers', *The Age*, 26 May 1863, cited in Smits, pp.88-9.

¹²⁷ Latour, *Science in Action*, p.243.

organised and used to build or illustrate theories of human variation as these evolved in the nineteenth century. When theories of human difference and relationships of power and ability became tied to the project of imperialism, images were central to the circulation and spread of these views.

The example of George Augustus Robinson demonstrates how an individual could influence the production, transmission and reading of colonial images in Britain.¹²⁸ Beyond his own sketches and drawings, he sought out the artists Strutt, Bock, Duterrau and others for his own ends. His interests and experiences in Australia influenced the development of and aspirations he had for his pictorial collection and the representation of particular Aboriginal sitters. Such personal interests and experiences could lead to the imbalanced weighting of subject matter held in an institution at a later stage in the lifecycle of these objects. For example, in the British Museum collection, Trukanini is represented seven times: in a graphite and watercolour drawing by Thomas Bock in 1831; an 1831 watercolour profile drawing by Bock; a plaster bust by Benjamin Law of 1835; an 1835 print by Benjamin Duterrau; a watercolour drawing by G. Gray after Bock c.1837-1847; an 1845 graphite and watercolour drawing by John Skinner Prout; and a small painting by Robert Hawker Dowling, after Bock, produced at some point between 1853 and 1856.¹²⁹ The first three of these works were at one point in the collection of George Augustus Robinson. The Gray and Dowling copies were made after works he commissioned. The Duterrau print was from a series that represented key Aboriginal figures in the ‘conciliation’ process and Robinson himself. Only the Prout drawing produced at Wybalenna was not directly linked to Robinson, though he had of course been commandant of that establishment only a few years prior.

Wurati and Trukanini were the first Aboriginal people who joined Robinson’s ‘mission’ and were perhaps seen as his most famous followers. For a time, they were also husband and wife. They spent time living with Robinson in Hobart and their

¹²⁸ This will be explored further in Chapters Two and Three

¹²⁹ BM: Bock drawing, Oc2006,Drg.58; Bock profile, Oc2006,Drg.62; Duterrau print, Oc2006,Drg.126; Law bust, 2009,2025.1; Gray copy, Oc.2006,Drg.78; Prout drawing, Oc2006,Drg.10; Dowling copy, Oc2006,Ptg.6; Similarly, Wurati, an Aboriginal Tasmanian man, was represented six times in the collection, often in the same ‘sets’ of images as Trukanini, BM: Bock drawing, Oc2006,Drg.55; Duterrau painting, Oc2006,Ptg.22; Duterrau print, Oc2006,Drg.125; Law bust, 2009,2025.2; Gray copy, Oc.2006,Drg.75; Dowling painting, Oc2006,Ptg.8; Another anonymous image in the BM collection may depict Wurati, Oc2006,Drg.47.

lives were consequently followed with greater interest by a colonial and imperial audience. Their regular representation in portraits may have been due to their presence in the British settlements and they may have been more willing to be represented, though this cannot be assumed. It is also possible that colonists and patrons valued their assistance on the mission or viewed Aboriginal men and women as objects of 'curiosity' and their visual representation as sources for further study. Images continued to be made late into their lives. Trukanini was photographed by Charles Woolley in 1866, thirty-five years after Bock's drawings. She was known for wearing shell necklaces, and these distinctive objects acted as identifiers, despite the range of dates and quality of execution in portraits of her.¹³⁰ Trukanini later became a symbol of the decimation of Tasmanian Aboriginal people, and it was following her death that Aboriginal people in Tasmania were erroneously described by colonial commentators as 'extinct'.¹³¹

Robinson took his large assemblage to England in 1852. His pictorial collection is particularly significant as it represents the largest initial source of images in the British Museum collection (see Chapter Two). It reflected his time spent with Aboriginal people in Tasmania and Victoria (a period of almost thirty years) afforded by his positions as 'negotiator' of Aboriginal removal from the main island of Tasmania ('Protector' or 'Conciliator' in contemporary colonial descriptions), commandant of the Aboriginal establishment at Wybalenna, and then Chief Protector of Aborigines at Port Phillip. This collection evidences his interactions with artists in both Australian colonies, and his concerns regarding his representation in narratives of Aboriginal 'conciliation' and 'protection'. Many of the images Robinson collected or commissioned were intended to illustrate a book he planned to write on events in Van Diemen's Land. Though never completed, it does indicate that Robinson believed a publication would ensure a legacy for his work and allow him to establish a reputation 'at home' as a colonial agent of significance.

¹³⁰ Until recently the Bock portrait of Trukanini at the British Museum had been confused with his image of Wortabowigee. The necklace played a role in the re-identification; Gaye Sculthorpe, 'Thomas Bock and the mystery of Trukanini's shell necklace', *Thomas Bock*, ed. by Jane Stewart and Jonathan Watkins (Birmingham: Ikon Gallery and Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, 2017), pp.49-63.

¹³¹ Lyndall Ryan, 'The Struggle for Trukanini 1830-1997', *Tasmanian Historical Research Association Papers and Proceedings*, vol. 44, no.3 (1997), p.153.

Beyond the network of people who brought visual images representing Indigenous Australians to Britain, works could be collected and circulated by a further network of individuals in Britain with interests and collections that gave the works additional and sometimes divergent meanings (discussed in Chapter Three). Some of these would later enter institutions in Britain, such as the British Museum, where they became part of larger institutional narratives. It is suggestive of how despite attempts to strive for cohesive thoroughness, institutional collections were highly influenced by the concerns of the collectors from whom they purchased works or the astuteness of the curators who sought out purchases or donations, a matter that will be explored in the following chapter.

Chapter Two

Developing a national collection

In the stores at the Bloomsbury site of the British Museum sits a collection of visual records depicting people from locations across the globe. In cases, frames and acid-free paper, these paintings, drawings, and prints represent a network of artists and collectors that facilitated the movement of colonial images to Britain in the nineteenth century.¹ Within the museum their location has been organised and categorised by size, content, source, and in rare examples convenient storage. Their placement has changed over time, reflecting institutional concerns about their arrangement. Works range from detailed evocative drawings by internationally trained artists such as William Strutt, to less skilled observational sketches by the untrained, but close observer, George Augustus Robinson.

This chapter explores the significant pictorial collection of colonial images depicting Indigenous Australians in the British Museum, the major source of nineteenth-century images of Australian Aboriginal peoples within Britain. I consider how these works entered the museum, through acquisition, gift or bequest, and their subsequent organisation and categorisation into the twentieth century. A cursory view of the British Museum's collection today suggests a division between images treated as 'art', which now sit in the Prints and Drawings department, and those treated as ethnographic source or supplementary material, today held by the Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas. But this simple division does not reflect the historical institutional processes and broader developments which influenced the current arrangement of these works. Large portions of the British Museum's collections, including images and ancestral remains from Australia, were transferred to the newly built Natural History Museum in 1881 and various forms of printed material were physically relocated to the British Library when it moved to St Pancras in 1997, dispersing the works relevant to this project.² As this chapter reveals, choices made at these times of transition give a glimpse of how eighteenth

¹ The registration of images and improvements in their storage have been completed as part of this PhD.

² Legal separation of the Natural History Museum came in 1963, and the name changed from the British Museum (Natural History) to the current title in 1992. The British Library separated from the Museum in 1973 after The British Library Act of 1972, although it physically remained in the building at Bloomsbury until 1997.

and nineteenth-century colonial images, and the people they depicted, have been viewed by museum curators and other staff at particular points in their histories.

In the introduction to their 2021 edited volume *Mobile Museums*, Felix Driver, Mark Nesbitt and Caroline Cornish assert that museums should not be approached as static entities. Rather, the movement of ‘ideas and practices’ along with the movement of ‘people and things’ should be considered central to the formation of museum collections, within wider imperial networks and infrastructures that enabled this mobility.³ Accordingly, the British Museum in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was not a ‘physical structure with a stable collection’ and should be approached as ‘a vast array of hitherto mobile objects and assemblages’.⁴ The circulation and exchange of goods have given colonial images multiple identities they retain within the museum space. In this chapter, the processes of collection linked to these works are contextualised within the broader history of the Indigenous Australian collections in the British Museum.

2.1 Indigenous Australian collections in the British Museum

The study, collection and display of ethnography in the British Museum reveal intellectual and institutional contexts that influenced the reading of images explored in this thesis. Introducing the development of Australian ethnographic collections in the museum from the early nineteenth century to the turn of the twentieth, allows us to consider the role visual images played in the broader aims and ambitions of this institution in the first half of the nineteenth century.

From its foundation in 1753 the British Museum acquired examples of ethnographic material, initially from the Americas, Africa and Asia.⁵ Most of these were from the bequest of Sir Hans Sloane, the primary founder of the museum’s collection. The original repository, Montagu House in Great Russell Street, opened to the public in 1759, and displayed ethnographic items alongside a range of other material that

³ Drawn from the ‘Mobile Museums’ project, which researched the Kew Gardens Economic Botany collection; ‘Introduction’, in *Mobile Museums: Collections in Circulation*, ed. by F. Driver, M. Nesbitt & C. Cornish (London: UCL Press, 2021).

⁴ Daniel Simpson, *The Royal Navy in Indigenous Australia, 1795-1855: Maritime Encounters and British Museum Collections* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021), p.258.

⁵ Ben Burt, *The Museum of Mankind: Man and Boy in the British Museum Ethnography Department* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2019), p.6.

sought to codify and categorise the world, in the style of a cabinet of curiosities.⁶ The earliest items from the Pacific to enter the Museum were from the first voyage led by James Cook, which returned to Britain in 1771.⁷ After Cook's death in Hawai'i in 1779, and the completion of the third voyage to the Pacific in 1780, an independent 'South Sea Room' opened in 1781 displaying ethnographic material from this area of the world.⁸

The museum continued to implicitly celebrate official exploratory expeditions into the nineteenth century through ethnographic objects. The display of what were often initially termed 'artificial curiosities' when collected was organised by geographical location from at least 1808, and from the 1860s reflected contemporary ideas concerning social evolution.⁹ In an 1814 synopsis and guide to the British Museum, objects collected from around the world were described as 'modern works of art'.¹⁰ While the term 'art' held different connotations at this time, its usage suggested that in the early-nineteenth century objects from around the world were not separated into ethnographic objects and artefacts. Rather they were grouped together as artistic, creative or cultural outputs. However, displays and storage did reflect perceived hierarchies of value. For example, in 1815, one museum official referred to ethnographic objects as 'the vilest trash' of artificial curiosities relegated to the basement.¹¹ The first 'Ethnological Gallery' opened in the British Museum in 1845 and it gained notoriety for overcrowded cases. One high official gave it the contemptuous nickname of the 'rag-and-bone Department'.¹²

⁶ James Delbourgo, *Collecting the World: the Life and Curiosity of Hans Sloane* (London: Penguin Books, 2017).

⁷ Items were also sent to Oxford by Joseph Banks after the first voyage, and by Johann Reinhold and Johann George Forster after the second. These were transferred to the new University Museum in 1860, and then to the Pitt Rivers Museum in 1886; Jeremy Coote, 'The Cook-Voyage Collections at Oxford, 1772-2015', in *Cook-Voyage Collections of 'Artificial curiosities' in Britain and Ireland, 1771-2015* (MEG Occasional Paper, No.5), ed. by Jeremy Coote (Oxford: Museum Ethnographers Group, 2015), pp.74-122.

⁸ Neil Chambers, *Joseph Banks and the British Museum: the World of Collecting, 1770-1830* (London: Routledge, 2007), pp.11-12, 16.

⁹ Room I. South Sea curiosities (Upper floor), XII. Drawings and Engravings (Gallery), *Synopsis of the Contents of the British Museum* (1808).

¹⁰ Australian examples are not listed below this heading, but the source location of works included Otaheite, Friendly Islands and New Zealand; *Synopsis of the Content of the British Museum. Seventh Edition* (London: 1814).

¹¹ Quote from Chambers, p.16.

¹² H.J. Braunholtz, 'History of Ethnography in the Museum 1753-1938 (Pt.11)', *The British Museum Quarterly*, Vol. 18, No.4 (Dec., 1953), p.119.

In his 2021 publication *The Royal Navy in Indigenous Australia, 1795-1855*, Daniel Simpson demonstrated that the current holdings of the British Museum, which suggest its ‘pre-eminence as a keeper of nineteenth-century expeditionary collections’, result from its incorporation of collections of smaller, often failed institutions. He describes this as the largely accidental product of a period ‘in which specimens circulated through an eclectic mix of imperial infrastructures, disciplinary innovations, and transient museum initiatives.’¹³ Simpson’s work challenges the idea of the British Museum’s ‘national collection’ being the natural repository of colonial ethnographic collections from maritime ventures in the early-nineteenth century, and argues this impression results from concerted ‘reputation-building’ by the institution itself in the second half of the century. In the early nineteenth century, those working in the museum had little influence over collections made by the navy and were prevented from sending their own expeditionary collectors on voyages. The Admiralty had considerable control over the ‘procurement of ethnographic knowledge’, and development of colonial science about the British Empire.¹⁴ At this time the ‘national collection’ did not inspire trust regarding the ability of those in the museum to care for the objects, particularly ethnographic collections. The Haslar Hospital Museum, founded in Gosport in 1827, became the repository for most objects collected on naval expeditions. This began to change after a parliamentary enquiry was made into the British Museum’s ‘condition, management, and affairs’ in 1835. At this stage, the museum sought to ‘establish itself as the rightful destination for new imperial knowledge’, though it was only in the mid-nineteenth century it developed its reputation as the ‘official nexus of new expeditionary knowledge’.¹⁵ Haslar Hospital Museum closed in 1855 and ‘all the ethnological specimens, and the preparations of Natural History in alcohol’ were moved to the British Museum.¹⁶ These were recorded as ‘Lords of the Admiralty artefacts from Haslar Hospital’.

The object collections from Australia in the British Museum grew in the period c.1820 to 1860. These included donations of ethnographic collections from Royal Navy personal, missionaries, and temporary residents who had returned to

¹³ Simpson, *The Royal Navy*, p.xii.

¹⁴ Ibid., pp.253, 256, 259, 278-9.

¹⁵ Ibid., pp.2, 277.

¹⁶ Daniel Simpson, ‘Expeditionary collections: Haslar Hospital Museum and the circulation of public knowledge, 1815-1855’, in *Mobile Museums: Collections in Circulation*, ed. by F. Driver, M. Nesbitt & C. Cornish (London: UCL Press, 2021), p.171.

England.¹⁷ Objects had not necessarily been collected with the Museum in mind. Donors included notable figures, such as Lieutenant Phillip Parker King in 1831, and S. Neil Talbot who gave seventy objects from Swan River in 1839. Surveyor General of New South Wales, Sir Thomas Mitchell gave objects from Darling River in New South Wales, Murray River (border of New South Wales and Victoria), Queensland, and South Australia in 1839 and 1848. From HMS *Fly*, the geologist Joseph Beete Jukes, the purser Mr Bell, and Lieutenant Ince all donated items from the Torres Strait in 1846. George Whitcomb gave Tasmanian spears in 1847 on his return to England and objects from the late Captain Owen Stanley of HMS *Rattlesnake* were donated to the Museum in 1851. Works also travelled to Britain for display in the international exhibitions held in Europe in the 1850s and 1860s that were later purchased or donated to the museum. None of these collections contained illustrative works.

In the nineteenth century the most influential person in the development and expansion of ethnographic material in the museum collection was Augustus Wollaston Franks (1826-1897), who presented some 9,000 objects.¹⁸ An Assistant Keeper in the Department of Antiquities at the British Museum from 1851, he rose to hold the position of Keeper of the Department of British and Medieval Antiquities and Ethnography from 1866 to 1896. Before its creation in 1866 there was no ethnographic department at the museum, and Franks sought to change its 'reputation for apathy and carelessness in scientific pursuits'.¹⁹ He built relationships which resulted in significant bequests, such as the private collector and Quaker Henry Christy. Christy's collection, accepted as a donation around 1868, after his death in 1865, greatly expanded the ethnographic holdings at the museum. It was so large it had to be housed separately at 103 Victoria Street from its acquisition until 1884, when the natural history collections at the Bloomsbury site were moved to South Kensington.²⁰ Christy also gave money to establish the Christy Fund,

¹⁷ Gaye Sculthorpe, 'Out of Country', in *Indigenous Australia: Enduring Civilisation*, by G. Sculthorpe, J. Carty, H. Morphy, M. Nugent, I. Coates, L. Bolton, J. Jones (London: British Museum Press, 2015), pp.210-225.

¹⁸ The ethnographic collection grew from 3,600 objects when Franks started, to 36,000 in 1896 when he retired; J.C.H. King, 'Franks and Ethnography', in *A.W. Franks: Nineteenth-century collecting and the British Museum*, ed. by Marjorie Caygill and John Cherry (London: British Museum Press, 1997), p.141.

¹⁹ Simpson, *The Royal Navy*, p.256; Brauhnoltz, p.109.

²⁰ Guides were created to the Christy collection in 1862 and 1870. In February 1868 Franks wrote a *Guide to the Christy Collection* for the British Museum Trustees; Caygill and Cherry, p.140.

which enabled the purchase of more works for the collection. Franks was a Trustee of both the Christy collection and the 'Fund' and many of the ethnographic objects he presented were acquired with money from the latter. The second half of the nineteenth century saw increased public interest in the development of anthropology and colonial peoples. Under C.H. Read, Keeper of British and Mediaeval Antiquities and Ethnography from 1896, the collecting focus of the museum transferred from Oceania towards Africa and the Americas in response to the 'shifting emphasis of colonial development'.²¹

In the early twentieth century relevant collections were moved to create a separate Asia department within the museum.²² In 1921 the wider Department resolved into two parts, with Ceramics and Ethnography combined into one, renamed in 1933 as Oriental Antiquities and Ethnography.²³ From 1946 until 2004, objects and images from Africa, Oceania and the Americas, along with some smaller societies in Asia and Europe, sat in a new Department of Ethnography. These collections continued to grow and by the late 1960s a building, given the name 'Franks House' in Hackney was acquired to hold and provide access to the 'reserve collections' (those not displayed or stored at Bloomsbury). In 1970 the British Museum created the Museum of Mankind in Burlington Gardens. It housed the department's exhibition and administrative space along with a library, study room, shop and lecture theatre. In the late twentieth century, research in the Department of Ethnography focussed upon fieldwork and collaborations with source communities in Papua New Guinea, Africa and elsewhere. It made acquisitions intended to fill 'gaps' in the collection and had a 'very active exhibition programme', including displays related to Australia in the 1980s.²⁴ In 2004 the Department of Ethnography returned to the Bloomsbury building to become the Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas, using 'geographic designation' or areas of the world for its organisational structure, an idea from then Director Neil Macgregor.²⁵ It also gained some display space within the main building, including the Wellcome Trust Gallery where the 'Living and Dying' display has been in place since 2003.

²¹ Braunholtz, p.111.

²² Significant collections were added in the twentieth century, such as the London Missionary Society's collection which was acquired in 1911, though it had previously been deposited on loan; Ibid., p.113.

²³ Ibid., p.119.

²⁴ To be discussed in Chapter Five; Burt, p.2.

²⁵ 'History of the collection and department', Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas, BM website [accessed 23 April 2019].

2.2 Colonial images of Indigenous Australia in the British Museum

It is within this wider context of the historical collection and display of ethnography at the British Museum that I introduce the collections of colonial images representing Indigenous Australians produced in the period c.1800 - 1860. As of 2021 this pictorial collection, excluding photographs, totals approximately 132 drawings, 117 prints and 23 paintings. These works are now held in the Department of Prints and Drawings and the Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas.²⁶ The collection of images for the museum in the nineteenth century was ad hoc and subject to broader structural changes in the institution. This is demonstrated by the example of the first works to enter in 1827: sixty-nine watercolour drawings of animals and plants made near Port Jackson, New South Wales in the earliest years after British invasion and settlement, designated as by the Port Jackson Painter.²⁷ These images had been in the personal collection of Sir Joseph Banks, and were bequeathed to the museum following his death in 1820.²⁸ Despite their initial location, they now reside in the Natural History Museum and will be discussed in relation to that institution below.

- *Department of Prints and Drawings*

Printed and drawn depictions of indigenous peoples that entered the museum collection were initially housed in the Department of Printed Books and the Department of Manuscripts which existed from the foundation of the museum in 1753. In 1799 a new room was created to hold the collection of prints and drawings, following the arrival of the collection bequeathed by former Trustee and old master print collector Clayton Mordaunt Cracherode.²⁹ In 1808 individual sheet prints were moved into a newly created section of Prints and Drawings, formed to secure loose

²⁶ P&D holds 23 drawings (a sketchbook is counted as one item), and 62 prints (a singular album of proofs is counted as one item, as is one almanac); AOA holds 109 drawings (two volumes of drawings by Charles Hamilton Smith are counted as two items), 55 prints, and 23 paintings.

²⁷ As for many early colonial works these drawings are unsigned and unattributed. They are likely to represent the work of a small number of artists; 'The First Fleet artwork collection', NHM website [accessed 5 June 2020].

²⁸ NHM, Banks MS 34; These were held in the Banksian collection before being transferred to the Natural History Museum.

²⁹ Antony Griffiths (ed.), *Landmarks in Print Collections: Connoisseurs and Donors at the British Museum since 1753* (London: British Museum Press, 1996), p.10-11.

items within the collection believed to be at risk of theft.³⁰ This was formally separated into an independent department in 1837. Significant colonial images of Indigenous Australians were bought for the Prints and Drawings Department intermittently through the nineteenth century and will be discussed in chronological order of purchase.

The earliest examples still held in this department are eighteen drawings of Aboriginal and Māori men and women, produced by the convict and colonial artist Charles Rodius between 1834 and 1835, purchased by the museum in 1840 for £5 from 'J.F. Clarkson'.³¹ These drawings are held in a purpose-made leather-covered museum box, suggesting they have been considered of some value for many years. Fourteen of the portraits depict Aboriginal sitters (twelve male, two female). One man, Culuba, is depicted twice: once in a front-facing portrait and once in profile. The names of the sitters are noted on nine of the Aboriginal portraits and all four Māori portraits, sometimes accompanied by location or 'tribe' (the term used in the inscriptions). The drawings are executed on different kinds of paper, in regards to quality and colour. The materials used and the finished state indicate that works were produced at different speeds: a couple were executed quickly in pen and brown ink or pencil (Fig.2.1), while others are detailed constructions created with a combination of pencil and black, white, or red chalk and stump, which would have taken longer to complete (Fig.2.2). As a group these drawings are sensitive renderings within the wider colonial recording of Indigenous Australians, offering detailed representations of individuals, their features, clothing and deportment. Most of the men and women wear pieces of European clothing: shirts, head scarves, neck ties and cloaks. This is one indication of the impact of colonisation. Another is evident in the portrait of *King Jack Waterman* (Fig.2.2) in which he appears to gaze warily from the page.³² He wears a gorget, an object signifying the colonial practice of creating new and artificial hierarchies within Aboriginal groups, by nominating and identifying individual Aboriginal people as leaders. These 'king plates', breast plates, or brass plates denoted an Aboriginal figure of esteem or power in European eyes. The earliest was given to Bungaree in 1815. Some plates were inscribed with their name and the word 'King', 'Queen' or 'Chief', and could record a particular

³⁰ A number of works had been stolen in the years prior to 1808; Felicity Myrone, 'Putting topography in its place', British Library Picturing Places blog [accessed 30 April 2019].

³¹ Recorded as 'I.F. Clarkson' in some records; BM, 1840,1114.64 to 81.

³² A gorget is also worn in the portrait of 'Kangaroo Jack', BM, 1840,1114.71, and drawn below the portrait of Nunberri, BM, 1841, 1114.75.

event or deed. For some Aboriginal people these were worn with pride while others destroyed them.³³ They remain somewhat controversial today, with Aboriginal people holding mixed views.³⁴

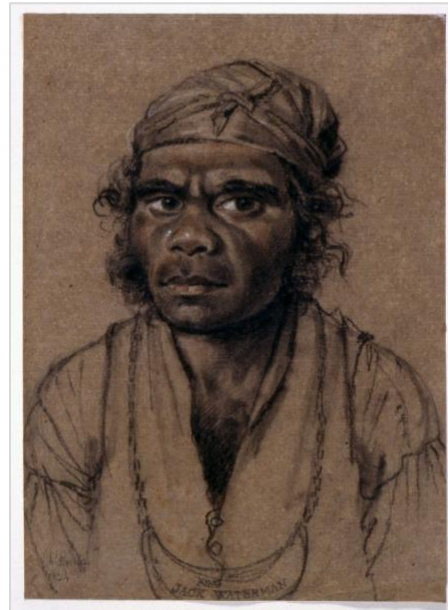


Fig.2.1 Profile portrait of the head of an un-named Indigenous Australian man, 1834-5, pen and brown ink, 96 x 71 mm, BM, 1840,1114.81
Fig.2.2 *King Jack Waterman*, 1834, pencil, black, red and white chalk with stump, 189 x 136 mm, BM, 1840,1114.72
 Both Charles Rodius © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Rodius arrived in Australia in 1829 and produced the first set of lithograph portraits of Aboriginal Australians in New South Wales, some of which were after the drawings held in the British Museum.³⁵ Two of these sets were printed in October 1834 by John Gardiner Austin, described as depicting the ‘tribes’ of New South Wales, the Chiefs and their wives.³⁶ E.D. Barlow took over Austin’s establishment in 1837 and employed artists such as William Nicholas to portray significant figures, including Aboriginal people. He sold his business to William Baker by October 1840 who republished the Rodius sets, adding two figures ‘Kangaroo Jack’ and ‘Biddy Salamander’ in 1847, and eight others in his *Heads of the People* (1847-8).³⁷ These

³³ Shino Konishi, Maria Nugent, and Tiffany Shellam (eds.), *Indigenous Intermediaries: New Perspectives on Exploration Archives* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2015), p.37.

³⁴ Jakelin Troy, *King Plates: A History of Aboriginal Gorgets* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 1993).

³⁵ The print proofs amended by Rodius are in the SLNSW, SAFE/ PXA 615, presented by Francis Edwards in 1932; Roger Butler, *Printed: Images in Colonial Australia 1801-1901* (Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 2007), p.103.

³⁶ These were sold for one guinea, in sets of six, at the artist’s residence.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.109.

lithograph portraits were reproduced and maintained their popularity for almost twenty years. They were also circulated in Britain, introducing a group of Aboriginal men and women from New South Wales to a European audience.

In 1868, the British Museum purchased working proofs of the plates for *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean* from the estate of the printseller George Smith, through Edward Daniell and Sotheby's. This was the official publication that followed the third voyage to the Pacific led by James Cook, published by James Caldwell in 1784. The purchased group included fourteen proofs of John Webber's print of *A Man of Van Diemen's Land*,³⁸ and ten of *A Woman of Van Diemen's Land* (Fig.2.3).³⁹ Depictions of Aboriginal families were first introduced to a British audience through these illustrations. The pairing of gendered depictions was common in exploratory volumes. These close-up 'portrait' images suggest

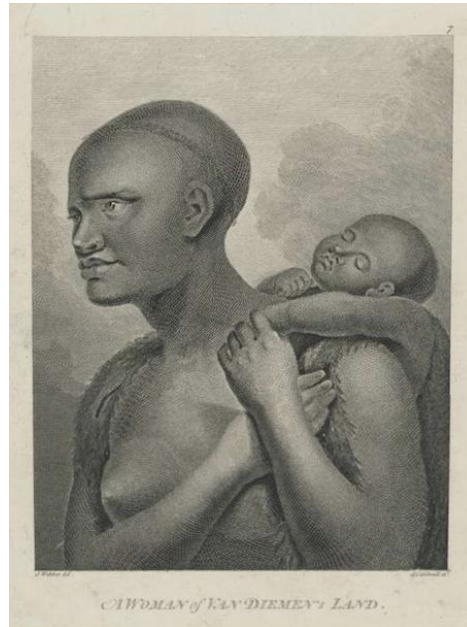


Fig. 2.3 'A Woman of Van Diemen's Land', J. Caldwell after John Webber, from *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, 1784, etching and engraving, 269 x 199 mm (print) BM, Oc2006,Prt.147 © The Trustees of the British Museum.

observation of specific people. The sitters however remained anonymous, and as a result are read as 'type' portraits. Due to the high costs of production, publications such as these were seldom accessible to those outside the upper ranks of British society, although individual prints were sold and could be copied in cheaper formats. These works were purchased for the museum due to continued interest in this significant publication and its illustrations, not for the Australian examples alone.

In the first two decades of the nineteenth century, images produced in Australia were overwhelmingly by convicts, with exceptions created by surveyors like G.W. Evans and free artists such as John William Lewin, the first artist to settle in New

³⁸ BM, in P&D, 1868,1212.351 to 364 are working proofs of this plate. Final versions: in P&D, 1957,0705.11; and in AOA, Oc2006,Prt.143 and Prt.146.

³⁹ BM, in P&D, 1868,1212.365 to 374 are working proofs of this plate. Final versions: in P&D, 1957,0705.12; and in AOA, Oc2006,Prt.144 and Prt.147.

South Wales and the first printmaker and publisher in the colony. Some emancipated figures sought artistic careers, like Absalom West who published twenty-four *Views of New South Wales* in Sydney between November 1812 and September 1814.⁴⁰ This series was available in Britain shortly thereafter, as George III's librarians purchased a complete set for his topographical collection, now held in the British Library.⁴¹ A series was also bought for the British Museum in 1869 from the printseller and bookseller George E. Mason.⁴² The views presented a developing colony, with evident markers of settlement, and it has been argued they reflected Governor Lachlan Macquarie's desire to move New South Wales towards a 'Georgian society'.⁴³ The prints were almost all the same size (12 by 18 inches) and presented horizontal landscapes of the developing towns of Sydney, Newcastle, and Parramatta, or their surrounding areas. Some of the prints were intended to form a panorama when placed alongside each other (See Figs.2.4 and 2.5). In these picturesque scenes Aboriginal people were sometimes incorporated in the foreground, perhaps to accentuate the development of the colonial settlements in the distance. Most of the artists and printmakers involved in the series were convicts, such as John Eyre, Joseph Lycett, Richard Browne (also known as T.R. Browne), the engraver Walter Preston and the printer Philip Slaeger.⁴⁴ Lewin also provided drawings. This group of contributors reveals the growth of a small but skilled artistic community in New South Wales.



Fig. 2.4 'View of Hunters River, near Newcastle, New South Wales', etching and engraving, 274 x 408 mm; **Fig.2.5** 'Newcastle, in New South Wales, with a distant view of Port Stephens', 275 x 405 mm. Both: Walter Preston after Richard Brown, 1812, BM, 1869,0213.29 and 30 © The Trustees of the British Museum.

⁴⁰ Butler, p.25.

⁴¹ Oliver Flory, 'West's views of New South Wales', on BL blog *Picturing Places* [accessed 28 August 2019].

⁴² BM, 1869,0213.29 to 31, 36 to 44.

⁴³ Grace Karskens, *The Colony: A History of Early Sydney* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2009), pp. 189-232.

⁴⁴ Butler, pp. x, 2, 26-29.

In 1893, the estate of the biologist, comparative anatomist and palaeontologist Sir Richard Owen, former Curator of the Hunterian Museum and Superintendent of the Natural History department at the British Museum (today the Natural History Museum), donated a series of works representing Aboriginal Australians to the museum.⁴⁵ They include two early watercolour full-length portraits of Aboriginal men made in 1810 by John William Lewin.⁴⁶ *Blueit – native of Botany Bay, NSW* is depicted nude, except for a loin cloth, and holds a spear and spear-thrower in his right hand and a club in his left (Fig.1.1). *Tomwaa, native of Jervis Bay, NSW* is portrayed nude standing facing forward, holding a club in front of his face (Fig.2.6). These representations present their sitters without overt influences of colonisation. The image of *Blueit* may be intended to demonstrate the correct usage of the spear thrower. Other images that came from Owen's estate are from W.H. Fernyhough's lithograph set *A series of twelve profile portraits of the Aborigines of New South Wales*, published by J.G. Austin in 1836.⁴⁷ Identified Aboriginal figures were represented within, such as John Piper who had received colonial public recognition, and was acknowledged by the explorer Thomas Mitchell and depicted in his publication (Fig.2.7).⁴⁸ As for the aforementioned Rodius series, Fernyhough's printed portraits were republished by William Baker, remained popular into the 1840s and were circulated in Britain. Two prints from Fernyhough's *Series* had already been purchased for the Prints and Drawings Department from the print dealer George Ellis in 1875.⁴⁹ Other examples from the *Series* entered the ethnography collections in 1883, in a larger assemblage purchased from the estate sale of Joseph Barnard Davis.

⁴⁵ A collection of 3,500 drawings in the Owen Collection at the Natural History Museum were produced by the anatomist, along with other artists, and used for study and illustration; Jean M. Ingles, 'A catalogue of the Richard Owen collection of Palaeontological and Zoological drawings in the British Museum (Natural History)', *Bulletin of the British Museum Natural History (Historical Series)* 6 (5), pp.109-197.

⁴⁶ BM, *Blueit* 1893,0803.49; *Tomwaa*, 1893,8083.50.

⁴⁷ BM, 1893,0803.51 to 59.

⁴⁸ Piper appeared twice in Fernyhough's *Series*: once in his own portrait and then in the image of Mitchell, in which he is portrayed holding the print of Piper; Elisabeth Findlay, 'Peddling Prejudice: A Series of Twelve Profile Portraits of Aborigines of New South Wales', *Postcolonial Studies*, 16:1 (2013), p.2.

⁴⁹ BM, 1875,0508.43-44.



Fig.2.6 *Tonwaa, native of Jervis Bay, NSW*, John William Lewin, 1810, watercolour, 271 x 210 mm, BM, 1893,0803.50

Fig.2.7 'Piper. The Native who accompanied Major Mitchell in his Expedition to the Interior', from *A series of twelve profile portraits of the Aborigines of New South Wales*, W.H. Fernyhough, 1836, lithograph, 259 x 186 mm, BM, Oc2006,Prt.340.

Both © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Smaller groups or singular items entered the Department of Prints and Drawings sporadically through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These included a sketchbook by noted Australian landscape artist Conrad Martens, purchased from the prints and drawings dealer A.A. Burt in 1868 (see Fig.5.4).⁵⁰ In 1871, Joseph Wilson Lowrey sold the museum a *View of Melbourne* by J. W. Lowry (presumed to be the same) after W.F.E. Liardet.⁵¹ A copy of the *Hobart Town Almanack* (1829), with wood-engraved vignettes such as 'An Aboriginal Dinner Party' by Thomas Bock, was accessioned in 1879.⁵² Proof impressions of illustrations by the Brothers Dalziel for J. G. Wood's 'Natural History of Man', some of which were after George French Angas, were purchased for the museum from Gilbert Dalziel in 1913.⁵³ Four lithographs engraved by John Heaviside Clark, after John Eyre, and delineating the *Present Picture of N.S.W.* (1810) were donated to the museum in 1917 by Nan Ino Cooper, Baroness Lucas of Crudwell and Lady Dingwall.⁵⁴ S.T. Gill's *Sketches of the Victoria gold diggings and diggers as they are* (1852), which included the plate 'License

⁵⁰ BM, 1868,1114.354-387; Burt sold items to the museum from the late 1850s to the 1870s.

⁵¹ BM, 1871,0812.1638.

⁵² BM, 1879,1109.54-63.

⁵³ BM, 1913,0415.183.

⁵⁴ BM, 1917,1208.4348-51, donated in memory of Auberon Thomas Herbert, 9th Baron Lucas of Crudwell and 5th Lord Dingwall.

inspected' mentioned in the previous chapter (Fig.1.3), was purchased from T. Millar in 1969.⁵⁵

There is also limited evidence of the movement of objects between departments. Thomas Gosse's 1799 mezzotint *Founding of the settlement of Port Jackson at Botany Bay in New South Wales* was transferred from the British Library in 1856, perhaps indicating that it had been held in a volume until that point (Fig.2.8).⁵⁶ In the print the British settlement is indicated by a tent in the centre and another structure to the left of the scene. It is populated predominantly by British men, one of whom is firing a gun, one holding a turtle, one chopping wood, and another building a fence around cattle, alongside a seated woman. These figures are juxtaposed by an Aboriginal man to the right of the image to whom one of the naval men is speaking. He lifts his hand in front of his face as if in a gesture of fear in response to the gun. Two drawings by Henry Laing of views in Tasmania were also transferred from the Department of Ethnography in 1943, after entering the museum collection in 1883 from the estate sale of Joseph Barnard Davis.⁵⁷ As they depicted Flinders Island in Tasmania, but did not include depictions of Aboriginal Tasmanians, this may be why they were moved out of this collection.



Fig.2.8 *Founding of the settlement of Port Jackson at Botany Bay in New South Wales*, Thomas Gosse, 1799, mezzotint, 540 x 610 mm, BM, 1856,1011.105
© The Trustees of the British Museum.

⁵⁵ BM, 1969,0614.32.

⁵⁶ BM, 1856,1011.105; It was published by Gosse at 45 Great Russell Street, on the road that hosts the main entrance to the British Museum.

⁵⁷ BM, 1943,0409.2-3; They were transferred along with a portrait of *Prince Lee Boo* by Arthur William Devis, 1943,0409.1.

Under A.W. Franks the collections of ethnographic images and objects in the British Museum were greatly expanded. As noted earlier this resulted in part due to extensive and fruitful contacts Franks made through his membership of London's ethnographical and anthropological societies from the 1860s to the 1890s. Franks was also involved in preparing and publishing questionnaires relating to anthropological collecting for explorers and travellers.⁵⁸ His acquaintances included Henry Christy and craniologist Dr Joseph Barnard Davis.

Born into a family of Quakers, Henry Christy trained as a banker in the family firm of Christy & Co. He had links to the Aborigines Protection Society, through his friendship with Thomas Hodgkin.⁵⁹ At the 1851 Great Exhibition, where he exhibited, Christy saw how objects which had travelled to that venue from around the world reflected stages of technological change of peoples in the past and present.⁶⁰ In the development of his extensive collection he sought to represent common origins and unity of humanity. On his travels in Scandinavia, Mexico, the United States and Canada, he met leading ethnographers, and through viewing their collections felt it was clear that all peoples pass through the same stages of development. Christy believed it was essential to preserve and record native peoples, creating an extensive collection through which to do that. He recognised the exhibition of objects as valuable for drawing public interest to this research.⁶¹

Visual records from the 1865 Henry Christy bequest, now held in the pictorial collection of the Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas, include sixty-seven sheets of watercolour illustrations by Leila Waterhouse Hawkins of Aboriginal ornament and weapons from the 1862 International Exhibition in London.⁶² One of the two pages of Indigenous Australian ornament presents two red and white decorated shields vertically on the page (Fig.2.9). The other presents

⁵⁸ Jill Cook, 'In pursuit of the unity of the human race: Henry Christy and Mexico', in *Turquoise in Mexico and North America: Science, Conservation, Culture and Collections*, ed. by J.C.H. King, Max Carocci, Caroline Cartwright, Colin McEwan and Rebecca Stacey (Archetype Publications, 2012), p.141.

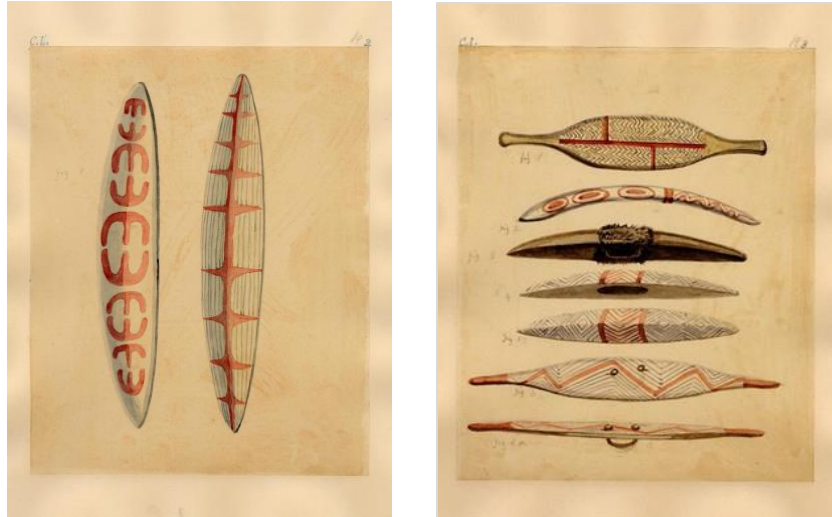
⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p.178.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.179-180.

⁶¹ He exhibited a selection in 1862, arranged by Mr Steinhauer; *Guide to the Christy Collection of Prehistoric Antiquities and Ethnography* (London: British Museum, 1868), pp.3-4.

⁶² BM, Am2006, Drg.60 and 61.

horizontally two boomerangs, and four shields (one presented from two angles, Fig.2.10). The sheets are accompanied by twenty pages of handwritten text, eighteen of which describe the drawings. These images are not characteristic of the large ethnographic collection donated by Christy, which was almost exclusively objects.



Figs.2.9 and 2.10 *Aboriginal Ornament selected from the International Exhibition London 1862 for Henry Christy, Louise Leila Waterhouse Hawkins, c.1862, watercolour, 303 x 240 mm, BM, Am2006,Drg.60 and Am2006,Drg.61* © The Trustees of the British Museum.

It is likely that it was through the ethnographical and anthropological societies that Franks became aware of the collection of the surgeon and craniologist, Joseph Barnard Davis (1801-1881). I have established through my research for this thesis that almost 1200 works in the pictorial collection of the Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas at the British Museum are linked to the 1883 sales of Davis's estate. They depict figures from a vast range of geographical origins including Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe. My survey indicates that the number of images (photographs, engravings and paintings) from the Davis collection includes around 239 items for Oceania, 150 items for Africa (including an album of prints, photographs and drawings), 241 items for Asia, 167 items for the Americas, 127 items for Europe, two volumes of drawings by Charles Hamilton Smith, and over 244 miscellaneous or anatomical items (see Fig.2.11).

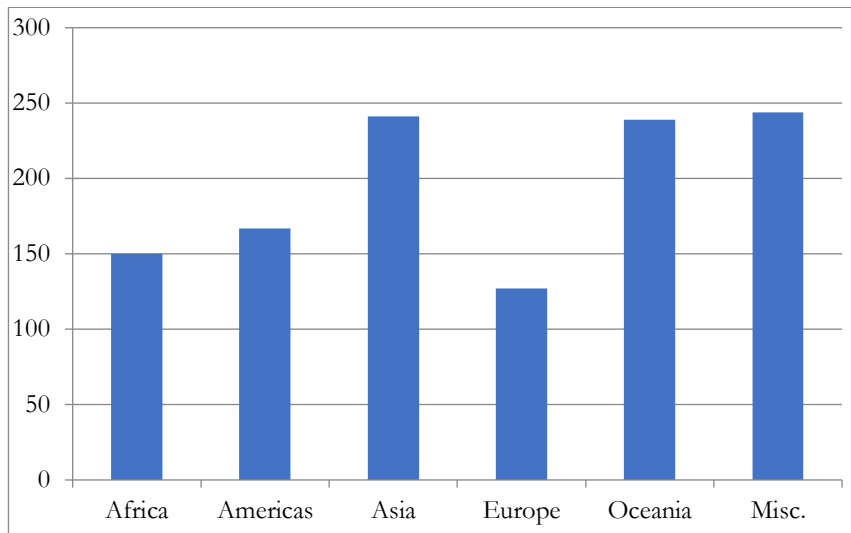


Fig.2.11 Pictorial items, indicating origin of people in images, confidently identified as formerly belonging to Joseph Barnard Davis, now in the British Museum.

* 'Misc.' refers to miscellaneous items that do not fall under the other categories. The majority of these are depictions or reproductions of images of skulls.

The largest group of images of Indigenous Australians in the British Museum were purchased from Davis's estate. The collection included significant groups, such as the twelve Aboriginal Tasmanian portraits by Thomas Bock commissioned by colonial agent George Augustus Robinson to illustrate his account of 'conciliation' in Tasmania. The sources of Davis's collection, and the interests and potential reasons for him wanting a pictorial collection will be discussed in depth in the next chapter.

While the acquisition of Davis's collection appears to have been a conscious decision by Franks to expand the museum's holdings, there is no evidence that it was specifically for the Australian images. Rather its appeal is more likely to have been its scale and the comprehensiveness of representations of indigenous peoples from around the world. Motivation for purchase is central to considering how Christy and Franks would have viewed this pictorial material. The images Hawkins made for Christy of objects displayed at the International Exhibition of 1862 were intended to stand in for the objects themselves, which perhaps Christy was unable to obtain. Representing the objects, these visual records of the form and decoration of Aboriginal objects could be used to supplement his own collection of ethnographic objects. I assert that Franks would have approached the pictorial

works in Christy's collection as sources related to his object collection and kept them together for the cohesion of the group. I believe Franks would have viewed the comprehensive nature of both the Christy and Davis collections as fulfilling the thoroughness expected of a 'national institution'.

For much of the twentieth century the Department of Ethnography's pictorial collection of colonial depictions of Indigenous Australians remained almost entirely static. New acquisitions of contemporary work in the twentieth century were added to the collections from time to time and eighteenth or nineteenth-century depictions of Indigenous Australians were still occasionally donated to the British Museum, as demonstrated in the discussion of the Prints and Drawings Department above. In 1902 perhaps the most widely known early colonial depictions held in Britain, made by convict artist Thomas Watling, were sold to the Natural History Museum, still formally part of the British Museum at that time (discussed below). A significant donation made in the



Fig.2.12 "Genai" Nagbir island,
Tom Roberts, 1892,
watercolour and graphite,
273 x 178 mm,
BM, Oc2006,Drg.406
© The Trustees of
the British Museum.

early-twentieth century, of works produced in the late-nineteenth century, are four detailed and atmospheric watercolours by Tom Roberts (1856-1931) made during his 1892 trip to North Queensland and the Torres Strait Islands, which the artist donated to museum in 1922 (Fig.2.12).⁶³

⁶³ BM, Oc2006,Drg.404 to 407: drawings were donated alongside 18 ethnographic objects; Ian Coates, 'Forgotten Torres Strait Treasures', *The Australian*, 4 March 2010.



Fig.2.13 *Woreddy* [Wurati], Robert Hawker Dowling, 1854-57, oil on board, 145 x 153 mm, BM, Oc2006,Ptg.8
© The Trustees of the British Museum.

In 1924 a group of twenty-one oil portraits of Aboriginal people from Tasmania and Victoria by the artist Robert Hawker Dowling (1827-1886) were donated to the British Museum by Henry Foster McClintock on behalf of his family.⁶⁴ Dowling had painted the donor's father, Sir Francis Leopold McClintock in 1879, and gave him this set of paintings at the time.⁶⁵ The artist was the son of Reverend Dowling, the preacher who commissioned copies of Aboriginal portraits from Thomas Bock in Tasmania in 1838. Robert Hawker Dowling produced nine copies of Aboriginal portraits after Bock's works between 1854 and

1857 (Fig.2.13).⁶⁶ He needed to draw on extant depictions as he could no longer observe scenes of Aboriginal life before the impact of colonisation in Tasmania and was unlikely to have had direct access to the surviving Aboriginal people based at that time in Oyster Cove. Robert Dowling moved to Victoria in September 1854 with his wife and child, and after a short time in Melbourne chose to establish himself in Geelong. He produced twelve small-scale paintings of Aboriginal Victorians in 1856, also in the group held in the British Museum (Figs. 2.14 and 2.15).⁶⁷ The names Dowling recorded for his sitters reflected hierarchies created by colonists through the denotation of 'King' or 'Queen', and colonial attempts at reidentification, via European-given names like 'Jack', 'Mary', and 'Jimmy'. Unidentified figures were also depicted, but the locations used in the titles help to place the origin of the sitters. While in Tasmania Dowling's interactions with Aboriginal people were limited to copies of Bock's portraits, on arrival in Victoria, he was able to portray Aboriginal people 'from the life'. He produced the largest

⁶⁴ BM, Oc2006,Ptg.1-21.

⁶⁵ BM, PIC DOC 171_OC1, 'Notes on the pictures of Tasmanian Natives'.

⁶⁶ 'Fanny native of Port Dalrymple, V.D.Land' BM, Oc2006,Ptg.3; 'Jinny [aka Jenny] native of Port Sorell V.D.L.' BM, Oc2006,Ptg.4; 'Larratong' BM, Oc2006,Ptg.5; 'Truggernana' BM, Oc2006,Ptg.6; *Woureddy*, BM, Oc2006,Ptg.7; *Jimmy profile* BM, Oc2006,Ptg.8; *Jimmy profile*, BM, Oc2006,Ptg.9; *Jimmy*, BM, Oc2006,Ptg.18; *Jack*, BM, Oc2006,Ptg.19.

⁶⁷ BM collection: *Jimmy native of River Blackmans near Port Fairy Victoria*, Oc2006,Ptg.1; *Jack native of Spring Creek near Port Fairy, Victoria*, Oc2006,Prg.2; *King Marpoura*, Oc2006,Ptg.10; *Queen Marpoura*, Oc2006,Ptg.11; *Victoria Native*, Oc2006,Ptg.12; *Victoria Native*, Oc2006,Ptg.13; *Man from Maria River* Oc2006,Ptg.14; *Man from Maria River* Oc2006,Ptg.15; *Queen Laratong*, Oc2006,Ptg.16; *King Laratong*, Oc2006,Ptg.17; *Mary*, Oc2006,Ptg.20; *Mount Gambier Native*, Oc2006,Ptg.21.

body of paintings of the Aboriginal Victorians of the Western District in the mid-nineteenth century. Paintings he made in the 1850s were the first to combine Aboriginal Victorians and European settler-colonists.⁶⁸



Fig.2.14 *Mary*, oil on board, 144 x 120 mm, BM, Oc2006,Ptg.20.
Fig.2.15 *Victoria Native*, oil on board, 143 x 120 mm, BM, Oc2006,Ptg.13.
 Both Robert Hawker Dowling, 1856(?) © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Dowling moved between Launceston and Victoria in the 1850s to practice his craft. Between 1856 and 1860, he created fictional scenes of Aboriginal Tasmanian groups.⁶⁹ Dowling was the first artist trained in Australia to build himself a career in London between 1857 and 1884 (when he returned to Melbourne). From the ‘centre of Empire’ Dowling sent a number of paintings to be sold in Australia, including a *Group of natives of Tasmania*, produced at the Royal Academy Schools in 1858.⁷⁰ A smaller later version of this work was purchased by the Ethnological Society of London in 1860 (Fig.2.16).⁷¹ Making use of his copies after Bock’s original observational portraits, he created imagined compositions. Many of Dowling’s paintings did not include colonial agents or evidence of colonisation,

⁶⁸ Such as: NGA, 84.260, *Mrs Adolphus Scales with Black Jimmie on Merrang Station*, 1856; NGV, 2007.115, *Masters George, William and Mrs Harriet Ware with the Aborigine Jamie Ware*, 1856. Commissioned by Joseph Ware, who owned ‘Minjah’ a property in Western Victoria, located on Spring Creek; Jones, pp.60, 76; They indicate that Dowling encountered Aboriginal Victorians working on colonial properties.

⁶⁹ Dowling’s brother Henry also owned a pair of sculptures of Trukanini and Wurati by Benjamin Law; John Jones, *Robert Dowling: Tasmanian son of Empire* (Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 2011), p.151.

⁷⁰ NGV, 2102-4. Purchased, 1949; This followed an earlier painting *Tasmanian Aborigines* produced in 1856-7; Ibid.

⁷¹ The Ethnological Society became part of the Royal Anthropological Society of Great Britain & Ireland in 1871. The Society sold Dowling’s *Group of natives of Tasmania* and the remnants of the Bock watercolour set of Aboriginal portraits they held in 1988; Ibid.

thereby presenting a time before British arrival, rather than constructing a historical narrative around the removal of Aboriginal people from the island.⁷² Sending works back to his 'homeland' of Australia demonstrated his developing skills to those who had helped him financially to make the journey and indicated an audience could be counted on to purchase his works outside Britain. The connection Dowling maintained between the art worlds of Australia and Britain is one example of the broader movement of artworks between these two countries.⁷³



Fig.2.16 *Group of natives of Tasmania*, Robert Hawker Dowling, 1860, oil on canvas, 914 x 456 mm, Art Gallery of South Australia, 882P9. Gift of the Art Gallery of South Australia Foundation and the M.J.M. Carter AO Collection, 1988.

Other examples of works depicting Indigenous Australians in the British Museum's collection arrived as part of larger groups. For example, a copy by W. D. Steyning of the *Portrait of Yerran-gou-la-ga*, after the print by Nicolas-Martin Petit, was donated alongside other drawings in 1940.⁷⁴

⁷² As seen in *The Conciliation* by the artist Benjamin Duterrau; Dowling did incorporate European colonists in his work *Early Effort* discussed in Chapter Four.

⁷³ Matthew C. Potter, *British Art for Australia, 1860-1953: The Acquisition of Artworks from the United Kingdom by Australian National Galleries* (Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2019).

⁷⁴ BM, Oc2006,Drg.84.

In the twenty-first century significant additions were made to the pictorial collection by Jonathan C. H. King, the former Keeper of the Department of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas (2005-2010), and then of Anthropology (2010-2012) at the museum. In 2016, he donated depictions of Aboriginal people, eleven of which were produced in the period covered by this thesis, including prints from: Thomas Mitchell's *Three expeditions*; and after Nicolas-Martin Petit; Charles Lesueur; Louis de Sainson; Jacques Etienne Victor Arago (Fig.2.17) and Samuel John Neele.⁷⁵ These plates were created to illustrate expedition, exploratory or narrative accounts of Australia. Their



Fig.2.17 ‘Timbéré’, from Jacques Etienne Victor Arago’s *Narrative of a Voyage round the world*, 1822, lithograph, 350 x 248 mm (sheet), BM, 2016,2024.10
© The Trustees of the British Museum.

donation helped to fill gaps in the British Museum’s collection of colonial images of Indigenous Australians with works that would have been known to the British public in the nineteenth century.

King’s donation also included two prints from S.T. Gill’s *The Australian Sketchbook* (1864-5). Gill was as a key producer of images in Victoria in the 1850s and 1860s. He worked predominantly for a local audience, but settler-colonists sent his lithographs back to Europe as a representation of what was happening in Australia. Gill was particularly popular in the mid-1850s and his work was plagiarised in Europe, sometimes by major artists like Gustave Doré.⁷⁶ The *Sketchbook* included twenty-four colour lithographs (plus a frontispiece) and was significant in the representation of post-gold rush Victoria. Fourteen of the prints depicted Aboriginal Victorians.⁷⁷ Examples such as ‘Night-fishing’ (Fig.2.18) exclusively depicted Aboriginal life, while others like ‘Attack on Store Dray’ showed an imminent Aboriginal attack upon a European camp (Fig.2.19). Historian Lynette

⁷⁵ BM, 2016,2024.1-11.

⁷⁶ Sasha Grishin, ‘An overdue appreciation of ST Gill, Australia’s first painter of modern life’, *The Conversation* (14 July 2015).

⁷⁷ Published by Hamel & Ferguson in Melbourne. Examples are held in the BM, 2016,2036.1 to 5; A complete set held at the SLV, LTF BOX GILL 2A.

Russell has noted Gill often placed Aboriginal people on the margins of his images, as if balanced between the old and new worlds.⁷⁸



Fig.2.18 ‘Night-Fishing’; **Fig.2.19** ‘Attack on Store Dray’
Both S.T. Gill, from *The Australian Sketchbook* (1865), lithograph, 290 x 355 mm,
BM, 2016,2036.1 and 2 © The Trustees of the British Museum.

The institutional standing of ethnographic images in the British Museum over the years is indicated by the number of works in the pictorial collection of the Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas for which the provenance remains unknown. Most images were not registered as part of the collection until 2009, supporting the argument of this thesis that they were viewed as supplementary to the object collection. The lack of recorded information inhibits its potential and awaits future research. Some depictions were recorded in 2009 as ‘probably part of the collection of artworks and ethnographic objects which Joseph Barnard Davis (q.v.) acquired from Robinson’s widow in the 1860s, and which AW Franks (q.v.) later purchased for the British Museum at the auction sale of Davis’s estate in 1883’, but such designations are based on the subject matter, rather than specific documentation.⁷⁹ Works depicting Indigenous Australians with no provenance were registered as recently as 2016, as part of the present project. These include examples from colonial prints series: two works by G. F. Angas ‘The Kuri Dance’ and ‘The Palti Dance’ taken from *South Australia Illustrated* (1847);⁸⁰ G. Hamilton’s *Colonial Sketches*;⁸¹ and prints by S.T. Gill.⁸² Another single illustration is taken from the

⁷⁸ Lynette Russell, ‘Tickpen’, ‘Boro Boro’: Aboriginal economic engagements in early Melbourne’, in *Settler Colonial Governance in Nineteenth-Century Victoria*, ed. by Boucher and Russell, p.28.

⁷⁹ For example, BM, Oc2006, Drg.42 and 43.

⁸⁰ BM, 2016,2037.1, *The Palti Dance*; 2016,2037.2, *The Kuri Dance*.

⁸¹ BM, 2016,2033.1.a to g; Jane Lydon, ‘Noble horses and ‘black monsters’: the politics of colonial compassion’, *The Conversation* (15 October 2017).

⁸² BM, 2016,2036.1 to 5; a copy of ‘Corroboree’ 2016,2024.2, donated by Jonathan King.

History of Mankind by Friedrich Ratzel, of 'An Australian Family-Party from New South Wales'. The image is after Gustav Mutzel.⁸³

Some images can be found in two locations in the museum. William Strutt's print of *Corungiam and Munight* is held in Prints & Drawings (in a landscape orientation), and in Africa, Oceania and the Americas (in portrait orientation).⁸⁴ Printed portraits of Woollarawarre (also known as Bennelong), a senior Eora man are also held in both departments.⁸⁵ Woollarawarre was portrayed multiple times in European-made records, featuring in early portraits by Thomas Watling, scenes by the Port Jackson Painter, and in the naming of places, such as 'Bannellongs Point'.⁸⁶ He was the first Aboriginal person to visit Britain along with Yemmarawanne, both of whom sailed with Governor Arthur Phillip in 1792. While Yemmarawanne died in May 1794, Woollarawarre returned to New South Wales that same year.⁸⁷ Publications about New South Wales spread knowledge of particular Aboriginal individuals in Britain, creating what historian Paul Irish has termed 'tribal celebrities'.⁸⁸ One depiction of Woollarawarre in the museum is from *Modern and Authentic System of Universal Geography* (c.1802-1810), and is after an illustration first produced in David Collins's *An Account of the English Colony* (Vol. I), published in Britain in 1798 (Fig.2.20). Another copperplate portrait of him, produced in London in 1804 by the engraver Samuel John Neele (Fig.2.21), exists in two copies in the museum. In the Collins image Woollarawarre is presented in European clothing, worn in the 'correct' fashion, and framed by a group of Aboriginal tools and weapons collected by colonists during the early years of the Sydney Cove settlement.⁸⁹ The inscription below the image describes how Woollarawarre 'after experiencing for two years the Luxuries of England, returned to his own Country and resumed all his savage Habits'. The image and text draw attention to his past and his present. The Neele

⁸³ BM, 2016,2041.1.

⁸⁴ BM, in AOA, Oc2006,Prt.236, bought by Franks from the Davis collection, who in turn bought the print from Rose Robinson, George Augustus Robinson's widow in 1867. The example in the P&D department, 1982,U.2890, has no provenance information.

⁸⁵ BM, 2016,2039.1 and 2016,2024.11 in AOA; 1982,U.2888 in P&D.

⁸⁶ NHM, Watling Drawing – no. LS8, *A View of the west side of Sydney Cove taken from Too-bay-ulee, or Bannellongs Point*, Port Jackson Painter, 1792-1795.

⁸⁷ Kate Fullager, 'Bennelong in Britain', *Aboriginal History*, Vol.33 (2009), pp.37-51.

⁸⁸ Paul Irish, *Hidden in Plain View: The Aboriginal People of Coastal Sydney* (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2017), pp.87-91.

⁸⁹ An amended version of this print was published in George Alexander Cooke's, *Modern and Authentic System of Universal Geography* (London: Printed for C. Cooke, [1810?]); A related drawing in the SLNSW: DG B10 f.13, 'Banalong', is paired with another, DG B10 f.14, 'Yuremany'.

print also represents Woollarawarre in European dress, but here he is depicted with an informal open collar and loose hairstyle.⁹⁰ While both prints demonstrated the impact of colonisation through European dress, the image in the first indicates a more polished presentation than the second, which may be intended to make comment on the sitter's ability to carry overt demonstrations of 'civility'. The Collins image draws out the false binary of 'civilised' and 'savage' in the accompanying text.



Fig.2.20 'Portrait of Bennilong', a print published in *Modern and Authentic System of Universal Geography...*, Vol. I, c.1802-1810, etching and engraving, 205 x 140 mm, BM, 2016,2039.1
Fig.2.21 'Benelong: A Native of New Holland', Samuel John Neele, 1804, engraving, 268 x 220 mm, BM, 1982,U.2888
 Both © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Multiple versions of a large-scale representation of an Aboriginal ceremonial scene are held in the British Museum, 'Corroboree or Dance of the Natives of New South Wales, New Holland', engraved by Walter Preston in 1821 (Fig.2.22). One example in the Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas has a contemporary magazine cutting attached, indicating how such works were advertised in Britain:

A most singularly Large Engraving THE DANCE OF THE NATIVES OF NEW SOUTH WALES, deeply interesting, from its having been the earliest production of the infant community of SYDNEY. It was engraved by PRESTON, a CONVICT, on a common sheet of COPPER, taken from bottom of a strip. It is full of

⁹⁰ Image published in 1804 edition of James Grant's *The Narrative of a Voyage of Discovery*; BM, 2016,2024.11 and 1982,U.2888.

figures, dresses and scenery, taken from Life, Size 15 by 22, Price is 6d, worth 10s 6d.⁹¹

Despite the inaccurate assertion that it was the earliest print in Sydney, this purportedly observed scene, after a drawing by Joseph Lycett or Captain James Wallis, offers a complex early depiction of an Aboriginal ceremony.⁹² Wallis resided in Australia from 1814 to 1819 and on his return to Britain published *Scenes of Australian Views* in 1820, and the following year *An Historical Account of the colony of New South Wales and its dependent settlements*.⁹³ The images for the latter included the ‘Corroboree’. Another version, held in the Prints and Drawings department, was purchased from Lumley, a dealer in that form of material.⁹⁴ It is likely it was the aesthetic strength of this scene, and its significance as an early print that led to it being acquired for both departments.



Fig.2.22 ‘Corroboree or Dance of the Natives of New South Wales’, Walter Preston after Joseph Lycett or James Wallis, 1821, engraving, 554 x 760 mm, BM, Oc2006,Prt.238
© The Trustees of the British Museum.

Works in the British Museum with links to Australian collection have been uncovered during the research for this project. Two anonymous depictions of

⁹¹ BM, Oc2006,Prt.238.

⁹² Lycett is thought to have observed these ceremonies firsthand, and it has been inferred he must have been trusted by certain Aboriginal people to witness them; Alisa Bunbury, *This Wondrous Land: Colonial Art on paper* (Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria, 2011), p.87; Butler, pp.53-59.

⁹³ Wallis’s copy of the *Historical Account*, bound with drawings by the author and Lycett, was purchased from Gardener Galleries in London in 2011 by the State Library of New South Wales; SLNSW, Mitchell Library, PXD 1008/vol.2.

⁹⁴ BM, 1863,0110.29.

Aboriginal Australians in the British Museum are identified by their annotations as ‘An Old Native of The Settlement of Port Jackson known by the name of Taugerbanna. No. 5’ (Fig.2.23) and ‘A native of Port Jackson in the [attitude] of defence No 27’.⁹⁵ They relate compositionally to a group of twelve portraits produced by a single artist (attributed to George Charles Jenner) held in the State Library of New South Wales.⁹⁶ Another set in the same library titled ‘Natives of New South Wales; drawn from life in Botany Bay’, were clearly by or after the same images but include some alternate examples.⁹⁷ Six works by the artist Isaac Coates representing men and women from the ‘Murray River Tribe’ are held at the British Museum (Fig.2.24).⁹⁸ Formerly in the collection of Joseph Barnard Davis, they relate to two unfinished drawings held in the Rex Nan Kivell collection at the National Library of Australia.⁹⁹ Coates was in New Zealand from 1843, travelling to Adelaide in September 1845. Prior to the current research, Coates was only known to have produced significant portraits of Māori.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ BM, Oc2006,Drg.42; BM, Oc2006,Drg.43 related to SLNSW DG B10 f.6.

⁹⁶ SLNSW, DG B10, purchased from J.G.G. Pownall in September 1964. Watercolours originally titled “Natives of New South Wales, pre 1806” based on the contemporary title of another work.

⁹⁷ SLNSW, PXB 513, purchased 1919; Richard Neville, *A Rage for Curiosity* (Sydney: SLNSW Press, 1997).

⁹⁸ BM, Oc2006,Drg.49-54; In Melbourne by 1860, Coates had returned to England by 1872 when he remarried. It is unclear if his images represent an Aboriginal group from the Lower Murray region of South Australia or from the far west of the Port Phillip District; D. Smith, ‘Isaac Coates: Artist’, *Nelson Historical Society Journal*, Vol.6, Issue 3, 2000, p.43.

⁹⁹ NLA, NK 10010/7 and NK 10010/8.

¹⁰⁰ Jocelyne Dudding, ‘An initial report on a recently identified set of Māori Portraits at the Pitt Rivers Museum’, *Journal of Museum Ethnography* No.18, 9-10 May 2005 (May 2006), pp.115-124; Marian Minson, ‘Art as Evidence: The Enigma of the Nelson Māori Portraits’, *The Turnbull Library Record*, Vol.23, no.1 (May); D. Smith, ‘Isaac Coates: Artist’, *Nelson Historical Society Journal*, Vol.6, Issue 3, 2000.



Fig.2.23 ‘*An Old Native of the Settlement of Port Jackson known by the name of Taugerbanna. No.5*’, artist unknown, pre-1806, watercolour, 220 x 140 mm, BM, Oc2006,Drg.43

Fig.2.24 ‘*No.2. Male. Australian. Murray River Tribe. Aged 23 years*’, Isaac Coates, 1845-1872, watercolour, 195 x 172 mm, BM, Oc2006,Drg.50.

Both © The Trustees of the British Museum.

The acquisition of depictions of Indigenous Australians for the British Museum’s collection was piecemeal and often opportunistic, with relatively few works received or acquired before the late 1850s save for works by the Port Jackson Painter and Charles Rodius. In the nineteenth century the museum had little money for acquisitions and Franks used the Christy Fund to purchase works. Other images entered as part of larger groups of varied subject matter, like those donated from Owen’s estate. In the twentieth century, when significant works from private British collections became available at auction, they were overwhelmingly bought by Australian collectors and institutions seeking to develop and strengthen their foundational collections.¹⁰¹ In the twenty-first century, the museum has focussed on acquiring contemporary works by Indigenous Australian artists to augment its otherwise predominantly colonial era collection. The location of most depictions of Indigenous Australians in the British Museum in the pictorial collection of the Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas has led to these images being less well known amongst historians of visual culture. Placed in what was for fifty-eight

¹⁰¹ Art galleries in Australia began to buy material from Britain in the 1860s, although interest in collecting works produced in the early decades of the Australian colonies seems to have increased in the 1930s and 1950s. The State Library of New South Wales was the first founded in Australia in 1826 and holds a large collection of early colonial imagery. The National Library of Australia was established in the 1960s. It holds the extensive collection of the art dealer and collector Rex Nan Kivell, sold to the Australian government in 1959. This collection was an important source for Bernard Smith’s *European Vision and the South Pacific* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988).

years the Department of Ethnography, they have been viewed principally as anthropological or ethnographic illustrations, obscuring their more varied history. With digitisation of the works, which has made them available through the museum's collection online, this has been changing.

2.3 The Natural History Museum

In 1856, Sir Richard Owen left his role as Curator of The Hunterian, University of Glasgow, to take charge of the British Museum's natural history collection. By the early 1850s the museum's expanding zoological, botanical, geological and mineralogical collections were held together in cramped conditions in Bloomsbury.¹⁰² Owen persuaded the museum's board of trustees that a new location was needed for these collections and ultimately it was decided to build a museum of natural history in South Kensington, with Owen as the museum's first superintendent. He envisaged an 'index of the natural world' in physical form, 'a cathedral to nature', free and open to all.¹⁰³ A rough plan created by Owen in 1859 included space for libraries and offices, where works on paper, including depictions of indigenous people, from the Bloomsbury site would be held. The British Museum (Natural History Museum) opened on 18 April 1881 but remained technically under the auspices of the British Museum until 1963 when a separate board of trustees was appointed. There was initially no space for a library in the new building, although smaller departmental libraries moved from the Bloomsbury site to South Kensington in 1881.¹⁰⁴ It was officially renamed the Natural History Museum in 1992.¹⁰⁵

The movement of the collections from Bloomsbury to Kensington was a complicated endeavour, and not only because of their volume. The British Museum's original Trust mandated that scientific literature could only leave the

¹⁰² From 1840 John Edward Gray (1800-1875) was Keeper and virtual founder of Zoological collections at the British Museum.

¹⁰³ Despite the founding intentions of many British museums earlier in the century, by the mid-nineteenth century entry to museums was expensive, which limited access.

¹⁰⁴ Frederick C. Sawyer, 'A short history of the libraries and list of MSS. and original drawings in the British Museum (Natural History)', *Bulletin of The British Museum (Natural History)* Vol. 4, No.2 (London: 1971), p.79.

¹⁰⁵ In 1986 the museum absorbed the adjacent Geological Museum of the British Geological Survey and its collection; Katie Pavid, 'Indexing Earth's wonders: a history of the Museum', Natural History Museum website (first pub 1 Feb 2017, last updated 17 April 2018).

Bloomsbury site if expressly stated in a new Act of Parliament. In 1878, new legislation allowed part of the natural history collection to be moved, although some of Sloane's original gift remained in Bloomsbury.¹⁰⁶ The natural history library of Sir Joseph Banks, which had entered the Botanical Branch of the museum in 1827, proved more problematic.¹⁰⁷ When Banks's natural history books were moved to the Printed Book Department at the British Museum in 1854, this library was described as 'particularly rich in scientific Journals, Transactions of Societies, and Books on Natural History, consisting of about 16,000 volumes'.¹⁰⁸ The case for transferring the Library to South Kensington was referred to the Law Officers of the Crown in 1882, who were 'of the opinion' that the Museum's 'act of incorporation' prohibited the library's removal from Bloomsbury.¹⁰⁹

Banks's bequest included the aforementioned works by the Port Jackson Painter. Sixty-nine watercolour drawings of animals and plants were transferred from his house in Soho Square to the British Museum in 1827 and then to the Natural History Museum after its founding.¹¹⁰ The images included depictions of the Eora people of the Sydney region, hunting and fishing. Explicit representations of interactions between Aboriginal people and colonists are first seen in these works, some recording events of significance for members of the First Fleet that also illuminated Aboriginal practices. As the Eora generally avoided the early settlement, Governor Phillip resorted to kidnap to establish contact: first Arabanoo in December 1788, who died of smallpox in captivity in May the following year; then Woollarawarre of the Wangal clan and Colebee of the Gadigal in November 1789. Colebee escaped, but Woollarawarre stayed for six months before he too ran away. During the next interaction between the Aboriginal people and British colonisers in Manly Cove in 1790, Phillip was wounded with a spear. Understanding this as an act of retribution for the kidnappings Phillip chose not to retaliate.¹¹¹ Two images by the Port Jackson Painter recorded this scene, the first just after the spearing of Phillip (Fig.2.25), and the second in an almost identical composition, depicting 'Mr Waterhouse

¹⁰⁶ Sawyer, p.79.

¹⁰⁷ Chambers, pp.54-57.

¹⁰⁸ Richard Sims, *Handbook to the Library of the British Museum: Containing a Brief history of its Formation, and of the Various Collections of which it is composed* (London: John Russell Smith, 36, Soho Square. 1854), p.84.

¹⁰⁹ Sawyer, p.79.

¹¹⁰ They were held in the library of the Botanical department at the Natural History Museum. *Ibid.*, p.97.

¹¹¹ Karskens, *The Colony*, pp.378-385; Fullager, pp.31-51.

endeavouring to break the Spear after Govr Phillips was wounded by Wil-le-me-ring...'.¹¹² These visual records of events may have been required as supportive evidence to explain activities in New South Wales, or could offer the potential to be reproduced in a publication in Britain. While other images within the Port Jackson Painter group could serve as botanical or ethnographic sources, or Aboriginal portraits, these examples hold a narrative purpose.

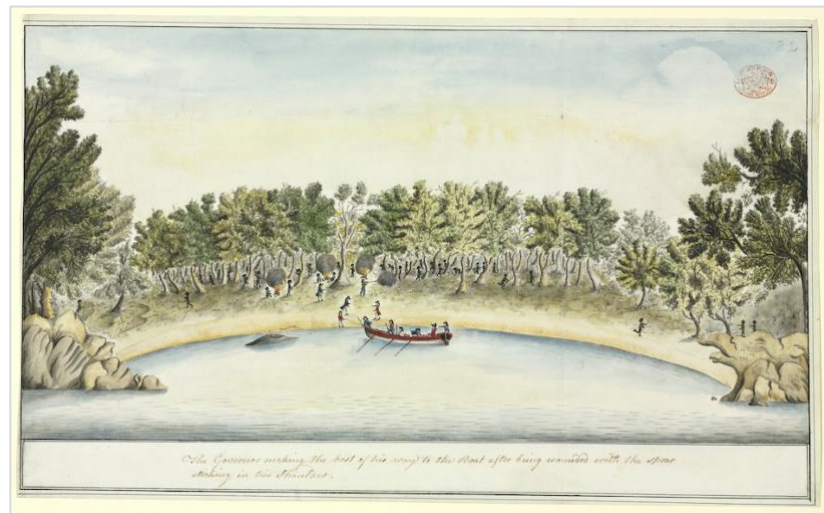


Fig.2.25 *The wounding of Governor Arthur Phillip on 7th September 1790 at Manly Cove, Port Jackson Painter, c.1790, NHM, Watling Drawing, no.23*
© The Trustees of the Natural History Museum, London.

In 1902, a collection of 512 watercolour drawings of Aboriginal Australians, plants, animals and scenery, all produced in the neighbourhood of Port Jackson and known as the Watling drawings, after the convict artist Thomas Watling, were bought for the Natural History Museum.¹¹³ These included portraits of identified Aboriginal Australian sitters, including Woollarawarre (Fig.2.26), and scenes of hunting and fishing. Portraits like these record information about customary Eora practices as in Watling's depiction of 'Dirr-a-go', which evidenced *malgun*, the process by which a woman had two joints of the left little finger cut off so the *garradjun* (fishing line) fitted comfortably (Fig.2.27).¹¹⁴ Twenty-four of these disappeared before the

¹¹² NHM, Watling Drawing – no. 24.

¹¹³ There are works by at least one other artist in this collection, based on the style; Lisa Di Tommaso, *Images of Nature: the Art of the First Fleet* (London: Natural History Museum, 2012), pp.11-12.

¹¹⁴ Watling produced a series of portraits of Aboriginal men and women, now in the NHM; For reference to *malgun*, see Bernard Smith and Alwyne Wheeler (eds.), *The Art of the First Fleet & other early Australian drawings* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988), p.20.

museum purchased the group from James Lee of Kensington.¹¹⁵ During the twentieth century the sixty-nine works bequeathed from the Banks collection were incorrectly attributed as a whole to Thomas Watling and grouped in storage in the Natural History Museum with the Watling drawings, together becoming known as the Watling collection.¹¹⁶



Fig.2.26 'Native name Ben-nel-long. As painted when angry after Botany Bay Colebee was wounded', c.1790, Watling Drawing, no.41.

Fig.2.27 'Dirr-a-goa', c.1792-7, Watling Drawing, no.35.

Both Thomas Watling © The Trustees of the Natural History Museum, London.

Today in the Natural History Museum these works all fall under the First Fleet artwork collection, comprised of the Watling collection of 488 drawings and the Port Jackson Painter collection of 69 drawings. The third group included is the Raper collection of 72 drawings, made by Royal Navy midshipman George Raper on HMS Sirius in the First Fleet, and presented to the Museum by Miss Eva Godman in 1962.¹¹⁷ The contents of these three collections are explored in depth in the 1988 publication *The Art of the First Fleet*.¹¹⁸

2.4 The British Library

The British Museum Library was founded in 1753 as an original part of the collections of the museum. Shortly after it was renamed the department of Printed

¹¹⁵ 'The Watling Collection', Natural History Museum website [accessed 13 August 2020].

¹¹⁶ The works confidently known to be by Watling are signed by him (as Thos. Watling or T. Watling); Banks MS. 34; *Ibid.*, pp.172, 197.

¹¹⁷ Sawyer, pp.173-4.

¹¹⁸ Smith and Wheeler.

Books and Manuscripts.¹¹⁹ In 1808, following the theft of significant works by visitors to this collection, a separate department of Prints and Drawings was created for the more valuable works. Value here was ascribed not only according to the costliness of production or materials, but also in the rarity of a work, or its links to particular artists. In the process of creating the new department, images were divided into ‘artistic’ works, often loose single sheet items, which became part of the Prints and Drawings collection, and ‘functional’ works where images acted as illustration or ‘supporting “evidence” for primarily text-based research’. These ‘functional’ works remained in the Printed Books and Manuscripts collection, from which the British Library was created in 1973 after the British Library Act of 1972.¹²⁰ The basic rule was summarised by curator Felicity Myrone as ‘plates without text were to remain at the British Museum and plates with text were to go to the British Library’, although exceptions were made.¹²¹ Historic decisions about which collection each item should enter were ‘random and reliant on the curator’s knowledge’, fashions of the day and the portability of individual items.¹²²

The department of Prints and Drawings remained a subsidiary of the Department of Antiquities until 1837, and the museum and library collections continued to be moved and divided into the twentieth century. The prioritisation of known artists and recognisable subject matter within the Prints and Drawings collection created further hierarchies of value. Illustrations in books continued to be viewed as less important, and the pictorial items in the library’s collections remained unlisted. This categorization was applied following the entry of works to the British Museum, as prints and drawings were collected and used in the nineteenth century with less distinction between ‘high’ and ‘low’ art, or text and image. The limited scholarship on book illustration has contributed to the important collection in the British Library remaining under-researched.¹²³ Antony Griffiths, former Keeper of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum, described the problem in the foreword to his 2004 publication *Prints for Books*, writing: ‘art historians don’t engage with prints,

¹¹⁹ The British Library was created from this collection in 1973 following the British Library Act of 1972.

¹²⁰ Felicity Myrone, Lead Curator of Western Prints and Drawings at the British Library, ‘Putting topography in its place’, British Library blog post [accessed 30 April 2019].

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² This has led to individual collector’s collections being split between departments and institutions; Ibid.

¹²³ The current topographical project ‘Picturing Places’ at the British Library is of great importance for this reason.

print historians don't seem to deal with books and book historians aren't engaged with the images'.¹²⁴

The collection holds copies of numerous publications containing colonial images of Indigenous Australians, which would have been available to a British audience from the late eighteenth and throughout the nineteenth centuries albeit restricted by cost, though some were produced at a low price point. They include works by members of the First Fleet, such as David Collins's *Account* (1798), in which eight plates illustrate the stages of the 'Yoo-lahng' tooth extraction ceremony.¹²⁵ In other nineteenth-century publications, representations of Aboriginal Australians were incorporated alongside images of other non-Europeans. This encouraged a comparative approach from the reader. One such example is John Heaviside Clark's *Field Sports*, in which six of the ten coloured prints detail Aboriginal hunting and fishing practices.¹²⁶ This high-quality example of a collection of scenes of Aboriginal life was published in London in 1813, but included as a supplement in a wider 1814 volume about indigenous peoples.¹²⁷ The British Library collection also holds the earliest known European-made drawings of Aboriginal people, produced by Sydney Parkinson during the first voyage to the Pacific by James Cook. In the sketch-like graphite drawings the artist depicts tools, shelter, weapons, the Aboriginal processes of fishing, construction of canoes and *gunyah* (shelters).¹²⁸ It also holds a drawing of Aboriginal people fishing at Botany Bay by Tupaia, a Tahitian high priest and navigator who joined James Cook's first voyage at Tahiti.¹²⁹

The binding of volumes in the library can indicate how publications have been grouped together in their history. For example, two significant lithographic works

¹²⁴ Antony Griffiths, *Prints for Books: Book Illustration in France 1760-1800* (London: British Library, 2004), p.x.

¹²⁵ An Eora male-only initiation ceremony which occurred as men reached adulthood; David Collins, *An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales* (London: T. Cadell, Jun. & W. Davies, 1798, 1802); Bernard Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988), p.187.

¹²⁶ Other plates represented less regular events such as fighters going to war, or an Aboriginal 'trial'.

¹²⁷ The plates were accompanied by descriptions that drew on previously published narratives of New South Wales. The volume was dedicated to William Bligh, Governor of New South Wales from 18 August 1806 until 26 January 1808, when he was removed by the New South Wales Corps during the Rum Rebellion.; John Heaviside Clark, *Field Sports &c. &c. of the Native Inhabitants of New South Wales* (London: Edward Orme, 1813).

¹²⁸ BL, Add. MS. 9345 f.14v and f.20v; Bernard Smith, 'The First European Depictions' in *Seeing the First Australians*, ed. by Ian Donaldson & Tamsin Donaldson (Sydney; London; Boston: George Allen & Unwin, 1985), pp.23-8.

¹²⁹ BL, Add. MS. 15508. f.10.

with colonial content depicting Indigenous Australians produced in Britain in 1824-5 and 1830 are bound together in the British Library.¹³⁰ The first is Joseph Lycett's printed scenery book *Views of Australia; or New South Wales & Van Diemen's Land delineated*, published in parts from 1824 to 1825. In this book, depictions of landscapes in New South Wales incorporated Aboriginal people in picturesque compositions.¹³¹ In the back of this bound volume are eight lithograph views in New South Wales with descriptive letterpress, by the professional artist Augustus Earle, who arrived in Australia in late 1825. Earle produced the first portrait lithograph and print of any person in Australia in 1826. The subject was Boongaree (sometimes 'Bungaree'), a Garigal man probably from Broken Bay, who accompanied Matthew Flinders on his expedition in 1801 to 1803, and Philip Parker King during his expedition from 1817 to 1818.¹³² Boongaree became closely associated with Governor Macquarie, who gave him a metal breastplate and named him 'Chief of the Broken Bay Tribe'. The artist Earle also produced the first print presenting the colonial trope of overconsumption of alcohol in Aboriginal communities in the 'Natives of N.S. Wales as seen in the streets of Sydney'. This representation of Aboriginal Australians as drunk and dishevelled was similar to the way impoverished figures in contemporary images of British street life were depicted at this time. This was one of many images by Earle in which Aboriginal people were portrayed as present but notably set apart from the colonists in New South Wales, to suggest a 'degree of real alienation'.¹³³ Both 'Bungaree' and 'Natives of N.S. Wales' were included in the eight lithograph views in the British Library volume. The works of Lycett and Earle were likely combined here due to their similarity in subject matter, date of production and perhaps also due to practical

¹³⁰ Lithography offered a cheaper and easier way to produce multiple copies of images that could be circulated to or produced in Britain.

¹³¹ John Maynard, *True Light and Shade: An Aboriginal Perspective of Joseph Lycett's Art* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2014), pp.12-14; The landscapes of Van Diemen's Land did not include Aboriginal figures. There is no evidence beyond the images to suggest Lycett visited Van Diemen's Land, and it is likely he developed these prints from another artist's drawings. The publisher of Lycett's views, John Souter, had published an 1822 book on Van Diemen's Land by the surveyor-general G.W. Evans. It is possible that the prints were developed from Evan's drawings, and the absence of people may have been his stylistic choice. The poor sales for Lycett's series may indicate the format was losing popularity by the mid 1820s; Jeanette Hoorne, *The Lycett Album: Drawings of Aborigines and the Australian Scenery* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 1990).

¹³² SLNSW, P2/4, The lithograph of 'Bungaree' was published in the 'Sydney Gazette' on 23 August 1826 and 'Sydney Monitor' on 11 August 1826; NLA, NK118, the original portrait of 'Bungaree'; Butler, p.102.

¹³³ Michael Rosenthal, 'The Penitentiary as Paradise', in *Double Vision: Art Histories and Colonial Histories in the Pacific*, ed. by Nicholas Thomas and Diane Losche (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p.106.

similarities, such as their page size. They are today read together due to this juxtaposition and reflect a continuity in what colonial artists in the 1820s and 1830s perceived as subjects of interest to a British audience.

The British Library collection of illustrations and prints in books vastly outnumbers those held at the British Museum today. These images do more than merely support the text - they act as records in their own right – and as such offer a clear opportunity for further study. Griffiths asserted that the dismissal of book illustrations in the British Library as ‘a lowly form of straightforward evidence’ is reductive and has resulted in a lack of visibility for these influential works.¹³⁴ Book illustrations were, after all, the format through which a broad British audience encountered depictions of Aboriginal people. While work has begun to address this gap, in 2019 Myrone described the scholarly cataloguing of the genre of illustration as ‘in its infancy’.¹³⁵ That these illustrations remain largely unlisted has hampered the identification of unusual items (when versions cannot be found in other collections).¹³⁶ In recent years, the British Library has started cataloguing and researching their topographical images, offering new sources for the study of colonial depictions of indigenous peoples.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter examined how depictions of Indigenous Australians entered and moved between departments within the British Museum, and those that became the Natural History Museum and British Library, from the late eighteenth century to the present day. The movement of works was informed by contemporary classifications. The dominant understanding of the purpose of representations of Aboriginal people, as art or ethnographic record, influenced whether they were kept in the Department of Prints and Drawings, or the Department of Ethnography, later the Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas. Incorporation of images in larger collections of natural history, botanical, and zoological images resulted in works being moved to more specialised museums. The format of works also

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Myrone, ‘Prints and drawings at the British Museum’, Picturing Places Blog, British Library [accessed 30 April 2019].

¹³⁶ An essential starting point is the publication by John Roland Abbey, *Travel in Aquatint and Lithography, 1770-1860: From the Library of J. R. Abbey; a Bibliographical Catalogue* (London: Dawsons of Pall Mall, 1956).

influenced decisions, as those in publications almost entirely moved to the British Library. The division of works into 'high' and 'low' art correlated with discussions of value over the centuries. Historical classification or categorisation continues to influence how collections are approached today. For visitors interested in early colonial Australian subject matter, all three institutions must be visited to access relevant works.

The location of colonial images within the museum could be influenced by the route by which they entered, as through collectors of note such as Joseph Banks and Richard Owen, significant figures in the world of science and natural history collecting. Images belonging to Henry Christy ended up in ethnography due to the subject matter of the wider collection in which they arrived, and similarly Joseph Barnard Davis's interests in craniology and ethnography influenced the final location of works bought from his estate sale (as will be discussed in Chapter Three). The entrance of these collections into the museum was influenced by the interests and social connections or networks of A.W. Franks, who as Keeper of British and Medieval Antiquities and Ethnography brought them into his own Department. Works purchased from dealers in prints, drawings and books, such as A.A. Burt, George E. Mason, and George Ellis, ended up in the Prints and Drawings department, likely due to established relationships with staff there. The singular instance of the museum purchasing relevant items from an auction house, Sotheby's, was for the significant and unique working proofs of illustrations for the Cook publication. In the twentieth century there was not much money available to purchase colonial imagery, so works entered primarily via donation: by Baroness Lucas of Crudwell and Lady Dingwall, and by Henry Foster McClintock on behalf of the McClintock family. It indicates that the reputation of the 'national museum' as a natural repository for such material had been established by this point. The most recent donations have been made by former Keeper J.C.H. King, whose intimate knowledge of the collection and own scholarly interests influenced the images given.

The categorisation of objects following their entry into institutions reflected taxonomies of knowledge and systems of belief in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It led to objects, closely related by sitter or subject matter, to be split arbitrarily between three institutions: the British Museum, the Natural History Museum and the British Library. Images that emerge in both the Prints and

Drawings Department and the Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas show they could be approached for different forms of knowledge, whether aesthetic or ethnographical. In the first case they could be viewed in aesthetic terms as ‘fine art’, offering an example by a particular artist, or recording a new colony. In the latter location they could be read as offering ethnographic information about a culture or people. For example, the printed portrait of Bennelong has the potential to be read as representing an Aboriginal sitter in the Africa, Oceania and the Americas Department, as the product of a European artist in the Prints and Drawings Department, as an illustration of a key figure in David Collins’s narrative of the invasion and settlement of the First Fleet, or included in a broader work about ‘Universal Geography’ that discussed indigenous peoples from different locations. These understandings and boundaries were and are malleable, and dependent on the knowledge or interests of the viewer in each of these given locations. That said, the location of objects in Prints and Drawings does not remove them entirely from the ethnographic material. Many of the earliest examples entered that department and have not been moved since despite the emergence of the Department of Ethnography, later Africa, Oceania and the Americas. In some cases, this could reflect their value as early colonial Australian artworks, while in others it was their lack of value that has seen them stay, as for copies of prints.

Together these works reflect the tension between the categories of ‘fine art’ and ‘ethnography’ that are applied to colonial depictions of Indigenous Australians, and other indigenous peoples such as Māori and Native Americans. Few of the examples discussed fall neatly into either grouping, and many could simultaneously exist in both categories and others beyond. Even works produced in fine art materials, such as Duterrau’s oil painting of Wurati (Fig.1.5) have been similarly treated as ethnographic records and held alongside other content purchased from Joseph Barnard Davis. The Davis collection when considered under the lens of that collector, necessarily engages with his reading of the works as ethnographic images because of his anthropological and ethnographic interests. However the same works represented significant Aboriginal people such as Trukanini, were made by recognised artists like Thomas Bock, or were related to key colonial figures, e.g George Augustus Robinson. Pushing back on the strictures of taxonomic organisation within institutions such as the British Museum offers an enriching path for research.

Approaching works by subject matter has allowed us to consider physically dispersed objects together, highlighting the irregularity of the history of the collection of these images in the British Museum, which was opportunistic and often resulted from the influence of figures like Franks and Christy. It has demonstrated the limiting nature of taxonomies of knowledge: by locating something within an institution based on an initial reading, or route of entry, the object can be restricted from offering information to study of other kinds. The institutional standing of the colonial images in the ethnographic collection following their entry is suggested by their subsequent lack of registration and research until recent decades. The historical disregard for illustrations in printed volumes has led them to be overlooked despite the wealth of information they offer about how images of Aboriginal peoples were presented and understood in the nineteenth century.

It is important to note that in the nineteenth century, the general public could not easily see these images. Despite significant early donations and sales, such as the Port Jackson drawings in 1827 and the Rodius drawings in 1840, from that point relevant works entered the Department of Prints and Drawings in small numbers at irregular intervals. The largest body of works entered the British Museum's collection in 1883 from the Davis sale, so towards the end of the century. It acted as a supporting collection for the Department of Ethnography, and its contents were rarely displayed until almost a century later (to be discussed in Chapter Five). There is no record of these works being shown in the museum in the nineteenth century, limiting any potential for their presence to be recognised by the wider public.

The collection has not received the attention that it deserved due to not having a dedicated pictorial collections manager for most of its history, a position missing again now. The widely held assumption outside the museum, that two-dimensional works would only sit in the Department of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum has led to those held in the Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas to be largely overshadowed, save for notable exceptions such as the portraits by Thomas Bock. Consequently, important images held in this pictorial collection have not been included in seminal studies of colonial Australian imagery. Reconstructing the route by which works entered the museum and changed over the centuries allows researchers to explore more fully how the meanings of objects have changed over time.

It is of primary importance for research and access that relevant works in collections are identified, registered, appropriately documented and made available online. While some images may later be restricted in line with the wishes or customary beliefs of originating communities, a first step is to provide digital access to enable these images to be known and available to the ancestors and communities of the Aboriginal sitters depicted. That said, general museum databases online are not a good medium for ‘interpretation’, as they are typically organised to suit museum collection management requirements and are limited by fixed categories that do not align with Indigenous concepts and knowledge systems.¹³⁷ They can also have slow response times to changed ‘meanings’. While issues of interpretation are important and influential, representation in an online museum catalogue with up-to-date information available remains a fundamental responsibility of the institution. It facilitates contact with Aboriginal communities, enabling new interpretations. It also gives institutions the opportunity to be transparent about some of the unpalatable truths of why these images were made, what they reflect, and how they may have influenced opinions and actions in their production and various afterlives.

Through tracing the history of acquisitions in the nineteenth century, I have demonstrated how institutional histories influence the organisation of colonial images held in their collections and can limit or shape the subsequent knowledge generated from them. The categorisation of objects and subjects into existing ‘Western’ frameworks of understanding, were a development of enlightenment ideas that sought to organise the world. Internal and external factors also influenced the organisation of the British Museum and the care and reading of these works: the changing architecture and buildings of the museum; concerns regarding the safety and care of the objects; and broader notions of culture and human development. It is this final subject that I consider in the next chapter, looking to readers of visual content in the scientific realm through the collection of Joseph Barnard Davis.

¹³⁷ Some specific databases are designed for this, such as the Collections Online (MOA-CAT) system at the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia.

Chapter Three

Indigenous Australia in the scientific realm: the pictorial collection of Joseph Barnard Davis

The creation of records about peoples in foreign lands newly encountered by Europeans was a formative part of the development of the fields of anthropology and ethnology in nineteenth-century Britain. Members of the related learned societies provided a ready audience for information conveyed in visual form and emerged as significant collectors of ethnographic pictorial works. They also offered guidance on the production of images of this kind to create a consistency in the representations made, including those depicting Indigenous Australians.¹ Within this sphere pictorial works were approached as sources of knowledge, albeit with caution, and were particularly valued for the physiognomic details they recorded. As a result, scientific ‘readers’, whose concerns were often phrenological or craniological, predominantly collected portraits. Through these images they sought to study the physical form of people from different geographical regions and ‘racial’ origins, many believing the crania, or brain-shape influenced or reflected the personality or capabilities of the sitter or their race.

Art and representation were key to understandings in Europe of human variety, which developed in the late-eighteenth century following increased global travel and engagement with people from distant locations, along with the desire to order the natural world through taxonomies.² Roxann Wheeler described the articulation of human variety in this period as developing from a focus on religious difference, to ‘scientific categories derived from natural history that feature external characteristics of the human body’. These included skin colour, facial features, and hair texture,

¹ Similarly the continuity of questionnaires conducted on expeditions, ensured stability and comparability in the information gathered and moved in expansive imperial networks; Bruno Latour, ‘Drawing things together’, in *Representation in Scientific Practice*, ed. by Michael Lynch and Steve Woolgar (Cambridge, MA; London: The MIT Press, 1990), p.57.

² These developed from and coexisted alongside long held ideologies about what caused human difference: the four continents theory (Africa, America, Asia and Europe), humoral or climatic theory, and the four-stage theory (hunter-gathering, pasturage, agriculture, commerce); Roxann Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), pp.31, 39; David Bindman, *Ape to Apollo: Aesthetics and the Idea of Race in the 18th Century* (London: Reaktion Books, 2002), pp.58, 61-62, 89.

along with outward evidence of civil society.³ External features were visually recorded and transported in images, used as sources for scientific study to describe and order the world, and they also performed an illustrative role for the wider circulation of ideas of human difference. The centrality of images in theoretical practices is demonstrated through the example of Johann Caspar Lavater, who in the 1770s championed the practice of physiognomy, in which a person's character was assessed from their outward appearance, and the shape and proportions of facial features. Lavater collected an archive of 22,000 images, which he used to inform a 'science' of physiognomy.⁴ These works were primarily portraits from which he developed ideas regarding differences in facial profile. The skull was viewed as the most permanent aspect of the head and therefore a reliable source of study. Lavater's influential essays 'on physiognomy' (1775-8) included 800 plates produced by skilled engravers, demonstrating the importance he placed on the visual to understand and convey his arguments.⁵

David Bindman has described the judgements of those visiting foreign lands as providing an 'accessible pool of stereotypes, allegories and personifications'. Subjective aesthetic judgments of 'beauty' could be applied to whole peoples and became a source for categorical distinctions and dehumanisation. Bindman asserted that the artist's representation was often directly conflated with that person's appearance, with limited acknowledgement of the subjectivity or style of the artist.⁶ The fallibility of 'measuring' features such as colour was recognised by contemporary writers, due to the partiality of observers. Skin colour into the nineteenth century was viewed as a less 'reliable' facet of identification. Wheeler has however correctly observed that people continued to record these factors, suggesting they maintained some role in views of difference.⁷

While physiognomy was widely considered a pseudoscience by the early nineteenth century, the practice of evaluating crania and visual typologies was central to other more enduring theories. Phrenology, in which the shape and structure of the skull was studied for indications of mental faculties and character traits, was largely

³ Wheeler, pp.14, 289.

⁴ Ibid., pp.9-10; Bindman, p.94.

⁵ He was dismissive towards artists as mere 'imitators of nature'; Bindman, pp.92-94.

⁶ Ibid., pp.11,14,19-20.

⁷ Wheeler, p.235.

discredited by the 1850s.⁸ Its close relation craniology however was deemed a legitimate scientific study in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. This study of the shape and size of crania from people across the globe, involved the collection and measurement of skulls. This data was used to assert racial difference through brain size, thereby inheriting the supposed link between crania, intelligence and race. These nineteenth-century practices highlighted human difference rather than the 'human similitude' that had been key to most eighteenth-century theories on human variation.⁹ Craniology is now closely associated with scientific racism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The tenor of discussions in Britain surrounding representations of Indigenous Australians changed with the steady emergence of ethnography, phrenology, and racial science. While ideas of 'race' were unstable in the eighteenth century, they became more fixed and charged as a 'categorical division' by the disciplines of medicine and science in the early to mid-nineteenth century, with race and colonialism becoming intimately co-dependent. In the early-nineteenth century it was increasingly asserted that external appearances or skeletons and cranial measurements reflected a person's mental capacity, and the 'civilizational proclivities for entire groups of people'.¹⁰ By the mid-nineteenth century many Britons believed race was destiny and place of birth defined a person's potential. The supposed 'objective superiority' of Europeans was supported through contemporaneous studies of anatomy, such as skull measurement, and the creation of scientific data sets. This perceived 'predominance' was linked to imperial ambition and asserted that colonial subjugation resulted from racial hierarchies rather than for political, economic, or religious reasons.¹¹ This false reasoning was used in the colonial subjugation of Indigenous Australians. Colonial images and their collection for scientific study in the period 1800 to 1860 were used to support this claim. Images sometimes travelled along similar networks as human remains collected in Europe, in response to an overlap in people interested in receiving these items. Paul Turnbull has described how scientists saw the collection of human remains as a 'race against time', to locate samples that clearly demonstrated distinctions between races, as the

⁸ Lavater's ideas influenced caricaturists and novelists in the nineteenth century; Ibid., pp.102-4, 122-3.

⁹ Bronwen Douglas and Chris Ballard (eds.), *Foreign Bodies: Oceania and the Science of Race 1750-1940* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2008), p.44.

¹⁰ Ibid., pp.11, 32-33, 44.

¹¹ Ibid., pp.291, 295, 299.

spread of Europeans across the British Empire and beyond would impact upon these differences.¹² This argument could logically be extended to images viewed as scientific record. They may have resulted in people collecting later in the nineteenth century seeking earlier examples of representations.

The pictorial collection of the surgeon and craniologist Joseph Barnard Davis illuminates the role images could play in support of scientific endeavours. It also demonstrates practicalities involved in the collection of depictions of Aboriginal people in nineteenth-century Britain. The Davis collection is held in the Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas at the British Museum and until now, has remained understudied. In the numerous obituaries written for the collector, which discussed his impact on the fields of craniology and ethnology, writers focused on his large collection of human remains. The assortment of paintings, drawings and prints Davis gathered has therefore been viewed as secondary to his extensive collection of crania and skeletal matter, if mentioned at all.¹³ In fact, his pictorial collection was far larger and more varied in content than has been previously observed or acknowledged. I argue that while not explicitly invoked or cited in his publications, it was through these images and the process of their collection that Davis learned of physiognomic details that his collection of human remains could not offer.

The sense that these pictorial works were of ‘secondary importance’ was reinforced once they entered the British Museum, where they supplemented the object-based ethnographic collection. This interpretation has masked the value of these works to nineteenth-century collectors interested in the study of human difference. Of the almost 1200 pictorial works linked to Davis in the British Museum, 239 depict subject matter from Oceania (see Fig.2.11). They include drawings, paintings, prints and photographs, almost all of which are portraits. Those linked to Australia were collected from three main sources, discussed in depth below, each connected to a person who had spent time in Australia, had engaged with Aboriginal Australians, or had written about the development of the human species. This highlights three different routes through which ‘authenticity’ or ‘authority’ could be asserted over

¹² Paul Turnbull, *Science, Museums and Collecting the Indigenous Dead in Colonial Australia* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), pp.22-23.

¹³ The crania collection is outlined and indexed in J.B. Davis, *Thesaurus Craniorum. Catalogue of the skulls of the races of man, in the collection of Joseph Barnard Davis* (London: Printed for subscribers, 1867).

the reading of the images. Investigating how these works entered Davis's collection, and the lengths he went to acquire them, reveals manifold meanings, the uses they had for previous owners, and offers an insight into the circulation of ethnographic depictions in Britain in the mid to late-nineteenth century and the provenance of works that later entered the British Museum collection. It also provides for the first time an analysis of the Davis collection, being the pre-eminent collection of images of human types assembled in Britain in the nineteenth century.

3.1 Joseph Barnard Davis: craniologist and collector

Joseph Barnard Davis (1801-1881) was born in York, and on 17 July 1816 was indentured to John Wilson, surgeon and apothecary of that city.¹⁴ When still a student, in 1820 he acted as surgeon on a whaling ship to the Arctic. He qualified as Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries in 1823, became a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1843, and in 1862 graduated with an MD from the University of St. Andrews.¹⁵ In his early years of training Davis was taught at the private anatomy school of Joshua Brookes in Great Marlborough Street, London where 'the importance of comparative anatomy' was emphasised.¹⁶ This may have influenced his later interests. Davis was a dedicated Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries from 1854; the Royal Society made him a Fellow in 1868 'for his scientific merits'; and he became a member of learned societies in cities across Europe and beyond.¹⁷ Of particular note to the current study, Davis was elected a Fellow of the Ethnological Society in 1856, thirteen years after its foundation, perhaps indicating when Davis first engaged seriously with the subject of ethnology. He became a Fellow of the Anthropological Society from its foundation in 1863.¹⁸

¹⁴ Archives of the Royal College of Surgeons (RCS), MS0562/3, and MS0562/4/4.

¹⁵ 'Obituary', *British Medical Journal (BMJ)*, 4 June 1881, p.901; G.T. Bettany, 'Davis, Joseph Barnard (1801-1881)', revised by Nick Hervey, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edition, Jan 2007 [accessed 2 February 2017]; W.H. Flowers, 'Joseph Barnard Davis', *Nature*, 24, 26 May 1881, pp.82-83.

¹⁶ Davis would later buy skulls that formerly belonged to Brookes's museum; Davis, *Thesaurus Craniorum*, p.v; Helen Macdonald, *Human Remains: Dissection and Its Histories* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), p.98.

¹⁷ 'Obituary', *BMJ*, 4 June 1881, p.901; RCS, MS0562/4/5, Letter from the Royal Society; RCS, MS0562/4, Letters from the General Council of the University of S. Andrews, the Association Francais pour l'avancement des Sciences, the Congres Medical International de Paris, and the Provinciaal Utrechtsch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen.

¹⁸ *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland (JAI)*, Vol. 11 (1882), pp. 482-487.

From his first marriage to Elizabeth Haslam on 25 September 1823 until his death in 1881, Davis's home was the rural town of Shelton, in the Staffordshire potteries. His residence also housed his vast collection of some 2000 crania and skeletons. Hanley and Shelton was the largest town in the Potteries, with a population of 16,338 by 1834, that would nearly triple over the following forty years.¹⁹ Davis was strongly connected to his local area, and held the positions of Union medical officer and Public Vaccinator for the Stoke on Trent district, also acting on a Board of Health and as Special Constable and parish medical officer for Shelton until his death.²⁰

The difficulties of accessing Davis's collection, due to its rural location, were oft cited in published references by contemporaries. Distance created a barrier, and most thought London, or another large city, was a more logical place for an assemblage of its kind:

There are few amongst the voyagers who watch that foretaste of Pandemonium, called the Potteries... that know, or would care to know, that the largest collection of skulls in the world is in their immediate vicinity... We regret that so superb a collection should be buried at Shelton.²¹

Davis, however, adopted the opposite view, condemning how 'such objects [we]re wasted in the London Museums' while he was 'able to turn them to a better account than anyone else'.²² Interested parties sought him out, such as James Bonwick, author of *The Last of the Tasmanians* who requested Davis's 'kind sympathy and aid in my public effort' for subscriptions to produce *The Daily Life and Origin of the Tasmanians* (both 1870).²³ His rural location did not prevent Davis from acquiring items from geographically diverse sources. He spared no expense on enriching his

¹⁹ 'Davis Jph. Bernard[sic], Albion st.,' under 'Surgeons' in section on 'Hanley and Shelton, in W. White, *History, Gazetteer, and Directory of Staffordshire: And the City and County of the City of Lichfield, comprising... a General Survey of the County of Stafford* (Staffordshire, 1834), pp.539, 569; J. Murray, *Handbook for Travellers in Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, and Staffordshire* (Derbyshire, 1874), p.180.

²⁰ RCS, MS0562/3/5, and MS0562/4; 'Obit.', *BMJ*, 4 June 1881, p.901.

²¹ 'Review: Barnard Davis on Craniology,' *The Anthropological Review (TAR)*, Vol. 6, No. 23 (Oct. 1868) pp.386-394.

²² Vivienne Rae-Ellis, *Black Robinson: Protector of Aborigines* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1988), pp.260-261.

²³ BM, PIC DOC 171_OC6, Letter Bonwick to Davis, 1870.

collection and made regular visits to London, Bristol, Bath and Paris, where he procured new items and participated in scientific exchanges and meetings.²⁴

Davis began his collection of human remains in 1822.²⁵ In 1848 he purchased two skulls of ‘the Adelaide Tribe’ from Matthew Moorhouse, Protector of Aborigines in South Australia.²⁶ By 1867 he had collected 1,474 skulls, more than those held in all the museums of Britain together. By 1879 this had expanded to over 1,800 anatomical specimens, crania, and skeletons and his collection was known internationally as ‘the richest and most valuable ever formed by a private individual’.²⁷ Davis believed the measurement and close analysis of these skulls offered significant evidence for the study of physical anthropology.²⁸ Although the level of his interest in phrenology is unclear, one of the foundational collections he purchased was from Deville of the Strand in 1861, ‘a notorious phrenologist.’²⁹ Davis built on this purchase by acquiring existing collections and through piecemeal donations, purchases and exchanges from contacts across the British Empire and beyond, including private travellers and collectors.³⁰ He formed his collection almost entirely at his own expense.³¹ In 1879, towards the end of his life, Davis sought to sell his collection of skeletons, bones, casts and other objects. One journal described him as ‘desirous of seeing it established in some central or public situation where it could be made available for future research,’ and fittingly the Royal College

²⁴ RCS, MS0562/4/5; Archives of the Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI), MS 140, Joseph Barnard Davis Notebook no. 4 (4th September 1854 to May 1858).

²⁵ Johanna Parker, ‘Navigating the Nineteenth Century Collecting Network: The case of Joseph Barnard Davis’, in *The Routledge Companion to Indigenous Repatriation: Return, Reconcile, Renew*, ed. by Cressida Fforde, C. Timothy McKeown, and Honor Keeler (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020), p.500.

²⁶ Identified as Kurna people by Turnbull, in *Science, Museums and Collecting; Davis, Thesaurus Craniorum*, p.vi.

²⁷ *The Staffordshire Sentinel*, 24 January 1880; *BMJ*, Vol.2, No.990 (Dec. 20, 1879), p.996.

²⁸ Bettany, ‘Davis’, *ODNB*, OUP, 2004; online edn, Jan 2007 [accessed 2 February 2017].

²⁹ Davis, *Thesaurus Craniorum*, p.vi; ‘Review: Barnard Davis on Craniology,’ *TAR*, Vol. 6, No. 23 (Oct. 1868), pp.386-394.

³⁰ RCS, MS0562/4/6, Letter from the Surgeon General’s Office in Washington, 11 March 1874; MS0562/4/7, Letter from a Dr Cranlie[?] regarding skulls from Vancouver’s Island; Davis owned twelve crania from Tasmania. A full skeleton of a man in the Davis collection he stated he owed ‘to the great zeal and generosity of Mr. Morton Allport’; J.B. Davis, *On the Osteology and Peculiarities of the Tasmanians: a race of man recently become extinct* (Haarlem: De Erven Loosjes, 1874), p.5; RCS, MS0562/4, the aforementioned Allport transferred a copy of Davis’s treatise *On the Osteology* to the Royal Society of Tasmania.

³¹ One example records Davis using a grant from the British Association for the Advancement of Science.

of Surgeons agreed to purchase the full collection in early January 1880.³² This acquisition was well covered in scientific journals, which asserted that its value would be ‘greatly enhanced’ by relocation to London.³³ The collection proved so vast that its transfer to Lincoln’s Inn Fields had to proceed ‘in instalments.’³⁴

In addition to Davis’s well-known collection of crania, he developed a wide collection of ethnographic images, objects, an extensive library of texts of a primarily anthropological and ethnological nature and an assortment of other objects (see Appendix 1). While Davis recorded the first skulls he acquired, there is no record of the first ethnographic image he purchased. Nevertheless, the documents produced in the construction of his pictorial collection reflect the same industrious and obsessive approach evident in his sourcing of crania and skeletal matter. Davis sought first-hand depictions of sitters, desiring observational works that were as ‘accurate’ as possible, as in his attempts to obtain the original portraits of Aboriginal Tasmanians by convict artist Thomas Bock. He was conscious of the potential fallibility of available images, particularly those produced second, or third hand removed from the sitter. Sometimes Davis purchased or commissioned copies of works he wished to own and then later acquired the original examples when they became available. In none of his letters or published works did he explicitly outline why he wanted a pictorial collection, but the nature of his collecting suggested these works supported his investigations into the physical form of peoples previously unknown to him. Visual representations of living figures offered his studies aesthetic information that could not be supplied through crania alone, such as the countenance or features of a person, and details such as skin and hair. The pictorial collection included works in a range of media depicting indigenous peoples from across the world (see Fig.2.11). Davis’s records document how his collection of images and information relating to Aboriginal Australians increased from 1856, following the purchase of a collection by the artist John Skinner Prout, but confirm that he also owned relevant images before this.³⁵ Appendix 2 provides a table of the depictions of Aboriginal people owned by Davis, excluding photographs, that are

³² The museum was bombed in 1941 and what remained was moved to the Natural History Museum; ‘The Barnard Davis Collection of Skulls’, *BMJ*, Vol. 2, No. 990 (Dec. 20, 1879), p.996; Parker, p.500.

³³ *JAI*, Vol. 11 (1882), pp. 482-487.

³⁴ ‘The Annual Show at the College of Surgeons,’ *BMJ*, Vol.1, No. 1017 (Jun. 26, 1880), p.989.

³⁵ SLNSW, GAR papers, Vol. 68/or 69, Davis to Robinson, Feb. 5, 1862, pl. 475-6.

now in the British Museum collection. These include 104 drawings, 55 prints, a singular painting, and two portrait busts.³⁶

Only in middle age did Davis broaden his focus from that of a medical practitioner.³⁷ His interest in crania and anthropology become evident in 1854, when he published reports on the crania of Ancient Britons, Romans and Anglo-Saxons, intended for a specialist audience. He became a Fellow of the Ethnological Society in 1856, and between 1856 and 1865 he produced *Crania Britannica* with Dr John Thurnam, which delineated the skulls of early inhabitants of the British Isles.³⁸ His later work, the *Thesaurus Craniorum* (1867), was based on his own collection. These works acted as resources for others to work from, drawing together a large amount of data on crania measurements. Davis published also on more delimited subjects, in 1874 releasing a treatise *On the Osteology and peculiarities of the Tasmanians, a race most recently become extinct* (unillustrated).³⁹ An influential figure in British anthropology, Davis contributed papers from 1860 to the *Anthropological Review*, the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute* and other journals in Britain and further afield. From 1870 he became joint editor of *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute* and *Anthropologia*. His influence was recognised in an obituary in which the *Thesaurus Craniorum* and *Crania Britannica* were described as ‘among the most important contributions to anthropological science ever published in this country.’⁴⁰ The *British Medical Journal* took a less flattering view, describing his strengths as his ‘untiring energy in [the] collection and record of specimens, rather than any deep power, of observation, judgment, or induction’. They allowed however that ‘none have ever left a more stable monument of scientific labour behind them.’⁴¹

While academics have explored the sourcing and construction of Davis’s collection of crania, little has been written on his pictorial collection.⁴² A few scholars such as

³⁶ The two volumes of drawings by Charles Hamilton Smith are counted here as two items.

³⁷ His earliest publication offered guidance on the maintenance of physical health through diet and exercise: J.B. Davis, *A popular Manual of the Art of Preserving Health* (London: Whittaker & Co., 1836), p.iv.

³⁸ Bettany, ‘Davis’, *ODNB*, OUP, 2004; online edn, Jan 2007 [accessed 2 February 2017]; J.B. Davis, and John Thurnam, *Crania Britannica: Delineations and Descriptions of the Skulls of the Aboriginal and Early Inhabitants of the British Islands* (London: Subscribers, 1865).

³⁹ Davis, *On the Osteology*.

⁴⁰ *JAI*, Vol.11 (1882), pp.482-487.

⁴¹ ‘Obituary’, *BMJ*, 4 June 1881, p.901.

⁴² Macdonald; Paul Turnbull, ‘British Anthropological Thought in Colonial Practice: the appropriation of Indigenous Australian bodies, 1860-1880’, in *Foreign Bodies: Oceania and the Science of Race 1750-1940*, ed. by Bronwen Douglas and Chris Ballard (Canberra: ANU

Plomley have briefly referenced his ownership of significant works, for example Thomas Bock's series of Tasmanian Aboriginal portraits.⁴³ In this chapter I first explore how Davis sourced, negotiated and gathered depictions of Aboriginal Australians by analysing three distinct groups of images acquired for his collection: a group of watercolour drawings by the artist John Skinner Prout; a series of copies made by Charles Hamilton Smith; and the collection of images gathered by George Augustus Robinson in Australia. Prout, Smith and Robinson were all notable in the anthropological, ethnographic and artistic communities of mid-nineteenth century Britain. These examples reflect the works available for Davis to purchase, how he became aware of them, and the process and negotiations he used to acquire them. I then situate these Aboriginal Australian examples within Davis's wider collection of depictions of other indigenous peoples to demonstrate how he approached these images comparatively. To explore his organisation and conception of the works, I examine an album he created called the 'Galerie Anthropologique' which demonstrates how Davis used depictions of Aboriginal people as sources for his production of new 'knowledge'.

3.2 Portraits by John Skinner Prout

In 1856 Joseph Barnard Davis purchased a group of portraits from the artist John Skinner Prout (1805-1876). Prout spent much of his early life in Plymouth and Bristol, later touring Wales and Dublin with the Bristol sketching club. He left England for Sydney in 1840 in search of better opportunities, which he found as a painter, printmaker, and teacher. Close examination of Prout's works allows us to make connections previously unaccounted for. A drawing of the 'Native, New South Wales' that entered the Davis collection, was the model for a figure at the bottom right of the front cover wrapper of *Sydney Illustrated*, a series of lithograph prints Prout published in New South Wales from 1842 to 1844 (Figs.3.1 and 3.2).⁴⁴ The woman is also seen in the artist's painting of *The city of Sydney N.S.W. from behind Lavender's Bay, North Shore*, demonstrating Prout's reuse of an observational image in

Press, 2008); Turnbull, *Science, Museums and Collecting*; Parker, 'Navigating the Nineteenth Century Collecting Network', in *The Routledge Companion to Indigenous Repatriation*, ed. by Fforde, McKeown, and Keeler, pp.497-520.

⁴³ N.J.B. Plomley, 'Tasmanian Aboriginal Material in Collections in Europe', *JAI*, Vol. 91, No.2 (Jul.-Dec., 1961), pp.221-227.

⁴⁴ Published by J.S. Prout & Co., Australian Lithographic; *Ibid.*, p.128; Other drawings by Prout from New South Wales in the BM: Oc2006,Drg.33, 'Yanna Wah, Illawarra N.S.W.'; Oc2006,Drg.35, 'Old Frying pan'; Oc2006,Drg.2, 'Native, New South Wales'.

further artistic outputs.⁴⁵ It also shows that he returned with the source record to Britain after its use in a product printed in Australia.



Fig.3.1 'Native, New South Wales', John Skinner Prout, 1841-2, graphite and watercolour, 235 x 186mm, BM, Oc2006, Drg.2 © The Trustees of the British Museum.
Fig.3.2 Frontispiece of *Sydney Illustrated*, John Skinner Prout, 1842, lithograph, National Library of Australia, Bib ID: 8043303.

Prout particularly flourished after he moved to Hobart in 1843. In February 1845 he was one of two European artists to visit the Aboriginal Tasmanians at the Wybalenna establishment on Flinders Island.⁴⁶ Prout had published the first half of a scenery book *Tasmania Illustrated* in 1844, shortly after his arrival from Sydney.⁴⁷ He included a depiction of Wybalenna titled the 'Residence of the Aborigines, Flinders Island' in the second part, published in 1846.⁴⁸ Along with landscape scenes, Prout produced portraits of Aboriginal women and men (some together, see Fig.3.3, some alone as in Fig.3.4 and 3.5, full list in Appendix 2).⁴⁹ The women are wearing pale blue dresses, and sometimes also white aprons and red caps, or

⁴⁵ NGA Canberra, 59.255. To finance the series Prout sought subscribers, requesting they come forward quickly as 'the Work will be sent to England after the Sydney Subscribers are supplied; Ibid., p.127.

⁴⁶ The other artist was Francis Simpkinson de Wesselow, nephew of Lady Jane Franklin, and they were together accompanied by superintendent Dr Joseph Milligan; UTAS, RSA B 18, Letter from F.G.S. De Wesselow to H.H. Montgomery, 10 July 1900.

⁴⁷ Prout taught drawing and created an amateur sketching club in Hobart, becoming the centre of an artistic community that stretched to Launceston; Roger Butler, *Printed: Images in Colonial Australia 1801-1901* (Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 2007), p.76.

⁴⁸ Printed from four stones; Butler, pp.135, 165.

⁴⁹ BM, PIC DOC 171_OC3.

elaborately patterned scarves or hats. The men are dressed in white shirts and blue trousers. The representations of the adults either have the sitters in profile or facing forward. The close detail in these works indicated the artist's attempt to create an 'accurate' portrayal of the sitter in this setting.⁵⁰ I argue that they are also sympathetic portrayals. A particularly intimate drawing presents a close familial relationship. The adult man Neptune supports his son Moriarty with his hand while gazing forward at the person capturing his image (Fig.3.3). The boy's youthfulness is emphasised through his distraction by something or someone beyond the frame of the image.



Fig.3.3 *Neptune & his son Moriarty*, John Skinner Prout, 1845, graphite, 248 x 188mm, BM, Oc2006,Drg.24. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

John Skinner Prout spent three months at Port Phillip in 1847, before returning to Hobart and then to Britain in 1848. He produced the scenery book *Views in Melbourne and Geelong* and five portraits of Aboriginal Victorians now held in the British Museum: *Sugar Sugar & Adam Clark*; *Yurunduck Devil's River*; *Mr Murray* (Fig.3.6); *Nerree Buck*; and *Family Group, Australia Felix* (Fig.3.7).⁵¹ This last work is thought to be based on one of the earliest photographs produced in Australia, in Port Phillip, an 1847 daguerreotype by Douglas Kilburn, and offers an early example of the interaction between these two mediums of image production in a colonial

⁵⁰ De Wesselow produced portraits of many of the same sitters, although his works were less accomplished. These are held at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.

⁵¹ Identified as from 'Australia Felix'; BM, ETH DOC 915, Letter from Prout to Davis (1), 26 January 1856; BM works by Prout: 'Family Group, Australia Felix' Oc2006,Drg.1; 'Sugar Sugar and Adam Clark' Oc2006,Drg.11; 'Nerree Buck, Goulbourn Tribe Melbourne' Oc2006,Drg.32; 'Mr Murray Melbourne' Oc2006,Drg.34; 'Yurunduk, Devil's River at Melbourne' Oc2006,Drg.36.

context.⁵² In 1848 Prout returned to Bristol, before moving permanently to London where he ‘lived off Australian subject matter’ until his death.⁵³



Fig.3.4 *Daphne. From Oyster Bay. V.D.L.*, John Skinner Prout, 1845, graphite and watercolour, 233 x 155mm, BM, Oc2006,Drg.19.
Fig.3.5 *Lallah Rookh from the Huon. V.D.L.*, John Skinner Prout, 1845, graphite and watercolour, 217 x 164mm, BM, Oc2006,Drg.10.
 Both © The Trustees of the British Museum.



Fig.3.6 *Mr Murray Melbourne*, 1846-47, graphite and watercolour, 195 x 140mm, BM, Oc2006,Drg.34.
Fig.3.7 *Family Group, Australia Felix*, 1846, graphite and watercolour, 180 x 155mm, BM, Oc2006,Drg.1.
 Both: John Skinner Prout © The Trustees of the British Museum.

⁵² The dagguereotype itself, NGA, 2007.81.122; Lydon, *Calling the Shots*, p.103; Isobel Crombie, ‘Australia Felix: Douglas T. Kilburn’s Daguerreotype of Victorian Aborigines, 1847’, *Art Journal* 32 (Art Bulletin of Victoria, 1991).

⁵³ This included a panorama discussed in the following chapter; H. Mallalieu, ‘Prout, John Skinner (1806-1876)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2012 [accessed 27 October 2017].

Of the thirty-six Prout portraits purchased by Davis, twenty-two depicted Aboriginal Tasmanians at Wybalenna station on Flinders Island,⁵⁴ five depicted Aboriginal Victorians,⁵⁵ and three depicted Aboriginal people from New South Wales.⁵⁶ Five portraits represented Māori at the penitentiary in Hobart in 1846, after they were ‘transported to Van Diemen’s Land on account of having taken an active part in the disturbances in New Zealand headed by the celebrated John Heki (Fig.3.8).⁵⁷ The final image in the group was described by the artist as depicting a ‘native of the Isle of Palms,’ also painted in Hobart (Fig.3.9).⁵⁸ The diversity of sitters reflected the movement of people from different cultures and countries through the Australian colonies, particularly in Hobart.



Fig.3.8 *Hobepa Teumuroa, New Zealand, 1846*, graphite and watercolour, 225 x 163mm, BM, Oc2006,Drg.29

Fig.3.9 *Native of the Isle of Palms, 1844-48*, graphite and watercolour, 210 x 145mm, BM, Oc2006,Drg.3

Both: John Skinner Prout

© The Trustees of the British Museum.

⁵⁴ See Appendix 2; One of these shows similarities in the dress of the sitter and format of the image but has not been securely identified with this Tasmanian group. BM, Oc2006,Drg.21.

⁵⁵ BM, including Oc2006,Drg.32, *Nerree Buck*, described as from the ‘Goulburn Tribe’; Oc2006,Drg.11, *Sugar Sugar and Adam Clark*; Oc2006,Drg.34, *Mr. Murray*; Oc2006,Drg.36, *Yurunduk*; Oc2006,Drg.1, family group *Australia Felix*.

⁵⁶ BM, Oc2006,Drg.33, *Yanna Wah* from the Illawarra region; Oc2006,Drg.35, *Old Frying Pan* from Wollongong; Oc2006,Drg.2, a female portrait.

⁵⁷ Each includes the name of the sitter, written in a different hand, which the artist identified as their ‘autographs’. BM, Eth Doc 915, Letter from John Skinner Prout to Joseph Barnard Davis, 26 January 1856.

⁵⁸ BM, Oc2006,Drg.3.

Davis kept detailed notebooks recording his travels and intended actions.⁵⁹ In his notebook covering 1854 to 1858, Prout's 'Panorama. Gold Fields. Australia' was listed for a forthcoming visit to London.⁶⁰ Davis first visited Prout in Camden during the years 1854 to 1858, most likely in late 1855.⁶¹ Two letters from the artist to Davis in early 1856 confirmed Davis's purchase of the drawings, and refer to their previous interactions and discussions.⁶² In a letter to William Haslam Davis (Joseph Barnard's son), on 26 January 1856, Prout wrote that he had intended to visit with the sketches, but had been unable to as he was unwell. Instead he included a list of the portraits in the group. He also referenced another potential buyer, explaining 'I am about to dispose of some of my Australian sketches to a party who would wish to include those of the Aborigines but which I have managed to stand over until I have your answer.' A later comment that 'with two exceptions, the sketches were all colored[sic] from the life' suggested Prout had received specific queries on the matter from Davis.⁶³ Prout's second letter of 12 February 1856 accompanied the actual portrait sketches. Alongside these he sent other documents relating to Flinders Island that he gathered during his visit, including letters 'written to [him] by some of the natives' and papers from Mr Clark, the catechist of the station, with included some names and biographies about the Aboriginal sitters in his drawings.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ Now held in the archive of the Royal Anthropological Institute.

⁶⁰ RAI, MS 140, Joseph Barnard Davis Notebook no. 4 (4th September 1854 to May 1858).

⁶¹ He wrote the address for 'J.S. Prout – 13 Osnaburgh St, Regent's park' on one page of his notebook, then a few pages later 'Prout 38 St Augustus[sic] Road / Camden Square, Camden Town'; Ibid.

⁶² BM, ETH DOC 915, Letters from John Skinner Prout to Joseph Barnard Davis (1), 26 January 1856; (2), 12 February 1856.

⁶³ BM, ETH DOC 915, Prout to Davis (1), 26 January 1856. An annotation in Davis's hand says 'Mr Prout told me the hair of the Tasmanian's "grows all over the head" which I strongly doubt. But see Alfred Bock letter of May 14, 1856.'

⁶⁴ BM, ETH DOC 915, Aboriginal Biographies; BM, PIC DOC 171_OC3, List of people held on Flinders Island.



3.10 Proclamation Board, 1829-30, MAA (Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology) Cambridge, Z 15346.

Prout also sent a government proclamation board he had received from Robinson, describing it as a ‘pity to separate it from the sketches...’.⁶⁵ This board was one of the earliest pictorial records produced in response to Aboriginal-colonist violence in Tasmania in 1829. Suggested by Surveyor-General George Frankland, painted boards (now known as proclamation boards) were intended to communicate with Aboriginal Tasmanians, using visual language to broach linguistic boundaries. The images on the boards suggested Aboriginal Tasmanians and British settlers were subject to the same rules of justice, and the same punishments should they attack one another (Fig.3.10).⁶⁶ The

opportunity for future harmony was presented with the expectation that Aboriginal Tasmanians would adopt British ways of life and dress. Approximately one hundred such boards were produced and mounted on trees in remote areas where they were intended to be seen by Aboriginal people. It is notable that Prout felt it was right to keep all the information relating to the Tasmanian Aboriginal people he had met together with the sketches. Possibly, it was through this second letter that Davis first came to know of Robinson, although the latter’s work in Tasmania had been reported in Britain.

The monetary value of works was addressed in Prout’s second letter. Davis had clearly asked the artist about the price he had paid for some drawings ‘purchased in the Strand,’ to which Prout responded that if the works were indeed originals (as presumably Davis had asserted) then they had been undersold. He elaborated:

...were I to make copies of the sketches I now send you Twenty pounds would be an inadequate payment for the time it would occupy – and then

⁶⁵ The board was later donated to the Cambridge Museum.

⁶⁶ Penelope Edmonds, *Settler Colonialism and (Re)conciliation: Frontier Violence, Affective Performances, and Imaginative Refoundings* (Houndmills; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), pp.139-145.

they would be of considerably less value than the originals – those having been drawn from the life.

Perhaps wondering if Davis was asking about the price of his own group of works, Prout assured him that at ten guineas for the collection he had ‘named a sum for them very considerably below their real value’. This discussion highlighted the relative value of originals and copies of drawings, particularly ethnographic portraits. Observations purported to be ‘from the life’ gave images a worth beyond the labour expended on their production. This claim, if supported, imbued images with assertions of faithfulness that allowed them to be considered reliable as a scientific source. The immediacy of producing an image from a sitter directly in front of the artist was viewed as turning the practice of painting or recording into mediation of knowledge, rather than drawing from memory which was fallible, or imagination which was fanciful. Davis and Prout did not touch upon the artistic nature of these works or indeed the skills of the artist, beyond the presumption that his abilities would include being able to faithfully record.

Davis maintained contact with Prout after the sale. Later in the 1856 notebook, he recorded: ‘Called on Prout / My Family Group has the correct colour, which Prout says is a “copper colour” darkish.../ ... / “Hair grows all over head”/ Sir Geo Arthur. Governor when my board was painted...’.⁶⁷ The note about the ‘Family Group’ was copied on to a card and attached to the mount of the relevant drawing.⁶⁸ These works by John Skinner Prout were some of the earliest recorded depictions of Aboriginal people to enter the Davis collection (he owned a set of prints by Benjamin Duterrau prior to this date) and Davis may have developed his more focused interest as a result of this purchase. By 1862 he would tell George Augustus Robinson he had ‘long taken a very deep interest in the Aborigines of Tasmania’.⁶⁹

3.3 The ethnological drawings of Charles Hamilton Smith

Davis acquired a collection of ethnological drawings by Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Hamilton Smith following the latter’s death in 1859. Smith (1776-1859) was a soldier by profession and served in the West Indies, the Netherlands, the United States and

⁶⁷ RAI, MS 140, Davis Notebook no. 4 (4th September 1854 to May 1858).

⁶⁸ No longer attached. BM, Oc2006, Drg.1, ‘Family Group, Australia Felix [Victoria]’.

⁶⁹ SLNSW, GAR papers, Vol. 68/or 69, Letter from Davis to Robinson Feb. 5, 1862, pl. 471.

Canada, retiring in 1820.⁷⁰ He sketched from a young age and his extensive travels as a soldier offered diverse locations as sources. Smith's interest in drawing became all-consuming following his retirement. His works traversed historical, zoological, archaeological and topographical subject matter, and were executed in graphite and watercolour. Smith reported that he made these drawings for 'his own instruction and that of any student who asked to see them'.⁷¹ Following retirement he settled in Plymouth with his wife and four children, produced numerous publications, on costume, war, and natural history amongst other subjects, and lectured at the Plymouth Athenaeum. He was elected Fellow of the Royal Society in 1824, the Linnean Society in 1826, and became a close friend of Georges Cuvier and Sir Richard Owen. Significantly for this discussion, in 1848 he wrote *A Natural History of the Human Species*.⁷² All of Smith's drawings of Aboriginal people were copied after works by other artists.

Following his death on 21 September 1859, Hamilton Smith's numerous manuscripts, books and sketchbooks were sold. The collection of drawings, which numbered 15,248 sheets, were auctioned as a single lot by Puttick and Simpson in London on 20 July 1860. The sale catalogue described them as:

Lot 1894 – The Extensive, Valuable, and Highly Interesting Collection of Drawings (in outline, tint, and fully coloured) Made between the years 1809-1859, by the Late Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton Smith, K.H., K.W., F.R.S., F.L.S., Etc., Etc.⁷³

It was suggested in this document that suitable locations for the works included a 'Public Library, Provincial Museum, or School of Art'. The catalogue reproduced a letter of c.1829 from Smith to the President of the Plymouth Institution, which best described the breadth of the collection, despite its early date. In it, the ethnological works fell into a third and final group, the subject area for which Smith said he had 'the strongest predilection': the natural history of man and animal. The letter listed up to thirty-four collections consulted to produce the natural history studies,

⁷⁰ Christine E. Jackson, 'Smith, Charles Hamilton (1776-1859)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Online edition, Oct 2008 [Accessed 13 February 2017].

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² A copy of this book featured in the Davis library sale of 1883; C.H. Smith, *The Natural History of the Human Species: Its Typical Forms, Primaeval Distribution, Filiations, and Migrations* (Edinburgh: W. H. Lizars, 3, St. James' Square: Samuel Highly, 32, Fleet Street, London, and all booksellers, 1848).

⁷³ *The Extensive, Valuable, and Highly Interesting Collection of Drawings (in outline, tint, and fully coloured) Made between the years 1809-1859, by the Late Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton Smith, K.H., K.W., F.R.S., F.L.S., ETC., ETC.*, Puttick and Simpson, 20 July 1860, pp.17-18.

including the Leverian Museum, the British Museum, Bullock's, the Missionaries', the India Company's, the Jardin du Roi at Paris, and the Museums of Munich, Dresden, Berlin, Bonn, Paris, Philadelphia, New York, and Baltimore. The collections of individuals referenced included 'M. Temminck, Mr. Leadbeater, Mr. Drew of Devonport, Mr. Cross of Exeter Change, Baron Cuvier, his brother the Chevalier F. Cuvier, Sir Joseph Banks, General Hardwicke, Mr. Le Sueur, John Wilson, Esq., Miss Gossling, Dr. Leach, and John Edward Gray, Esq.' Many of these people and institutions may have provided sources for Smith's ethnological copies. Works relating to the physical history of man Smith described as 'illustrated by a great variety of designs of human crania, portraits of many individuals, and whole lengths of the races, some of which are taken from living specimens...'. These drawings were described as 'the labour of a life... formed under circumstances highly favourable to ensure accuracy of delineation.' At the time the letter was written, the number of ethnological images by Smith was limited, but when the sale catalogue was produced thirty-one years later, it was large enough to warrant a separate grouping in the sale catalogue (standalone from natural history). The 2,184 images in 'Ethnology' included portraits of people from 'North and South America, North and South Africa, the South Seas, Tartary, Cochin China, China, India, Persia, Assyria, Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, Greece, Scandinavian races, Germany, Italy, Belgium, France, Holland, England'.⁷⁴ The increase in works of this subject matter resulted from Smith's developing interest in the history of man.

All the works in the sale were sold to 'Smith' for £500, potentially a family member.⁷⁵ At some point after this the works entered the collection of Joseph Barnard Davis, where they were bound by him into two volumes.⁷⁶ A handwritten list by Davis attached in the front of the first volume gives the title 'Lieut. Col, Hamilton Smith's Ethnological Drawings' (taken from the sale catalogue). Here Davis noted the contents of the two volumes and the original source of each image, when he knew it. It is unclear whether the ordering of the sheets was first made by

⁷⁴ Ibid., p.4.

⁷⁵ Most manuscripts relating to Smith were held in the Plymouth Institution, later bombed during the Blitz. There are drawings by Smith in the Society of Antiquaries, the Victoria & Albert Museum, the Houghton Library, Harvard University and the Royal Academy; Jackson, 'Smith'.

⁷⁶ Davis's bookplate is included inside the front cover of the first volume. The label '600' below references the lot number for this item at the Davis library sale. The current binding states 'Christy Library' suggesting these works were purchased for the British Museum using Christy funds and rebound following entry to the museum. Davis bound his own copy of the Smith sale catalogue of 20 July 1860 into the second volume of drawings.

Smith or Davis.⁷⁷ A separate list by Davis, written in pencil, recorded the full-page drawings, although some items are missing.⁷⁸ There are 145 separate pages in the first volume, described as ‘Skulls and figures’.⁷⁹ The second volume included mostly portraits, and a few figures.⁸⁰ Depictions of Aboriginal people from mainland Australia and Tasmania are represented on three pages in the first volume of Smith’s drawings,⁸¹ and nine pages in the second volume.⁸² As Smith never travelled to Australia or Tasmania the images copied resulted from a network facilitating the movement of images, whether in original or printed form. Smith’s choices in reproducing and arranging them on the album pages indicates how he had understood them and intended them to be read. There are no overt indications in the drawings or inscriptions from Davis about which editions of published images Smith would have seen, or specifically where. Of those collections listed in the sale catalogue, the library at the British Museum would have held versions of the published works copied by Smith, though as demonstrated in the previous chapter there were few relevant images in the Prints and Drawings department by the 1850s, and those held there were reproduced by him. Smith’s connections to the Plymouth Athenaeum and the Royal and Linnean societies would also have given him access to potential sources for the images he copied.

These ethnological drawings by Smith have never before been analysed. As most were produced in advance of his 1848 publication, the sheets offer a rare snapshot of the ethnological imagery available to him in the 1830s and 1840s and are therefore a valuable data source. They are not rough sketches. The paper is of good quality

⁷⁷ Page numbers are written in ink in Davis’s hand. Under some titles and subheadings are graphite notes in an unidentified hand, so Davis may have written over extant information.

⁷⁸ The list includes the drawings on p.91 and p.128, but not those on p.90 and p.92.

⁷⁹ Davis identified these as variously from works by the naturalist and phrenologist Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752-1840), physician and ethnologist James Cowles Prichard (1786-1848), the collection of the Museum Athenaeum Plymouth, Adam Johann von Krusenstern, with others noted as ‘from nature’ or ‘from Thurnam’. In the second section on ‘Figures’ in the first volume the images are described as ‘from life’ or taken from: Capt. King’s sketch; Sir Woodbine Parish; Maximilian; a bas relief; Rugendas Jun.; A Humboldt rue des Cordill Pl. 5, Earl[sic]; from life in Suriman; and Salomon Müller.

⁸⁰ Portraits (pp.1-121), figures (pp.122-124), and then further portraits (p.125 onwards); Davis identified the source of some of the works as: Capt. Stokes, *Discoveries in Australia*; Cook; Earle; Bellini; G.T. Vigne; Picture in India House; From life; Prince Maurice; Dr Staacten; Plymouth; Capt. King; Capt. Nelson; Capt. Squire; Sir Harry Durrell; Paris Library; Published Portraits; Drawing by a British Officer; Drawings of Capt. Tilmore; Photograph; De Bruyn; Franklin’s ‘Polar Sea’, p.262; Sketches of Ai Meskene; Capt. Back; Bartrane [sic]; Rugendas; J.S. Prout; W. H Fernyhough.

⁸¹ Three full page images, pp.90, 91 and 92.

⁸² Each page with at least four heads depicted, not all of which depict Aboriginal people, pp.44, 52, 125, 127-131, 142.

and pages often include multiple watercolour or graphite drawings together on one side, while the other side remains blank. Images could be copied from diverse sources on to one page but were frequently linked by the location of the original depiction, or the collection or series they came from. The handwritten notes beneath the drawings were often informed by the title of the image, thereby clarifying the source material, whether paintings, drawings or prints. Most were reproduced as bust-length or 'half-length' portraits in Smith's copies (no matter the scale or format of the original source), although some examples replicated a full scene. Smith may have had a high level of access to such imagery due to his reputation through his publications, via his contacts, or in the knowledge he was producing a book on a related topic.

Although images are often recognisably close to the source material, it becomes clear through close study that Smith regularly used artistic licence in their reproduction. A full-page image of 'Natives of Western Australia' was adapted from a single source, I.R. Fitzmaurice's frontispiece for J. Lort Stoke's *Discoveries in Australia* (1846, Figs.3.11 and 3.12).⁸³ The original landscape image was reproduced in portrait format in Smith's copy, with two figures removed to fit the composition on the page. The details of the shelter, spears and cloaks of the sitters are retained. In another adapted scene, Smith amalgamated three portraits by Nicolas-Martin Petit to create the full-length 'Natives of New Holland' (Figs.3.13 to 3.16). Petit's portraits were produced for *Voyages de Découvertes aux Terres Australes* (1807) which resulted from Nicolas Baudin's 1801-1803 voyage.⁸⁴ These prints had been reproduced in several forms and were well known in Britain by the 1840s. In Smith's central male figure he combined the body and markings of *Norou Gal Derri*, with the head of *Courrou-bari-gal* both by Petit. The female figure who sits behind in the image may be after *Arra-Maïda* from the same publication. The third and final full image in the first volume sees figures taken from the print by William Blake after Philip Gidley King of 'A Native Family', rearranged into an amended but recognisable composition (Figs.3.17 and 3.18).⁸⁵

⁸³ It is noted as such in Davis's list in Vol.I of Smith's drawings; J. L. Stokes, *Discoveries in Australia; with an account of the coasts and rivers explored and surveyed during the Voyage of H.M.S. Beagle, In the Years 1837-43* (London: T. and W. Boone, 1846).

⁸⁴ F. Péron, (continued by L. Freycinet), *Voyage de Découvertes aux Terres Australes* (Paris, 1807-1816).

⁸⁵ The original drawing by King is in SLNSW, Banks Papers, Series 36a: Charts and illustrations. Number 3, 'Watercolour illustration of a group of Aborigines, ca.1790s'.



Fig.3.11 'Natives of Western Australia' (p.90), Charles Hamilton Smith, c.1848, BM, 2017,2017.1. Author's photograph, 2017.

Fig.3.12 'Natives of Western Australia' (frontispiece), L.R. Fitzmaurice del. in J. Lort Stokes, *Discoveries in Australia* (London: T. and W. Boone, 1846). National Library of Australia, nla.obj-135904270. Rex Nan Kivell Collection.



Fig.3.13 'Natives of New Holland' (p.91), Charles Hamilton Smith, c.1848, BM, 2017,2017.1. Author's photograph, 2017.

Below (left to right):

Fig.3.14 *Nouvelle-Hollande: N:velles Galles du Sud. Norou-Gal-Derri*, Barthélemy Roger, after Nicolas-Martin Petit, 1804-1824, BM, 2016,2024.4. Author's photograph, 2017.

Fig.3.15 *Cour-rou-bari-gal*, nla.obj-150876774.

Fig.3.16 *Arra-Maïda*, nla.obj-150876199.

Both, Barthélemy Roger, after Nicolas-Martin Petit, 1807. National Library of Australia, Rex Nan Kivell Collection.



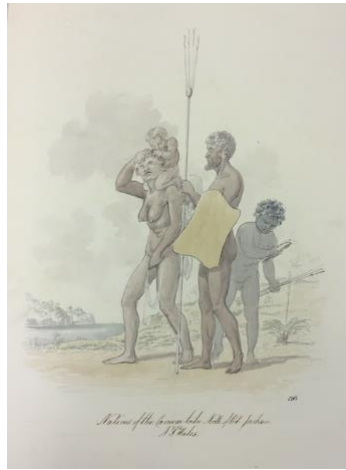


Fig.3.17 'Natives of the Camena tribe North of Port Jackson. N.S. Wales' (p.92), Charles Hamilton Smith, c.1848, BM, 2017,2017.1. Author's photograph, 2017.
Fig.3.18 'A Family of New South Wales', William Blake after Philip Gidley King, 1793, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, P8-1984. Purchased, 1984.

Petit's images from the *Voyage* also appear on pages featuring multiple portraits, such as 'New Holland' (p.52) in which the bottom left image is after *Oroun- Maré*. and the bottom right 'young woman of the tribe of Bou-wa-be-ran-gal' may link to *Jenne femme de la tribu des Cam-mer-ray-gal* (Figs.3.19 to 3.21). A page titled 'Van Diemen's Land' (p.131, Fig.3.22) includes a series of images after prints by Petit, including *Arra-Maïda* (Fig.3.16). Under the title 'Papua Malay of New Holland' (p.129, Fig.3.23) the bottom left image is after *Y-erran-gou-la-ga* and the bottom right *Oui-re-Kine* (Figs.3.26 and 3.27). The reason for the separation of these images by Petit over different pages is unclear. As they are all described as from 'New Holland' it may reflect the inconsistent availability of original source matter, or visual comparisons that Smith wanted to juxtapose.

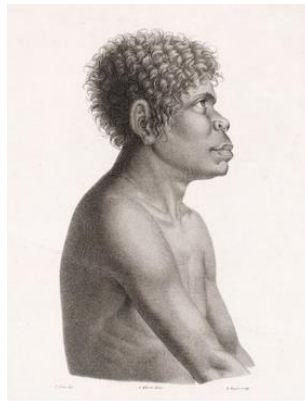
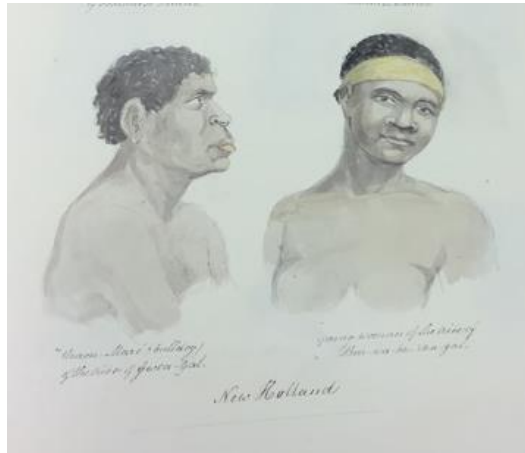


Fig.3.19 Detail of 'New Holland' (p.52), Charles Hamilton Smith, c.1848, BM, 2017,2017.2. Author's photograph, 2017.

Below (left to right):

Fig.3.20 *Nouvelle-Hollande: N:velles Galles du Sud. Ourou-Maré*, Barthélemy Roger, after Nicolas-Martin Petit, 1804-1824, BM, 2016.2024.4. Author's photograph, 2017.

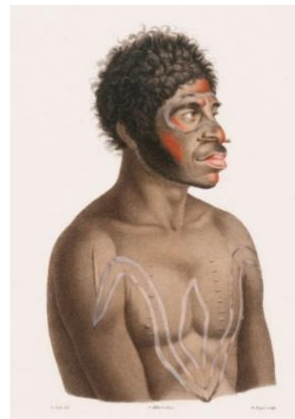
Fig.3.21 *Nouvelle-Holland, Nouvle. Galles du Sud, jeune femme de la tribu des Cam-mer-ray-gal*, Barthélemy Roger, after Nicolas-Martin Petit, 1824, National Library of Australia, nla.obj-135685704. Rex Nan Kivell Collection.



Fig.3.22 'Van Diemen's Land' (p.131), Charles Hamilton Smith, c.1848, BM, 2017,2017.2. Author's photograph, 2017.



Fig.3.23 'Papua Malay of New Holland' (p.129), Charles Hamilton Smith, c.1848, BM, 2017,2017.2. Author's photograph, 2017.



Top, left to right:

Fig.3.24 *Native of New South Wales from Wellington Valley*, Augustus Earle, c.1826, NLA, nla.obj-134498214. Rex Nan Kivell Collection.

Fig.3.25 *Tommy, Newcastle*, Augustus Earle, 1825, National Library of Australia, nla.obj-134503051. Rex Nan Kivell Collection.

Bottom, left to right:

Fig.3.26 *Nouvelle-Hollande, Y-erran-gou-la-ga*, Barthélemy Roger, after Nicolas-Martin Petit, 1807, NLA, nla.obj-150876928. Rex Nan Kivell Collection.

Fig.3.27 *Nouvelle-Hollande: N:velles Galles du Sud. Oni-re-kine*, Barthélemy Roger after Nicolas-Martin Petit, 1804-1824, BM, 2016,2024.7.

Author's photograph, 2017.

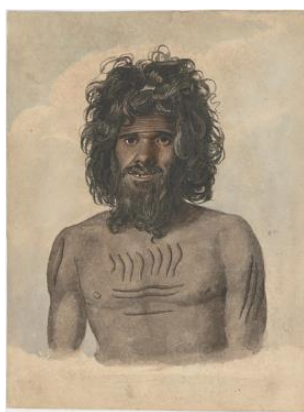
Works copied from the artist Augustus Earle also emerged on multiple pages. The other two images under the title 'Papua Malay of New Holland' (p.129) were after Earle's *Native of New South Wales from Wellington Valley* and *Tommy, Newcastle, 1825*, although the name of the latter was given by Smith as "Jemmy" (Figs.3.24 and 3.25). Under the title 'Papuas. Natives of New Holland' (p.128, Fig.3.28), were three more copies after Earle. The top two images have the subheading 'Hunter river' and the bottom two 'From near Bathurst'. The top right image with the title 'Chief painted for a 'Karobbery[sic]' is after the 1826 watercolour by Earle now titled *Desmond, a N.S. Wales chief painted for a karobbery or native dance* (Fig.3.29).⁸⁶ Of the bottom two images on this sheet, the left is after Earle's *A Man of New South Wales* and on the right, *A Woman of New South Wales* (Figs.3.30 and 3.31). Augustus Earle produced 161 original watercolour drawings during his 1824 to 1830 voyage. These included depictions of people he had met in Australia, New Zealand and beyond. They remained in the artist's possession until his death in 1838, following which they passed to his half-brother Admiral William Henry Smyth and down through the family.⁸⁷ When sold in May 1926, the Sotheby & Co. sale catalogue described the collection as 'mounted in an old folio scrapbook, 19in by 13in'. It is unclear whether they were mounted by Earle or a later family member but suggested the unity of the group was acknowledged and had been maintained. It appears Charles Hamilton Smith had accessed the full collection of Earle's original drawings, as he copied other works from the group, in his depictions of people from locations other than Australia. Smith and Admiral William Henry Smyth were both Fellows of the Royal Society from the late 1820s-30s and this relationship may have facilitated Smith's access to the works. Access could also have been gained through the artist's son Charles Ferdinand Hamilton Smith, himself a water-colourist, natural historian, and army officer, who settled in Sydney from 1835.

⁸⁶ I have been unable to identify the original source for the top left image on this page. It follows the style of the other Earle portrait and there is no inscription indicating it is by another artist. This may reference a less well known or unidentified drawing by Earle.

⁸⁷ In May 1926, the Admiral's grandson Herbert Warington Smyth auctioned the works through Sotheby & Co. An art dealer bought them for £1,800 and sold them to Rex Nan Kivell who placed them in the custody of the National Library of Australia in 1948. The works were formally transferred in 1959; J. Hackforth-Jones, *Augustus Earle: Travel Artist* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 1980).



Fig.3.28 'Papuas. Natives of New Holland' (p.128), Charles Hamilton Smith, c.1848, BM, 2017,2017.2. Author's photograph, 2017.



Left to right:

Fig.3.29 *Desmond, a N.S. Wales chief painted for a karobbery or native dance*, 1826, nla.obj-134502738.

Fig.3.30 *A man of New South Wales*, 1825(?), nla.obj-134498411.

Fig.3.31 *A woman of New South Wales*, 1825(?), nla.obj-134498574.

All Augustus Earle: National Library of Australia, Rex Nan Kivell Collection.

Smith also copied drawings by John Skinner Prout. Under the title 'Tasmanians' (p.130, Fig.3.32), three copies by Smith of 'King Alexander', 'Daphne', and 'King Tippoo' were after the 1845 portraits Prout made on Flinders Island, and another from sketches made in Victoria, 'Adam Clark. Australia Felix' (Figs. 3.4, to 3.33 to 3.35). These were selected from the larger group of thirty-six sold to Davis in 1856.⁸⁸ As Prout returned to England in June 1848, Smith is most likely to have accessed these in the first eight years when still in the artist's possession, rather than after

⁸⁸ This is noted in the contents list made by Davis, bound into the front of the first volume.

they entered Davis's collection. There was a Plymouth connection between the two men as Prout grew up there and Smith lived there prior to his death. An artistic link is further suggested by another Smith copy after a print by Prout of 'Port Jackson from Dawes Battery,' now held in the National Library of Australia.⁸⁹



Fig.3.32 'Tasmanians' (p.130), Charles Hamilton Smith, c.1848, BM, 2017,2017.2. Author's photograph, 2017.



Fig.3.33 *King Alexander. Tasmania*, John Skinner Prout, 1845.
Fig.3.34 *King Tippoo from Hobart Town V.D.L.*, John Skinner Prout, 1845.
Fig.3.35 *Sugar Sugar and Adam Clark*, John Skinner Prout, 1846.
 BM, Oc2006,Drg.9, 11, 18. All © The Trustees of the British Museum.

⁸⁹ Both works were also in Rex Nan Kivell Collection: NK4395/4, the Prout version; NK4664, the Smith version.

More easily accessible printed series were also copied by Smith. Fifteen silhouetted heads are titled 'New Holland' on page 142 (Fig.3.36). Twelve of these were after W.H. Fernyhough's *Series of twelve profile portraits of the Aborigines of New South Wales* printed in Sydney in 1836. While the original lithographs were full length figures (see Fig.2.7), Smith chose only to copy the head to shoulders sections of each of the figures. This suggests that the information he wished to gather was phrenological. In the series the twelve figures represented were given European names underneath. These were shortened on the Smith page, which is likely a compositional decision, given the length of



Fig.3.36 'New Holland' (p.142), Charles Hamilton Smith, c.1848, BM, 2017,2017.2. Author's photograph, 2017.

the original titles. The three additional silhouetted heads were taken from another Fernyhough print of 1844, entitled *Native Dance*. These figures were not named, but Smith gives two the title of 'Dancer,' and the central figure 'Middle dame'.⁹⁰ His shortening of the image titles removed all details concerning the location of origin of the individuals, or their ties to the other figures in the series or their roles in exploratory expeditions.

Other identifiable printed sources Smith copied include lithographs by the German-born artist Charles Rodius. *Tooban* and *Nunberri, Chief of the Nunnerahs* were reproduced together (Figs.3.37 to 3.39). On a page with three unfinished copies *Jackey Jackey (Galmahra) N.S. Wales*, by Charles Rodius was the source for one of three unfinished copies (Figs.3.40 and 3.42).⁹¹ The two other images are after plates in Charles Pickering's 1848 publication *The Races of Man and their Geographical Distribution*. Only one depicts an Aboriginal Australian man, 'Williluga' described as '[a] native of the Interior of Australia' and after a drawing by A.T. Agate (Figs.3.41 and 3.43).⁹²

⁹⁰ Despite this title the middle figure in the print is not female.

⁹¹ Galmahra was guide and companion to the surveyor Edmund Kennedy.

⁹² The other copy was after Plate VIII, described as 'An Aramanga lad. From a drawing, taken at Tongataboo, by J. Drayton.'



Fig.3.37 Detail of page 44,
Charles Hamilton Smith,
c.1848, BM, 2017,2017.2.
Author's photograph, 2017.



Bottom, left to right:

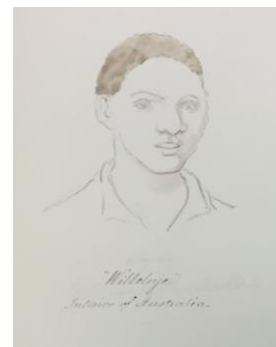
Fig.3.38 *Tooban*,
Charles Rodius, 1834,
SAFE/PXA 615, 24.

Fig.3.39 *Nunberri, Chief of
the Nunnerahs, N.S. Wales*,
Charles Rodius, 1834,
SAFE/PXA 615, 15.

Both: Mitchell Library, State
Library of New South Wales.

Top, left to right:

Figs.3.40 and 3.41 Detail
of page 125, Charles
Hamilton Smith, c.1848,
BM, 2017,2017.2.
Author's photograph,
2017.



Bottom, left to right

Fig.3.42 *Jacky Jacky*
[Galmahra].
Expedition of Kennedy,
Charles Rodius, 1849,
SAFE/PXA 615, f.38.

Fig.3.43
'Williluga', Pl.V in *The
Races of Man and their
Geographical Distribution*,
Charles Pickering, 1848,
Q508.3/W.



Both © Mitchell Library,
State Library of New
South Wales.

At the top of page 127 (Fig.3.44) are depicted ‘Mocata’ and her husband ‘Kertamaroo (King John)’. Both are either after the 1840 frontispiece to the *Fourth Report of the Directors of the South Australian Company*, the 1843 lithograph by George French Angas from *South Australia in 1842*, or after the wax medallions by Theresa Walker exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1841.⁹³ At the bottom of this page are copied two images from the 1846 publication by G.H. Haydon, *Five years’ experience in Australia Felix* (with lithographs by Henry Hainselin). On the left is reproduced the head and shoulders of a ‘Native of Gipps Land, Victoria’. In the full plate this figure holds a shield in his proper left hand and draws back a spear in his proper right hand as if to throw it. The removal of context further indicates Smith’s interest in recording the head and facial features, perhaps in this case also the customary headdress and nose bone. On the bottom right of the page is copied a portrait titled ‘Yonki Yonka’ on the plate, the sitter being named as ‘Youki-Youka’ in the text, ‘[a] native of one of the Westernport tribes’.

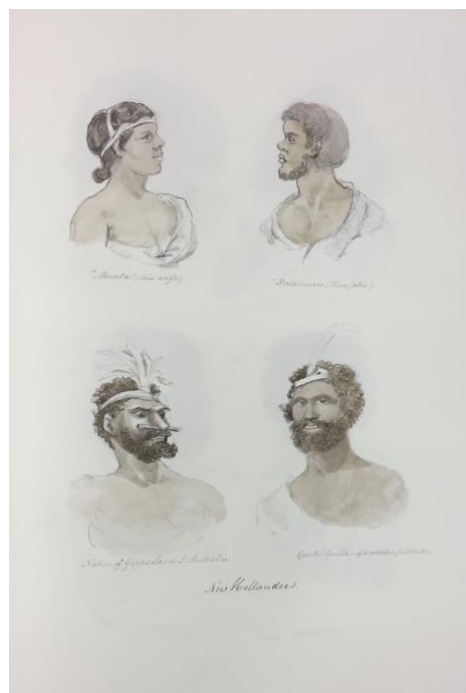


Fig.3.44 ‘New Holland’ (p.127), Charles Hamilton Smith, c.1848, graphite and watercolour, BM, 2017,2017.2. Author’s photograph, 2017.

⁹³ BM, 2016,2001.1, *Kertamaroo, A Native of South Australia*, Theresa Walker c.1840.

The selection of works Smith copied for his group of ethnological drawings demonstrates the availability of sources. Notable absences suggest that scientific or informational value also played a role, specifically when concerning issues of accuracy. For example, although Smith did reproduce illustrations from the publications of Cook's voyages to the Pacific elsewhere in his copies of indigenous portraits, thereby confirming his access to them, the image of 'Two of the Natives of New Holland, Advancing to Combat' by Thomas Chambers after Sydney Parkinson is absent. It is possible that this work was already widely acknowledged as an inaccurate representation. Smith's decisions to abstract or amend images reflected his ethnographic interests; in a number of examples he chose to reproduce only the head and shoulders of full-length images. This focus on the head shape may stem from Smith's interests in craniology and phrenology, evident in his volume on the history of the human species. His imagined scenes brought together a few sources in one image, with the potential for further reproduction.

The drawings undoubtedly informed Smith's 1848 publication *A Natural History of the Human Species*, a formative text in the mid-nineteenth century debate on racial typology. The finished volume included 38 plates, all seemingly after Smith's ethnological drawings. Plate XVII is the only example depicting an Aboriginal Australian, representing 'Ouzu[sic]-Mare of the Gwea-Gal Tribe, called Bulldog at Sydney' above an image of 'Grant, Charleston Maroons. One of those who slew Three fingered Jack'. The explanation of this plate described the figures on the page as a 'Papua of New Holland, as an example of mere brutal development; and Grant, a Jamaica Maroon chief, who, notwithstanding the low sensual aspect of the mouth, was a man of excellent qualities'. In this reference to the mouth, Smith repeated a contemporary white racialised trope that linked black men to sexuality and lasciviousness.⁹⁴ A final comment 'taken from life' related only to the drawing of 'Grant' as the image of 'Ouzu-Mare' is clearly after the *Oroun-Maré* print by Nicolas-Martin Petit (Fig.3.20).⁹⁵

Smith copied portraits of indigenous people, after works by other artists. The Australian images link to artists addressed in previous chapters such as Nicolas-

⁹⁴ Angela Rosenthal, 'Visceral Culture: Blushing and the Legibility of Whiteness in Eighteenth-Century British Portraiture' in Deborah Cherry's *Art: History: Visual: Culture* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), p.100.

⁹⁵ Smith, *Natural History*, p.460.

Martin Petit, Charles Rodius and W.H. Fernyhough. Copies after Augustus Earle and John Skinner Prout reflect Smith's first-hand access to the work of these artists. As a keen reproducer of ethnographic images and an author on the natural history of man, Davis's interest in Smith's drawings is easily explained. With images concerning the shape of the skulls and physiognomic features of people of different ethnic origin, these depictions created a source book for a collector with interests like Davis. It offered a visual 'bibliography' of pictorial sources Smith had drawn upon to produce his publication, assisting the later writer with his own analysis. Although it is unclear if Davis influenced the structure and organisation of Smith's works when bound, his list of works included at the beginning of the first volume included a note on how many figures were in each scene, and their sources. On individual pages he referred to the plate or page number and volume of the source from which it was copied when he could identify it. In this way Davis made his own interventions on these works.

3.4 The pictorial collection of George Augustus Robinson

The images of Aboriginal people acquired by Davis following the death of George Augustus Robinson in 1866 constituted the third and largest group to become part of his pictorial collection. As introduced in Chapter One, Robinson's role in Tasmania was framed, by himself and others, as 'conciliator' or 'protector' of the Aboriginal people of Tasmania, later Chief Protector in the Port Phillip District. Shortly after he returned to Britain in 1852 Robinson married his second wife, Rose Pyne (1829-1901), who had a significant role in the transmission of the collection following his death.⁹⁶ In 1853 he joined the Ethnological Society in London and attended meetings of the Aborigines Protection Society, showing engagement with both scientific and humanitarian circles. That same year he chose to travel through Europe, returning to England in 1858 and taking a house in Bath from August 1859. This house, formerly known as Prospect Cottage, was renamed 'Pahran' by Robinson, presumably after the name of the suburb in Melbourne.⁹⁷ In 1988, the writer Vivienne Rae-Ellis described the art collection Robinson held there as 'two

⁹⁶ Robinson's previous wife Maria Amelia Evens died in September 1848.

⁹⁷ This suburb was named by George Langhorne in 1837 for 'Pur-ra-ran', a compound of two Aboriginal words meaning "land partially surrounded by water". The building in Bath is now known as Fairstowe; Rae-Ellis, pp.257-260.

oils by Glover' and a 'large portfolio of watercolours and drawings, prints and engravings by colonial artists of the period 1829-1850.'⁹⁸

Davis first contacted Robinson by letter on 5 February 1862, to communicate his interests and on-going desire to acquire information and objects relating to Aboriginal Tasmanians. He asked if Robinson had skulls or ethnographic material available for purchase. In the letter Davis described himself as 'anxious to procure all the prints and engravings of the Natives' and requested that Robinson direct him to any available. Davis cited five etchings by Benjamin Duterrau he already owned, querying if this was the complete set of works.⁹⁹ Duterrau had produced twelve etchings in Hobart between July 1835 and August 1836 related to a large oil painting *The National Picture* (now lost). The images depicted Wurati, Manalakina, Trukanini and Tanalipunya, Robinson and the larger composition 'The Conciliation' produced 'to promote Robinson's project' (see Fig.3.45).¹⁰⁰ These prints were reportedly sent to Britain in their 'hundreds', according to a Hobart based newspaper *Bent's News*, which is how Davis was able to obtain them.¹⁰¹ The five prints he owned are now in the British Museum's collection. Davis wrote 'G.A. Robinson' under the relevant figure in 'The Conciliation'.¹⁰²



Fig.3.45 'The Conciliation', Benjamin Duterrau, 1835, etching, 255 x 320mm, BM, Oc2006,Drg.127 © The Trustees of the British Museum.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.257-258.

⁹⁹ SLNSW, GAR papers, Vol. 68/or 69, Letter from Davis to Robinson Feb. 5, 1862, pl. 473.

¹⁰⁰ Each print cost 1 shilling 6 pence, although markings on some suggest the price was lowered, perhaps reflecting poor sales; Butler, p.86.

¹⁰¹ Bonyhady and Lehman, p.102.

¹⁰² BM, Oc2006,Drg.123-127; Original painting: Benjamin Duterrau, *The Conciliation*, 1840, oil on canvas, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.

Robinson had intended to write a volume about his work with Aboriginal Tasmanians, outlining his role in removing them from their homelands to Flinders Island. He must have conveyed this notion to Davis, who in March 1862 wrote ‘few things could gratify me more’ than to read such a publication from Robinson, ‘seeing that you know infinitely more about these Children of nature than any other living person, there seems to me a call of duty for you to put what you know on record’.¹⁰³ Not long after, perhaps when it became clear Robinson was not working on this publication, Davis determined that he would try to gain all the information he could from him. In a letter of 1863 (to an unknown recipient, probably Rose Robinson) he requested a copy of any papers relating to Aboriginal people, offering payment if copied in ‘a really good hand’ and checked by Robinson afterwards.¹⁰⁴ Surviving correspondence between the two men track the transition from Davis urging Robinson to give a paper on Aboriginal Tasmanians at the Ethnological Society in 1865 to wanting to publish the information himself. Davis seemed to want something to be made of Robinson’s experiences, and his actions may have been a response to the latter’s inaction in his advancing age. In reference to these activities Rae-Ellis described Davis as a ‘grasping, selfish individual’.¹⁰⁵ Robinson died on 18 October 1866 and Davis was quick to approach his widow Rose about the disposal of Robinson’s library and collection: ‘If they are to be sold, I should like to buy some of the objects...’.¹⁰⁶ As he sought Robinson’s manuscripts either the requested copies had not been made, or Davis wished to obtain the original versions.

Of particular interest to Davis was the original set of portraits by Thomas Bock. Robinson had commissioned them to illustrate his potential publication, and they remained in his collection in Bath. Davis first became aware of the Bock portraits on 22 December 1854 during a visit to Richard Cull, then secretary of the Ethnological Society, recording the copies held there in his notebook as:

7 small coloured prints of Natives of V. Die-men’s land, issued he believed by Mr Robinson, now or lately Prot. Of Aborigines, there or in N.S.W., he

¹⁰³ SLNSW, GAR papers, Vol. 68/or 69, Letter from Davis to Robinson, Feb. 5, 1862, pl. 475-6.

¹⁰⁴ SLNSW, GAR papers, Vol. 68/or 69, Letter from Davis to an unknown recipient, 1863, pl. 934-935.

¹⁰⁵ Rae-Ellis, p.260.

¹⁰⁶ SLNSW, GAR papers, Vol.68/ or 69, Letter, pl. 526-7.

bought them about 3 yrs ago for 2.2.0. of Palliser Strand, who says he can't get more.¹⁰⁷

In a later letter Davis conveyed different details, with Cull buying a set of twelve Bock drawings for two guineas from a 'London Printseller in the Strand, who live[d] a few doors by the Temple Bar Side of Norfolk St.'¹⁰⁸ From whom this print seller had acquired them remains unknown. These appear to be two accounts of the same event, with the material and number of items much changed. This second set of Bock images was thereafter held in the Library of the Ethnological Society.

Davis reached out to the artist's son Alfred Bock, who still resided in Hobart, to discuss the original series. In Alfred Bock's response of 14 May 1856, Davis first learned that 'the 12 best and most carefully executed of the works' were originally produced for Mr Robinson and a series of copies were also made by Bock for Lady Jane Franklin, in 1837-1838.¹⁰⁹ Davis subsequently reached out to Lady Franklin. In her response of 5 December 1856, she acknowledged that she 'possesses only a portion' of these copies and was unwilling to lend them as the group had 'diminished in consequence of lending them' before.¹¹⁰ In his letter Alfred Bock stressed his father had made the portraits 'as true as possible'. Davis had clearly requested copies from the younger Bock, but he held 'none but mere outlines', which he was unwilling to part with and had not had time to copy. Alfred Bock advised Davis to borrow and copy the drawings held by his friend (presumably Cull) 'as they are the only authentic ones now extant of this race of people.' It seems once again Davis had mentioned the price of two guineas exchanged for the copies as Bock responded: '[y]our friend ought to be very proud of the set of drawings he has got, and he had them for a mere nothing, if I mistake not, my father had four guineas each for them, and I would willingly have given £2 each to have them back.'¹¹¹ Davis had copies made of seven of the works at the Ethnological Society, signed G.

¹⁰⁷ RAI, MS 140, Notebook no. 4 (4th September 1854 to May 1858).

¹⁰⁸ SLNSW, GAR papers, Vol.68/ or 69, Letter, pl. 561.

¹⁰⁹ Robinson was not pleased Bock had made additional copies of the works he commissioned; BM, PIC DOC 171_OC8, Letter A. Bock to Davis, 14 May 1856; RAI, MS 145, Barnard Davis Catalogue list. Numbers 4-13, 15-16, 20-26 referenced the Bock works; SLNSW, GAR papers, Vol.68/ or 69, Letter, pl. 558-9.

¹¹⁰ BM, PIC DOC 171_OC5, Letter from Lady Franklin to Davis, 5 December 1856; Lady Franklin's copies are now in the Pitt Rivers Museum.

¹¹¹ This is likely to be the exchange referenced in the 1856 letter between Prout and Davis, which the artist referred to as 'ridiculously cheap'; BM, PIC DOC 171_OC8, Letter A. Bock to Davis, 14 May 1856.

Gray.¹¹² On a visit to Robinson on 28 August 1862, Davis made notes of the Bock images he did not have copies of, observing that the original works (and Franklin copies) were not signed by Bock and only one of Robinson's originals had a sitter's name included:

He has 12 Drawings of Tasmanians by Bock, which are in frames, and a few others not framed. / Besides those I have are / one seated pointing a spear a man with a lower jaw tied round his neck, a fire stick and waddy. Tomlaboma, shaved head / another woman / Eumarah, a chief. / The difference in their colour arises from some being ochred and others not. / Truggernana is not ochred / Problatena is not ochred.¹¹³

Davis offered Rose Robinson the meagre sum of £30 for the complete Robinson collection of skeletal material, artefacts and pictorial works. In doing so he referenced Richard Cull's payment of two guineas for the copied set from the print seller. He described the copies as 'indistinguishable' from Robinson's group, valued by a knowledgeable London dealer as not worth a large sum, and suggested the original versions should be priced accordingly. He asserted this despite knowing Robinson's versions were the original observational works; that the artist Prout thought it was far too cheap; and that Bock himself had received around 4 guineas per image from Robinson when they were created. Perhaps in an effort to appear unassuming, Davis noted he had paid a considerable price for the seven copies of the Bock works he had made for his collection, however he did not elaborate on what he actually paid. Davis eventually purchased Robinson's collection, although there had clearly been a disagreement with Robinson's executors about the price. In his defence Davis wrote he was only interested in the skulls and the portraits, but had to purchase the complete lot, and that he was in 'the best position to know the price of skulls as the great skull-purchaser of recent times'.¹¹⁴ Davis wrote to Mrs Robinson on 20 March 1867 to clear up the difficulties which had developed between himself and Dr Hensley, one of Robinson's executors who believed Davis was taking advantage of the newly widowed Rose. The executors wished for Rose Robinson to make the most money from the sale to ensure the best for her family,

¹¹² N.J.B. Plomley, 'Thomas Bock's portraits of the Tasmanian Aborigines', in Diane Dunbar, *Thomas Bock: Convict Engraver, Society Portraitist, exhibition catalogue* (Tasmania: Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, 1991); 'G. Gray' may have been George Robert Gray (1808-1872) who worked at the British Museum from 1831 and was head of the ornithological section for 41 years.

¹¹³ RAI, MS 147.

¹¹⁴ SLNSW, GAR papers, Vol.68/ or 69, Letter, pl. 558-9.

while Davis felt the collection should be kept together and not fall into the hands of those who would not appreciate it.¹¹⁵ Rose appears to have asserted herself, stating ‘that the curiosities are [hers] to dispose of as [she] sees fit’, to which Davis and Hensley agreed. Therefore, the eventual movement of the collection went beyond the monetary value of the objects within. While Davis prioritised his own interests, his passion for the collection and subject matter was clearly of more importance to Mrs Robinson.

Davis and his second wife Jane (née Moorhouse) visited to see the collection on 26 March 1867.¹¹⁶ On 28 March Rose drew Mrs Davis and ‘Dr D. made an offer of £30 for the Curiosities’. The following day Rose drew ‘Mrs D’ packing, indicating the couple left shortly thereafter.¹¹⁷ Davis recorded during this visit a ‘List of Ethnological Objects collected by the late Geo. Augustus Robinson, and purchased of his Widow.’¹¹⁸ The pictorial works included in this list were: one large oil painting of “The Doctor”; twenty-four drawings in frames; six unframed drawings; two lithographs; one Daguerreotype. On 21 October 1867, Davis compiled a second, more thorough “Catalogue of Drawings, Paintings and other objects of an Ethnological nature” in his notebook.¹¹⁹ The first thirty-four items were described as previously belonging to George Augustus Robinson, and bought from his widow. Beyond the Bock works, the others produced in Tasmania were: the two sculptural busts of Wurati and Trukanini (1835) by Benjamin Law;¹²⁰ *The natives mourning the loss of their country* by Charles Merrett;¹²¹ the oil painting of Wurati by Benjamin Duterrau;¹²² the sketch titled *Tom* by William Buelow Gould;¹²³ five anonymous portraits on red tinted paper, of three women and two men;¹²⁴ a daguerreotype of

¹¹⁵ SLNSW, GAR papers, Vol.68/ or 69, Letter Davis to Rose Robinson, 20 March 1867. pl. 545.

¹¹⁶ Jane was sister of Matthew Moorhouse, Protector of Aborigines in South Australia 1839-1856; Richard Sylvanus Williams, ‘A Survey of Staffordshire Medical Practitioners in 1851’ (June 2018), practitioners.exeter.ac.uk [accessed June 2020].

¹¹⁷ SLNSW, GAR papers, Vol.68/ or 69, Note from Rose Robinson(?), 25-29 March 1867.

¹¹⁸ RAI, MS 147, 29 March 1867.

¹¹⁹ RAI, MS 145, 21 Oct. 1867, ‘Catalogue of Drawings, Paintings, and other objects of an Ethnological nature.’

¹²⁰ BM, 2009,2025.1 and 2009,2025.2.

¹²¹ BM, Oc2006,Drg.83.

¹²² BM, Oc2006,Ptg.22; RAI, MS 147, 29 March 1867, listed as “a Native of Bruné Island called “The Doctor” highly esteemed by G.A. Robinson; RAI, MS 145, Cat. No. 3 refers to “Woreddy”, or “The Doctor”. Described as framed in Tasmanian wood;

¹²³ BM, Oc2006,Drg.40.

¹²⁴ There is no signature or supporting documentation to evidence the artist. Gaye Sculthorpe has asserted they were made by Thomas Lempriere, as Robinson notes in his journal he asked Lempriere to draw ‘the natives’ when they stopped overnight at Port

three Tasmanians; a drawing of Two Tasmanian Catamarans or floats, and a drawing in colour of “Cape Barren Geese” by Robert Neill made in July 1830.¹²⁵ There were also five works by William Strutt purchased by Robinson during his time in Victoria, including: three pencil drawings of *Parn Garn* of the native police (1851), *Morum-morum been* of the Boninyong Tribe, and his wife *Waran-ten-noon* or *Warren drennin*, alias Mary, of the Warreneep Tribe (both 1852); and two lithographs, one of *Moonwillie* and the other of “*Corunguam*” and “*Munight*”, native police.¹²⁶

Davis tried to acquire Robinson’s journals after his death, but Rose refused his offer as she wished her son to write an account of his father’s life. She allowed Davis to borrow one or two, and on 28 September 1867 he lamented in a letter to Rose that ‘Mr Robinson’s manuscripts contain so very little information... respecting the Tasmanian Aborigines.’¹²⁷ Davis had discovered by this point that a number of the images and objects from Robinson’s collection were of Aboriginal Australians rather than Tasmanians, and dismissively stated that Robinson ‘always confounded these and spoke of the two people as one’ and he could not be considered ‘a man of science’.¹²⁸ Davis offered to sell the entire collection back to her for thirty pounds plus expenses, but was unable to do so. He returned the last of the journals after much delay in June 1871.¹²⁹

The relationship between Robinson and Davis has often been described in a purely negative light with the latter viewed as taking advantage of Robinson and his widow. There is however evidence of respect and even friendly acquaintance between the two men. In an 1865 letter from Robinson to Davis, Robinson described the latter’s *Crania Britannica* as much spoken of and referred to. As Robinson was attempting to draft his own book he said to Davis ‘I wish, I had you as a neighbour. I shd[sic]

Arthur, and Lempriere’s publication, *The Penal Settlements of Van Diemen’s Land*, refers to the drawings and the distinctive colour around the eyes of individuals depicted; BM, Oc2006, Drg.44-48; RAI, MS 145, Cat. Nos. 14, 17-19 (18 has two drawings).

¹²⁵ Robinson visited Port Arthur where Neill was held in 1833 and may have acquired this drawing then; BM, Oc2006, Drg.82; RAI, MS 145, Cat. Nos. 34 and 34a.

¹²⁶ BM, Oc2006, Drg.41, Oc2006, Drg.719-720, Oc2006, Prt.236-237; RAI, MS 145, Cat. Nos. 27-31; RAI, MS 147, 29 March 1867; Ian D. Clark (ed.), *The journals of George Augustus Robinson, chief protector, Port Phillip Aboriginal Protectorate* (Melbourne, Heritage Matters, 2000), p.40.

¹²⁷ SLNSW, GAR papers, Vol.68/ or 69, Letter Davis to Mrs Robinson, 28 September 1867, pl.563 -568; RAI, MS 436, Notes by Davis on Robinson’s journal ‘My First Expedition’ are short and incomplete.

¹²⁸ SLNSW, GAR papers, Vol.68/ or 69, Letter Davis to Mrs Robinson, 28 September 1867, pl.563 -568; Davis, *On the Osteology*, pp.6-8.

¹²⁹ These were later purchased by the SLNSW c.1939.

try and profit by your great experience in such matters.¹³⁰ Female relationships were also a factor in developing networks for collection. Rose Robinson and Jane Davis exchanged letters to each other, sometimes passed through the letters sent by their husbands or, following George Augustus Robinson's death, directly to his widow. Mrs Robinson had drawn Mrs Davis during their stay in March 1867, and later Mrs Davis wrote in a warm manner to invite Mrs Robinson to stay, and later to express her disappointment when she was unable to make it. An undated note from Jane Davis, to Mrs Robinson ended with a warm note that her 'husband writes with me in kindest regards to you, love and kisses to the little ones.¹³¹ These closer relationships fall outside the often-cited negotiations, but they may have proved beneficial to Davis in his acquisition of the Robinson collection, with his desire to keep the items together and evident appreciation for the authenticity of its contents proving of more importance to Rose Robinson than the potential financial value of the group of works.

3.5 Davis, science and the 'Galerie Anthropologique'

Davis's list of forty-three items, written in his notebook in October 1867, offered a "Catalogue" of works he held and went beyond the works from Robinson's collection.¹³² Although a useful source to explore this pictorial collection, this snapshot by Davis omitted the works by Prout and Smith, which were already a part of his collection, showing the list was incomplete. Of the nine pictorial works in the "Catalogue" from sources other than Robinson, only one referenced the depiction of an Aboriginal Australian: 'No. 36. a fine coloured drawing of "Mook-aba-rang", alias "Broken Bay Jack"' (Fig.3.46).¹³³ This and five other items were bought by Davis from the 20 August 1867 sale of works from Dr Richard King (1811-1876), surgeon, explorer and former secretary of the Ethnological Society of London and

¹³⁰ BM, PIC DOC 171_OC4, Letter from Robinson to Davis, 16 Feb. 1865.

¹³¹ SLNSW, GAR papers, Vol.68/ or 69, Letter Mrs Davis to Mrs Robinson, 13 October 1867 (including reference to letter of 29 October 1867 from Mrs Robinson to Mrs Davis); Letter Davis to Mrs Robinson, 17 November 1867.

¹³² RAI, MS 145, 21 October 1867, 'Catalogue of Drawings, Paintings, and other objects of an Ethnological nature.'

¹³³ BM, Oc2006,Drg.319.

founding member of the Aborigines' Protection Society. Davis was acquainted with King through London's ethnological circles, and he had purchased from him before, describing in his *Thesaurus Craniorum* a 'Chippewyan' skull 'bought of Dr. Richard King, who knew him'.¹³⁴ Lot number 177 in King's sale included 'Four water colour drawings "Portraits of Madagascar Indians," and "Portrait of an Australian Chief".¹³⁵ The drawings from Madagascar were by J.W. Sperling, but the creator of the Australian Chief is unlisted. A reference in Davis's notebook described the sitter as 'Botany Bay Jack. Chief of an extinct tribe. Sydney'. A note on Davis's copy of the catalogue has the price of £5 written alongside 'Lot 177'.¹³⁶



Fig.3.46 *Mook-aba-rang*, Unknown Artist, mid-19th century, watercolour, 570 x 400mm, BM, Oc2006,Drg.319 © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Other works depicting Aboriginal Australians in the British Museum collection can be linked to Davis. These include six drawings of people from the 'Murray River Tribe' by Isaac Coates, five men and one woman, described in an annotation on the back as coming from the Davis collection.¹³⁷ The accompanying inscription included numbers in Davis's handwriting, suggesting they were treated as a series.

¹³⁴ From 1869 Davis was Vice-President of The Anthropological Society and King was on the council; 'The Anthropological Society', *BMJ*, Vol.2, No.459 (Oct. 16, 1869), p.423; Davis, *Thesaurus Craniorum*, p.50.

¹³⁵ It has not been possible to ascertain where King acquired these works.

¹³⁶ BM, Oc2006,Drg.319; RAI, MS 145, No. 36 'A fine coloured drawing of "Mook-aba-rang", alias "Broken Bay Jack". An Australian'. These five works (Nos. 36 to 40 in Davis's October 1867 list) were described as 'purchased of Dr Richard King for £5; Other images in the list included: "Rammohun Ro", the hindoo reformer' by P. Briggs R.A. (bought for £3); an 'African in three phases' by James Ward R.A. (bought for £5); a drawing of a 'Pianoghotto Indian Chief by Sir Robert Shomburgk' (bought for £5) and 'A Portrait of an African', by Jos. Bononn R.A. (bought for £2.10).¹³⁶ These purchases reflect that while Davis expressed a particular interest in Aboriginal Tasmanians, the depictions he collected covered a wider geographical base.

¹³⁷ BM, Oc2006,Drg.49-54.

It is unclear how Davis came to own these works and they were not mentioned in his 1867 “Catalogue”. Coates was based in Adelaide from 1848, so these may have reached Davis through his connection with the Moorhouse family.

No descriptions or images have been found to indicate how these works were displayed in Davis’s home. However, an album now in the British Museum entitled ‘Galerie Anthropologique’ demonstrates how Davis conceptualised and organised his pictorial works. The name of this volume may be a nod to the Galerie Anthropologique of the Jardin des Plantes in Paris, mentioned by Davis in his *Thesaurus Craniorum* of 1867, but it could also reference the publication by the ethnographic sculptor Henri Joseph Charles Cordier, *L’Oeuvre de M. Cordier. Galerie anthropologique et ethnographique pour servir à l’histoire des races...* (1860).¹³⁸ The use of this title reflected the network of colleagues and acquaintances Davis had built in France. A makers’ mark on the inner cover of the album reads ‘Parkins & Gotto. Manufacturers. 25, Oxford Street.’ This company existed from the 1840s, but only moved to 25 Oxford Street in the 1850s, so the album was made after this date. Most of the pictorial items included in the album were simply pasted in, but the volume also allowed for reader interaction. Paper barriers were pasted to hold removable catalogues or lists. This suggests Davis wished to be able to remove, read and reference other items in the book. Envelopes, stamps and seals were inserted to accompany the images and were pasted so the letters within could remain accessible. This ensured documents with information concerning the production and purchase of the items were kept alongside their respective images. Many of these accompanying documents have now been archived elsewhere in the museum. The letter written by Alfred Bock to Davis in May 1856 was described in Davis’s catalogue of October 1867 as in the ‘Galerie Anthropologique’.¹³⁹

The volume in its current state holds depictions of people from Asia, Africa and Oceania. Most works are from the print series *Sketches of Oriental heads* or *A Series of Miscellaneous Rough Sketches of Oriental Heads* produced in 1839-1846.¹⁴⁰ One drawing remains in the volume, which is a watercolour profile portrait of “Tatooah” a “Makooah”, painted in the Republic of Congo.¹⁴¹ Only twelve depictions of

¹³⁸ Davis, *Thesaurus Craniorum*.

¹³⁹ BM, PIC DOC 171_OC8, Letter A. Bock to Davis, 14 May 1856.

¹⁴⁰ BM, As2006,Prt.240-339. The name “Rev R. B. Boswell’ is noted in pencil on one of the print covers.

¹⁴¹ BM, Af2006,Drg.22.

Aboriginal Australians are currently held in the album.¹⁴² All are from W.H. Fernyhough's *Series of twelve profile portraits of the Aborigines of New South Wales* produced in 1836.¹⁴³ In the album these prints were prefaced by a list 'from the publishers' of reviews of the series copied from Australian papers: *The Colonist*; *The Commercial Journal*; *The Australian*; *Sydney Times*; and the *Sydney Herald*. This list conveys how a print series produced in Australia could be sold to people in Britain, through a set of reviews to convince an interested party to buy. This would allow the publisher not to misjudge the number of sales or copies to print and send. The three pin holes on the left of these prints indicate they were originally sewn together and are likely to have been sold as a complete series, or in parts or groups.¹⁴⁴ Each of the twelve prints sit on the left-hand side of a double page spread, and visible remnants signal that items have been removed from the opposite pages, seemingly following the album's entrance to the British Museum. The gaps in the album are made evident through traces of what had been in place before: ripped or lifted paper where images were previously pasted; paper barriers without their removable items; and visible offsets from prints indicating the location of images no longer present.

The original lot description for this item in the Joseph Barnard Davis posthumous 1883 sale by Sotheby's read:

Lot 246- ANTHROPOLOGY. A large Collection of Original Drawings, Photographs, Autograph Letters, etc. relating principally to Uncivilized Tribes, mounted in an album, half morocco, with patent lock, lettered "Galerie Anthropologie".¹⁴⁵

This description confirms items were removed from this album after the sale. The reference to 'Original Drawings, Photographs...' cannot refer solely to the single remaining image, or the two photographs still inside, and 'Autograph Letters' for which only the envelopes are in place. The 'patent lock' referenced in the description may have been intended to give the object grandeur through restricted access, as an additional embellishment, or it may have related to the monetary value

¹⁴² BM, Oc2006,Prt.340-351.

¹⁴³ Fernyhough was born in Staffordshire but thus far no identifiable link has emerged between him and Davis.

¹⁴⁴ Another version of the Fernyhough prints is held in the Prints and Drawings department at the British Museum, which is probably why these works remain in this album.

¹⁴⁵ BL, N.R.s. 847. 1, *Catalogue of the Library of the late Dr. J. Barnard Davis, F.S.A. F.R.S... sold by auction, by Messrs. Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge... On Tuesday, the 30th of January, 1883, and Two following Days...*

of the items kept within.¹⁴⁶ The placement of the letter from Alfred Bock suggested the objects near to it had some relevance.¹⁴⁷ Seven empty pages fell in the middle of the arrangement of the *Series of twelve portraits*, perhaps indicating it was received in two parts. An annotation by Davis on one of these empty pages matched with an annotation on the back of one of the seven watercolour copies of Thomas Bock's works by G. Gray, by this point located elsewhere in the British Museum's store, thereby confirming these items once sat in this album.¹⁴⁸ The five Duterrau prints previously discussed in this chapter were also once in this volume. Traces left on now empty pages match visible marks on the back of the prints. The Isaac Coates set of six images may also have been in the volume, as they follow the pattern of the others with the later pencilled note 'J.B. Davis Coll' on the verso.

Albums like the 'Galerie Anthropologique' give the sense of an order imposed by the collector, although the works sat together largely in their sets. The album can be explored and understood as an evolving object and the images within it as items which could be moved or removed. The agency of Davis as a collector, gathering and arranging these objects in the album is a visible process, albeit limited by changes made after it left his possession. The album emphasised that depictions of Aboriginal Australians were not produced, in aesthetic terms, in isolation from the format of depictions of people of other ethnic origin, and they were often viewed and organised in the nineteenth century comparatively with depictions of other peoples. Thus to understand their significance in colonial knowledge making in Britain, the images of Indigenous Australians should not be analysed in isolation.

Images offered scientific collectors information that objects and human remains could not. They could show what people looked like beyond bones and other forms of human remains, which may have encouraged some viewers in Britain to acknowledge the humanity of those portrayed, while others worked harder to deny that truth. Images could also show the proper use of ethnographic objects which, divorced from their original environment, could be otherwise misunderstood. In a

¹⁴⁶ The 'patent lock' is no longer there. In a letter to Mrs Davis, Franks stated the lock was broken, drew a sketch of the keyhole and asked, 'Do you know anything of this key?'. This confirmed that the removal occurred following the album's entry to the British Museum; BM, Central Archive, 'Pre-1896' correspondence, box 'D', Dept of Britain, Europe & Prehistory Archive, Letter from A.W. Franks to Mrs Davis, 14 February 1883.

¹⁴⁷ BM, PIC DOC 171_OC8, Letter A. Bock to Davis, 14 May 1856.

¹⁴⁸ The annotation was transferred to the back of the Gray copy when removed from the album.

comparative display, images demonstrating how objects would have been worn or used, could bring those kinds of collections ‘to life’.

...

Joseph Barnard Davis died on 19 May 1881, leaving all of his belongings to his third wife, Emma Moorhouse (who he had married on 31 July 1878) except for a small amount of money for his son, the artist Joseph Davis.¹⁴⁹ Three sales of Davis’s collection were held in early 1883: one for Decorative Porcelain and other works of art;¹⁵⁰ one for coins, early medals and plaques;¹⁵¹ while the final sale was for Davis’s vast Library.¹⁵² Augustus Wollaston Franks purchased many pictorial works at the 1883 sales of Davis’s estate for the museum’s collection. A number of these were listed in the *Decorative Porcelain, Antiquities & other Works of Art* sale under the section titled ‘Natives of India, New South Wales, Zulus, Kaffirs, and other Tribes (framed and glazed)’.¹⁵³ At the sale of Davis’s library the bookseller Bernard Quaritch, who acted as collector and agent for the publications of the British Museum and Society of Antiquaries, bought numerous volumes, many of which were subsequently sold on to Franks for the British Museum as soon as the Davis sale was over.¹⁵⁴ The ‘Galerie Anthropologique’, was listed in the Library sale (Lot 246), bought for £15 by Quaritch and sold on to Franks on 1 February 1883. The limit on the documented agreement between Franks and Quaritch was set for the ‘Galerie’ at £7-10s, and the higher price paid suggests there were other interested buyers, and it was considered an item of significant worth to the museum’s collection. The Library sale also contained Charles Hamilton Smith’s drawings, described as:

¹⁴⁹ Will of Joseph Barnard Davis, proved at Lichfield on 22 August 1881 by Emma Davis (widow) and William Henry Snow, both of Shelton. Probate Records (gov.uk); ‘Obit.’, *BMJ*, June 4, 1881, p.901; Also purchased from the Davis collection are drawn copies of ethnographic images by his sons, annotated ‘J.B.D. jr’ and ‘W.H. Davis’.

¹⁵⁰ BL, N.R.s. 847. 1, *Catalogue of Decorative Porcelain, Antiquities & other Works of Art, including the collection of the late Dr. J. Barnard Davis, F.S.A. F.R.S. & c., ... sold by auction, by Messrs. Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge... On Friday, the 19th of January, 1883...*

¹⁵¹ BL, N.R.s. 847. 1, *Catalogue of some valuable Coins, Early Medals & Plaques, including the collection of the late Dr. J. Barnard Davis, F.S.A. F.R.S. & c., ... sold by auction, by Messrs. Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge... On Friday, the 26th of January, 1883, and following Day...*

¹⁵² BL, N.R.s. 847. 1, *Catalogue of the Library of the late Dr. J. Barnard Davis.*

¹⁵³ This section covered lots 27 to 37 (lot 38 was also related). The works were not identified individually, and Franks bought all bar lots 36 and 37.

¹⁵⁴ Davis’s library sale ran from 30 January to 1 February 1883; BM Archive, A. W. Franks payment list to Bernard Quaritch after Davis Sale, 1 February 1883; Quaritch issued another catalogue of works acquired from this sale in late February 1883, with increased prices.

[Lot] 600 SMITH (LT. COL. HAMILTON) ETHNOLOGICAL DRAWINGS, 2 vol. an extensive collection of drawings, mostly in water-colours, comprising studies of portraits, skulls, &c. principally of tribes of Eastern Countries and the Islands of the South Seas, with MS. Contents, half morocco.¹⁵⁵

These volumes were bought for 18 pounds 15 shillings by Quaritch and sold to Franks with the other items. Franks presented these two volumes to the museum where they were placed within the Christy Library, indicating they were purchased with Christy funds.¹⁵⁶ The Davis collection greatly extended the department's assemblage of pictures of indigenous figures from around the world. It remains the main source of colonial works depicting Aboriginal peoples in the British Museum's collection.

The Anthropological Institute also purchased items at the Library sale, spending £13-18s-6d on 'two large albums of photographs and drawings, a few books, and a considerable number of Dr Davis MS notebooks'.¹⁵⁷ They had intended to purchase more for the Institute, resolving at a meeting of 23 January 1883 to spend at a maximum £40, but as the assistant secretary relayed in a later meeting, the books 'were sold at very high prices' in the end.¹⁵⁸ A letter written from Franks to Mrs Davis shortly after the sale on 14 February 1883 described how competitive the sale of the Davis library had been: '[i]n the book sale I purchased a considerable number of volumes, including many of the albums, and I only regret that I was unable to obtain the whole of these.'¹⁵⁹ This indicated not only that Franks was aware of Davis's albums, but that he had considered their contents and perhaps also Davis's arrangement of them to be of sufficient value that he wanted all to enter the British Museum's collection.¹⁶⁰ Given the limited number of artworks referenced as individual or group lots in Davis's sale of *Decorative Porcelain... & other Works of Art*, and the large number of individual images linked to Davis now in the British

¹⁵⁵ BL, N.R.s. 847. 1, *Catalogue of the Library of the Late Dr. J. Barnard Davis...*

¹⁵⁶ The volumes are held in AOA. The inner front cover of the first volume includes the bookplate of the Christy Library, and Franks's monogram 'AF' in pencil, with a note in the top left says No. '107 Fol.'. Underneath is 'Quaritch Davis Sale. Jan 31/83 £20.12.6.' This does not match the price written on the agreement list between Franks and Quaritch, which recorded 18 pounds 15 shillings.

¹⁵⁷ RAI, Council Minutes, 23 January 1883, p.9.

¹⁵⁸ RAI, Council Minutes, 13 February 1883, pp.10-11; *JAI*, Vol. 13 (1884), pp.481-484.

¹⁵⁹ BM, 'Pre-1896' correspondence, box 'D', Dept of Britain, Europe & Prehistory Archive, Letter from A.W. Franks to Mrs Davis, 14 February 1883.

¹⁶⁰ Franks may have been aware of the contents as a result of the volumes being available to view in advance of the sale.

Museum's collection, it seems many of the works that now feature as individually stored pieces in the museum were previously held as a collection in albums created by Davis.

3.6 Discussion and conclusion

Dr Barnard Davis... appears as a strong collector of evidence in favour of the plurality of the human race, and in powerful antagonism to the Darwinian monogenists...¹⁶¹

Davis was an influential figure in his own time and a known proponent of polygenesis, the theory that different races of man were descended from different animals. His publications showed he believed that his study of comparative anatomy would demonstrate that profound racial differences were undeniable. Many, if not all, of his ideas are now viewed as not only false but also highly prejudiced and racist. Davis used his collections to write, amongst other publications, the *Crania Britannica* (1856) with Dr Thurman, and his own *Thesaurus Craniorum* (1867). In 1874 he published *On the Osteology and Peculiarity of the Tasmanians* as a foreign member of the Dutch society of Sciences of Haarlem, and it was for this publication that he focussed so heavily on securing depictions of Aboriginal Tasmanians.¹⁶² With rare explicit references to artwork in his publications we must look to more subtle evidence of how his pictorial collection influenced his work, often in physiognomic references which could not have been informed by skeletal matter, such as his notes on skin colour and hair texture.¹⁶³

Davis referred repeatedly to skin colour in his searches for, and records of, ethnographic pictorial works. Skin colour was an influential factor in discussions of human variety, particularly in the late-eighteenth century, arising from the development of the field of natural history, increased global travel and the interest from medical practitioners in comparative anatomy. Roxann Wheeler has termed skin colour as seen by many to be a 'discrete item of analysis', one of a number of factors.¹⁶⁴ Angela Rosenthal described how this physiognomic feature was seen as a

¹⁶¹ 'Review: Barnard Davis on Craniology' *TAR*, Vol. 6, No. 23 (Oct. 1868), p.389.

¹⁶² Davis, *On the Osteology*.

¹⁶³ Davis did also collect samples of Tasmanian hair. These are now held in the Pitt Rivers Museum.

¹⁶⁴ Other conceptions of difference: religion, civility and rank; Wheeler, pp.2, 28.

‘signifier of moral or spiritual state of development’ or state of the soul.¹⁶⁵ In the nineteenth century, analysis of skin colour had been eclipsed by the comparative study of crania or skeletons, as colour was seen as too changeable and the measurement of anatomy gave more objective data. However it is evidently still a factor in notes made by Davis. In his catalogue of October 1867 Davis wrote under the entry for Bock’s drawing of Problatena, she ‘is not ochred, and therefore presents the true and natural colour of the ‘Tasmanians’. The ‘accuracy’ of depicted colour emerged as a repeated concern for Davis. Following the purchase of Prout’s thirty-six drawings in February 1856, he called on the artist and ascertained that the ‘Family Group has the correct colour, which Prout says is a “copper colour” darkish.’¹⁶⁶ This reference emerged in Davis’s publication on the *Osteology and peculiarities of the Tasmanians*, in which he described Aboriginal Tasmanians as having ‘a skin of a dull dark colour, approaching to brown’ while Aboriginal Australians were described ‘by the most careful observers to be chocolate, copper coloured or nutmeg coloured.’ It was here Davis makes his sole reference in a publication to a pictorial work depicting Aboriginal Australians, George F. Angas’s *South Australia Illustrated*, where the author defined the sitters’ skin colour as “a purplish copper-tint”, ‘certainly extremely remote from black’.¹⁶⁷

Davis also regularly asked his contacts about the nature of the hair of Aboriginal Australians, with notebooks including brief remarks such as ‘hair grows all over head’.¹⁶⁸ In 1856 Alfred Bock sent him a sample of hair from an Aboriginal Tasmanian woman, on Davis’s request, further explaining that women wore their hair close, noting ‘I think you will find it so represented in the drawings’. Men he described were accustomed ‘to mat it together with grease and a clayey red ochre’.¹⁶⁹ As a result of details such as this Davis went on to read a paper before the Anthropological Institute in 1872 titled ‘Notes upon the Hair, and some other Peculiarities of Oceanic Races’, describing and later writing on differences between the hair of Aboriginal Australians and Tasmanians in his publications.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁵ Rosenthal, pp.97-103.

¹⁶⁶ RAI, MS 140, Notebook no. 4 (September 4th 1854 to May 1858).

¹⁶⁷ This publication is noted in the sale list for Davis’s library but did not come to the collection at the British Museum; Davis, *On the Osteology*, p.7.

¹⁶⁸ RAI, MS 140, Notebook no. 4 (September 4th 1854 to May 1858).

¹⁶⁹ ‘Second Annual Report of the Council of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, for 1872,’ *JAI*, Vol.2 (1873), pp. 425-429.

¹⁷⁰ Davis, *On the Osteology*, pp.8-9.

These examples evidence how Davis used imagery and information from artists to influence his understanding of indigenous peoples and his own scientific knowledge production. The imperfect nature of these second-hand sources is highlighted by an encounter Davis had with an Aboriginal man from South Australia in Snow Hill, Birmingham on 25 February 1865. First mistaking the man for what he described as 'a Hottentot' due to 'the tawny yellow of his skin', Davis only believed the man's claims regarding his geographical origin when he saw a 'painted cloth' in the man's possession which he recognised as Aboriginal Australian. Davis wrote of this instance in his notebook from this period, remarking '[h]is colour quite misled me'.¹⁷¹ This is a telling example not only for the presumptions this interaction dispelled, but also that it was the object Davis cited for the confirmation of truth rather than the person's own testimony.

This chapter has considered, through the case study of Joseph Barnard Davis's pictorial collection, how depictions of Aboriginal Australians could be approached as sources for the pseudoscientific study of race and the history of man in nineteenth-century Britain. It has highlighted how the context of collecting influenced how these images were read. Davis's pictorial collection was created to augment a collection of crania, offering ethnographic information about indigenous peoples. This individual case complicates the study of colonial image collection in the nineteenth century. A collector with different interests could have approached these same images for information on clothing or cultural practices, on a particular artist, or on life in Australia. It is notable that Davis rarely appears to have had competition in the purchase of these items. The only reference to another collector was in the letter from Prout, and the anonymous person sought to buy all his works, seemingly holding an interest in the work of the artist or Australia more generally, rather than his depictions of Aboriginal people. The availability of observed representations appears to have been restricted.

While some of his acquisitions may have been opportunistic, Davis showed himself to be a strategic and dogged collector in his pursuit of items. For example, his wish to gain the most original, and thereby 'accurate,' version of Thomas Bock's depictions of Aboriginal Tasmanians, saw him contact over a period of thirteen years (c.1854-1867): Richard Cull; the print seller from whom Cull bought the items;

¹⁷¹ RAI, MS 147, Joseph Barnard Davis Notebook 'Notae ethnographicae' (1859-65).

the artist's son Alfred Bock; Lady Jane Franklin; George Augustus Robinson; and, after his death, his widow Rose Robinson. The monetary worth of items like ethnographic images also appears to have been negotiable and far from general knowledge, as shown by Davis querying costs with the artists he contacted, and manipulating his own contacts for financial gain (including offering Mrs Robinson £30 for a collection he knew was worth more).

The value of imagery for Davis lay in the accurate depiction of peoples unknown to him and to that end he wished to own works produced directly from life. The need to build networks to secure the available imagery was clearly demonstrated. Davis sourced many of his images via written communication, or through associations made in the societies of which he was a member, as with Dr Richard King. With new contacts, Davis always tried to expand his collection, whether of information, images, crania or ethnographic objects, as in his first contact with Alfred Bock. He sought to verify the works he was purchasing in advance, as with the group of Prout drawings, and showed a willingness to travel to get the benefit of directly viewing items, as with Robinson. Printed sets such as those by Duterrau and Fernyhough were more easily available to Davis. However, both sets were originally printed in Australia, so they also necessitated communication in advance of their movement from distant colony to Britain. Unfortunately, their specific trail to Davis is to date indiscernible. Within his overall pictorial collection Davis distinguished important collections, such as Robinson's, as 'Protector of the Aborigines', or the drawings by Smith, as the author of *The Human Species*. These sets remained separate and were not treated in a fixed arrangement within his own collection.

Despite his desire for first-hand accuracy, Davis's interest in the actual personality or life of the sitters is less easy to discern. Evidence of his interest, although rare, emerged in passing notes, such as when recording where Robinson has mentioned the 'character' of Wurati, or the actions of Trukanini. Davis stored in his collection the documents that Prout had received from the catechist at the Wybalenna station, which may indicate an interest in the experiences of the sitters. However, this was instigated by Prout who felt it important that this information should stay with the works to retain the associated knowledge about the people depicted. Davis's awareness of the identity of specific sitters is evident through a correction he made on one of the Gray copies after Thomas Bock to which the names had been added

(there are no names on the originals). He noted the titles on the images of Trukanini and Wortabowigee were incorrectly reversed.¹⁷²

Analysis of the collections amassed by Davis has demonstrated how the interests of an individual collector could influence the reading and later use of colonial images, and, in the example of Davis, how this could relate to other forms of collected material. Ricardo Roque has described how associated archival material was thought to bring ‘credibility’ to collections of skulls in the nineteenth century. Images could be viewed as a form of ‘documentary material’ accompanying collections of human remains, though as we have seen colonial images are fallible and subject to external influences undermining their reliability.¹⁷³ The collections of human remains also gave ‘authority’ to visual records of indigenous peoples.¹⁷⁴ This chapter has demonstrated how images were approached as holders or conveyers of information and in turn were used to produce ‘new’ knowledge which entered an ethnographic or anthropological sphere. The demand from collectors for depictions of Aboriginal Australians in mid-nineteenth century Britain appears to have been limited, although it increased later in the century as evident in the wider interest and high prices paid at the sale of Davis’s collection. The comparative nature of Davis’s cranial studies was echoed in the comparative way he viewed indigenous peoples from across the globe, and the way he interacted and arranged images of them in his collection. His arrangement of the ‘Galerie Anthropologique’ also showed how meanings created through the organisation of works in the collection of a private individual could be changed when they entered a museum.

The foresight of Franks in acquiring the Davis collection for the British Museum in 1883 needs to be acknowledged. Nevertheless, as pictorial works remained secondary to the ethnographic objects in the Department of Ethnography (or its predecessors), until the Oceanic pictorial collections were catalogued, digitised, and put online (through a Getty project grant) in 2009, its existence has hardly been noted. Its potential for research and exhibition is now just begun to be realised

¹⁷² Gaye Sculthorpe, ‘Thomas Bock and the mystery of Trukanini’s shell necklace’, *Thomas Bock*, ed. by Jane Stewart and Jonathan Watkins (Birmingham: Ikon Gallery, 2017), pp.49-63.

¹⁷³ Ricardo Roque, ‘Authorised Histories: Human Remains and the Economies of Credibility in the Science of Race’, *Kronos*, Vol.44, No.1 (2018), pp.82-85.

¹⁷⁴ Seen in George French Angas’s solo exhibition, discussed in Chapter Four.

through investigations such as this thesis on the Indigenous Australian portion of the collection.

Chapter Four

Pictorial travelling – beyond the museum

‘... I am persuaded that pictorial travelling is fast growing into a necessity of an Englishman’s nature.’

‘Contributions from home’,
The Melbourne Daily News, 29 January 1851.

The producers of visual records in the Australian colonies overwhelmingly sought to profit from these works upon their return to Britain, most commonly by creating paintings, drawings, prints and publications for exhibition or sale. Artists charged fees for entry to displays of their work, encouraged the reproduction of images in print, and used the exhibition as a showcase of skills to demonstrate their suitability for future commissions. While finished works could be made in the colonial sphere and then transported, sketches or drawings made in Australia were more often ‘worked up’ on the original creator’s return to Europe, or given to a subsequent artist or printmaker to make the transition from sketch to finished work. Original observational drawings were frequently altered in this process of remediation, as artists consciously amended their images with a metropolitan audience and narratives in mind. Omissions could be made, content misunderstood, or meanings changed, particularly when supported by erroneous text. At a distance from the Aboriginal sitters, the authenticity of images could not be verified against the people they represented. As a result, faithfulness or ‘accuracy’ was a recurring concern. When exhibiting or publishing, artists used supporting documents, objects, and people to assert the authenticity of their work. In metropolitan centres, images were made displayable and comprehensible by fitting them into structures and formats easily legible for contemporary audiences.¹ The growth of exhibition venues and publications in nineteenth-century Britain, particularly in London, created a range of settings for the public to engage in ‘pictorial travel’ to distant lands, where they would ‘encounter’ depictions of Aboriginal people.²

¹ Bruno Latour, *Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers through Society* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1988), pp.237, 241.

² Catherine Roach, ‘The Ecosystem of Exhibitions: Venues, Artists, and Audiences in Early Nineteenth-Century London’, *British Art Studies*, Issue 14, November 2019.

As demonstrated in Chapters Two and Three, few works depicting Indigenous Australians had entered the British Museum collection before 1883. To better understand the circulation of images like these in early-to-mid nineteenth century Britain, in this chapter I explore how pictorial representations of Aboriginal people and their accompanying narratives became widely known in Britain through display and in the popular press. I focus on works outside the British Museum's collection which were disseminated in the public spheres of entertainment and spectacle in Britain. These images could be far-reaching and influential, but their form has sometimes inhibited their later collection in institutions. For example, large-scale panoramas travelled to multiple locations and were both unwieldy in scale and worn through repeated use, or newspapers, which most readers viewed as ephemeral and therefore survived in limited numbers. Some formats, such as oil paintings, were more likely to enter museums, galleries, private collections or heritage sites and indeed were made with those destinations in mind. Although London acted as a hub for the circulation of colonial imagery in Britain, the flexibility and portability of most two-dimensional images allowed content to move easily from metropolitan to regional centres. Artists engaged with this further set of networks for the consumption of images, in which works from Australia were circulated and viewed alongside depictions of other lands and colonised peoples.

The analysis in this chapter is structured into three sections. In the first two, I discuss diverse types of venue in which depictions of Aboriginal people were shown in Britain, separated to make a distinction between 'artistic' and 'popular' sites. In the 'artistic' section I consider the Royal Academy's Summer Exhibition, the foremost location for the public display of contemporary work produced by professional artists, as an example of a site where artistic ideology was the priority.³ Submitted works reflected the fashions of the day, as artists displayed their knowledge and awareness of changing artistic styles and taste. The second 'popular' section groups three venues that prioritised public entertainment and ethnographic display. The first of these is a solo artist exhibition at the Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly, where the audience could read the body of work on display in a cohesive or comparative manner. In panoramas, the second type of venue, painted works were accompanied

³ David H. Solkin (ed.), *Art on the Line: The Royal Academy Exhibitions at Somerset House, 1780-1836* (New Haven; London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art and the Courtauld Institute Gallery by Yale University Press, 2001), p.xi.

by a spoken or written guide intended to take the viewer on an imagined journey. The final venue is the international exhibitions that took place from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, in which depictions of indigenous peoples were one of thousands of different kinds of exhibit. For each of these four sites, I present a case study for analysis. Although this approach limits the opportunity to discern larger patterns, concentrating on a case study enables analysis in greater detail. Each site varied in relation to: the size of the overall audience; the intimacy of the venue; the social class, expectations, and existing Australian or artistic knowledge of the audience; the way the audience was directed through the images; as well as the showmanship or entrepreneurialism of the artist. Some display forms gave more prominence to the representation of Aboriginal people than others. In the third section of the chapter, my analysis of sites of public engagement moves to publications and the popular press to consider other formats in which the British public encountered images of empire. For this, I take a concentrated look at the first and most popular illustrated newspaper produced during the period, the *Illustrated London News*.

Spectacles of empire were consumed both publicly and privately. Notions of 'audience' and 'public' are broad and complex in this period. In each of the locations discussed in this chapter this grouping demonstrates difference in terms of class, gender, size, motivation for attendance, and relationship with the colonies and colonial emigres in Australia. Artists responded to fashionable styles or the settings for consumption, and the circumstances and interests of the spectators influenced their reading. The understanding of or reception by the audience was tempered by the narratives in which images were presented, and these were controlled by various actors involved in their production, publication and display. Audiences visited these places for reasons beyond the desire to view images. In fashionable locations such as the Royal Academy, it was equally important to be seen to attend.⁴

Visual imagery played an important role in solidifying and disseminating imperial concepts of power, supremacy and human difference within Britain.⁵ This chapter will demonstrate some consistency in the themes which emerged in the displayed

⁴ Solkin, p.4.

⁵ Tim Barringer, Geoff Quilley and Douglas Fordam, 'Introduction', in *Art and the British Empire*, ed. by Tim Barringer, Geoff Quilley & Douglas Fordham (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), pp.1-19.

images, such as control over distant empire, and an interest in promoting emigration. These factors led artists and publishers to shrink large imperial distances, making visual messages about experiences in the colonies more legible for a British populace with thoughts of making a life there. Remediated imagery illustrated and informed the colonial narratives of the period, as in the presentation of Aboriginal people as ‘a race in decline’. This narrative of imminent ‘extinction’ had already been established in the display and depiction of other indigenous groups affected by British colonisation.⁶ The rise in British emigration to Australia, particularly in the 1820s and 1850s, changed Australian demography, and altered representations of the colonies and their inhabitants in visual media that then travelled back to Britain. It also strengthened ties between the two locations, through increased personal connections and networks. In Britain a narrative of opportunity and progress framed around emigration came to dominate representations of Australia, particularly following the discovery of gold in New South Wales and Victoria in the 1850s. The development of new colonies and their growing autonomy from the centre of the British Empire influenced messages conveyed to a British audience ‘at home’ about the Aboriginal people of Australia.

4.1. Artistic venues – the Royal Academy

The foundation of the Royal Academy in 1768 occurred only one year before British artists began to produce visual records of people from the Pacific Islands on Lieutenant James Cook’s first voyage to the Pacific. The first of its annual exhibitions opened on 25 April 1769. John Webber, artist on Cook’s third voyage, exhibited paintings at the Royal Academy worked up from sketches made on the journey. These included twenty-nine paintings of Pacific subject matter, though none of these included Aboriginal portraits or Australian material.⁷ By the early-nineteenth century, the society and art school were the nexus of the British art world. Works submitted by artists for the annual Royal Academy exhibition were selected for display by a committee. Visitors to the Summer Exhibition arrived in large numbers, and included royalty, aristocracy, clergymen, officers, and the press.

⁶ Such as Native Americans from the eighteenth century; Sadiah Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade: Exhibitions, Empire and Anthropology in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2011); Coll Thrush, *Indigenous London: Native Travelers at the Heart of Empire* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2016).

⁷ Works by William Hodges, artist on Cook’s second voyages, and imagined scenes of Cook’s death were displayed at the RA in the 1780s. These included representations of Pacific peoples.

Artists had the opportunity to sell their works at the exhibition, and to build their reputation for future commissions from the 'well to do' audience. This incentivised artists to know and represent the latest popular styles of 'high art'. In the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries the 'picturesque' was dominant, primarily associated with the genre of landscapes, or topographical painting. Most Australian subjects submitted during this period reflected this style. Paintings were often developed from sketches, but as artists responded to the expectations of the committee, viewers, the art world, and the Academy, amendments were regularly made that departed from the observational scientific record.⁸

The hierarchy of art genres first generated in sixteenth-century Italy continued to hold sway in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, carried by artists and patrons to the European colonies. The hierarchy placed, in order of importance, history painting at the top, followed by portraiture, genre painting (scenes of everyday life), landscape art, animal painting and at the bottom, still life.⁹ This reflected that in fine art imagination was privileged over realism, directly contrasting with the detached mechanical copying desirable in the scientific representation of people and specimens. The hierarchy of genres was particularly influential in spaces like the Royal Academy. Beyond this, artists sustained themselves financially primarily through portraits and landscapes. 'High art' relating to works suitable for aesthetic contemplation, and 'low art' believed to have some function or utility, was an influential distinction in the fields of art and design. This followed through into the arrangement of works in the Summer Exhibition.¹⁰

The earliest work depicting Aboriginal people were exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1805 by William Westall (1781-1850), a recent probationer of the school. Westall was a member of the scientific team brought together by Joseph Banks to accompany Captain Matthew Flinders on his circumnavigation of Australia in the *Investigator* from 1801-1803. During this time Westall made around 140 sketches in pencil and watercolour, primarily coastal profiles and panoramic views. In a letter to Joseph Banks dated 31 January 1804, Westall expressed displeasure at the scenery of Australia.¹¹ He sent his drawings to Banks in London, who had them catalogued

⁸ The exhibition had 55,357 paying customers in 1783; Solkin, p.44.

⁹ Ibid., pp.4-5, 77-78.

¹⁰ In the display the Great Room was the most prestigious space; Ibid., p.24.

¹¹ Westall delayed his return to Britain, much to the Admiralty's displeasure, visiting other locations until February 1805. Despite the reservations he expressed, in the 1830s Westall

and conserved, before depositing them with the artist's brother Richard.¹² Westall returned to Britain in 1804 to learn that Flinders had been imprisoned by the French on Mauritius, and there would be no forthcoming work for an official Admiralty-sponsored publication.¹³

In 1805, Westall's *View of the bay of Pines, or Port Bowen* (New South Wales) was the first landscape of Australia to be displayed at the Royal Academy (by someone who had visited the country).¹⁴ Westall exhibited pictures in 1807 at the British Institution for Promoting the Fine Arts, in 1808 in Brook Street in London, and later that year, in the Gallery of Associated Artists. Joseph Banks supported the artist in claiming funds from the Admiralty, noting the outcomes of the French voyage of 1800-1803 led by Nicolas Baudin had been published and documented, while the artistic output of Flinders's concurrent circumnavigation had been overlooked.¹⁵ By 1809 the Admiralty had succumbed to pressure to produce results from the *Investigator* voyage. As Flinders remained in captivity, Westall was commissioned to make ten oil paintings based on his original drawings.¹⁶ These were completed between 1809 and 1812, and Westall exhibited some of these at the Royal Academy in 1810 and 1812.¹⁷

In the process of creating the finished oil paintings, Westall drew on the images he had produced to scientifically document the land, to create composed visions of Australia in the picturesque style favourable to the British art world. For empirically observed visual records produced on a voyage the artists would have adhered to a 'combination of scientific and aesthetic conventions', while the developed oil paintings were aesthetically pleasing for a metropolitan audience and erased all traces

became allied to those pushing for the establishment of the South Australian colony. He contributed his recollections to a pamphlet encouraging emigration, producing six engraved images as an accompaniment; James Taylor, *Picturing the Pacific: Joseph Banks and the shipboard artists of Cook and Flinders* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018), p.176.

¹² The damage that required conservation likely resulted from the wreck of the *Porpoise* off the north east coast of Queensland on 17 August 1803; *Ibid.*, pp.173, 178-9.

¹³ In the absence of commissions from the Australian expedition, Westall travelled to Madeira and Jamaica to generate new content, returning once again to Britain in 1806.

¹⁴ *View of the bay of Pines, or Port Bowen*, William Westall, c.1805, held in the NLA, nla.obj-135185925; *Ibid.*, pp.176-7.

¹⁵ As recorded by Joseph Farington, *The Diary of Joseph Farington, Vol.9* (London: Yale University Press, 1982); Bernard Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988), p.196.

¹⁶ Taylor, pp.186-231.

¹⁷ Often recorded as nine. All ten paintings were transferred to the National Maritime Museum in 2017, on dispersal of the Ministry of Defence Art Collection.

of the mobile sites of their original production.¹⁸ Historian Elisabeth Findlay used Westall's *Part of King George III Sound, on the South Coast of New Holland, December 1801* to demonstrate how the artist's finished work combined his original sketches and imagination (see Figs.4.1 to 4.3).¹⁹ This painting was not exhibited at the Royal Academy, but it was one of seven works by Westall that were engraved to illustrate Matthew Flinders's official expedition account *A Voyage to Terra Australis* (1814). Six depicted Aboriginal men and women, or Aboriginal objects.²⁰ Westall's illustrations often jarred with descriptions by Flinders, and the author was displeased with the dissonance created between image and text. The publication was financed by the Admiralty after Flinders eventually returned to Britain in October 1810, and it was widely disseminated.²¹ Westall also published his prints for a wider audience in the 'scenery book' *Views of Australian Scenery* (1814), though access was still limited by cost.²²

Westall had made highly proficient portraits of Aboriginal people during his time on the *Investigator*, including images from Western Australia, South Australia, and south-east Australia. These detailed drawings do not seem to have informed the representations in his paintings. In these, Aboriginal men and women were depicted from a distance and were more aligned with the representative trope of the 'noble savage' than a detailed view of observed individuals (Fig.4.1). Westall also combined sources from different locations, with men and women from one area of Australia sometimes included in a landscape from another. As style and skill were dominant concerns for Academy exhibitions, creativity was expected in the finished work. Only a handful of the people who would see the paintings, if any, would be familiar enough with the scene to be able to identify 'inauthentic elements'.

¹⁸ Sarah Thomas, 'The Art of Travel in the Name of Science: mobility and erasure in the art of Flinders's Australian voyage, 1801-3' in Lambert and Merriman (eds.), *Empire and Mobility in the long nineteenth century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020), pp.72-3.

¹⁹ Elisabeth Findlay, *Arcadian Quest: William Westall's Australian Sketches* (Canberra: National Library Australia, 1998), pp.24-25.

²⁰ Matthew Flinders, *A Voyage to Terra Australis* (London G. & W. Nicol, 1814).

²¹ This followed a pattern of voyage artists overseeing the printed versions, as John Webber had for the publication after the third voyage led by Cook to the Pacific.

²² Two versions were produced; one large paper issue priced at one guinea, another version on smaller thinner paper priced at 15 shillings. This suggested socially differentiated audiences, with contrasting financial resources.



Fig.4.1 *Part of King George III Sound, on the South Coast of New Holland, December 1801*, William Westall, 1809-12, © National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London, ZBA7943.
Fig.4.2 *King George's Sound, view from Peak Head*, William Westall, 1801, National Library of Australia, nla.obj-138875378.
Fig.4.3 *Port Jackson: Grass Trees*, William Westall, 1802, National Library of Australia, nla.obj-138879570.

Paintings including 'non-European people' were displayed at the Royal Academy from the beginning of the Summer Exhibition, but depictions of Indigenous Australians were rare. In 1838 Augustus Earle exhibited *A bivouac of travellers in Australia* at the Academy.²³ This painting depicted a group of frontiersmen, accompanied by Aboriginal guides, seated around a campfire. The first Australian resident artist to display work at this venue was Theresa Walker in 1841, who had arrived in South Australia from England in 1837. Walker exhibited miniature wax medallion relief sculptures of Kertamaroo [Mullawiraburka] and Mocatta, 'commonly called Pretty Mary', an Aboriginal man and woman from the Adelaide

²³ Exhibit 684 – 'A bivouac of travellers in Australia, in a cabbage-tree forest; day-break', *The Exhibition of the Royal Academy* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1838), p.33.

region of South Australia.²⁴ The relationship between ‘high’ art and ‘low’ art in spaces such as the Royal Academy is demonstrated through the distinct difference in treatment in both the published catalogue and the display itself. Walker’s wax medallions were understood as ‘low’ art in this sense and were displayed in the section of the exhibition titled ‘Architecture’, in a display alongside intaglio and medallic portraits.²⁵ Her status as a female artist, may also have led to her being classified as a ‘sculptor’ in the catalogue, as opposed to ‘honorary exhibitor’.

In 1860, Australian artist Robert Hawker Dowling produced and exhibited his painting *Early effort – art in Australia* at the Royal Academy (Fig.4.4), in the West Room of the exhibition.²⁶ It represented a young white artist in the act of depicting three Aboriginal people, two men, and one woman. In this work the focus is upon the artist and his settler-colonial companions from whom he is receiving instruction, rather than those he was depicting. The painting served to highlight Dowling’s unusual background in the British art world, as the only Australian-trained artist working in Britain. One of the Aboriginal sitters has a bone ornament, worn by Aboriginal people in Victoria but not Tasmania, thus indicating this is the intended setting for the scene (despite the artist spending his youth in Tasmania). This was the last known work Dowling painted which included Aboriginal Australians.²⁷ The artist William Strutt exhibited regularly at the Royal Academy between 1865 and 1893, but there is no record of him exhibiting an oil painting of Aboriginal Victorians on his return to Britain. This was despite his many years in Victoria and the drawings and watercolours of Aboriginal men and women made there. This absence is significant as he did produce paintings of Māori for exhibition in Britain despite spending only one year in New Zealand, along with depictions of people from other ethnic groups he encountered following his return to Britain.²⁸ This absence may reflect the artist’s personal choice, but also suggests a potential lack of interest from the British public towards this subject matter.

²⁴ BM, 2016,2001.1, portrait medallion in wax of Kertamaroo (Mullawiraburka). Donated to the museum in honour of Neil MacGregor. Originally item was one of a pair with a portrait of his wife, Mocatta; John Jones, *Robert Dowling: Tasmanian son of Empire* (Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 2011), p.72.

²⁵ Exhibit 1136 – ‘Model of Mocatta commonly called Pretty Mary, a native of South Australia’, Exhibit 1140 – ‘Model of Kertamaroo, a native of South Australia’, both by Mrs. Theresa Snell Walker; *The Exhibition of the Royal Academy* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1841), p.50.

²⁶ Exhibit 364 – *Early effort – art in Australia*, by R. Dowling; *The Exhibition of the Royal Academy* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1860), p.18.

²⁷ Jones, *Dowling*, p.86.

²⁸ Curnow, pp.47-54, 67.



Fig.4.4 *Early effort – Art in Australia*, Robert Hawker Dowling, c.1860, oil on canvas mounted on composition board, NGV 218-4 © National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. Felton Bequest,1934.

Artists and practitioners across Europe aspired to a particular aesthetic and fashionable style that would afford them recognition, and they were trained in similar practices to attain it. These practical skills and compositional ideas influenced the production methods and appearance of visual imagery, whether in the form of observational sketches or in finished paintings. Depictions of non-European people were thus consistently produced to meet the tastes and expectations of a European audience which consumed them in prestigious spaces such as the Royal Academy. The example of Westall draws out the relationship between the scientific visual record and artwork, the first focused on precise representation, while the latter saw the artist conform to contemporary ideas of style and use of imagination to create an impactful scene. The transition from observational sketch to painting was far from simply scaling up an image, but rather involved combining and amending details to create a cohesive and engaging scene. Often several studies - of costumes, physiognomies, landscapes, botanical and zoological specimens - would contribute to a finished piece. These constructed compositions spoke more to contemporary conventions, such as the 'picturesque', than to topographical accuracy.

4.2 Popular venues

Solo exhibitions

Exhibitions displaying the work of a single colonial artist were uncommon in the first half of the nineteenth century, and such exhibitions on an Australian theme were even rarer. When they did occur, despite their novelty, a positive response could not be assumed. In 1835 the artist John Glover (1767-1849) held a solo exhibition which opened on New Bond Street in London.²⁹ Of sixty-eight paintings on display, sixty-two depicted Van Diemonian subject matter. In eight of those, Aboriginal Tasmanians were presented engaged in dancing, bathing and climbing trees. His exhibited landscape paintings included sweeping vistas, unusual botanical specimens (to a British audience) and so-called 'scenes of native life'. Being well-established in Britain prior to his arrival in Tasmania in 1831, Glover drew on contacts in the London art world to organise this exhibition.³⁰ His artist son William Glover had remained in Britain and oversaw the exhibition's organisation, also displaying some of his own works in it. Given the short interval between John Glover's arrival and the exhibition, he may have left Britain with the intention of sending back views of Van Diemen's Land, and made arrangements for the exhibition before making the journey. The catalogue for his exhibition noted all but seven of the works were painted in Van Diemen's Land, and 'the natives' featured in the titles of eight of them.³¹ These romanticised visions masked the ongoing devastating impact of British colonisation upon the lives of the Aboriginal Tasmanians. The venture was commercially unsuccessful and failed to attract many buyers.³² Works from this exhibition were not purchased for existing institutions, such as the British Museum.

²⁹ Glover was a successful British artist who had emigrated to Van Diemen's Land in 1831.

³⁰ No. 113, *A catalogue of pictures, descriptive of the scenery, and customs of the inhabitants of Van Diemen's Land, together with views in England, Italy, &c. painted by John Glover, Esq* (London: Printed by A. Snell, Newcastle Place, Edgware Road. 1835. Reprinted by J. Rogers, 1868); Hansen, *John Glover*, p.94.

³¹ Nos. 7, 14, 17, 22, 23, 29, 45, 55 in *A catalogue of pictures* (1868)

³² In the 1868 reprint of the catalogue a number of Glover's paintings were listed as in the gallery of Sir Thomas Phillipps, at Thirlestaine House, and four works depicting Aboriginal Tasmanians were in the possession of Charles Bowles, Esq; 'Mr. Glover's views in Van Diemen's Land', *The Times*, 29 June 1835, p. 5; David Hansen, *John Glover and the Colonial Picturesque* (Hobart: Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, 2003), p.104; David Hansen, 'The picturesque and the Palawa: John Glover's *Mount Wellington and Hobart Town from Kangaroo Point*', in *Art and the British Empire*, ed. by Barringer, Quilley and Fordham, pp.38-52.

From the 1840s exhibitions of colonial content drawn from ‘the corners of the empire’ became a more regular occurrence, particularly in the ‘cultural centre’ of London, where artworks were made, sold, and viewed.³³ Solo exhibitions by colonial artists incorporated a significant body of material containing images of indigenous peoples. To consider the form of these displays and their contemporary reception, I discuss the Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly, London and the 1846 exhibition of works by George French Angas, who became a commercially successful colonial artist, and produced illustrated volumes about indigenous people from Australia, New Zealand, and Africa.

The Egyptian Hall was built in Piccadilly in 1812 and housed natural history specimens and other objects from the collection of the naturalist and antiquarian William Bullock, until 1819 when the collection of over 32,000 items was sold at auction (Fig.4.5). The building became an exhibition hall, holding themed exhibitions, art exhibitions, panoramas, popular lectures, and gaining a reputation in the second half of the nineteenth century for illusion, spiritualism and mystery shows.³⁴ Living displays and ‘human curiosities’ were also exhibited in this space. From 1840 to 1842, the American George Catlin presented an exhibition of painted portraits and artefacts of the indigenous peoples of North America, accompanied by performances from Ojibwe, and later Iowa men.³⁵ Marketed as ‘Catlin’s Indian Gallery’ it generated a lot of publicity and likely strengthened this venue’s reputation for ‘living displays’ of people from distant lands.³⁶ The popularity of Catlin’s exhibition and publications encouraged Angas to travel and produce his own series of images of the indigenous peoples of Australia and New Zealand.³⁷

³³ Barringer, Quilley and Fordham, p.13.

³⁴ The hall was demolished in 1905.

³⁵ Thrush, pp.6-9.

³⁶ *A Descriptive Catalogue of Catlin’s Indian Gallery: containing Portraits, landscapes, costumes, &c. and Representations of the manners and Customs of the North American Indians* (1843).

³⁷ Philip Jones, ‘George French Angas: Colonial Artist at Large’ in *Crossing Cultures: Conflict, Migration and convergence: The proceedings of the 32nd international congress in the History of Art*, ed. by Professor Jaynie Anderson (Carlton, Vic: Miegunyah Press, 2009), p.322; Philip Jones, *Ochre and Rust: Artefacts and Encounters on Australian Frontiers* (London: Hurst and Company, 2018), p.214.



Fig.4.5 ‘Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly’, from the series *Metropolitan Improvements: London in the Nineteenth Century*, A. McClatchy after Thomas Hosmer Shepherd, 1828, steel engraving, 115 x 155 mm. BM, 1888,1113.2054 © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Born in Newcastle, England, in 1822, George French Angas was the son of the founder and Chairman of the South Australian Company, George Fife Angas.³⁸ The younger Angas travelled to Adelaide in summer 1843, and by June 1844 had produced depictions of scenes in the colony described in the *South Australian Register* as ‘accurate’ and ‘beautiful’. These included representations of Aboriginal people:

He has brought before us the costume, arms, and figures of the distant tribes, not as seen when they come to Adelaide, unarmed, and covered with old blankets, but arranged in the splendour of their native panoply, and engaged in the original exercises or employments of the race... as a proof of their fidelity, the natives themselves have pointed out the portraits of individuals, and named them...³⁹

These works had drawn upon and, in some examples, plagiarised the work of other artists, such as William Cawthorne.⁴⁰ In August 1844 Angas travelled to New Zealand, before returning to Australia in 1845 and arranging a formal exhibition of his works in Adelaide and Sydney.⁴¹ These were received to great acclaim, particularly his Aboriginal portraits.⁴²

Shortly after his return to Britain in February 1846, Angas displayed around 270 images in the ‘New Zealand and South Australian exhibition’ at the Egyptian Hall in London.⁴³ Opening to the public on 6 April, it presented works previously shown

³⁸ George Fife Angas was an early Aborigines’ Protection Society committee member.

³⁹ *South Australian Register*, 12 June 1844, p.3.

⁴⁰ Jones, ‘George French Angas’, p.322; Jones, *Ochre and Rust*, pp.81-86.

⁴¹ This was the first art exhibition held in South Australia.

⁴² *South Australian Register*, 21 June 1845, p.2; *South Australian*, 27 June 1845, p.3.

⁴³ Prior to the exhibition’s opening, Angas displayed his drawings to Queen Victoria and Prince Albert at Buckingham Palace: Leonard Bell, *Colonial Constructs: European Images of Māori 1840-1914* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1992), pp.15-16.

in Australia.⁴⁴ The exhibition was organised into three sections, focusing in turn on New Zealand, South Australia, and the coast of Brazil.⁴⁵ A contemporary advertisement described ‘200 full-length portraits, from life, of the principal New Zealand Chiefs with their Wives and Children’, followed in a smaller font by ‘One Hundred Portraits of the Natives and Scenery of South Australia’ (see Fig.4.6).⁴⁶ The priority placement of New Zealand likely resulted from contemporary interest in events featuring in the British news at the time, and the higher proportion of works depicting this country. Only a few years after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, Māori and British colonial relations remained far from stable. ‘Inquiries’ and reports of ‘outrages’ against colonists in New Zealand, were a frequent topic in the British press.



Fig.4.6 Advertisement for ‘Mr. G. French Angas’s New Zealand and Australian Exhibition’ at the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly [London: 1846], National Library of Australia, F/Broadside F4218.

A core element of the marketing for the exhibition in Britain was the reliability or ‘accuracy’ of Angas’s images, indicating these images were viewed as holding a scientific or ethnographic purpose. This was commonplace for such shows, as

⁴⁴ Unrelated exhibits were on display in different spaces in the hall at the same time. While Angas’s ‘New Zealand and Australian Exhibition’ was held, another space displayed a ‘non-descript dog of the arctic regions’; *Blackwood’s Lady’s Magazine and Gazette* (London: A.H. Blackwood and Page, 1846), p.237.

⁴⁵ *ILN*, 18 April 1846, p.253.

⁴⁶ *NLA*, F/Broadside F4218, printed by T. Frost, 45 Marshall Street, Golden Square.

depictions of distant lands, peoples and objects could not be immediately verified.⁴⁷ Novelty was also a selling point as Angas's promotional materials asserted that he was the first artist to have lived amongst the Māori and Aboriginal Australians, and devoted himself to their 'careful representation on the spot'.⁴⁸ While in fact he was preceded by Augustus Earle, Angas did travel widely and had spent extensive time with the indigenous peoples of New Zealand and Australia, making drawings immediately and working them up at a later juncture.⁴⁹ The *London Evening Standard* drew comparisons with George Catlin, well-known in Britain following his exhibition which travelled the country.⁵⁰ Testimonials from reputable supporters were brought to London by Angas to confer authenticity upon his work, and included: the Bishop of New Zealand; Mr. J. Morgan, a member of the Church Missionary Society mission at Otawhao; and Mr. T. S. Forsaith, 'Protector of Aborigines' in New Zealand. These attested to Angas's 'correct representations of the Mavries[sic]'.⁵¹ Christian missionaries, through their activities of conversion and 'civilising missions', interacted regularly with Māori in their efforts to transform the communities. These processes were central to the work of British colonialism and imperial expansion, and missionary networks were well established throughout the empire, facilitating the movement of objects and images. Those visitors who reported on the exhibition in London felt the testimonials added credibility to the depictions.⁵² It is notable that none of those described as accompanying the Angas exhibition in the British press related to the Aboriginal people depicted.

The promotional material also promised that fourteen-year old Hemi Pomare (James Pomara), '[a] Young New Zealand Chief ... in his Costume' would be present in the exhibition space when open (Fig.4.6).⁵³ Pomare was grandson of the Moriori chief of the Chatham Isles.⁵⁴ Reviewers of the exhibition described the young man's excellent knowledge of English and evident intelligence. Robert D. Grant has argued Angas intended Pomare's presence to lend his exhibition further

⁴⁷ *The Daily News*, 6 April 1846, p.6.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*; 'Angas's Exhibition Egyptian Hall', *The Era*, 12 April 1846.

⁴⁹ Bell, p.9.

⁵⁰ *London Evening Standard*, 14 April 1846.

⁵¹ Forsaith elaborated that 'The New Zealander, in my opinion, has never been correctly pourtrayed[sic] before...'; *The Manchester Courier, and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 16 September 1846, p.5.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *The New Zealand Journal*, Vol. 6, 1846, p.83; *ILN*, 18 April 1846, p.253.

⁵⁴ Elisa DeCourcy and Martyn Jolly, 'Portrait of Hemi Pomara as a young man: how we uncovered the oldest surviving photograph of a Māori', *The Conversation* (30 June 2020).

‘authenticity’.⁵⁵ By having a representative from a group of people he had encountered, Angas was seeking to confirm that he had indeed met all the groups that he claimed. It also meant there was an opportunity for visual comparison between a real person and the artist’s representation, so addressing ethnographic or scientific concerns about faithfulness and precision. This was important in a context where images and objects were intended to create a coherent representation of peoples and their customs. The exhibition included around fifty ethnographic items from locations depicted in the images, including ‘costumes, weapons, implements, canoes... and objects of natural history’. The result was described in one report as ‘a cabinet museum’, in reference to cabinets of curiosity.⁵⁶ In this context the term ‘curiosity’ alluded to the novelty of these items to a British audience. Approximately twelve of the ‘curiosities’ were listed as Australian items.⁵⁷ The objects lent veracity to the scenes displayed around them, but also stood alone as items of interest.

Reviews of the exhibition indicate it was read primarily as of ethnographic interest, rather than artistic, despite the language of the advertisement which sought to attract other audiences with the use of words like ‘novelty’ and ‘entertaining’.⁵⁸ The *Liverpool Mercury* suggested that it would benefit those who ‘love to trace the history of their species’, as well as antiquarians, historians and artists.⁵⁹ Many reviews dwelt on the value of the works as representations of the manners, customs and costumes of peoples of the Antipodes. As in Mr J. Morgan’s testimonial, such reflections took on an elegiac tone: Angas’s depictions of Māori would endure he reflected, but the people themselves ‘in the course of a few years will have disappeared altogether.’⁶⁰ The Māori depictions generated more discussion than those of Aboriginal Australians, and reviews tended to frame the Australian images in comparative and negative terms. The *Illustrated London News* noted that ‘[t]he South Australian views,

⁵⁵ Robert D. Grant, *Representations of British Emigration, Colonisation and Settlement: Imagining empire, 1800-1860* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p.180.

⁵⁶ ‘Angas’s Exhibition Egyptian Hall’, *The Era*, 12 April 1846.

⁵⁷ These include a ‘shield from New South Wales... fishing spear from New South Wales... Australian spears... weapon of myall wood... boomerang[sic] from South Australia... native basket from South Australia... dilby, or rush basket Moreton Bay, New South Wales... a water basket from Australia ... womera, or strong stick, New Australia... waddies from New South Wales...’, *The Manchester Courier*, 16 September 1846, p.5; BM, Oc1908,0513.1-50, fifty objects from Australia and New Zealand likely exhibited by Angas were donated to the British Museum by Miss E. S. Budden in 1908. She was the daughter of Angas’s lawyer in London, at the firm of Bell, Budden & Co.

⁵⁸ Bell, pp.11-12; Drawings of value ‘to the ethnographer’, *John Bull*, 12 August 1848.

⁵⁹ ‘New Zealand and South Australia’, *Liverpool Mercury*, 28 August 1846.

⁶⁰ *The Manchester Courier*, 16 September 1846, p.5.

in the wretchedness which they depict, present a painful contrast with the New Zealand scenes and portraits'.⁶¹ Similarly the *London Evening Standard* recorded '...the attributes of the Australian natives are by no means so engaging' when compared to people of New Zealand.⁶² The reviewer from the *London Daily News* felt that '[t]he Australian native shows to little advantage beside the New Zealander...'.⁶³ None of Angas's works were deemed 'high art' despite their merit, as they were linked to visual records used for scientific information gathering.⁶⁴ Angas adopted picturesque schema in some of his scenes, using a harmony of perspective and colour in the middle and background of the image and a detailed foreground, to draw the eye around the composition. This aesthetic was used to depict landscapes throughout the British Empire, helping 'to unite and homogenize the many regions...' making them more legible to a British audience.⁶⁵ It also demonstrates that fashionable artistic styles had an influence beyond the sphere of 'high art'.⁶⁶ The *Illustrated London News*, recognising Angas's effort and productivity described the exhibition as 'a success which argue[d] well for the improved intelligence of sight-seers'.⁶⁷ Thanks to the portability of Angas's images, and interest across Britain, Angas's exhibition toured to Bold Street in Liverpool and the Concert Hall of the Albion Hotel in Manchester.⁶⁸

To maximise his returns from the images exhibited, Angas published two travel lithograph collections: *South Australia Illustrated* (Fig.4.7), and *The New Zealanders Illustrated* in 1847; as well as a travelogue *Savage Life and Scenes in Australia and New Zealand*.⁶⁹ These were high quality products, and their costs were 'prohibitive to the average emigrant to these colonies'.⁷⁰ They included images of indigenous people, landscapes, artefacts and shelters. Angas was closely involved in the production of the lithographic volumes and could ensure they related to his original works. He

⁶¹ ILN, 18 April 1846, p.253.

⁶² *London Evening Standard* 14 April 1846.

⁶³ *The London Daily News*, 14 April 1846.

⁶⁴ *The Daily News*, 6 April 1846, p.6.

⁶⁵ Jeffrey Auerbach, 'The picturesque and the homogenisation of Empire', *The British Art Journal*, Vol.5, No.1 (2004), p.47.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ ILN, 18 April 1846, p.253.

⁶⁸ Liverpool in August and Manchester in September; *The Manchester Courier*, 16 September 1846, p.5.

⁶⁹ Angas also published *The Kaffirs Illustrated* in 1848; BM, 2016,2037.1, 'The Palti Dance' along with another item in the museum's collection 2016,2037.2, 'The Kuri Dance', were cut down from a single lithographed page from *South Australia Illustrated*.

⁷⁰ Grant, p.180.

returned to Adelaide with his wife in 1850, where he set up a studio, then taking a position at the Australian Museum in Sydney from 1853-60 before moving back to South Australia in 1860. Angas was supportive of emigration to the Australian colonies, and Jeffrey Auerbach has described an underlying purpose of his visual work was ‘to present regions of the empire as safe and familiar for potential European settlers’.⁷¹



Fig.4.7 ‘The Palti Dance’ from *South Australia Illustrated*, George French Angas, 1847, BM, 2016,2037.1.
© The Trustees of the British Museum.

Angas returned to London in 1862 and shortly thereafter his images appear again in Australia-related content made in Britain. An image by Angas of Aboriginal ‘Bee Hunters’ was published in the *Illustrated London News* on 3 October 1863. In 1865 he produced *Australia: a Popular Account of its Physical Features, Inhabitants, Natural History and Productions*. He also contributed over forty images to the Rev. J.G. Wood’s *The Natural History of Man*, which was issued in thirty-four monthly instalments between 1867 and 1870. The wood-engravings for Wood’s publication were produced by the prolific Brothers Dalziel and proof impressions of these prints, including those after Angas, are held in an album in the Department of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum.⁷² Both of these later publications incorporated cheaper productions of works Angas had made in the 1840s, reflecting the improvement in printing technology, the broadening of public literacy, and the diversification of products in the intervening years.

⁷¹ Auerbach, p.47.

⁷² BM, 1913,0415.183.

Angas's 1846 exhibition combined depictions of Aboriginal and Māori people from the colonies in Australia and New Zealand. Their juxtaposition encouraged viewers to compare different peoples, an effect magnified by the British audience's unfamiliarity with Angas's subjects. This fed into contemporary European scientific practices of evaluating people of different ethnic origin against each other. Constructed hierarchies were based on physiological and phrenological differences, along with understandings of customary practices. Aboriginal people who were essentially hunter-gatherers and believed not to till the soil were deemed of lower status than Māori who practised agriculture by cultivating gardens.

Solo exhibitions presented one artist's work and reflected their interests, concerns, and travels. At the London venue, the Egyptian Hall is likely to have drawn a more socially diverse audience than the Royal Academy. It had developed a reputation for living displays, and ethnographic associations from previous displays. Angas's works would have reached a middle-class audience there and on tour to other regional centres in Britain. Engagement with the artworks was mediated by the presence of Hemi Pomare, colonial testimonies, and the objects they were displayed alongside, all of which would have given the scenes more urgency and authenticity.

The Panorama

The panorama was a new format in early-nineteenth century London, and artists returning from Australia took advantage of such innovations. This 360 degree-immersive painting which surrounded its visitors, was first patented by Robert Barker in Edinburgh in 1787, who shortly thereafter moved to London to create the Leicester Square Panorama which opened in 1793 (Fig.4.8).⁷³ In this setting colonial depictions of populated landscapes were displayed, as were other subjects of interest such as battles. The paintings produced for the panorama were exhibited and replaced each season, but they also had an afterlife, touring across the country and beyond to Europe and America.⁷⁴ These large-scale images were sometimes supported by descriptive sheets of text with a key to the images for the audience, and later pamphlets to enhance the visits. The venue differs from the previous

⁷³ Markman Ellis, 'The spectacle of the panorama', British Library blog post, published 8 February 2018 [accessed 30 April 2020].

⁷⁴ Ibid.; Recent research on the role and legacy of the panorama is published in Katie Trumpener and Tim Barringer (eds.), *On the Viewing Platform: The Panorama between Canvas and Screen* (Yale: Yale University Press, 2020).

examples as it introduced distant places and people in an entertainment ‘experience’. The associated format of the diorama introduced a series of panoramic scenes in turn and acted more like a theatre show in which mass audiences would sit and be directed through the experience. This made it portable and able to be moved around the country. Panoramas and dioramas were accessible art forms: they took their viewers on a journey and created an immersive experience. Popular into the mid-nineteenth century, they included depictions of Indigenous Australians when few images were available or accessible in museums in Britain.

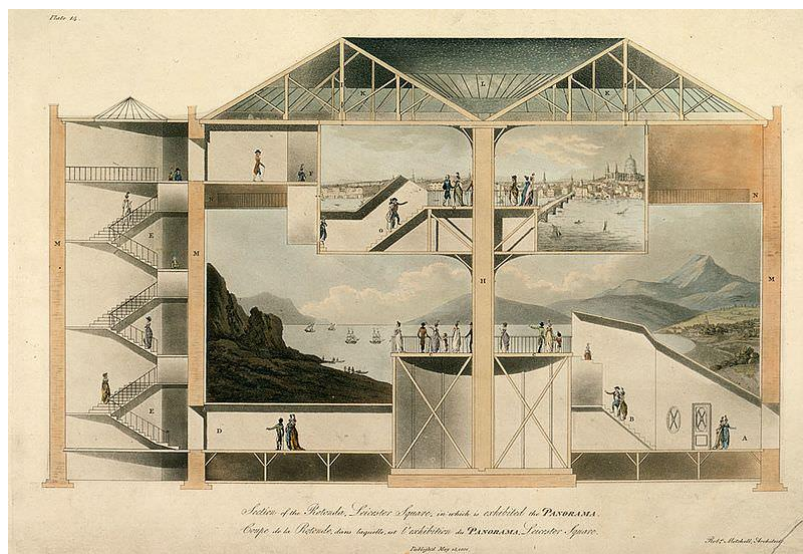


Fig.4.8 Section of the Rotunda, Leicester Square, in which is exhibited the Panorama, Robert Mitchell, 1801. BM, 1880,1113.6025.
© The Trustees of the British Museum.

Panoramic scenes were also produced in smaller printed form, with the first Australian example being the topographical view of *The Town of Sydney in New South Wales* engraved by Robert Havell and Sons after Major James Taylor, painted in 1820 and published in 1823. Depictions of Aboriginal people were included in the prints, and they remained popular ways of representing sweeping landscapes and could be bought for household consumption. In 1834, Robert Dale created a *Panoramic View of King George’s Sound* (Fig.4.9), an eight-panel hand-coloured image, which he intended to be sold in a roll with an accompanying pamphlet. When displayed in Britain it was presented in London alongside the head of Aboriginal leader Yagan, a Noongar man whose head was severed as a colonial trophy when he was killed. Dale had brought Yagan’s head with him from Western Australia. This juxtaposition conflicted with the narrative of peace between the Aboriginal people and colonists as presented in the printed scene.



Fig.4.9 *Panoramic View of King George's Sound part of the colony of Swan River,* R. Dale and Robert Havell, 1834, National Maritime Museum, PAI0445.

Aboriginal Australians were routinely depicted in panoramas of Australia. In December 1828, the first large-scale Australian panorama went on display at Barker's Leicester Square venue. Produced from images by Augustus Earle, it was titled 'A View of the Capital of New South Wales'.⁷⁵ While the large-scale paintings do not survive, the accompanying pamphlet of twelve pages does, with its woodblock frontispiece. It shows that Aboriginal people were included in the foreground of the scenes, in one location demonstrating weapons, in another 'climbing a Gum' and near the Government Gardens an individual is identified as 'King Bongaree[sic]'.⁷⁶ In 1831, Earle's second panorama 'View of Hobart Town Van Diemen's Land and the Surrounding Country' appeared in the competing Strand Panorama. Rather than producing the actual panoramas himself, Earle had sent sketches back to London to be worked up to scale, a process that gave scope for deviation in the final work. The published *Description* with woodcut image shows a group of Aboriginal people from Tasmania depicted in the foreground, though this time at a marked remove from the colonists.⁷⁷ Indicating the appeal of Earle's Australian subject matter, the 1831 panorama had appeared in the Strand venue's 'Large Circle'. No further Australian panoramas or dioramas have been identified from that point until John Skinner Prout's 1849 'dissolving views'. The following year, James Brice produced a panorama of Australia and America in '80 scenes',

⁷⁵ For this Earle was reportedly paid 100 guineas. The artist was at that point working in the 'South Pacific'. This panorama was on display at the same time as a view of pandemonium from Milton's first book of *Paradise Lost*; *Globe*, 2 July 1829; Robin Skinner, "...Dreamt of, Indeed, but Utterly Unknown!": the Earle Panoramas of the Tasman World,' *Fabrications*, 29:3, pp.379-401.

⁷⁶ Robert Burford, *Explanation of a view of the town of Sydney, exhibiting in the Panorama, Leicester Square* (London: Printed by J. and C. Adlard, 1829).

⁷⁷ Robert Burford, *Description of a view of Hobart Town, Van Diemen's Land and the surrounding country, now exhibiting at the panorama, Strand* (London: Printed by Nichols and sons, 1831).

accompanied by his lectures subtitled ‘the life of an emigrant’. As this title suggests, and in common with other colonial-themed panoramas, mid-century works were used to encourage emigration. As Colligan argues, there was ‘a busy traffic around Britain of panoramas depicting Australia’, and as will be shown, this extended to provincial cities and towns.⁷⁸

Prout produced depictions of Aboriginal people in the colonies of New South Wales, Tasmania, and Victoria in the years 1840 to 1848. His works help us understand how portraits of indigenous people were repurposed to make them more appealing to a broader British public audience. Prout returned from Australia to Bristol in 1848 before moving permanently to London. He made use of his Australian images in early 1849: producing illustrations for an article in the *Illustrated London News* about emigration,⁷⁹ and exhibiting ‘highly interesting specimens of Australian scenery’ at the new Society of Painters in Water Colours.⁸⁰ In May 1849 Prout first advertised his new ‘dissolving views’ at the Royal Polytechnic Institution.⁸¹ A form of magic lantern show, these views aligned two (or more) lanterns projecting images. As the strength of the light of one was diminished, the light of the other was strengthened, thereby creating a fade between images. Over the next ten years Prout’s ‘views’ were regularly advertised in popular papers, although from 1850 they were renamed ‘dioramic views of Australia, illustrative of convict and emigrant life’.⁸² A critical review in 1850 in the *Morning Post*, indicated Prout had received some acclaim by that point, stating ‘the views do not suggest the talent that is associated with the name of the artist who is reported to have executed them.’⁸³ After a slow start Prout amended his marketing approach in London, angling his ‘views’ towards the emigrant market and creating a cheaper emigrant ticket, in a move that saw his audience numbers surge. This was recounted in an article in the 29 January 1851 edition of *The Melbourne Daily News*, in which the

⁷⁸ Mimi Colligan, *Canvas Documentaries: Panoramic Entertainments in Nineteenth-century Australia and New Zealand* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2002), p.40.

⁷⁹ In the article, the tide was described as “unquestionably set” towards Australia, notwithstanding the gold of California”; *ILN*, 20 January 1849, pp.39-41.

⁸⁰ Emigrants were encouraged to ‘take a peep at his “Christmas in Australia”’; *London Daily News*, 23 April 1849.

⁸¹ These included scenes from Van Diemen’s Land; *ILN*, 5 May 1849; *ILN*, 9 June 1849; *ILN*, 30 June 1849.

⁸² Including the *Illustrated London News*, *Morning Advertiser*, *The Examiner*, *the Era*, *London Daily News*, *Morning Chronicle*, and the *Morning Post*.

⁸³ The review criticised the machinery, the renaming of the show from ‘dissolving’ to ‘dioramic’ views, and the venue, the Western Literary and Scientific Institution in Leicester Square; *The Morning Post*, 26 March 1850.

author, seemingly a sometime resident of Melbourne, described how people flocked to the show. The writer lauded the strength of the images on display, remarking upon the recognisability of the represented buildings and streets, and noted the response of the audience to scenes of natural beauty, such as Willoughby Falls in New South Wales.⁸⁴ They also exhibited some condescension towards those attending, writing ‘the higher classes generally appear to take very little interest in the Australian colonies’, and that ‘[p]ictures amongst the uncultivated are more powerful than statistics.’⁸⁵

In late 1852 Prout advertised a new moving panorama ‘The Gold Fields of Australia’ painted ‘from Sketches made upon the Spot’ and accompanied by the artist’s ‘descriptive lecture’.⁸⁶ The principal scenes tracked the movements of a voyager to the gold fields, from Plymouth to Melbourne, Geelong, and Sydney, by way of the Cape of Good Hope and other locations. In the accompanying illustrated handbook, the panorama was framed as preparation for the emigrant experience, aimed at those wishing to know more about the colonies.⁸⁷ The handbook referenced the artist’s experience of eight years in the Australian colonies.⁸⁸ As for the solo exhibitions, this presentation as ‘testimonial’ was important for representations of Australia in Britain. Prout had left Australia before the gold rush began, so for those images he drew on works from more recently returned artists.

The panorama included depictions of Aboriginal people, as evidenced in the accompanying handbook and in a description of the lecture published in two parts in the *Taunton Courier*.⁸⁹ As the audience ‘moved’ from “Mooney Ponds” to Mount Macedon, some forty miles from Melbourne, they ‘passed’ a group of Aboriginal Australians ‘ingeniously catching the wild turkeys which abound here’.⁹⁰ The second

⁸⁴ ‘Contributions from home’, *The Melbourne Daily News*, 29 January 1851, p.4.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ Admission was 1s, or 2s for Central Seats, or 6d for the Gallery. Performed twice daily at three and eight o’clock at 309 Regent Street. In January 1853 another slot was added at twelve during the holidays; *ILN*, 11 December 1852; *Morning Advertiser*, 24 January 1853, repeated on 16 February 1853.

⁸⁷ Also included were advertisements for provisions such as ‘Gold-Washing Cradles’ or ‘Sets of Digging-Tools’; NLA, Petherick Collection, PETHpam 1375, J.S. Prout, *An Illustrated Handbook of the Voyage to Australia, and a visit to the Gold Field* (London: Printer, Duff, and Co. Printers, Playhouse Yard, Blackfriars, 1852(?)).

⁸⁸ Two artists assisted in the creation of these works: the maritime subjects by Mr. Robius, and natural history subjects by Mr. Weigall.

⁸⁹ *Taunton Courier and Western Advertiser*, 12 April 1854.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

instalment opened with a longer account of the encampment of an Aboriginal group:

These natives, who occupy a very low place in the scale of humanity, feed on the kangaroo, wallaby, opossum, and other wild animals which they hunt in the bush, while they leave their gins at home in their gunyahs of bark to do their work! Having killed their animals, they roast them, a piece at a time, which they bite off as it gets black, gallantly leaving the odds and ends for their wives, who are not permitted to eat with these “lords of the creation.”

This description denigrated Aboriginal people and engaged with European myths surrounding the poor treatment of Aboriginal men towards their wives, the latter being depicted as much neglected by their partners.⁹¹ As David Sampson has shown, ethnic inferiority was inferred through the assertion of Aboriginal men as violent towards Aboriginal women.⁹²

When the journey reached the ‘diggings’ at Ballarat the audience was presented with a scene ‘beyond description’, with the upheaval of earth dug up and a gathering of men of all ages.⁹³ This scene of activity included:

[a] little group of Aborigines listlessly looking on, with their short pipes in their mouths, [which] gives rise to a feeling of wonder that this singular people, with all their love of flare and glittering finery, had turned to no account the “nuggets” of gold which, at first, might sometimes almost be kicked up as you walked along!

This derisive comment was repeated in the handbook and failed to acknowledge that the value afforded to gold by Europeans was subjective. Having moved from central Victoria, the audience ‘arrived’ at the Illawarra district on the south coast of New South Wales, a distance of 600 kilometres as the crow flies. There, the visitors witnessed ‘the Aborigines spearing the kangaroos among the palm trees... [and] In a sheet of a water close by, called Tom Thumb’s Lagoon, the natives were spearing fish...’. As discussed earlier, Aboriginal hunting and fishing methods were

⁹¹ Prout, *An Illustrated Handbook* (Petter, Duff, and Co., 1852(?)); Shino Konishi, *The Aboriginal Male in the Enlightenment World* (London: Pickering & Chatto Publishers Ltd, 2012); Liz Conor, *Skin Deep: Settler impressions of Aboriginal women* (Crawley: UWA Publishing, 2016), pp.90-151.

⁹² David Sampson, ‘Strangers in a Strange Land: 1868 Aborigines and other indigenous performers in mid-Victorian Britain’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Technology, Sydney, 2000), pp.80-83.

⁹³ Prout, *Illustrated Handbook*.

commonly depicted in colonial scenes, from the first European voyages to the Pacific onwards. In the final location of the Ophir diggings, two ‘native mounted police’ were presented in a more positive light, seemingly ‘Europeanised’ in their uniformed work.

The handbook for ‘Voyage to Australia’ was illustrated, and some scenes were reproduced with notes from Prout’s journal. In structure and content, the handbook likely reflected his accompanying lecture, with Australia reached only in the final section, Part III. Aboriginal people were described in four of the scenes: catching wild turkeys; in an Aboriginal camp (Fig.4.10); in the gold bearing district; and at a corroboree.⁹⁴ Other scenes included Aboriginal people without explicitly stating so in their titles, as for the image of ‘the Illawarra District’ (Fig.4.11) reproduced in the handbook. The text adopted a paternalistic tone when describing Aboriginal people along with explicitly offensive comment.

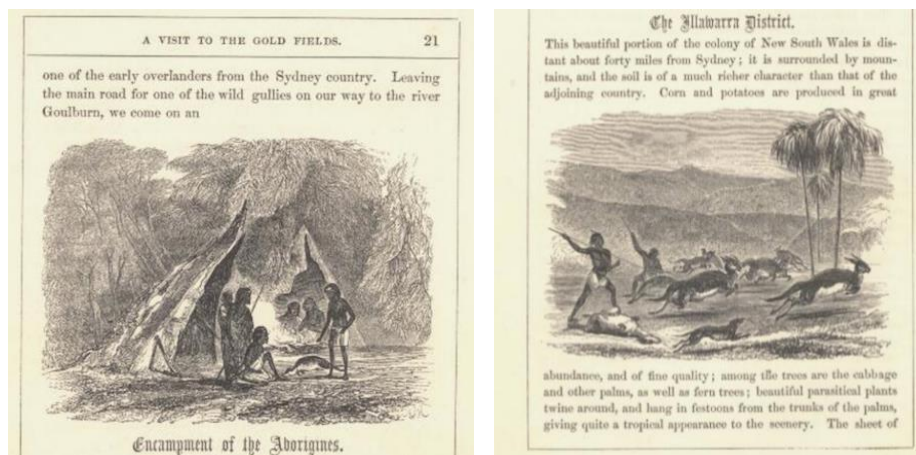


Fig.4.10 ‘Encampment of the Aborigines’ (p.21),
Fig.4.11 ‘The Illawarra District’ (p.26),
 Both from *An Illustrated Handbook of the Voyage to Australia, and a visit to the Gold Fields*, John Skinner Prout, 1852.
 National Library of Australia, nla.obj-2623077074.

Prout’s panorama was deemed a success in London, due to the high number of visitors and overwhelmingly positive response. Reviewers referenced the beautiful execution of the scenes and the accompanying description. The diorama’s appeal to the wider public was confirmed through reports like that of the *Morning Advertiser* in August 1853 which recorded that it had been ‘exhibited upwards of six hundred

⁹⁴ Ibid., pp.20,21,26 and 29.

times to crowded and delighted audiences'.⁹⁵ No public comment referencing the representation of Aboriginal people has been found. After closing in London in autumn 1852, Prout proceeded to take it to other locations in the country. In March 1854, it opened at the Assembly Rooms in Bath,⁹⁶ in April at the Assembly Rooms at Taunton, and then in Exeter for the Easter Holidays.⁹⁷ Prout accompanied the panorama on its travels, the lecture sometimes delivered by him and sometimes by others.⁹⁸ The show was retitled for locations in the provinces like Taunton as an 'Emigrant's Voyage to Australia, and Visit to the Gold Fields'. This echoed Prout's previous project by emphasising its intent to encourage emigration to Australia through reflections of the experience, the potential for financial gain, along with a sense of adventure.

When Prout's Australian panorama returned to London in 1855 it was displayed at 6 Leicester Square and advertised as '[t]he only authentic Panorama of Australia ever exhibited.'⁹⁹ The stress on authenticity suggests that other panoramas depicting related subjects were in circulation. In 1856 Prout sold a group of thirty-six observational depictions to Joseph Barnard Davis, primarily of Aboriginal people, and in 1861 the panorama itself was advertised for sale by Messrs. Toplis and Roberts and could be viewed at the Prince of Wales Hall, Regent Street:

[A] beautifully-executed and highly-interesting PANORAMA, illustrative of an emigrant's voyage to Australia, painted at a great expense by J.S. Prout, J.S. Robius, and C. Weigall, from original drawings taken on the spot by Mr. Prout, whose well-known artistic talent forms a sufficient guarantee for the authenticity and beauty of the picture. At the same time will be sold the whole of the machinery, gas-fittings, and other effects, forming the complete necessities for the exhibition, and offering a most attractive opportunity to persons wishing to take advantage of the ensuing season...¹⁰⁰

Panoramas had declined in popularity by the 1860s, and it is unknown whether Prout's panorama was displayed or toured beyond this point.¹⁰¹ Prout continued to

⁹⁵ *Morning Advertiser*, 2 August 1853.

⁹⁶ *Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, 16 March 1854.

⁹⁷ Displayed in Taunton from 5-13 April 1854; *The Taunton Courier and Western Advertiser*, 29 March 1854, p.5; The show opened in Exeter on 17 April 1854.

⁹⁸ Performed at the same times and for the same price as for the general audience in London; *Taunton Courier*, 12 April 1854; *The Melbourne Daily News*, Wednesday 29 January 1851, p.4.

⁹⁹ *Morning Advertiser*, 14 April 1855.

¹⁰⁰ *London Evening Standard*, 12 December 1861.

¹⁰¹ Stephan Oettermann, *The Panorama: History of a Mass Medium*, trans. Deborah Lucas Schneider (New York: Zone Books, 1997); Denise Blake Oleksijczuk, *The First Panoramas:*

make use of his Australian images for the rest of his life: exhibiting sketches at the Crystal Palace in Sydenham in the early 1870s,¹⁰² and through illustrations in contemporary publications, including Edwin Carton Booth's *Australia* (1873).¹⁰³

The format of the panorama generally downplayed the presence of Aboriginal people. As they were often in large-scale landscape scenes, Aboriginal people typically acted as staffage or groups of interest in picturesque compositions. In dioramic scenes such as those created by Prout, their depiction was part of a narrative through which the audience was guided. Visitors were primarily interested in emigration and how to improve their own fortunes, rather than in documentation of Aboriginal life. The representation of Aboriginal people on the fringes of towns and cities, or watching European figures on the gold fields, presented them effectively as marginalised people and defused the idea of them as a threat to colonial life. Certain scenes described in the accompanying material were derisive towards Aboriginal culture, engaging with and used to support contemporary discussions in Britain regarding variation within the human species.

International Exhibitions

Following the 1851 Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park, international exhibitions held in Britain were increasingly geared towards publicising the products of colonial rule. These exhibitions gave individual colonies the opportunity to advertise and represent themselves and their 'achievements'. Displays were constructed around messages that leaders of the colonies wished to send about their productivity and sought to entice new emigrants from Britain. These venues offer an opportunity to consider how Aboriginal people were portrayed in person or as represented through the display of their works of art or craft. The Australian colonies exhibited minerals, natural resources, produce, objects, designs, and colonial artworks depicting the country, including its

Visions of British Imperialism (Minneapolis and London: University of Minneapolis Press, 2011), Chapter 5; G.R. Corner, *The Panorama with memoirs of its inventor Robert Barker, and his son, the late Henry Aston Barker* (London: J& W. Robins, 1857).

¹⁰² *Descriptive Catalogue of the Exhibition of Modern Pictures at the Crystal Palace, Sydenham: Including the Paintings and Sketches of Central Asia and the Victoria Cross Gallery* (London: C. Dickens & Evans, 1873).

¹⁰³ By his death in 1876, Prout was widely known, and numerous obituaries were published across Britain: *The Western Daily Press*, 31 August 1876, p.8; *Luton Times and Dunstable Herald*, 9 September 1876, p.7; *Aldershot Military Gazette*, 9 September 1876; *York Herald*, 31 August 1876; *Hampstead and Highgate Express*, 2 September 1876.

Aboriginal inhabitants. The representation of Australia at international exhibitions has been explored by scholars, although rarely with a focus upon Indigenous peoples.¹⁰⁴ A notable exception is Sadiah Qureshi's investigation of the experience of living people from across the globe, displayed at the exhibitions.¹⁰⁵ The representation of Aboriginal Australians was one indication of how colonists envisaged the future of settler-colonial Australia. Between the Great Exhibition of 1851 and the Colonial and Indian exhibition of 1886, both held in London, imagery of First Nations in Australia was increasingly linked to contemporary theories of human variety and racial hierarchies. The audience's understanding of such images was moderated by the presence of Indigenous people alongside the display of their objects.

At the Great Exhibition of 1851 objects were presented from New South Wales, South Australia, and Tasmania. Contemporaries described the displays of the Australian colonies as disappointing, with cartographic publisher John Tallis writing they had 'nothing very new or very showy to exhibit'.¹⁰⁶ Aboriginal tools and weapons were presented 'as relics of apparently 'savage' peoples', contrasted against settler-colonial products.¹⁰⁷ Clear in his condemnation of the violent acts in the colony, Tallis described 'a melancholy tribute' in the Van Diemen's Land department to its 'now extinct aborigines[sic]' which included a shell necklace, water-vessels, baskets and boats.¹⁰⁸ He also noted that there was no Aboriginal work included in the New South Wales section, asserting that it is probable that there was 'no longer any trace of the people'. Tallis critiqued the lack of Aboriginal objects on display, opining that:

the same circumstances which render them inferior to civilized men in accumulated property and in acquired knowledge, have operated to leave their show of industrial development in the Exhibition somewhat meagre,

¹⁰⁴ Peter Greenhalgh, *Ephemeral Vistas: The Expositions Universelles, Great Exhibitions and World's Fairs, 1851-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988); Anthony David Edwards, *The Role of International Exhibitions in Britain, 1850-1910: Perceptions of Economic Decline and the Technical Education Issue* (Amherst, New York: Cambria Press, 2008).

¹⁰⁵ Qureshi, p.66.

¹⁰⁶ John Tallis, *Tallis's History and Description of the Crystal Palace*, vol. I (London and New York: John Tallis and Co., 1852), p.53.

¹⁰⁷ Jeffrey A. Auerbach, *Britain, the Empire, and the World at the Great Exhibition of 1851* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), p.110.

¹⁰⁸ Tallis, p.54.

whatever equality of capacity may be conceded to them, and however their natural intelligence.¹⁰⁹

Eleven water-colours were displayed in the South Australian section, and four landscape ‘views of New South Wales’ featured in that colony’s section.¹¹⁰ It is not explicitly stated whether depictions of Aboriginal people were included in these images. The Crystal Palace reopened in Sydenham in 1854, with a cheaper entrance fee and a focus on entertainment and education. It included a museum of mankind with models of people from around the world against a painted backdrop, the casts were made from people who had travelled to London.¹¹¹ These included two Aboriginal men, discussed below in the case study of the *Illustrated London News*. The models at the Crystal Palace proved of great interest to ethnologists.

At the 1862 International Exhibition, no Australian fine art was displayed in the painting and sculpture galleries, nor was any included in the *Official Catalogue of the Fine Art Department*. But images of Australia did appear at the exhibition, either solely intended to depict the colonies or deemed insufficiently competitive with examples from the European art world to be treated as artworks. Six artists were represented in the New South Wales Pavilion, including Conrad Martens, Edward Baker Boulton, and George Kilgour Ingelow. Some of these had been accorded recognition in other artistic venues in Britain: Martens, for example, exhibited at the Royal Society of British Artists in 1833 and 1837. This suggests that the decision to group artists from New South Wales together was an active choice. In the Victorian Pavilion works by George Rowe, William Strutt, and Eugene Von Guerard were displayed.¹¹² Official printed or painted depictions of the Australian sections of the exhibition highlighted the presence of a large tower of gold, thereby associating the Australian colonies with their newfound mineral wealth. However, a set of drawings held in the British Museum indicates other objects on display. These watercolours by artist Louisa Leila Waterhouse Hawkins, produced for the collector Henry Christy, record a variety of ethnographic objects and include two pages of tools and weapons made by Aboriginal Australians (Figs.2.9 and 2.10).¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p.55

¹¹⁰ Peter H. Hoffenberg, ‘Nothing Very New or Very Showy to Exhibit?': Australia at the Great Exhibition and After’, in *Britain, the Empire, and the World at the Great Exhibition of 1851* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 93-120.

¹¹¹ Qureshi, pp.194-6, 206-209.

¹¹² Twenty-one works altogether; ‘International Exhibition’, *Launceston Examiner*, 16 September 1862, p.2.

¹¹³ BM, Am2006,Drg.60 and 61.

In later international exhibitions Aboriginal Australian content increased.¹¹⁴ At the Colonial and Indian Exhibition of 1886, the Australian colonies sat at the centre of the exhibition site.¹¹⁵ *Illustrated London News* coverage depicted both living Aboriginal people within the displays, and models or three-dimensional depictions of people included in the courts devoted to the history of man.¹¹⁶ Photographs of ‘Natives of Port Darwin’ in the exhibition were also reproduced.¹¹⁷ Later reports in the *Illustrated London News* honed in on separate Australian locations, for example the subject for 7 August was Victoria, and the lead image a ‘Group of aborigines’.¹¹⁸ This indicates that the colonies succeeded in representing themselves as distinct entities.

...

The four venue types discussed in this chapter illustrate the diversity of locations in which indigenous representations could be exhibited in the British public sphere. In all instances authority of the artist was paramount. The association with accuracy was notable in the more ethnologically focused environment of the solo exhibition at the Egyptian Hall. In this space works were accompanied by indigenous people, objects or testimonies to assert legitimacy. The panorama asserted validity through its accompanying narrative by Prout, who had lived in Australia. The intent of the international exhibitions was to present diverse regions of the world through a combined reading of objects and people. As each section was organised by a committee from the respective colony, this was the source of authority. Conversely, at the Royal Academy the use of artistic licence and creativity in response to contemporary styles was expected. The development of the representation of Aboriginal people from original observed sketches to finished pieces and related circulatable material is evident in the Royal Academy, solo exhibition, and panorama or diorama. While all the examples discussed were displayed in London, the

¹¹⁴ From 1871 London launched an annual International Exhibition.

¹¹⁵ *Colonial and Indian Exhibition, 1886: Official Catalogue* (London: William Clowes and Sons, Ltd., 1886).

¹¹⁶ Images of encampments on the River Murray; ‘natives, armed with spear and boomerang’; ‘native kindling fire by friction’, *ILN*, 29 May 1886, p.575-579, 582-3, 586-7.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.583.

¹¹⁸ Another page juxtaposed a ‘case of gold nuggets’ with a ‘native encampment’; *ILN*, 7 August 1886, pp.153-158; *The Graphic* also recorded scenes from the Australian sections that contained depictions of living Aboriginal people and remediated some of the photographs also displayed there; *The Graphic*, 5 June 1886, p.609; *The Graphic*, 26 June 1886, p.689.

panorama and solo exhibition also toured to other cities and provincial locations. Regional newspapers drew upon content generated in metropolitan sources to advertise or review displays.

4.3. Publications and the popular press

The development of technologies between 1788 and 1860, such as the steam-powered press and innovations in paper-making, sped up the production of printed works and lowered the costs.¹¹⁹ They also helped to disseminate specific artistic techniques, such as aquatint which was developed to replicate the effect of watercolour in print.¹²⁰ Improvements in transport also allowed prints and printed publications to travel further and faster. Literacy levels greatly improved in Britain through the early-nineteenth century and more people could access books through circulating libraries.¹²¹ New categories of publications emerged such as novels, paperbacks, penny dreadfuls, and other publications produced at different price points.¹²² New formats could be subject to the fashion of the day, and impacted colonial depictions of Aboriginal people. Prints were also produced as standalone pieces, as artworks in their own right, as portable records of a popular image, or in satirical works such as George Cruickshank's *Probable Effects of Over Female Emigration or importing the fair sex from the Savage Islands in Consequence of Exporting all our own to Australia* (1844).¹²³ Most artists generated the majority of their income through prints, and standalone examples were typically sold by public subscription.¹²⁴

Images in printed publications are an important source for exploring depictions of Aboriginal people circulating in Britain in the early-nineteenth century, and generally

¹¹⁹ Simon J. Potter, *News and the British World: The Emergence of an Imperial Press System, 1876-1922* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003); S. Hutchinson, *Settlers, War, and Empire in the Press: Unsettling News in Australia and Britain, 1863-1902* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019); K. Storey, *Settler Anxiety at the Outposts of Empire: Colonial Relations, Humanitarian Discourses, and the Imperial Press* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2016).

¹²⁰ Invention of iron press in 1800, steam printing in 1814, and steel plates and machine-made paper by 1820; Alisa Bunbury, *This Wondrous Land: Colonial Art on paper* (Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria, 2011).

¹²¹ Richard D. Altick, *The English common reader: a social history of the mass reading public, 1800-1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957).

¹²² Matthew Taunton, 'Print Culture', British Library blog post, published 15 May 2014; Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor (eds.), *The Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism*, (London: British Library, 2010); W.B. Stephens, 'Literacy in England, Scotland, and Wales, 1500-1900', *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol.30, No.4, pp.545-571.

¹²³ Three examples are held at the BM: 2017,2039.8; 1978,U.2997; 1978,U.2998.

¹²⁴ J.E. Crowley, *Imperial Landscapes: Britain's Global Visual Culture 1745-1820* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011), p.4.

reached a wider audience than singular or copied drawings and paintings. Patterns emerged in the kind of material published. Broadly speaking early accounts of the foundation of the settlement in New South Wales gave way to coastal exploration accounts into the interior in the 1800s to 1820s, followed by land expeditions in the 1820s to 1840s where European authors extended the 'known' area of land, thereafter turning to discussions of developed settlements. In published accounts produced after exploration voyages and expeditions, works by artists in the scientific team were used as the basis for illustrations. Published histories of the Australian colonies incorporated illustrations of Indigenous Australians to represent the 'starting point' of colonial development. Scenery books, which consisted of a collection of landscapes views commonly accompanied by short descriptions of the content, enjoyed a period of popularity in Britain, Europe and the British colonies from the 1810s to the 1830s, such as Joseph Lycett's *Views of Australia; or New South Wales & Van Diemen's Land delineated* (1824-25). From the 1850s new subjects emerged: accounts of the gold fields; discussions of tours or adventures (noticeably without the term 'exploration' in the title); and broader histories of the colonies as they developed individual identities and sought to encourage emigration. The accompanying text influenced how illustrations were read. Multiple editions were made of the more popular publications, not always with consistent images included.¹²⁵

Depictions of Indigenous Australians circulating in Britain in the early nineteenth century were required to attest to 'accuracy', reflecting the increased professionalisation and production of images for scientific study, rather than the constructed visions of a 'noble savage' that dominated the late-eighteenth century.¹²⁶ In Charles Pickering's *The Races of Man* (1848) the author illuminated how images could be embraced or dismissed as sources, particularly those drawn from published accounts. The author mused:

'[f]or characteristic representations of Australians, I am hardly willing to refer to any except those in Mitchell's Tour, and the portraits taken by Mr. Agate

¹²⁵ This makes tracing patterns of reproduction a difficult, and often flawed, process. Popular illustrations of Aboriginal people from New South Wales were often copied between publications in the early years. For example, the success of David Collins's *Account* (published in two parts in 1798, 1802) resulted in a second edition of 1804 which combined the two volumes into one publication. Prints from the *Account* were lifted and republished in George Barrington's *History of New South Wales* (1802 and 1810), and *The History of New South Wales* (1811) by 'A Literary Gentleman'.

¹²⁶ Latour, p.252.

[the illustrator of the volume] ... The coloured figures in the French Voyages are deficient in that depth of hue, which at once arrests attention in the Australians: the best I have seen, is the full-length portrait in the “Voyage aux Terres Australes”.¹²⁷

Questions had arisen in the early-nineteenth century about if and how Aboriginal people of Tasmania were related to Aboriginal peoples of mainland Australia. In the same book Pickering referenced explorer Thomas Mitchell’s view that Tasmanians were associated with the ‘continental Australians’, recording he was further swayed by the portraits produced by Labillardiere which included the physiognomic details he would ‘expect to see’.¹²⁸ These examples show how art could function as a tool of science in the creation of a comparative hierarchy of ‘otherness’.

Images could dictate how Aboriginal people of a particular colony were considered in Britain. A telling example relates to the book *Australia Felix* (1848) written by Melbourne merchant William Westgarth and published in Edinburgh.¹²⁹ Westgarth’s volume was illustrated with two poor-quality printed reproductions of daguerreotypes originally produced by Douglas Kilburn in Victoria. The owner of Cairn Curran station in Victoria, Robert P. Cunningham, had purchased these photographs from Kilburn and returned with them in late 1847 to Glasgow, where they were used to create the illustrations for Westgarth’s book.¹³⁰ They included one image of an Aboriginal man and woman, and another depicting a group of Aboriginal women and children. No individual sitters were named, but they served to accompany Westgarth’s detailed description of ‘the manners and condition of the [A]boriginal natives’. He characterised Aboriginal people as ‘lazy, savage and doomed to extinction’ despite previous records indicating he felt some sympathy towards them.¹³¹ The impact of Westgarth’s publication, and the limited number of European artists practising in the Port Phillip District, are discussed in an 1849 exchange of letters between John Cotton and his British-based brother, William. In

¹²⁷ Charles Pickering, *The Races of Man: and their geographical distribution* (London: John Chapman, 1849), p.138.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.142-3.

¹²⁹ ‘Australia Felix’ was a term coined by explorer Thomas Mitchell to describe the lush lands he encountered in Western Victoria; William Westgarth, *Australia Felix; or, A Historical and Descriptive Account of the Settlement of Port Phillip, New South Wales* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, Tweeddale Court; London: Simpkin, Marshall, & Co., 1848).

¹³⁰ Isobel Crombie, ‘Australia Felix: Douglas T. Kilburn’s Daguerreotype of Victorian Aborigines, 1847’, *Art Journal* 32 (Art Bulletin of Victoria, 1991).

¹³¹ Further publications by Westgarth including *Victoria* (Edinburgh, 1853), and *The Colony of Victoria* (London, 1864); Lydon, *Calling the Shots*, p.105.

1843, Cotton had created a small farming village in the Goulburn River valley where Aboriginal people were to be ‘settled’.¹³² Writing to his brother in July 1849, Cotton wrote:

I wish some of our eminent painters would take a voyage to Australia – they would learn many a beautiful effect not attainable in Europe, and the natives would be a source of great profit to them. Their figures have such a noble, picturesque effect when clothed in the possum rug. I think Eastlake¹³³ might give a hint of this sort to some of our men of colour at home.¹³⁴ They would make much by their studies on their return to England.¹³⁵

His brother warned Cotton against sending any images on, stressing ‘I really do not think a purchaser will be found, if we may judge of the Australian beauties by the photograph portraits published in Westgarth’s *Australia Felix*.’¹³⁶ Badly made reproductions may have influenced a British view that Aboriginal sitters constituted poor potential sources for further artistic productions.

In the 2015 publication *Indigenous Intermediaries*, Catherine Bishop and Richard White asserted that Aboriginal figures were erased from the written accounts during the later process of colonial history-making.¹³⁷ An example found in my research shows an example of how this process of erasure could occur much earlier in visual images, between the title vignette of the first and second editions of Mitchell’s *Three Expeditions* (first volume). Depicting a ‘temporary gunyah’ in the first edition, the explorer sleeps in the shelter with a colonial companion sitting relaxed to the left of the scene with a gun and informal clothing (Fig.4.12). To the right are two Aboriginal men: one lying asleep, while the other sits up attentively as if watching or protecting. In the second edition of this work the image was amended (Fig.4.13). Now the explorer appears alert, reading or working in the gunyah, with the light falling on him. In the darkness at the front left a man in uniform leans back. On the

¹³² The village was established at Doogallook in the Goulburn River valley, on the traditional country of the Taungurong people; *Ibid.*, pp.103-4.

¹³³ Eastlake was Keeper of the National Gallery in London from 1843 to 1847, Trustee from 1850, and its first Director from 1855. He was also President of the Royal Academy from 1850.

¹³⁴ ‘Men of colour’, or ‘colourmen’ was a nineteenth-century term for artists or suppliers of artistic materials.

¹³⁵ This quote cited in Lydon, *Calling the Shots*, p.105.

¹³⁶ ‘W.M. Cotton to Robert Hudson, 4 Dec. 1849’ in Mackaness, p.64, cited in *Ibid.*, p.107.

¹³⁷ Catherine Bishop and Richard White, ‘Explorer memory and Aboriginal celebrity’, in *Indigenous Intermediaries: new perspectives on exploration archives*, ed. by Shino Konishi, Maria Nugent, and Tiffany Shellam (Acton: ANU Press, 2015), pp.31-66.

right now only the sleeping Aboriginal man is still in place. The figure sitting up and watching has been removed. This edit amended the tone of the scene, placed the explorer at the centre of the narrative, the colonial sentry alert, and the only visible Aboriginal guide asleep. The consequence of this discovery is that erasure as a practice could be enacted at the point at which these images were made available to a public audience. It demonstrates a visible change of composition, controlled by the author or the publisher, that sought to centre the role of explorer.

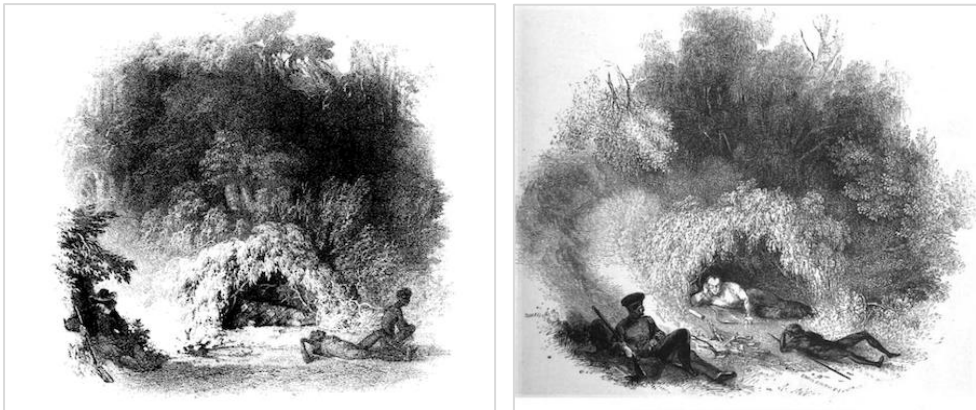


Fig.4.12 Title vignette of first edition of Thomas Mitchell's *Three Expeditions*, 1838.

Fig.4.13 Title vignette of second edition of Mitchell's *Three Expeditions*, 1839.

National Library of Australia, NK1512 and NK3043. Rex Nan Kivell Collection.

Over the first half of the nineteenth century, British-based publishers played a central role in the control, generation and funding of publications of Australian content which included depictions of Aboriginal people. Some did so on numerous occasions. An early example, T. Cadell & G. Nicol published the second edition of the account of Cook's third voyage to the Pacific in 1785, then Cadell went on to publish David Collins's 1798 and 1802 volumes on the settlement of New South Wales with W. Davies. A range of publishers and printers were involved in the First Fleet publications.¹³⁸ In the early-nineteenth century a new generation of names emerged.¹³⁹ The most prolific publisher of Australian content (including locations beyond New South Wales) in the late 1830s and throughout the 1840s was T. & W. Boone who published: Mitchell (1838); Grey (1841); Eyre (1845); Hodgkinson

¹³⁸ These include J. Debrett for White (1790), and John Stockdale for Phillip (1789 and Hunter (1793).

¹³⁹ M. Jones for Barrington (1802); Mackenzie & Dent for Paterson (1811); Edward Orme for John Heaviside Clark (1813); Treutel & Wertz for English version of Arago (1823); J. Souter for Lycett (1824-5); J. Cross for Earle (1830); Richard Bentley for Breton (1833); G. & W. Nicol published both the Flinders and Westall publications (1814); John Murray produced the volumes for Oxley (1820), and Phillip Parker King (1826).

(1845); Stokes (1846); Leichhardt (1847); Napier (1849); and Sturt (1849). From the late 1840s British publishers of Australian content diversified again.¹⁴⁰ Increasingly, works were published by multiple firms in the main cities in the British Isles. Publishers were influential in stimulating the production of depictions of Aboriginal people for a British audience. It seems likely that they maintained contacts in the Australian colonies to provide material for their publications, and that they benefitted from developing reputations for producing Australian material.

The popular press also drew on established imperial image networks to generate content. Printed images of Indigenous Australians featured in this wider-reaching but more ephemeral context of British newspapers, magazines, and journals. Representations of Aboriginal people in these formats must be considered within the development of illustrated journalism in the nineteenth century. Publishers commissioned new images and recycled and copied existing examples, including remediated photographs. Some artists had long-term associations with particular publications, sometimes unacknowledged, while other works remain unattributed. Images from colonial correspondents were more likely to be accompanied by an explicit provenance. Some magazines and newspapers had a far wider reach than most exhibitions, and could be consumed within the domestic sphere. As discussed in Chapter One, Australian illustrated newspapers such as the *Melbourne Illustrated Post* and the *Australian news for home readers* were available to the British public, just as periodicals and newspapers from London could be found in Sydney, Hobart and Melbourne.¹⁴¹ Specialised publications also emerged in the nineteenth century, such as scientific journals, or missionary periodicals, with their own specific motivations.¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ Smith, Elder & co. for Angas (1847); John Chapman for Pickering (1849); W. Shoberl for Henderson (1851); Ingram, Cooke, & Co. for Sidney (1852); James Blackwood for De Brebant Cooper (1857); and Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts & Green for Griffith (1845), and Heywood (1863); London Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge for Angas (1865); Sampson Low, Son, & Marston for James Bonwick (1870); George Routledge & Sons for Wood (1870); Virtue and Company for Carton Booth (1873-6).

¹⁴¹ Mary L. Shannon, 'Colonial Networks and the Periodical Marketplace' in Joanne Shattock (ed.), *Journalism and the Periodical Press in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), pp.203-223.

¹⁴² Sally Shuttleworth and Berris Charnley, 'Science Periodicals in the Nineteenth and Twenty-First Centuries', *Notes and Records*, Volume 70, Issue 4 (December 2016), p.298; T. Barringer, 'What Mrs Jellyby Might Have Read Missionary Periodicals: A Neglected Source', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, Vol. 37, No.4 (Winter, 2004), pp.46-7.

Given the range of printed sources, for my purposes I take the example of *The Illustrated London News* to explore how Aboriginal people were represented in the popular press from 1842-1865. The *Illustrated London News* was the world's first illustrated weekly news magazine, published from Saturday 14 May 1842. It reproduced a wide array of content including news from the colonies, and reports of visitors from colonised lands. Its popularity and wide circulation reached a broad readership and generated high sales through sensation and populism, whilst retaining a reputation for the quality of its imagery and content. Depictions of Aboriginal people were incorporated to support news features and due to the broad audience, articles were aimed at those with a low level of knowledge about Australia.

The first Aboriginal Australian to be portrayed in the *Illustrated London News* was an 'Australian Boy' in an 1846 article on the 'Aborigines of South Australia' (Fig.4.14).¹⁴³ Warrulan, a Ngaiwong boy, and Kour (referenced in the article as 'Pangkerin') aged between eight and ten, accompanied the explorer Edward John Eyre to Buckingham Palace on 26 January, where they were introduced to the Queen and Prince Albert.¹⁴⁴ The article commented in detail on the physiognomy of the 'well-formed, active, and intelligent' children, who were learning English well in eight months. The report described Aboriginal people as having

been much misrepresented and misunderstood... too often ... depicted as the lowest and most degraded of mankind; forming, as it has been asserted, only a connecting link between the human family and the lower orders of the creation. This opinion is... as unjust as it is unfounded; ... they have as great natural intelligence as, and an equal capacity for improvement with, other races.¹⁴⁵

This analysis is unusual, even progressive for its time, in its attempt to counterbalance previous representations in Britain. But the article noted uncritically the continued subjection of foreign figures to scientific investigation, reporting the boys were examined by 'several eminent phrenologists' who had found their

¹⁴³ ILN, 14 February 1846, p.108.

¹⁴⁴ Pangkerin had travelled to England with Mr. Anthony Forster; Sari Braithwaite, Tom Gara, and Jane Lydon, 'From Moorundie to Buckingham Palace: Images of "King" Tenberry and his son Warrulan, 1845-55', *Journal of Australian Studies*, 35:2, June 2011, pp.165-184.

¹⁴⁵ ILN, 14 February 1846, p.108.

developments, ‘...very good, and far superior to those of the negro race generally’. The *Illustrated London News* supported contemporary understandings of a ‘hierarchy of races’ even while acknowledging Aboriginal humanity. The article continued with the hope that the visit of these youths to England, along with the acknowledgement of Queen Victoria would:

go far towards removing the unfavourable impressions heretofore entertained of the race; and, by creating an interest on behalf of a people little known and greatly misunderstood, perhaps tend, in some degree, towards inducing better-directed, and more effectual, attempts to mitigate the evils which our occupation and possession of their country necessarily inflict upon them.¹⁴⁶

This explicitly recognised the poor treatment of the Aboriginal owners and occupants of lands colonised by Europeans.



Fig.4.14. ‘Australian Boy’, *Illustrated London News*, 14 February 1846, p.108.
© Illustrated London News Ltd/
Mary Evans.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.; Eyre published a long account of Aboriginal Australians shortly after, detailing their appearance, character, habits, manners, and customs.

The arrival of indigenous men and women in Britain was often recorded in newspapers, with individuals presented as the first available representatives from their country, or as worthy of interest because of recent political or military activity in their homelands.¹⁴⁷ The 8 October 1853 edition of the *News* reported the arrival of two Aboriginal men from Cape York, illustrated in print after a photograph by Mr F.W. Berger (Fig.4.15).¹⁴⁸ The accompanying article named them as ‘Garicha’ and ‘Boyduga’ and outlined how they journeyed to Britain. Their canoe ‘broke adrift’ when they were on board the ship the *Scotia*, at that time anchored in Cape York. Unwilling to alight on nearby coasts for fear of hostile groups, they travelled on to India and then to Britain. This extraordinary story brought attention to the men in Britain. Photographs of the two Kaurareg men, under the names “Dick” and “Tom”, are held in the British Museum collection.¹⁴⁹

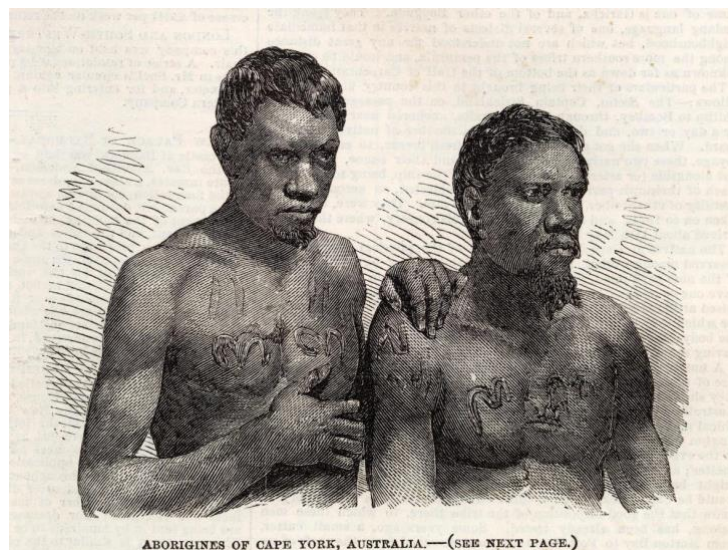


Fig.4.15. ‘Aborigines of Cape York, Australia’, *Illustrated London News*, 8 October 1853, p.308.
© Illustrated London News Ltd/ Mary Evans.

Exploration was also newsworthy.¹⁵⁰ In August 1849, surveyor Edward Kennedy’s 1848 expedition from New South Wales to Queensland was reported, followed in

¹⁴⁷ In 1855, for example, the *Illustrated London News* reported the arrival in England of an Aboriginal boy from Warialda; ILN, 24 November 1855; Qureshi, p.66.

¹⁴⁸ ILN, 8 October 1853, pp.309-310.

¹⁴⁹ These are the two men that modelled for casts displayed at the Crystal Palace, Sydenham; BM, Oc,B95.1 and Oc,B95.3, “Dick”, and Oc,B95.2, “Tom”, both Cowrarega or Kaurareg men from Cape York. These objects are linked to the Ethnological Society of London and Roger Gordon Latham. Although dated 1861, if the photographs are carbon prints, they must have been made after 1864 as that is when that process was invented. These photographs were in the Davis Collection, discussed in Chapter Three.

¹⁵⁰ The mounted Native Police of Victoria were another subject of interest, presented as people in between the European settlers and the colonised.

November with a depiction of ‘Jackey Jackey’.¹⁵¹ This was the name by which Galmahra, most likely of the Wonnarua nation in New South Wales, was known to Kennedy; he was described as also accompanying Sir Thomas Mitchell on several of his expeditions. Galmahra was discussed in a positive albeit patronising fashion, as ‘faithful Jackey’.¹⁵² The image used was after a print by Charles Rodius (Fig.3.42), and the *Illustrated London News* described itself as ‘favoured by a Correspondent’. Whether Rodius himself was the contributor, or someone else with access to the 1849 lithographic print is unclear. Galmahra was romanticised for his presence at the explorer Kennedy’s death, creating an idealised image of ‘the relationship between explorer hero and Aboriginal companion’.¹⁵³

While all these sitters were named, in other instances names were removed to create a ‘type’ image. One such example is the ‘Man of South Australia’ published in March 1857 (Fig.4.13), which Sari Braithwaite, Tom Gara and Jane Lydon have demonstrated was copied after an identified photograph of Tenberry (Tenbury), a Ngaiwong man and the father of Warrulan (Fig.4.16).¹⁵⁴ In its remediation from photograph to print the identity of the sitter was either lost, or intentionally erased, although the correct location remained. The accompanying text described this portrait, and another of a woman from South Australia, as ‘fine specimens of the natives of South Australia,’ produced from photographs sent from the colony.¹⁵⁵

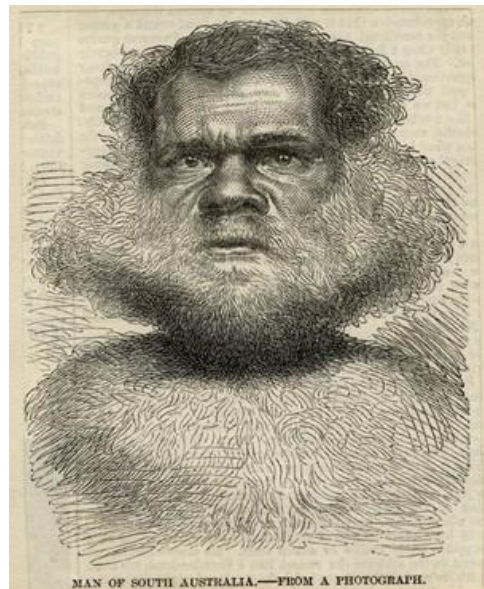


Fig. 4.16. ‘Man of South Australia – from a photograph’, *Illustrated London News*, 21 March 1857, p.133. BM, 2016,2038.3 © The Trustees of the British Museum.

¹⁵¹ ILN, 25 August 1849, p.133; ILN, 17 November 1849, p.325.

¹⁵² Maria Nugent, ‘Jacky Jacky and the politics of Aboriginal testimony’, in *Indigenous Intermediaries*, pp.67-84.

¹⁵³ Bishop and White, in *Indigenous Intermediaries*, pp.38, 42.

¹⁵⁴ ILN, 21 March 1857, p.133; Braithwaite, Gara and Lydon, pp.165-184.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.180-181.

The remediation of photographs of Aboriginal people first took place in early 1850 when the *News* printed recent examples by Mr. Kilburn, who sought to portray the ‘curious race of Aborigines’ by daguerreotype.¹⁵⁶ Under the headline ‘Australia Felix’, three of Mr Kilburn’s daguerreotypes of Aboriginal people from the Port Phillip District were reproduced (Fig.4.17).¹⁵⁷ An appended ‘View of Melbourne’, was copied from a picture by watercolourist Mr. W.F.E. Liardet to complete the page. The access the newspaper had to the photographs was presented as if by luck or chance, but they were likely supplied directly by either Kilburn or his brother, whom the article noted was ‘well-known in Regent Street’. These images accompanied an 1849 account of Port Phillip by Dr. J.B. Clutterbuck. In contrast to the earlier instances cited from the *News*, this account was derogatory and offensive. It demonstrates how diverse sources could be combined to create the final pages.



Fig.4.17. ‘Australia Felix’, *Illustrated London News*, 26 February 1850, p.53.
 © Illustrated London News Ltd/ Mary Evans

¹⁵⁶ ILN, 26 January 1850, p.53.

¹⁵⁷ They are given the titles ‘Aboriginal Australians – Young men’, ‘Aboriginal Australians – Old and Young Man’, and ‘Lubra, a young Australian woman.’

New images were sometimes received by the *News* through correspondents, such as the maker of the 1856-1857 series 'Sketches in Australia' which incorporated numerous depictions of Aboriginal Australians, including common tropes of subject matter such as 'mode of climbing a tree' or 'the disposal of the dead in Australia'.¹⁵⁸ A later example of 15 November 1856, presented an unusual scene of an Aboriginal group proceeding in a line 'towards' the image maker (Fig.4.18).¹⁵⁹ The accompanying article labels the Aboriginal people of Victoria as in 'undisturbed possession' of the land of Victoria fifteen to twenty years previously, and that Europeans had sought to 'cultivate' them to no avail. The author describes the men dressing in piecemeal European clothing while women remained in 'native garment'. The derogatory tone of the piece notes the Aboriginal people of the area rejecting 'positive' things brought by Europeans, while embracing vices, such as an 'inclination for strong drinks'. It delineates the setting of the image, with Aboriginal groups visiting the city, but returning to their encampments at night. In a rare compliment the author alluded to the signs of 'artistic taste' in the designs seen on the 'opossum mantles' and in the drawings of a young man. In late 1863, another series of 'Sketches in Australia' identified the correspondent as Dr. Doyle, who supplied the accompanying illustrations of 'snake-hunting' and 'the bee-hunters', copied after Angas.¹⁶⁰ In 1865 the *Illustrated London News* produced a feature on the 'The Last Surviving Aborigines of Tasmania' accompanied by a print after a photograph of four figures, including William Lanne and Trukanini, taken by Mr. H.A. Frith of Hobart Town.¹⁶¹ The author described how a communication reached them by the last Australian mail from Hobart Town and that a large section was quoted from the *Hobart Town Mercury* of 22 October 1864. In the report the violence of colonisers towards the Aboriginal Tasmanians was chastised, but the ultimate narrative once again asserted natural decline and extinction.

¹⁵⁸ In February 1857 images from Western Australia were published, and in March these were followed by a series of 'Sketches in South Australia'; ILN, 15 November 1856, p.491; ILN, 24 January 1857, p.71; ILN, 28 February 1857, p.178; ILN, 21 March 1857, p.266, included the aforementioned 'Man of South Australia' and 'Woman of South Australia'.

¹⁵⁹ 'Aborigines of Victoria', ILN, 15 November 1856, p.491.

¹⁶⁰ ILN, 3 October 1863, p.353.

¹⁶¹ ILN, 7 January 1865, p.13.



Fig.4.18 'Aborigines of Victoria', *Illustrated London News*,
15 November 1856, p.491.
© Illustrated London News Ltd/ Mary Evans.

Accounts presented in the *Illustrated London News* often combined image sources for visual effect. This reflected the time and resource pressures of producing a weekly illustrated newspaper.¹⁶² In June 1854 the editors used the format of the page to support a discussion about racial hierarchy and the impact of 'civilisation'.¹⁶³ In an article which reported an 'Aboriginal Affray in New South Wales', a scene of two Aboriginal groups meeting 'three miles from Brisbane' was juxtaposed with an image in the bottom half of the page 'Presentation of a gold vase, at Melbourne, to the Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria' (Fig.4.19). The accompanying description on the page noted 'the co-existence of two very opposite extremes of civilisation almost upon the same spot'. The contrast of the 'publication of a local newspaper' in Ballarat and the 'sanguinary feuds of the [A]boriginal tribes of the country' in Brisbane were introduced to demonstrate to the British public 'the barbarism amidst which the colonists live in the present days of high civilisation in New South Wales.' The reference to the 'same spot' is erroneous, as the distance from Ballarat to Brisbane is over 1,600 km.

¹⁶² Virginia McKendry, 'The *Illustrated London News* and the Invention of Tradition', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, Vol.27, No.1 (spring, 1994), pp.1-24; Thomas Smits, 'Looking for the *Illustrated London News* in Australian Digital Newspapers: Colonial readership and the formation of imagined communities, 1842-1872', *Media History*, Vol. 23, No.1 (2017), p.80.

¹⁶³ ILN, 17 June 1854, p.575.

4.4 Conclusion



Fig.4.20 ‘The Queen’s Visit to the South Australian Court, on Friday, May 21’, *Illustrated London News*, 29 May 1886, p.575.
© Illustrated London News Ltd/ Mary Evans

The cover image of the 29 May 1886 edition of the *Illustrated London News* recorded a noteworthy encounter at the Colonial and Indian exhibition the week before. On 21 May Queen Victoria visited the South Australian section of the exhibition and stood before a staged scene of an Aboriginal Australian man standing on a bark canoe, holding a three-pronged spear, semi-immersed in water (Fig.4.17). This figure was a model, posed as if in the act of fishing. The backdrop was painted, botanical specimens incorporated, as was a taxidermy eagle clutching a lamb. The printed depiction of this scene in the newspaper captured not only the spectacle created for the exhibition, but also the act of the figures looking on. A man to the left explains to the Queen the subject of the scene, his hand extended towards the Aboriginal man. The expressions displayed on the faces of Victoria and her retinue are blank and indecipherable. The distance between these living figures and the diorama is exaggerated by the inclusion of exhibition barriers and the visible string

from which the eagle and its prey hang, which extends beyond the limits of the recorded scene.¹⁶⁴ This depiction of the presentation of colonial knowledge to a British audience was produced two decades after the years in focus of this thesis, however it reflects the peak of patterns of exhibition and illustration that began in the 1850s and 1860s.

The circulation and display of imagery depicting indigenous peoples and colonised lands in Britain created a spectacle of empire, which reached a broad British public. The chapter has analysed multiple formats in which depictions of Indigenous Australians reached large and diverse audiences after they were brought to Britain by the artists that produced them. Opportunities to view these representations in Britain increased and diversified in the period 1800 to 1860. Through displays of collections of art, circulating exhibitions and emigrant ‘experiences’, images moved through the country. They entered the homes of the British public in newspapers and magazines, where they were read through different lenses by audiences with varied levels of knowledge and understanding about the people and places depicted. The images, read by some as pieces of art, were used as objects for pseudo-scientific analysis by others, or approached as an illustration or memorial of a ‘doomed race’. This confirms David Sampson’s argument that the reproduction of images in travel literature, popular periodicals and illustrated newspapers extended ideas of racial difference to a far broader audience, ‘projecting scientific racism beyond its educated gentlemen theorists’.¹⁶⁵

Political and social changes in Britain influenced the messages conveyed in the spheres of engagement discussed in this chapter. Emigration to Australia increased from the 1820s and particularly following the discovery of gold in the 1850s. Imagery relating to Australia presented in panoramas, solo exhibitions and international exhibitions in Britain was used to advertise the benefits of the emigrant experience. This context influenced depictions of Aboriginal people, who were increasingly presented as a ‘race in decline’ soon to be replaced by a predominantly European population. Following the discovery of gold in New South Wales and Victoria in 1851 the narrative of a land of potential fortune became central to news

¹⁶⁴ The powerful eagle capturing the lamb could be read as an allegory for the relationship between the centre of the British Empire and the colonies.

¹⁶⁵ Sampson, p.43.

reported in Britain. References to the Aboriginal occupants of the colonies became limited and often incidental to tales of opportunity.

This period saw an increase and diversification in the potential settings in which images could be consumed. As the power and extent of the British Empire grew it became common to see depictions of colonies in publicly available spaces, connecting those in Britain with emigrants or colonial agents in distant lands. New printing techniques allowed for the improved replication of original images, and materials and paper were more widely available. Products were created at different price points, and more easily shipped, thereby increasing their range and availability. The audience itself was changing, with an increase in literacy expanding the readership. Readers in Britain were far removed from the context of colonial depictions of indigenous peoples, and some artists appear to have relied upon their audience's unfamiliarity with the subject to construct their images. However, authenticity was a key concern for exhibitors. Portrayals could be, and were, falsified, hence the accompaniment of testimonials, objects and even indigenous people themselves, in the example of Hemi Pomare, whose physical presence influenced the way the representations of Māori were constructed. Once the images were removed from Australia, and often before, the Aboriginal subjects of these works had no control over how they would be used. People from different places, such as Australia and New Zealand, were displayed together, as in the Angas exhibition and in the *Illustrated London News*. These exhibitors and metropolitan publishers conflated vast colonial distances in their journals and newspapers, thereby making complex and conflicted representations both more easily consumed, and misleading, for a mass audience.

Networks of empire ensured that images of indigenous peoples were available in Britain throughout the nineteenth century. Visual records influenced narratives of empire which moved from the search and collection of knowledge, to statements of power, superiority and 'civilisation'. As more British people emigrated to Australia, networks were strengthened and diversified, connecting people who identified as British both within Britain and beyond. Images by colonial artists influenced the views and expectations of emigrants and future colonial settlers in Australia. The inclusion of depictions of Aboriginal Australians in scenes of the 'emigrant experience' supported contemporary narratives around their

dispossession. They sought to remove fear of the ‘unknown’ for the British and publicise the European settlement of these lands.

This chapter highlights that while the British Museum and other museums would ultimately become the British repositories of many pictorial depictions of Indigenous Australia, these were not the spaces in which the works were found or displayed at the time of their creation. The representations discussed here do sometimes relate to contemporary works that entered the museum, not solely in their subject of interest and location of production. For example, the image of Galmahra reproduced in the *Illustrated London News* in 1849 was from a set of prints, some of which derived from the Rodius drawings sold to the British Museum in 1840. Their public display gave images an active role in creating and maintaining narratives about the colonies and the British Empire.

Members of the British public could engage with these images in a variety of arenas of consumption. Some encountered pictures in only one setting, while others would see them in multiple formats. Those with a particular interest, such as potential emigrants to the Australian colonies, may have sought out all those accessible. New meanings and uses could develop, as those who brought the images together applied their own readings because of their particular interests, as demonstrated in the previous chapter through the collection of craniologist Joseph Barnard Davis. It is with an understanding of the broader context of settings in which colonial images of Indigenous Australians were consumed in nineteenth-century Britain that in the next chapter I return to the British Museum in its present context to consider how the images in this collection may be understood today.

Chapter Five

Re-presenting Indigenous Australia

The British Museum's assemblage of drawn, painted and printed depictions of Indigenous Australians is unusually large and varied for a British collection, and is the most important single collection of colonial images of Aboriginal people from Australia in the United Kingdom. Its history reveals the impact of intellectual changes in the British public, academic and museum spheres on the development of the collection. This chapter explores how the reading of colonial depictions of Indigenous Australians held in the British Museum and other British institutions has been re-addressed in recent years, and how it may inform museum practice. Long-distant nineteenth-century decisions regarding the categorisation of works within the British Museum, discussed in the second chapter of this thesis, continue to influence how they are read, viewed and displayed today. Understanding their institutional distribution helps us to consider what frameworks these objects sit within at this present moment, and what may usefully be done to interrogate these images anew.¹ What do they mean to audiences today and what could they mean in the future?

This treatment builds on the reassessment of collections of colonial photography in museums over the last two decades. Such scholarship has led Christopher Morton, Head of Curatorial, Research and Teaching, at the Pitt Rivers Museum to describe its photographic collection as 'an intrinsic part of its curatorial, research, and teaching activities'.² This development, seen in other anthropological collections, has yet to translate to other forms of visual record, or to museums with alternate foci. In 2013 Sarah Thomas demonstrated that colonial art is more likely to be encountered in narratives presented by institutions like the National Maritime Museum, whose collection requires contextualisation within the British Empire, than, say, in art museums which purport to present a history of British Art. The

¹ For some works, particularly prints, examples may exist in both Britain and Australia.

² Christopher Morton, 'The Place of Photographs in the Collections, Displays and Other Work of General Pitt-Rivers', *Museum History Journal (MHJ)*, Vol.7, No.2, July 2014, p.168.

‘virtual invisibility’ of colonial or imperial images in this latter context, she has argued, leaves British art defined ‘in its narrowest geographic sense’.³

The exhibition of colonial pictorial works is rare, particularly in the UK, a continuation of their limited display in institutions such as the British Museum in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (discussed in Chapter Two). The reaction of viewers to colonial depictions of Aboriginal people in the nineteenth century is notably different to their reception by audiences in the twenty-first century. A lack of interest in early colonial depictions of Australia is indicated by the purchase of numerous works from private British collections in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries by Australian collectors, with little local competition. This reflects a pattern of condescension towards early depictions of Australia in Britain. In a scathing review of the Royal Academy’s *Australia* exhibition in 2015, Brian Sewell described the relevant colonial material as ‘pedestrian’, ‘the work of prisoners, of second-rate visiting painters from England, and of immigrants from Germany and Switzerland...’.⁴

Recent exhibitions at museums and galleries in the United Kingdom and Australia have sought to amend or disrupt conventional narratives around colonial art, as well as the representation of relationships between the Aboriginal owners of the land now known as Australia and the British colonisers that arrived there from 1788. Through presentation in new displays, museums have made historical images more widely known and provoked discussion of the contexts that once framed the narratives around these works, which today are often considered problematical or contentious. Some approaches have succeeded in opening conversations previously overshadowed by more ‘convenient’ histories, while others have created new problems. This is evident in considering how colonial imagery from the British Museum’s collection has become better known in the last five years, when presented in permanent displays or through works lent to exhibitions such as *Thomas Bock* (displayed at Ikon Gallery, Birmingham in 2017, and then the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery in Hobart, Tasmania in 2018). By focusing on the presentation and reception of Bock’s depictions of Aboriginal Tasmanians in both countries, and the

³ Sarah Thomas, ‘The Spectre of Empire in the British Art Museum’, *MHJ*, Vol. 6, No.1, January 2013, p.105; Geoff Quilley, *Art for the Nation: The Oil Paintings Collections of the National Maritime Museum* (London: National Maritime Museum, 2006).

⁴ Brian Sewell, ‘Australia, Royal Academy – exhibition review’, *London Evening Standard*, 19 September 2013 [accessed 27 April 2020].

impact of the exhibition location and their different audiences, I identify the concerns and stimuli that influenced those who make decisions about the display of such works at different points in time.

The contemporary role of the museum and notions of 'Britishness' feed into this discussion. As Nicholas Thomas has established, despite concerns about the impact of the digital turn in museology, physical collections have not been rendered redundant.⁵ Ethnographic museums retain an important role in society and have a responsibility to challenge and address their internal structures, as well as the histories of the objects they contain, including how they were collected. The British Museum was founded on enlightenment ideals of the eighteenth century, prior to the colonisation of places such as Australia, and has restructured in response to changing social and political interests over the intervening years. Museums have been described as having a history 'as active tools of empire', with the objects within them helping to shape 'perceptions of the imperial past of various countries and regions.'⁶ The question of how curatorial 'authority' has been and should be exerted over a collection of objects today, is comparable to how nineteenth-century colonial artists sought to present their 'authority' over the images they created on their return to Britain.⁷ In both contexts, individual artists or curators attempt to control or develop specific narratives and choose the frame in which a wider audience engages with the works. In the past this was almost entirely done without the involvement of the Aboriginal sitters, however, in the contemporary setting it is possible to address this absence through engagements with their descendant communities.

5.1 Displaying the collection in the twentieth century

The British Museum has rarely displayed the colonial depictions of Aboriginal people held in its collection. While ethnographic objects from Australia were exhibited upon their entry to the museum, visual representations of people from

⁵ Nicholas Thomas, *The Return of Curiosity: what museums are good for in the 21st Century* (London: Reaktion books, 2016), p.8.

⁶ John Giblin, Imma Ramos, and Nikki Grout, 'Dismantling the Master's House: Thoughts on Representing Empire and Decolonising Museums and Public Spaces in Practice. An Introduction', *Third Text*, Vol.33, Issue 4-5, p.471; Sarah Longair and John McAleer, 'Introduction: Shifting Interpretations of Empire', *MHJ*, Vol.6, No.1, January 2013, p.3.

⁷ Sarah Longair, 'Cultures of Curating: The Limits of Authority', *MHJ*, Vol. 8, No.1, January 2015, pp.1-7.

across the globe were seemingly rarely displayed to the visiting public until well into the twentieth century.

A selection of the Aboriginal portraits made in Tasmania by Thomas Bock and John Skinner Prout were included in the long-term exhibition ‘The Australian Aborigines’, displayed in the Museum of Mankind from June 1972 to February 1982.⁸ Photographs of the display allow us to understand the organisation and arrangement of these works and the narrative they were presented within. One image shows six Bock drawings mounted together on one wall with a section text below. The choice of portraits, and sitters represented, seems to link to their aesthetic quality and visual balance, rather than particular narratives relating to the individuals, or their gender (four male, two female).



Fig.5.1

Photograph of ‘The Australian Aborigines’ exhibition at the Museum of Mankind, 1972-82
© The Trustees of the British Museum.

The Bock portraits are arranged, first row left to right: Malapuwinarana (*Maulboybeenner*), Prupilathina (*Probelatter*), Wurati (*Woureddy*); second row left to right: Possibly Nollerhalleker (or *Ki*), Tanalipunya (*Tanlebonyer*), Namplut (*Numbloote*).

The label describes the works as ‘portraits of Tasmanian aborigines[sic]... probably copies, by [Bock’s] son Alfred, of originals painted by Thomas Bock.’ This attribution is echoed in the accompanying publication. It is likely this information was drawn from a 1961 article by historian N.J.B. Plomley.⁹ The section board bears the title ‘Tasmanian pre-history’ and discusses archaeological discoveries. Stone

⁸ Ben Burt, *The Museum of Mankind: Man and Boy in the British Museum Ethnography Department* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2019), pp.46, 144.

⁹ At different points in his career Plomley published alternate views on which versions of the Bock portraits were by or after the artist; N.J.B. Plomley, ‘Tasmanian Aboriginal Material in Collections in Europe’, *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. 91, No.2 (Jul.-Dec., 1961), p.223.

tools are displayed in the case in front of the board, juxtaposing these objects with images of the peoples who created such objects.

A second image of the display takes a wider viewpoint, revealing Benjamin Law's busts of Trukanini and Wurati placed on the left and right of the front-facing portraits by Bock (Figs.5.2). On the wall to the right of the busts, are four of Bock's profile portraits mounted together: top row, left to right Manalakina (*Manalargenna*) and Prupilathina (*Probelatter*); bottom row left to right Malapuwinarana (*Maulboyheenner*) and Trukanini (*Truganini*). To the right of these are mounted six portraits by John Skinner Prout: top row (left to right), 'Daphne from Oyster Bay', and 'King Tippoo from Hobart Town'; second row, 'Methinna', and 'Louisa, Cape Portland'; bottom row, 'Bessy Roo [from] one of the islands', and 'Barnaby Rudge from Cape Grim'. To the left of the Prout portraits is displayed what appears to be a cutting from a large broadsheet newspaper.



Fig.5.2 Photograph of 'The Australian Aborigines' exhibition at the Museum of Mankind, 1972-82 © The Trustees of the British Museum.

The placement of items within the exhibition creates meaning for the visitor that would be additional to viewing each object individually. The positioning of the Bock portrait of Wurati, alongside the Benjamin Law sculpture of the same man, would allow for visual comparison of depictions of this sitter. Similarly, the Bock portrait profile of Trukanini if viewed from the Law sculpture of her, would be shown at the same angle. These sculptures thus placed would have highlighted the physicality of the Aboriginal men and women represented by Bock, allowing visitors to connect in the space with the physical reality of otherwise two-dimensional representations.

In the Bock portraits the sitters are represented in ‘traditional’ attire, while the images by Prout represent the Aboriginal men and women held in inhumane conditions at Wybalenna. Wearing European clothing, this juxtaposition emphasises the changed circumstances for Aboriginal Tasmanians following colonisation. As the Bock portraits were made following ‘conciliation’ but before their removal to Flinders Island, together these works also represent false promises. There are no crossovers between the Aboriginal people depicted in the Bock and Prout images displayed, so they cannot be easily linked through a singular person. This was likely intentional in order not to draw the narrative around individual men or women, to speak more generally about events and customs thereby making the people appear, like the stone tools, as relics of the past. In terms of the images themselves, Bock and Prout were artists with a high level of skill, and their representations of Aboriginal people could be read as more sensitively executed than other contemporaneous depictions.

A third photograph of the display gives a sense of the placement of these images in the wider exhibition (Fig.5.3). The right side of a map of Australia is visible to the left of the image, and a view through to another display area shows wall cases holding Aboriginal objects such as boomerangs. Numerous objects on display demonstrate the output or products of Aboriginal people on mainland Australia. This indicates that in this exhibition, portraits were intended to illustrate the Aboriginal people of Tasmania. This likely resulted from the fact that while there were many depictions, there were few artefacts from this location within the Museum’s collection.



5.3 Photograph of ‘The Australian Aborigines’ exhibition at the Museum of Mankind, 1972-82
© The Trustees of the British Museum.

In 1988, settler Australia's bicentennial year, an exhibition 'Stories of Australian Art' curated by Jonathan Watkins included representations of Indigenous Australians from the British Museum collection.¹⁰ The exhibition was intended to mark the bicentenary of European settlement in Australia and highlight the role of art in reflecting and creating a national identity. It was shown first at the Commonwealth Institute in London (31 March - 29 May 1988) before moving to the Usher Art Gallery in Lincoln (25 June - 31 July 1988). Exhibits were drawn from a range of British Museum locations and departments and other national museums. From the Museum of Mankind (the Ethnography department) were loaned the two plaster busts by Benjamin Law (Figs.2.3 and 2.4), Charles Merrett's *The Natives of Tasmania bewailing the loss of their country* (Fig.2.6), and the anonymous 'Native of Port Jackson in the [attitude] of deffence[sic]'. Two drawings and a print by Conrad Martens were loaned from the Department of Prints and Drawings, including 'Brush at Brisbane Water' (Fig.5.4). Four works by the Port Jackson Painter were loaned from the Natural History Museum, and one by Thomas Watling. Exhibits from other UK collections illuminate what was held elsewhere in Britain: three images from the National Maritime Museum; two William Westall works from the Victoria and Albert Museum; six by Thomas Baines from the Royal Geographical Society; one painting from the Royal Collection; and eight photographs from the Pitt Rivers Museum.

Fig.5.4 'Brush at Brisbane Water', Conrad Martens, 1834-1845, graphite with grey wash heightened with white on buff paper, 1868,1114.382
© The Trustees of the British Museum.



¹⁰ *Stories of Australian Art* (London: Commonwealth Institute, 1988).

The inclusion of the selected works in this exhibition demonstrate that the images held in the Museum of Mankind, now the Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas were known to some scholars, perhaps due to the cited article by N.J.B. Plomley, in which he referred to the group of portraits of Aboriginal people from Tasmania held in the British Museum. It is significant that despite these acknowledgements, the works have warranted little study until recently.¹¹ The 1988 exhibition indicates the wider dispersal of relevant images held in other British collections. The juxtaposition of works produced in the early years of British colonisation in Australia, created a narrative around the construction of a vision of contemporary Australia that saw a reduction in the inclusion of Aboriginal figures in images of ‘civilisation’. For the purposes of the current project, this dispersal demonstrates that works produced in the early years of British colonisation had entered other British institutions and that the British Museum was not considered to be the ‘natural’ place for them.

5.2 Exhibiting colonial images in the twenty-first century

Colonial representations of indigenous people have featured in several exhibitions in the United Kingdom in the twenty-first century, though rarely as the sole focus. In London alone, displays in many national museums have included such works with varying levels of scrutiny.¹² Representations of Indigenous Australians in these exhibits have however been infrequent. In one exhibition *Between Worlds*, held at the National Portrait Gallery in 2007, the narrative centred around non-European individuals brought to London, who were represented in portraits and other consumable products.¹³ It presented the experiences of the individuals and

¹¹ Greg Lehman, ‘Regarding the Savages: Visual Representation of Tasmanian Aborigines in the 19th Century’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Tasmania, 2016); Tim Bonyhady, and Greg Lehman, *The National Picture: the art of Tasmania’s Black War* (Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 2018).

¹² At the National Portrait Gallery, *George Catlin: American Indian Portraits* (2013); at Royal Museums Greenwich, *William Hodges, 1744-1797* (2004-5) and *The Art and Science of Exploration, 1768-80* (2014- 2015); at Tate, *Artist and Empire: facing Britain’s imperial past*; at the Wallace collection, *Forgotten Masters: Stephanie Pratt and Joan Carpenter Troccoli, George Catlin: American Indian Portraits* (London: National Portrait Gallery, 2013); Geoff Quilley and John Bonehill (eds.), *William Hodges, 1744-1797: the art of exploration* (London: National Maritime Museum, 2004); Alison Smith, David Blayney Brown and Carol Jacobi, *Artist and Empire: facing Britain’s imperial past* (London: Tate Publishing, 2015); William Dalrymple with Lucian Harris, *Forgotten Masters: Indian painting for the East India Company* (London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 2019).

¹³ Jocelyn Hackforth-Jones, *Between Worlds: Voyages to Britain 1700-1850* (London: National Portrait Gallery, 2007).

interrogated how portraits could act as a site of constructed ‘truth’ and potential exploitation. Indigenous Australian presence was introduced in the images and experiences of the Eora men Bennelong and Yemmerrawanne. More recently, the *Australia* exhibition at the Royal Academy of Arts (21 September – 8 December 2013), which drew the previously cited scathing remarks from Brian Sewell, presented a history of art in the country and incorporated early colonial images to demonstrate the development of artistic styles.¹⁴

At the British Museum, there is currently one room for the permanent display of objects from Oceania, in several cases in the Wellcome Trust Gallery. Its longstanding exhibition ‘Living and Dying’ is devoted to cross-cultural concepts of health and well-being. The Australian case displays Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and artefacts. There are no colonial depictions of Aboriginal people within these cases. This is partly practical, as works on paper should only be displayed for a short period of time for conservation purposes. Colonial art in this setting would also not be appropriate given that the cases investigate the core concerns of life and death in these contemporary cultures.¹⁵ Settler-colonial works would de-centre the indigenous cultures and concerns in the contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander works displayed.

Colonial depictions of Aboriginal Australians appeared in the temporary exhibition at the British Museum, *Indigenous Australia: enduring civilisation* (23 April – 2 August 2015) curated by Gaye Sculthorpe. In the second section ‘Encounters in Country’, the display included two Aboriginal portraits from Flinders Island by John Skinner Prout from the collection; a loan from the British Library (a drawing of two Aboriginal men fishing by Tupaia); and from MAA (Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology), Cambridge (a government proclamation board, Fig.3.10).¹⁶ These stood for encounters in the colonial space (Fig.5.5). Charles Merrett’s *The Natives of Tasmania bewailing the loss of their country* (1837) also featured as a contextual illustration adjacent to the proclamation board.¹⁷ Sculthorpe described each term of the

¹⁴ Sewell; Thomas Keneally, *Australia* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2013).

¹⁵ The display of works on paper are restricted by rules surrounding length of light exposure.

¹⁶ BL, MS 15508 f.10, Tupaia, *Indigenous Australians in bark canoes*, 1770; Proclamation Board, 1829-30, MAA Cambridge, Z 15346; The Proclamation board was also displayed at the Tate exhibition, *Artist and Empire* (25 November 2015 - 10 April 2016), and had also been included in the aforementioned ‘Stories of Australian Art’.

¹⁷ BM, Oc2006, Drg.83.

exhibition's sub-title 'Enduring civilisation' as carefully chosen, to reflect the ancient origins of Indigenous Australia - a civilisation that has endured over 60,000 years - and the consequent impact of colonialism which it has had to endure since British settlement of the continent. The aim was 'to educate British and international visitors about the complexity and diversity of Indigenous Australian culture, while not shying away from the country's problematic past'.¹⁸ This exhibition marked the first attempt by the museum to introduce 'more critical colonial narratives'.¹⁹ In a review, Melbourne-based Aboriginal curator Myles Russell-Cook described this presentation of Aboriginal Australian culture, marketed in the entrance of the museum alongside exhibitions on Ancient Rome and Ancient Greece, as the first time any major museum had given this culture the same 'weight and validity' as an ancient civilisation, such as that of Greece and Rome.²⁰



Fig.5.5 Exhibition image from 'Encounters in Country' in the *Indigenous Australia: enduring civilisation* exhibition at the British Museum, 2015.
© The Trustees of the British Museum.

Of the exhibits displayed in London, 151 objects (from the British Museum's collection) were subsequently displayed at the National Museum of Australia in Canberra in *Encounters* (27 November 2015 – 28 March 2016), alongside about the same number of contemporary objects from NMA's own collection, and with additional loans.²¹ Divergent expectations and knowledge could be presumed of the

¹⁸ Gaye Sculthorpe, 'Same objects, different stories: exhibiting Indigenous Australia', *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, No.30 (March 2017), pp.79, 83.

¹⁹ This was followed in 2016 by 'South Africa: the Art of a Nation' which also included a critical colonial narrative; Giblin, Ramos and Grout, p.474.

²⁰ Myles Russell-Cook, 'Exhibiting Indigenous Australia at Home and Abroad', *Australian Historical Studies*, 47:3, p.486.

²¹ It was a free exhibition, unlike in London.

London and Canberra audiences, and as a result the two exhibitions were constructed independently with those different audiences in mind. In 2016-2017 at the request of the Albany Aboriginal Heritage Reference Group, some historical objects from the 1820s and 1830s related to the Menang community in Albany, Western Australia, were subsequently lent for a community-led exhibition titled *Yurlmun: Mokare mia Boodja* at the Museum of the Great Southern, being the Albany branch of the Western Australian Museum. These were presented with videos and text emphasising their meaning to the local community.²²

The 250th anniversary of the departure of James Cook's first voyage to the Pacific resulted in multiple exhibitions in Britain in 2018, particularly in London. The British Library's *James Cook: The Voyages* (27 April to 28 August 2018) included three images of Aboriginal people: the aforementioned watercolour by Tupaia, a page of drawings in a sketchbook by Sydney Parkinson, and another image by Charles Praval (potentially after Parkinson). The last two are the earliest known drawings of Aboriginal figures 'from the life' by European artists. The exhibition introduced contemporary debates in Australia about Cook's memorialisation, although the display's engagement with issues of Aboriginal rights in the country was restricted by the space required to introduce the large amount of information that needed to be conveyed concerning the countries visited, people encountered, and associated events. The emphasis of the display was on understanding the three voyages rather than the impact of encounters. These issues were further explored in articles on the exhibition's website and the supporting events programme, which created opportunities for several Pacific Islanders and Aboriginal people to respond to the display.

²² Gaye Sculthorpe and Maria Nugent, *Yurlmun: Mokare Mia Boodja (Returning to Mokare's Home Country)*, *Encounters and Collections in Menang Country* (Perth: Western Australian Museum, 2016).

At the British Museum, the exhibition *Reimagining Captain Cook: Pacific Perspectives* (29 November 2018 to 4 August 2019), used objects and contemporary Indigenous art to explore ‘dynamics of encounter and exchange’ and to interrogate established myths about Cook and his voyages. Displayed in gallery 91, the section on Australia did not include colonial depictions of Aboriginal Australians. Instead prime position was given to a contemporary painting of *James Cook – with the Declaration* by Aboriginal artist Vincent Namatjira (2014, see Fig.5.6), and the photographic artwork *Civilised #12* by Michael Cook, a member of the Bidjara people, of southwest Queensland.²³ The series from which Michael Cook’s work comes asked ‘what makes a person civilised’ and imagines how different the history of Australia could have been if the Europeans had recognised that the Aboriginal Australians they encountered were already ‘civilised’.²⁴



Fig.5.6 Exhibition image of part of the ‘Australia’ case in *Reimagining Captain Cook: Pacific Perspectives*. Author’s photograph, 2019.

The National Maritime Museum opened a permanent ‘Pacific Encounters’ gallery to the public on 22 September 2018, which ‘moves beyond Cook’s achievements to focus on the world’s largest ocean and longstanding Oceanic voyaging cultures’.²⁵ It incorporated a group of paintings by William Westall, the artist who accompanied Matthew Flinders’s 1801-1803 expedition on the *Investigator*. Two of these feature depictions of Aboriginal Australians, and another centres two Aboriginal objects (see Fig.5.7).²⁶ These paintings were picturesque constructions produced for a

²³ BM, 2014,2007.1, Vincent Namatjira, *James Cook – with the Declaration*. This work was purchased for the *Indigenous Australia* exhibition at the museum; BM, 2018,2003.1, Michael Cook, *Civilised #12*. This was one of fourteen contemporary works by Oceanic artists included in the exhibition, and one of eight acquired specifically for the display.

²⁴ Michael Cook, ‘Civilised’, <https://www.michaelcook.net.au/projects/civilised> [accessed 01 April 2021].

²⁵ Annemarie McLaren and Alison Clark, ‘Captain Cook upon Changing Seas: Indigenous Voices and Reimagining at the British Museum’, *The Journal of Pacific History*, 2019, p.5.

²⁶ The latter work: Royal Museums Greenwich, ZBA7944, *View of Sir Edward Pellen’s Group, Gulf of Carpentaria, December 1802*, William Westall, c.1811.

British audience, as discussed in Chapter Four. They drew upon Westall's interactions with, and observations of, the Aboriginal people he encountered during the expedition, although the final images were heavily amended, and often composed of unrelated scenes. A major exhibition, *Oceania*, which opened one week later at the Royal Academy of Arts (29 September to 10 December 2018), also marked the anniversary of Cook's voyage, venturing far beyond this subject in its exploration. This exhibition concentrated on 'Pacific' cultures and did not include Australia.

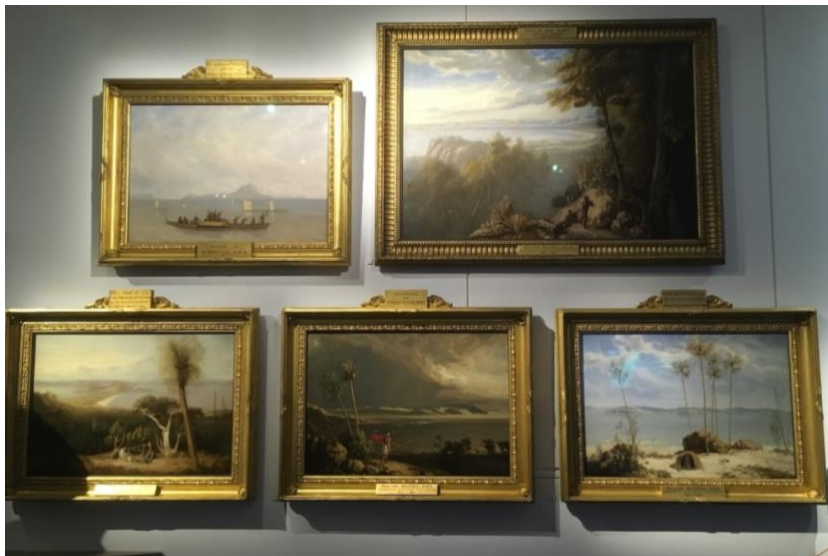


Fig.5.7 Display of paintings by William Westall in the 'Pacific Encounters' gallery at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. Author's photograph, 2019.

The Thomas Bock exhibition

Coinciding with the various Cook exhibits, a major exhibition on the work of the convict artist Thomas Bock was mounted at Ikon gallery in Birmingham, United Kingdom (6 December 2017 to 11 March 2018), before moving to the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery in Hobart, Australia (17 August to 11 November 2018).²⁷ Organised in partnership between the two galleries, the location of display and nature of each institution (contemporary art focus in Birmingham and local history

²⁷ Admission was free at both venues; The exhibition project was supported by the Australian Government through the Australian Cultural Diplomacy Grants Program of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Gordon Darling, Foundation, the John Feeney Charitable Trust, the Owen Family Trust, and a Jonathan Ruffer Curatorial Research Grant from Art Fund.

and culture at TMAG) again informed how the same works were presented to the different audiences and how they were read by visitors. This was evidenced through design and interpretation choices made by those curators involved and was reflected in the reviews of the exhibitions. Thomas Bock (c.1793-1855), discussed in Chapter One as a significant artist of early colonial Van Diemen's Land, was born close to Birmingham, hence the exhibition's first location.²⁸ Bock's association with Birmingham was a fact little known to its residents, and the exhibition intended to establish his reputation in the town of his birth and beyond. It also introduced the environment of the Australian penal colony, 'the aspiration and the awfulness of it', an obscure subject in Britain.²⁹

The exhibition included a series of the portraits of Aboriginal Tasmanians by Thomas Bock from the British Museum's collection (discussed in Chapters One, Two and Three). Although purchased as a group in the 1883 Davis sale, this was the first time they had been exhibited together. Alongside this series were hung other works by Bock loaned from Australian institutions, primarily in Tasmania: portraits of colonists; nude studies; captured individuals; post-mortem drawings; sketchbooks; Bock's engravings for the Bank of Van Diemen's Land and newspapers; and the daguerreotypes he created later in his career.³⁰ Bock advertised himself as a portrait painter in Tasmania and the completed images reflected his training as an engraver, using fine and detailed lines to build his images, giving his finished works the appearance of miniature paintings.

The Bock exhibition in Birmingham was displayed at Ikon, a contemporary art gallery (Fig.5.8).³¹ It was presented alongside an exhibition of work by the contemporary artist Edmund Clark in Ikon's upper gallery, titled 'In Place of Hate'. This was based on the artist's residency at HMP Grendon in Buckinghamshire, the UK's first therapeutic prison. The juxtaposition of these two displays drew out themes of incarceration and imprisonment, which spoke not only to Bock's depictions of convicts, but also to the portraits of Aboriginal Tasmanians later

²⁸ Bock arrived in Hobart in 1824 and received a conditional pardon in 1832.

²⁹ Thomas Bock press release, Ikon gallery, 2017.

³⁰ Collections included: Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery; the Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts; Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston; Dixon Library, State Library of New South Wales.

³¹ The gallery's director Jonathan Watkins studied in Australia, was director of the Sydney Biennale in 1996 and had included colonial depictions of Aboriginal people in earlier exhibitions.

effectively imprisoned at Wybalenna. Both exhibitions led the visitor to consider the role of the artist in the formation of these images, and the sitter's lack of autonomy within their depicted environment. One reviewer felt that the Bock and Clark exhibitions complemented each other through a 'sensitive approach to their subjects by underscoring their humanity' with 'both exhibitions arguing for an understanding of those who exist beyond mainstream society's frame of vision.'³² Clark's works do not show prisoners' faces, to preserve their anonymity, a stark contrast to Bock's detailed and intimate portrayals. It is unlikely that Bock's Aboriginal sitters were given the choice of anonymity or were informed about how their images would be used. Five of the portraits displayed were profiles of Aboriginal figures from the neck up, executed in a cool blue wash. This minimal use of colour has been linked to physiognomic or phrenological studies produced from the early to mid-nineteenth century, drawing attention to particular features of an individual's head. These could be used to discuss 'type' and 'development', details that would inform later theories of scientific racism.³³ Some, if not all, of Bock's images were produced for George Augustus Robinson's account of his 'conciliation', but the book was never published, and as discussed in Chapter Three the works eventually entered the collection of Davis following Robinson's death.



Fig.5.8 Installation of the *Thomas Bock* exhibition at Ikon in Birmingham. Author's photograph, 2017.

³² Elizabeth Fullerton, 'Bock and Clark share a sensitive approach to their subjects', *Apollo* (15 February 2018).

³³ Physiognomic studies emerged in 1770s Europe; David Bindman, *Ape to Apollo: Aesthetics and the Idea of Race in the 18th Century* (London: Reaktion Books, 2002), pp. 102-123.

Reviewers of the Birmingham exhibition frequently commented on Bock's 1830s depictions of Aboriginal Tasmanians, describing this sequence as his most significant and important legacy.³⁴ They ascribed or identified notions of pride, bravery, dignity, wariness, anxiety, and desperation to those depicted, echoing the exhibition press release, which described the sitters as having:

... a demeanour that conveys both pride and despair, suggesting Bock, being marginalised himself, closely identified with them and sought to convey the tragedies suffered by these indigenous people through the British settlement in Australia.³⁵

This inference of Bock's empathy was widely accepted by British reviewers, one describing the artist as offering the sitters his 'fullest respect'. This interpretation was extended to the reference of curatorial decisions, like the placement of the portraits of Trukanini and Wurati 'next to each other like Victorian vignettes'.³⁶ Other descriptive details of the Aboriginal portraits were also noted, with 'dreadlocks', 'tribal markings', 'fur wrapped around strong shoulders' listed as if to denote 'difference' or 'otherness'.

The review that engaged most closely with the portraits' troubling historical context was written by Jane Ure-Smith for *The Financial Times*, for whom this overwhelmed her interest in Bock the artist. Ure-Smith discussed the land grab by European colonisers and the thirty years of defence enacted by Aboriginal Tasmanians, the role of Robinson's 'conciliation', and how Bock was drawn into these activities through Robinson's commission to produce portraits of Aboriginal Tasmanians, including Wurati, Trukanini, Namplut, and Wutapuwitja. Ure-Smith referenced Tasmanian artist Julie Gough as saying '[Robinson] was promising Aboriginal people conversations with the governor that never eventuated. He was doing whatever he could to exile people without too much trouble.'³⁷ Bock's portrait of Mithina (or Mathinna, 1842) - the young Aboriginal girl sent to Lady Jane Franklin to live at government house - was used for the Birmingham exhibition poster. Ure-Smith draws attention to the fact that many of the Aboriginal people depicted in the

³⁴ Laura Cumming, 'Thomas Bock review – an extraordinary glimpse of 19th-century Tasmania' at Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, *The Observer* (24 Dec 2017); Fullerton, 'Bock and Clark', *Apollo* (15 February 2018).

³⁵ Thomas Bock press release, Ikon gallery, 2017.

³⁶ Cumming.

³⁷ Jane Ure-Smith, 'Thomas Bock – an artist overpowered by his Aboriginal subjects.' *Financial Times* (December 28, 2017).

earlier 1830s portrait series were likely to have died by the time of its production in 1842.³⁸ Some reviewers discussed Mithina's life with more care than others.³⁹ The main marketing image for an exhibition sets the tone for the narrative, seeking to draw in audiences and give a flavour of what will be included. Gough questioned the choice of her as a 'poster child' for the exhibition, stating: 'I would have preferred someone who'd made it to adulthood and fought the good fight to have the attention.'⁴⁰

Only 'tombstone' information was given on the labels in the display in Birmingham, likely due to Ikon being a contemporary art space, leading visitors and reviewers seeking further information to make use of the accompanying textual handout or the available catalogue. This allowed the audience to concentrate on the content of images and their quality, but a fuller contextual understanding of the images necessitated they read the essays in the catalogue. In this way the display presumed a high level of pre-existing knowledge from its visitors. Further explanation of the life experience of particular Aboriginal sitters proved useful to some, and a number of tours were held in the space to provide additional information to keen visitors. Although framed around a European artist and not his sitters, for many visitors the exhibition became about the displacement of Aboriginal people by colonial settlement (a story largely new to them). Ure-Smith described the show as 'more about history than it is about Thomas Bock', concluding with the clear message that 'the legacy of empire isn't buried yet.'⁴¹

When the exhibition moved to the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery later in 2018, a nude drawing of a settler-colonial woman, rather than the image of Mithina, was used to publicise the exhibition (Fig.6.5).⁴² This choice may have been made as people in Tasmania were likely more familiar with the image of Mithina, and also to ensure that it was seen as a 'Bock' exhibition not a display of only Aboriginal portraits. Media reports prior to the opening focussed on the one hundred and

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ '[I]n a fashionable red Western dress, Mithina gazes calmly out of the canvas with wide, gentle eyes, not to know that at just 17 she would die, abandoned and an alcoholic'; Fullerton, 'Bock and Clark' *Apollo*, (15 February 2018).

⁴⁰ Ure-Smith.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² This was the second exhibition on Bock in Tasmania. The previous exhibition was held at Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery in Launceston in 1991; Diane Dunbar, *Thomas Bock: Convict Engraver, Society Portraitist Exhibition and Catalogue* (Launceston, Tasmania: Queen Victoria Museum & Art Gallery, 1991).

eighty years the Aboriginal portraits had spent in storage in Britain. Ikon director and curator Jonathan Watkins described the ‘incredible freshness’ of the images as only scholars, the subjects themselves and those who commissioned them had ever seen them, apart from those displayed at the Museum of Mankind in the 1970s and 1980s.⁴³ In advance of the exhibition a significant discovery was made by Gaye Sculthorpe. A portrait by Bock, long held to be of Trukanini, and used in countless publications to represent her, had in fact been mis-identified and confused with the artist’s portrait of Wortabowigee.⁴⁴ Given Trukanini’s significance in Aboriginal Tasmanian history this discovery was of great importance and, as noted by Watkins, particularly moving for the Tasmanian Aboriginal community.⁴⁵ It was remarkable that the portrait of such an important woman had been misattributed for so long, and the response to this discovery highlighted both the power of imagery in the memorialisation of figures, and the need for detailed provenance research into work of this kind.

At the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery *Thomas Bock* was displayed alongside another temporary exhibition, *The National Picture: The Art of Tasmania’s Black War*, curated by art historian Tim Bonyhady and Tasmanian Aboriginal writer Greg Lehman (See Figs. 5.9 and 5.10).⁴⁶ *The National Picture* focused on the events of ‘The Black War’ in Tasmania in more depth, the leading Aboriginal figures at that time, and the artists who chose to depict these events. It helped to contextualise the production of Bock’s depictions and highlighted his skills as an artist in comparison to those with less training. It also affirmed his relatively sympathetic portrayals when compared to his contemporaries. In the display the images were presented in a darkened space with spotlights on individual works (Fig.5.11). Accompanying labels included updated spellings for the Aboriginal sitters in the portraits and accorded with those used in *The National Picture* exhibition. The works had individual labels with additional detail than when displayed at Ikon, reflecting contemporary interest of Aboriginal people in Tasmania today in their history and the role of Aboriginal curators in the Indigenous Cultures Department at TMAG. The portraits by Bock

⁴³ Rhiannon Shine and Cameron Gooley, ‘Thomas Bock Aboriginal portraits return to Tasmania after 180 years in storage’, *ABC.net.au* (20 Aug 2018).

⁴⁴ Gaye Sculthorpe, ‘Thomas Bock and the mystery of Trukanini’s shell necklace’, *Thomas Bock*, ed. by Jane Stewart and Jonathan Watkins (Ikon Gallery and Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, 2017), pp.49-63.

⁴⁵ Shine & Gooley.

⁴⁶ This exhibition was a partnership between the National Gallery of Australia and the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.

received limited attention in Tasmania beyond their return to the location they were made.⁴⁷ Reviews of *The National Picture* were overwhelmingly produced during its first leg at the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra.⁴⁸ In contrast to the revelatory response of some British reviewers, to whom Tasmania's early nineteenth-century history was at best little known, the tone of the audience in Canberra and Hobart was more reflective. This underlined the impact of space and place on how images are read, both in the past and today, particularly when the images are displayed close to the locations from which the Aboriginal sitters came and where their descendants live today.



Fig.5.9 Entrance to the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery in Hobart, displaying the signs for the *Thomas Bock* (left) and *The National Picture* (right) exhibitions.

Author's photograph, 2018.



Fig.5.10 Entrance to *The National Picture* and *Thomas Bock* exhibitions at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.

Author's photograph, 2018.



Fig.5.11 The hang for the *Thomas Bock* exhibition at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.

Author's photograph, 2018.

⁴⁷ Shine and Gooley.

⁴⁸ For example, Paul Daley, 'The National Picture: overwhelming reminder of wilful gaps in Australia's history', *The Guardian* (14 May 2018).

Thomas Bock drew items from the British Museum's collection, which had never been publicly displayed in their entirety before. It led to fresh research, leading to Sculthorpe's significant discovery of the Trukanini misattribution. At a time of widespread discussion about the legacies of Britain's colonial past, the exhibition created a rare opportunity within the United Kingdom to draw attention to the colonial treatment of Aboriginal men and women of the country now known as Australia. Delivered through colonial imagery, the display in Birmingham caused visitors to confront the violent acts of colonisation. It was an important step to not shy away from colonial imagery embedded in contexts of violence, much of which is held in UK museum and gallery stores and private collections. The display ran at the same time as a ground-breaking exhibition at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, *The Past is Now: Birmingham and the British Empire*, which challenged the idea of a 'neutral voice' in museum displays, and adopted a postcolonial approach that explicitly created a place for the audience – particularly Birmingham's Black and Asian community – to shape the conversation and have their voices become part of the display.⁴⁹ Projects such as this increase the awareness of imperial and colonial events, and start urgent discussions about legacy and memorialisation.⁵⁰

5.3 Conclusion

This chapter examined how depictions of Indigenous Australians in the British Museum have been displayed in recent years, allowing us to consider what may usefully be done to interrogate these images anew. What do they mean to audiences today and could they mean in the future? While the exhibition of colonial pictorial works is rare, particularly in the UK, this is only one way for images to become more well-known and understood. The British Museum's collection online is an important resource for making information and digitised pictures of these visual records available to a far broader audience than those able to reach the physical objects, including the Indigenous ancestors of those depicted.

⁴⁹ *The Past is Now* ran from 28 October 2017 to 24 June 2018. The exhibition was the outcome of a pilot programme, Changemakers, led by Sara Wajid and funded by Arts Council England; Rachel Minott, 'Avoiding the single story by creating a single story: simplification and erasure in representing diverse histories', *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, no.32 (March 2019), pp.84-100.

⁵⁰ Giblin, Ramos, and Grout, pp.471-486.

There is also opportunity afforded by viewing collections as ‘inherently mobile’. This frames museums as dynamic spaces able to mutate in their institutional form. Collections are built through a range of human relationships, and those held in museums have the potential to be re-mobilised to serve the needs of the present and the future.⁵¹ In the Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas, British Museum curators have sought to redefine or reframe their extant collection through the purchase of contemporary artworks. Contemporary Indigenous voices broaden the conversation by bringing in alternate interpretations, new knowledge, and discussions regarding legacies that may challenge those constructed in Britain.

Recent exhibitions and displays in the UK and Australia such as *Thomas Bock* and *The National Picture* highlight the challenges of displaying colonial depictions of Aboriginal people, and some potential solutions. The approach to the display and discussion of colonial imagery depicting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in these two countries is notably different, reflecting the background knowledge that can be presumed from an audience, particularly around political issues, and contemporary concerns. In general terms in Britain, knowledge of the British invasion and colonisation of Australia is limited at best. Strong emotional reactions may be elicited when an audience is faced with difficult material about the past history and actions of its nation. With this in mind, there are nuanced approaches that can be adopted towards the presentation of colonial works depicting Indigenous peoples both in the UK and Australia. The Indigenous roadmap of the Australian Galleries and Museums Association (AGAMA) offers best practice guidelines for consideration today.⁵² Engagement, consultation, collaboration, curation, and co-curation with communities is increasingly central to the preparation of displays in Britain, just as in Australia. There are also protocols, albeit sometimes complex, for accessing, managing and presenting images, particularly for photographs. Some resulting difficulties and rigidities have been outlined by Howard Morphy, who stresses that protocols have to be able to respond flexibly to the ‘diverse and dynamic nature of Aboriginal society’ across the

⁵¹ ‘Introduction’ F Driver, M Nesbitt & C Cornish (eds) *Mobile Museums: Collections in Circulation* (UCL Press, April 2021)

⁵² The five elements for change are outlined as: reimagining representation, embedding Indigenous values into museums and gallery business, increasing Indigenous opportunity, Two way caretaking of cultural material, connection with Indigenous communities; Terri Janke and Company, *First Peoples: A Roadmap for enhancing Indigenous engagement in museums and galleries* (Canberra: Warralang Projects, 2018).

continent.⁵³ Appropriate models of display, language, terminology and selection of content, are essential aspects in showing respect in displays, to Aboriginal Australian communities both contemporary and historic. Negotiating these elements may not always be straightforward or easy, but this work is necessary.

The National Picture at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery included a closing section, 'Unfinished Business', in which artworks were displayed by contemporary Aboriginal artists including Julie Gough, Gordon Bennett and Marlene Gilson. These pieces acted as a response to colonial narratives, challenging histories as they had previously been presented, and centring the experience of Aboriginal Tasmanians. This is one example of a form of good practice utilised in both the UK and Australia in recent years. Projects relating to colonial history have increasingly involved Aboriginal artists, inviting artistic responses or in the curation. In the major research project 'Engaging Objects' (2011 to 2015) that ran before the *Indigenous Australia: enduring civilisation* exhibition at the British Museum, a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander fellowships for artists were funded by the project grant from the Australian Research Council. This enabled several artists to visit the British Museum and respond to what they saw in the collection. Works by most of these artists were included in the final exhibition.⁵⁴ Other recent projects have included Christian Thompson's *We bury our own* at the Pitt Rivers Museum from 2012 to 2013, Julie Gough's *The lost world (part 2)* at MAA Cambridge in 2013, and Judy Watson's eponymous exhibition at Ikon Gallery in Birmingham in 2020, which have seen Aboriginal contemporary art foregrounded and used to reflect on past colonial practices and legacies. In 2018 Gough described how:

[her] art shines a light on the dark past. It is a weaving, an attempt to demonstrate our reality, that good and bad cohabit here. This juncture between is a gap I aim to fill with something other than silence.⁵⁵

⁵³ Howard Morphy, 'Open access versus the culture of protocols', in *Museum as Process: Translating Local and Global Knowledges*, ed. by Raymond Silverman (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), pp.91-2.

⁵⁴ Australian Research Council Linkage Grant 'Engaging Objects: Indigenous communities museum collections and the representations of Indigenous Histories'. Artists included Julie Gough, Jonathan Jones, Elma Kris, Judy Watson, Wukun, Wanambi and Ishmael Marika.; Sculthorpe, 'Same objects, different stories', pp.81, 86, 90.

⁵⁵ Gough's maternal Aboriginal heritage is of the Trawlwulwuy people of Tebrikunna; Julie Gough, 'The Traveller', *Un-magazine*, 12:1 (2018), as cited in Kate McMillan, *Contemporary Art and Unforgetting in Colonial Landscapes: Islands of Empire* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), p.126.

Until recent decades, interpretation offered in museum or gallery spaces has commonly been limited to narratives driven by the institutions, that do not necessarily address gaps in the narrative, the collection or offer space for Indigenous voices. The projects and exhibitions discussed here highlight new practices that have begun to counter these absences.

Conclusion

Reframing the colonial picture

The Foundation of Empire is Art and Science. Remove them or Degrade them and the Empire is No more. Empire follows Art and not vice versa as Englishmen suppose.

- William Blake, artist (1757-1827).¹

You have to listen to both versions, the Indigenous version of our history, and the non-indigenous version of our history, because they're both telling the truth, but they're both not the same story.

- Don Christophersen, Senior Aboriginal Cultural Adviser, 2014.²

As British colonisation of Australia expanded from 1800 to 1860 with the establishment of additional settlements and extensive grabbing of Aboriginal lands, Aboriginal groups suffered, often violently. Disease and dislocation decimated communities and people were forced to adapt to difficult new circumstances. European artists represented Aboriginal people in images throughout this time, exerting their power as colonial intermediaries over narratives that introduced diverse Aboriginal cultures and Aboriginal-colonist relationships in Britain. The makers of colonial images shrank vast distances and complex worlds into simplified and accessible representations for a British and imperial audience. Sites of engagement in Britain streamlined the messaging of 'us' and 'them', 'Britishness' and 'Otherness' in multifarious settings, creating a layered imperial spectacle for the British public. European depictions of indigenous peoples were a central part of colonial knowledge making, 'naturalising' messages about the history of mankind, and seeking to justify subjugation by developing hierarchies of value or 'civilisation'

¹ William Blake, 'Annotations to Reynolds' Discourses', in Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses on Art*, ed. by Robert R. Wark (London; New Haven: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 1975), p.285.

² Christophersen is a historian and member of the Muran clan of Western Arnhem Land. This quote closed the *Encounters: Revealing Stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Objects from the British Museum* exhibition at the National Museum of Australia. Cited in Alison Clark, 'Indigenous histories in metropole and periphery', *History Australia*, Vol.13, No.1 (2016), p.174.

that disadvantaged the original occupants of colonised lands. Groups of images when brought together by individuals and institutions were influenced by their respective concerns, interpreted and reordered in attempts to synthesise and codify the world as inheritors of an enlightenment paradigm. Picturing Indigenous Australia in nineteenth-century Britain was a multi-layered and mutable practice.

This thesis has, for the first time, interrogated and brought to attention, the largest assemblage of colonial drawings, paintings and prints depicting Indigenous Australian people held in Britain. By illuminating the sources, construction and history of the British Museum's collection, I have explored the contexts of image production and circulation to and within Britain. This research moves beyond existing scholarly work that has engaged with particular images or artists within this assemblage, to look at the wider process of their collection and institutionalisation, which has never before been explored in depth. By considering the way these images were encountered, along with others circulating in popular venues and publications in early to mid-nineteenth century Britain, we gain insight into the role imagery played in shaping the popular perception of emerging colonies and the place of Indigenous peoples within them. Images could also be utilised in alternative spheres of engagement, as when approached as sources in the fields of science and natural history.

A skilled and entrepreneurial colonial artist could make something of the opportunities available to them in the Australian colonies, and the avenues for further commercialisation in Britain, as evidenced by John Skinner Prout's career. In Australia, Prout moved from New South Wales to Tasmania and then Victoria, depicting Aboriginal people in each location and following patterns of movement adopted by other colonial artists in search of opportunity and new subjects. He published 'scenery' in each, which included depictions of Aboriginal people. On his return to Britain, Prout used his works to create images for exhibition, illustrations for newspapers and publications, and public spectacles through his diorama and panorama. His Aboriginal portraits were copied by Charles Hamilton Smith for personal study, and then sold to Joseph Barnard Davis where they became part of a collection informing ethnographic and scientific theories. Finally, they were purchased at the sale of Davis's collection by curator A.W. Franks and entered the collection of the British Museum in the 1880s. Prout's works have remained there to this date, for most of this time in a pictorial collection perceived as ancillary to

the main ethnographic collection. His portraits have been addressed by scholars of art history and anthropology, and included in a display in the Museum of Mankind, exhibitions in Australia and the 2015 *Indigenous Australia* exhibition at the British Museum.³ Prout's career demonstrates how observational depictions of Aboriginal people could be reworked for a variety of formats and purposes within Australia and Britain, and highlights the influence of an individual artist, their interests and attitudes. Prout framed the narrative around the images in his panorama, which supported a perceived hierarchy of races and included negative comments about Aboriginal people. He prioritised contemporary British and settler-colonial interests such as promoting emigration to the colonies, which would cause the further displacement of Aboriginal people. Conversely, Prout influenced how his portraits were read by the collector Joseph Barnard Davis by emphasising their humanity: transmitting alongside them biographies of Aboriginal sitters, and samples of their own handwriting.

The unique nature of the colonies of New South Wales, Tasmania and Victoria influenced the representation of Aboriginal people, but a broader context affected all visual records. The rapid displacement of Aboriginal people through colonialism saw land and resources taken by colonists for settlement and pastoralism. The discovery of gold and resultant rushes led to growing settler populations and greater wealth in New South Wales and Victoria, and the movement of settler-colonists from Tasmania. The expanding populace resulted in the generation of more visual records and increased the number of agents acting as conduits for their movement to Britain. Similar institutions and infrastructure were established in each, albeit at a different pace. All the images produced were influenced by broader frameworks of artistic style and by available materials and technological developments, such as photography.

In my thesis I explored how colonial images were received and used in Britain in the nineteenth century, focusing on the role of colonial and scientific collecting in the history of objects that later entered the British Museum. This involved tracing works from the collections of George Augustus Robinson, to Joseph Barnard Davis, to the British Museum, and considering the influence of these environments at each

³ T. Brown and H. Kolenberg, *Skinner Prout in Australia, 1840-48* (Hobart: Tasmania Museum and Art Gallery, 1986); Tim Bonyhady and Greg Lehman, *The National Picture: the art of Tasmania's Black War* (Canberra, ACT: National Gallery of Australia, 2018).

stage and the impact of the works themselves. The objects now held in the British Museum have more links to scientific study than artistic display. Most of the images discussed in this thesis did not enter the museum until the 1880s and therefore played no role in the aims and ambitions of the museum in the first half of the nineteenth century. The museum was not only a repository for this group of pictorial depictions, it was also an actor in their display, interpretation and reinterpretation. The works have remained hidden from scholarly enquiry for so long due to their placement in a department commonly associated with ethnographic objects rather than images. It required access to the museum collection from the inside to know the extent of what was held there. Lack of publication has also kept their presence obscured. The recent digitisation of the images and access through collections online have increased their availability.

To consider the broader contexts of consumption for images of Indigenous Australia in Britain, I examined popular environments, such as exhibitions, public spectacles and the mainstream press. From their role as scientific source for the study of human diversity, to their inclusion in entertainment settings that popularised narratives about the supposed natural ‘superiority’ of Europeans and justifications for imperial invasion, these images reached a broad and diverse audience. These layered forms of encounter support the assertion by the artist William Blake that art and science were foundational to imperial ventures, ‘Empire follows Art and not vice versa’.

How images were read or used was influenced by the collector or owner, as shown in the case study of Joseph Barnard Davis, whose scientific interests influenced the reading and arrangement of the images he purchased. Davis brought images together under the auspices of his own primarily craniological interest in sorting and categorising people, seeking information about physical details such as skin colour and hair texture. The ‘truth’ these images conveyed was shown to be unreliable in Davis’s opportunistic interaction with an Aboriginal man from South Australia in Britain who he had failed to identify as such, as the man did not accord with the understanding provided by his collections. Davis’s pictorial collection was almost certainly purchased for the British Museum due to his contemporary reputation, the sources from whom he had obtained the images, and the adeptness of A.W. Franks as a collector on behalf of the museum. The Davis pictorial collection was not bought specifically for the Aboriginal images, but for the strength and variety of

depictions of indigenous people from around the world. This subsequently influenced the way they were managed in the museum environment.

I asked what happened to these objects once they entered the institution? How did that change the framing of the works? Did this alter over time? By looking at recent experiences of exhibition and display in Britain, and protocols of display and engagement adopted in Australia, I uncovered routes that made colonial images better known. In individual collections and institutions, pictorial works could be used to augment other types of collections, strengthening existing concepts of categorisation. Depictions of Indigenous Australians reached a broad audience in Britain through multiple locations of consumption, both public and private, which became more numerous over the nineteenth century. Works were created at different price points, making them available to a wider audience. In the popular press and public sphere in Britain, discussions regarding Australia became focused on opportunities for emigration. Concurrently, Aboriginal people were increasingly depicted as passive actors, watching but not partaking in events, to minimise the potential concerns of emigrants and to emphasise the control of settler-colonists over a 'tamed' land.

Detailed examination of the available images confirms that authenticity or 'truth' was key in the European representation of Aboriginal people, as for those of other distant lands.⁴ Paradoxically the geographical shrinkage of great distances in the representation of Australia in Britain affected the accuracy of the depictions of Aboriginal people and Australian colonies in displays and publications. Angela Woollacott has described the 'resistance of subordinated groups', primarily Aboriginal Australians, as playing a role in shaping Australian settler-colonial identities.⁵ The ultimate desire for settler-colonists was land, a wish 'predicated on dispossession of the Indigenous people.'⁶ Images simplified, and therefore falsified, relationships between Aboriginal Australian groups, and with settler colonists. Nuance was lost as colonial propaganda sought to assuage colonial, settler and humanitarian concerns. In the late 1850s in the Australian colonies, more visual records depicted Aboriginal Australians in the landscape, clad in 'traditional' attire,

⁴ Sarah Thomas, *Witnessing Slavery: Art and Travel in the Age of Abolition* (New Haven and London: The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2019), pp. 23-32, 225-227.

⁵ Angela Woollacott, *Settler Society in the Australian Colonies: Self-Government and Imperial Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2015), p.6.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.206.

as in works by Robert Dowling and John Glover in Tasmania. Anthropologist Renato Rosaldo terms this behaviour ‘imperialist nostalgia’, in which the imperial or colonial order idealises or mourns a reality they themselves destroyed. This is falsely presented as an “‘innocent yearning” both to capture people’s imaginations and to conceal its complicity with brutal domination’.⁷ The violence of Britain’s and Australia’s past treatment of Aboriginal people is still being debated today.

Colonial depictions of Indigenous Australians informed nineteenth-century British narratives of race and empire. Observational images were treated by British scientists as sources and illustrations in support of contemporary debates on the history and development of man. They were discussed in debates in learned societies about the meaning of ‘race’ as a marker of human difference and theories of racial science. Colonial images made in Australia were an important subset of images of indigenous peoples produced across the British Empire in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁸ Depictions of indigenous peoples were displayed and discussed comparatively in the anthropological and ethnological societies of London and used to justify claims of a ‘hierarchy of races’. In this schema, Aboriginal Australians were designated at a particularly low level due to their practices of hunting and gathering, a perception of a ‘stone age’ and non-agricultural society, therefore deemed at a lower scale of humanity. This characterisation of Aboriginal society was as incorrect as the hierarchy was itself specious.⁹

This study is the first work to holistically explore the British Museum’s significant collection of depictions of Indigenous Australians and address its role in nineteenth-century British knowledge-making and collecting institutions. I have used both historical and art historical approaches to address broader questions concerning

⁷ Renato Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis* (Boston: Beacon press, 1989), pp.69-79.

⁸ Some viewers used portraits to create reference works, as demonstrated in Chapter Three by the ethnological copies made by Charles Hamilton Smith, author of *The Natural History of the Human Species*, and in Davis’s ‘Galerie Anthropologique’.

⁹ Kay Anderson and Colin Perrin, ‘The Miserablest People in the World’: Race, Humanism and the Australian Aborigines’, *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*, Vol.18, No.1 (2007), pp.18-39; Bronwen Douglas, ‘Novus Orbis Australis’: Oceania in the science of race, 1750-1850’, in *Foreign Bodies: Oceania and the Science of Race 1750-1940*, ed. by Bronwen Douglas and Chris Ballard (Canberra: ANU Press, 2008), pp.99-155; Harry Allen, ‘The Past in the Present?: Archaeological Narratives and Aboriginal History’, in *Long History, Deep Time: Deepening Histories of Place*, ed. by Ann McGrath and Mary Ann Jebb (Acton: ANU Press and Aboriginal History Inc., 2015), pp.171-202; Alice Gorman, ‘Australian archaeologists dropped the term ‘Stone Age’ decades ago and so should you’, *The Conversation* (27 August 2018).

race, image and empire. Through the consideration of multiple locations of production, and distinct spheres of consumption, this study elucidates how images resonated in different environments. It highlighted the division between representational intent and audience comprehension and demonstrated the impact of ‘fashionability’ on British audiences. The apparent lack of interest from the British public in high art depictions of Aboriginal Australians limited their representation to mostly ‘low art’ products, including prints, newspapers, and illustrations, which reached broader audiences. The ephemeral nature of these formats means some relevant works have probably been lost, but diverse sources were available for public engagement with indigenous peoples. A complete history of how the British Museum developed either its Aboriginal ethnographic collection or associated photographic image collection in the nineteenth century is yet to be written, but collecting histories from other museums suggest the importance of such research.¹⁰ Provenance studies and contextual research has the potential to illuminate wider collecting patterns within the departments of the museum, as well as influences on decisions concerning the procurement and presentation of images at particular points in its history.

Images of Aboriginal Australians were created to work on multiple levels, both for local audiences in the Australian colonies and also for British audiences consuming them remotely. More nuanced understanding of this dual market, with its many subdivisions, could be obtained through further research. The circulation of images informed the expectations and hopes of emigrant settler-colonists, who reacted to circumstances found upon arrival, thereby informing a new set of expectations in a cyclical process than is seldom discussed in depth. Identifying the intermediaries involved in the transfer of works on their arrival in Britain would allow further links and network trends to be identified between the producers, sellers and consumers in British collections. The different treatment of images of Aboriginal Australians and Torres Straits Islanders is worthy of further investigation. There is also great potential for comparative research to explore the differences in the depiction of indigenous peoples of different countries through colonial imagery, for example between Australia and New Zealand, Canada, or South Africa. A starting point within British collections would be looking to the other extensive visual records

¹⁰ Boris Wastiau, ‘The Legacy of Collecting: Colonial Collecting in the Belgian Congo and the Duty of Unveiling Provenance’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Public History*, ed. by Paula Hamilton and James B. Gardner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp.460-478.

gathered by Joseph Barnard Davis from around the world, which remain an untapped resource.¹¹ Elaborating on experiences in other colonies of the British Empire may provide a clearer picture of what were the distinguishing features of how Australian colonies and Aboriginal people were being depicted in early-nineteenth century Britain. For some viewers, these images stood in for people or cultures, despite the acknowledged manipulation and construction involved in the processes of recording and replication. This project has focused on the metropolitan experience, through its concentration on a central archive of empire at the British Museum and the high number of exhibitions and newspapers from London used as sources.¹² While the circulation of images to Britain's provinces was touched upon through travelling examples like Prout's panorama, further investigation of images in regional and private collections is warranted.¹³ How would they feed into the production and movement of colonial messaging? Do they offer other conclusions or reveal differences not seen in this study?

To move beyond viewing the impact of singular artworks, exploring relationships between drawings, prints, and paintings allows us to consider how new meanings were conferred by additional actors and institutions later in their lifecycles. One of the benefits of this research is an increased awareness of the influence of creators and previous owners on how colonial works were reorganised and interpreted by later collectors and through incorporation into an institution. Alongside written records and oral testimony, images influenced public awareness of Aboriginal people in Britain. Images were shared between acquaintances across the vast physical distance between Australia and Britain. While the personal transfer of images occurred from the outset, a public exchange also emerged from the 1820s in the Australian colonies, with published visions of civility or progress becoming widely shared, through popular prints and publications. Visual records acted as source and subject and were approached on two levels: as carriers of messages or 'knowledge' and materially made objects. They were a product of colonial imagining, but they also acted for many as a source of imperial understanding. Some of the

¹¹ As shown in Fig.2.11, beyond Australia, subject matter in this pictorial collection is extensive and has not been investigated.

¹² This was accommodated by the extensive material made available online by Australian collections.

¹³ For example, British Museum curator Gaye Sculthorpe located an unsigned painting by George French Angas in the collection of Tyne & Wear Archives and Museums, Newcastle, where he was born.

relevant images have fallen into obscurity, although more so in Britain than in Australia. This is reflected by Thomas Bock's significant depictions of Aboriginal Tasmanians, displayed for the first time as a complete set in Britain only in 2017, despite arriving in London more than 150 years earlier.

Tying these colonial images into the larger moment of debate around decolonisation of museums in 2021, we can consider the kind of work that could make meaningful changes in museum practices. Investigation of collection histories is an important route for exploring and understanding the impact of colonial images in nineteenth-century Britain. The collection investigated in this study existed in a relatively well-resourced national museum. Given the British Museum's historical lack of documentation of its ethnographic images and limited knowledge of this aspect of its history, there are likely to be other unlocated or under researched images in other British public and private institutions waiting to be uncovered, catalogued and better understood. This would further promote understanding of the role of colonial images in imperial messaging and knowledge production in the nineteenth century and offer greater transparency about the history of such objects. 'Aboriginal history' as a field of studies only commenced in about the 1970s in Australia and has since expanded significantly. Colonial images can have significant uses in such expanding fields of knowledge, acting as resources for determining the provenance of artefact types. The colonial history of Australia and the impact of colonisation on Aboriginal communities is still not widely known in Britain, and until the 2000s Australian Indigenous voices were rarely presented in British museums. Projects in these institutions should engage with Indigenous researchers and others from the community of origin, allowing museums 'to become spaces for recovering traditional knowledge and countering dominant ideologies'.¹⁴ In the British Museum, working with partner organisations in Australia, significant steps have been made, through the research project 'Engaging Objects' (2011 to 2015) and in the 2015 *Indigenous Australia: enduring civilisations* exhibition, which introduced and confronted the British audience with the history of British colonisation of Australia.¹⁵ Research with Australian Aboriginal communities is ongoing within the museum. The purchase or commission of artwork by contemporary Aboriginal

¹⁴ Erna Lilje and Alison Clark, 'Decolonizing strategies: doing research in ethnographic museums', *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, no.32 (March 2019), pp.33.

¹⁵ Discussed in Gaye Sculthorpe, 'Same objects, different stories: exhibiting Indigenous Australia', *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, No.30 (March 2017).

artists for the collection and their inclusion in exhibitions, has highlighted Indigenous works and voices, as well as adding significant works to the collections of the museum.¹⁶ This is an important practice with ramifications for understanding and promotion of knowledge both in Britain and Australia.

Such work has parallels in other British institutions such as the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, and MAA Cambridge which have engaged contemporary Australian Indigenous artists and their works within recent projects.¹⁷ Contemporary art brings new voices to established narratives to create a public conversation. It also creates a route by which to respond to colonial images in the contemporary world and illuminate the experiences of those whose ancestors are represented. It reframes the picture by offering ‘a critique of the process of knowledge creation, particularly in relation to the colonial project’.¹⁸ By gaining familiarity and access to colonial images and collections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples now have opportunities to challenge the narrative that confined their ancestors. The engagement of Indigenous scholars, curators and communities in Australian museums means such debates have become commonplace there, in a way they are not yet in many British museums.

Addressing the colonial representations of Aboriginal people, in the midst of current discussions surrounding imperial legacies within institutions is important work. It allows us to consider and imagine the role these works can play today and in the future. Images explored in depth for the first time holistically and historically in this thesis, acted as evidentiary sources for Joseph Barnard Davis, the holder of the ‘largest human remains collection in Europe’, and highlighted the troubling histories that remain undisturbed in some of the most well-known institutions in Britain. As recent exhibitions in the UK and Australia have shown, objects like these, produced

¹⁶ For example, *Civilised #12*, a 2012 photograph by Michael Cook, artist of Bidjara heritage, was purchased for the *Reimagining Captain Cook: Pacific Presences* exhibition at the British Museum (29 November 2018 to 4 August 2019); BM, 2018,2003.1.

¹⁷ Recent projects include Christian Thompson’s *We bury our own* at the Pitt Rivers Museum from 2012 to 2013, and Brook Andrew’s works produced in response to a visit to MAA Cambridge in 2007, and a subsequent collaboration in 2016 between that institution and the Australian Print Workshop, *Antipodes*; Nicholas Thomas, ‘Von Hügel’s curiosity: Encounter and experiment in the new museum’, *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 1: 1 (2011), pp.311-313; Kerry Heckenberg, ‘Retrieving an archive: Brook Andrew and William Blandowski’s *Australien in 142 Photographischen Abbildungen*’, *Journal of Art Historiography*, Number 11 (December 2014), pp.1-18.

¹⁸ Jennifer Barrett and Jacqueline Miller, ‘Post-colonial engagements: Playing with history’, in *Australian Artists in the Contemporary Museum* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), p.44.

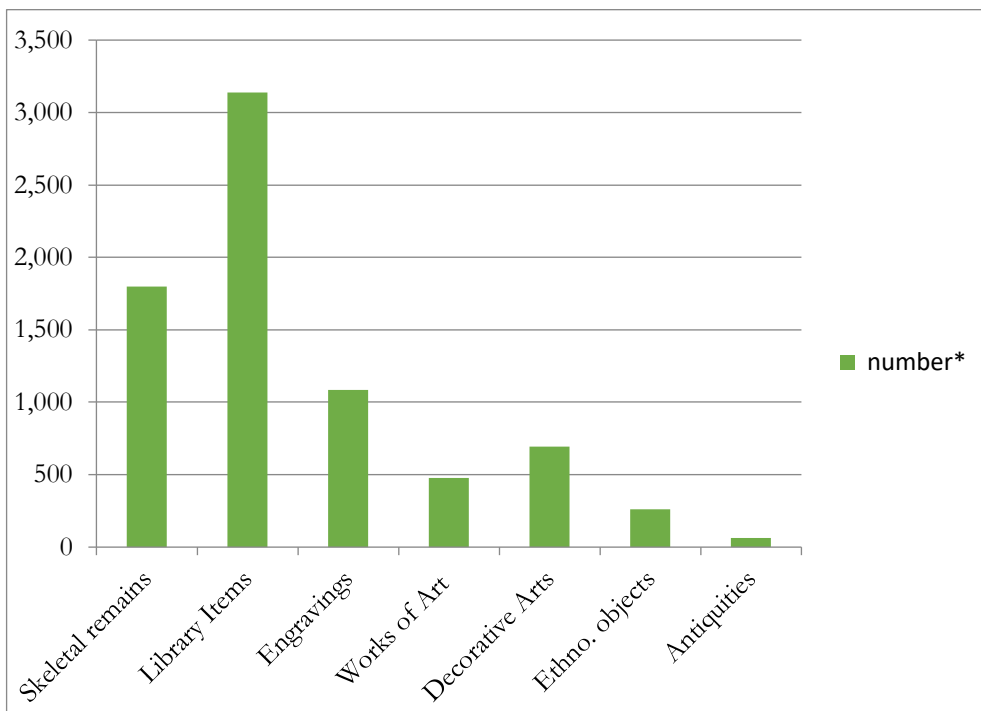
to fulfil a colonial purpose and subsequently playing a role in imperially guided narratives of scientific racism, offer an inroad to understanding complex histories. Contemporary debates about ‘Britishness’ and ‘otherness’, ever-present but further stimulated by the 2016 referendum on Britain’s membership of the European Union, have run concurrent to conversations about Britain’s imperial legacies. As I write this, in the midst of the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic and in the year after anti-racist protests spread across the world in the wake of the killing of George Floyd by police officers in Minneapolis, calls to address the legacies of slavery and empire in Britain have renewed and intensified. Public interest in the role of museums and other public spaces that present ‘national’ narratives has grown demonstrably, while the repatriation of objects and the ‘decolonisation’ of public spaces is ‘increasingly a part of museum action plans’.¹⁹

There is still much fundamental research to be done on objects and images within British collections. Many of the contemporary debates about museums and colonial pasts speak only in generalities and are not based on sound research into specific objects and histories. While discussions on how museums in the UK should address colonial legacies are ongoing, one proposed response has been to unveil and confront troubling histories both in regard to the provenance of colonial objects and their forms of contemporary display. This investigation of Indigenous Australian imagery within the vast collections of the British Museum has illuminated and confronted one such collection of challenging objects, bringing forth new knowledge about works largely overlooked since their acquisition in the 1880s. It has shed light on one side of the story of these images and, as Don Christopherson has suggested, there is now a need to engage the other side of the story to create new and fuller understandings of the enduring and at times troubled relationship between Britain and the Aboriginal peoples of Australia whose lands it colonised.

¹⁹ As indicated by the popularity of Alice Procter’s ‘Uncomfortable Art Tours’ from 2017; John Giblin, Imma Ramos, and Nikki Grout, ‘Dismantling the Master’s House: Thoughts on Representing Empire and Decolonising Museums and Public Spaces in Practice. An Introduction’, *Third Text*, Vol.33, Issue 4-5, p.472; Rachel Minott, ‘Avoiding the single story by creating a single story: simplification and erasure in representing diverse histories’, *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, no.32 (March 2019), pp.84-100.

Appendices

Appendix 1: The nature and number of items in the collection of Joseph Barnard Davis.



*Notes:

- Number of 'Skeletal remains' as recorded at time of transfer of the collection to the Royal College of Surgeons in 1880. All other numbers are sourced from the Davis sale catalogues.
- The number of 'Library items' includes albums as single items, some of which would have held numerous works of art or engravings inside, as evidenced by the 'Galerie Anthropologique' in the British Museum (discussed in Chapter Five).
- 'Works of Art' included miniatures, cameos, paintings, prints, and photographs.
- Davis's coins and medals collection has been removed from this chart for clarity in the presentation of results. The individual items totalled around 6,681.

Appendix 2: Depictions of Aboriginal people ex collection of J.B. Davis, now held in the British Museum (excluding photographs).			
Description	Artist and date of production	Source and Davis acquisition date	BM No.
<p><i>Five prints:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Manalargerna - Tanleboueyer - Woureddy - Truggernana - The Conciliation 	<p>Benjamin Duterrau</p> <p>1835</p>	<p>Unknown.</p> <p>Purchased prior to 1862 (possibly linked to the late Benjamin Duterrau sale in Hobart c.1851).</p>	<p>Oc2006,Drg.123 to 127</p>
<p><i>Twelve prints:</i></p> <p>‘A series of twelve profile portraits of the Aborigines of New South Wales’</p> <p>[In the ‘Galerie Anthropologique’]</p>	<p>W.H. Fernyhough, J.G. Austin & Co.</p> <p>1836</p>	<p>Purchased by Davis from publisher (list of reviews sent from publisher in the ‘Galerie Anthropologique’).</p>	<p>Oc2006,Prt.340 to 351</p>
<p><i>Thirty-Six drawings</i> (including thirty of Aboriginal Australians, five of Māori and one of a man from the Isle of Palms).</p> <p>Twenty-two drawings made at Wybalenna:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Amelia</i> [Kittewer] <i>and her little Bobby, Cape Grim V.D.L.</i> · <i>Augustus</i> [Thermanope], <i>Macquarie Harbour V.D.L.</i> · <i>Cranky Dick V.D.L.</i> [Drueretattenananne] · <i>Emma V.D.L.</i> · <i>Julia V.D.L.</i> 	<p>John Skinner Prout</p> <p>1841-1848</p>	<p>Purchased from the artist in 1856.</p>	<p>Oc2006,Drg.1 to 2, 4 to 26, 32 to 35.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">...</p> <p>Five Māori portraits, (Oc2006,Drg.29-31):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Ku Me Te</i> [Te Kumete], <i>New Zealand</i> · <i>Ko Pi Ta Ma, Te Ra Ni</i> [Te Rahui], <i>New Zealand</i> · <i>Matiu Tikiabi</i> [Matiu Tikiaki], <i>New Zealand</i> · <i>Te Waretea</i> [Te Waretiti], <i>New Zealand</i>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>King Alexander, Tasmania</i> [Moomereriner] · <i>Lallah Rookb from the Huon. V.D.L.</i> [Trukanini] · <i>Sarah from Cape Portland V.D.L.</i> · <i>Caroline V.D.L.</i> · <i>Louisa, Cape Portland V.D.L.</i> · <i>Bessy Clark V.D.L.</i> · <i>Barnaby Rudge from Cape Grim V.D.L.</i> · <i>Bessy Roo [from] one of the Islands, Circular Head. V.D.L.</i> · <i>King Tippoo from Hobart Town V.D.L.</i> [Calamarowenye] · <i>Methinna V.D.L.</i> [Mathinna] · <i>Mary Ann, Kings Island</i> · <i>Queen Flora from Oyster Bay</i> · <i>Neptune [Drinene] and his son Moriarty, Circular Head, Flinders</i> · <i>Daphne from Oyster Bay V.D.L.</i> · <i>Agnes from Ben Lomond</i> · <i>Mary from the Hampshire Hills V.D.L.</i> · [Man sitting] <p>Three drawings made in New South Wales:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Yannab Wab, Illawarra N.S.W.</i> · [Native, New South Wales] · <i>Old Frying Pan</i> <p>Five drawings made in Victoria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Mr Murray</i> · <i>Yurunduk, Devil's River at Melbourne</i> · <i>Nerree Buck, Goulburn Tribe, Melbourne</i> · <i>Sugar Sugar and Adam Clark</i> 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Hohepa Teumuroa</i> [Hohepa Te Umuroa], <i>New Zealand</i> <p>One portrait of a man from the Isle of Palms (Oc2006, Drg.3).</p>
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· <i>Family Group, Australia Felix</i>			
<p><i>Album</i> of Ethnological drawings of Charles Hamilton Smith that depict Aboriginal Australians:</p> <p>[<i>Three pages</i> in the first volume. <i>Nine pages</i> in the second volume.]</p>	<p>Charles Hamilton Smith</p> <p>c.1820-1859, most likely pre-1848</p>	<p>Most likely purchased from 'Smith', a family member, after 1860.</p>	<p>2017,2017.1-2</p>
<p><i>Seven copied drawings:</i></p> <p>Portraits of Aboriginal Tasmanians.</p>	<p>G. Gray, after Thomas Bock</p> <p>1837-1847</p>	<p>Copies commissioned by Davis, c.1856 to 1867.</p>	<p>Oc2006,Drg.74 to 80</p>
<p><i>Nineteen drawings</i> of Aboriginal Tasmanians:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wurati (<i>Woreddy</i>). - Trukanini (<i>Truganini</i>). - Namplut (<i>Numbloote</i>). - Tanaminawayt (<i>Tunnaminnewate</i>). - Prupilathina (<i>Probelatter</i>). - Manalakina (<i>Manalargenna</i>). - Youth sitting. - Tanalipunya? (<i>Tomlaboma</i>). - Malapuwinarana (<i>Maulboybenner</i>). - possibly Muntipiliyata (<i>Montpelatter</i>). - Multiyalakina (<i>Eumarrab</i>). - Laratung (<i>Larratong</i>). - Wutapuwitja (<i>Wortabovigee</i>). - Tukalunginta (<i>Togerlongerter</i>). - Profile, Trukanini (<i>Truganini</i>). - Profile, Manalakina (<i>Manalargenna</i>). - Profile, Prupilathina (<i>Probelatter</i>). 	<p>Thomas Bock</p> <p>1831-1835</p>	<p>Purchased from G.A. Robinson's widow, Rose in 1867.</p>	<p>Oc2006,Drg.55 to 73</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Profile, Namplut (<i>Numbloote</i>). - Profile of Malapuwinarana (<i>Maulboybeenner</i>) <p>[The names are given in palawa kani, the reconstructed Aboriginal language of Tasmania; In brackets are the titles as written on the works themselves, or in Davis's catalogue list].</p>			
<p><i>Two busts</i>.* Trukanini (Truganini) and Wurati (Woreddy).</p>	<p>Benjamin Law 1834</p>	<p>Purchased from G.A. Robinson's widow, Rose in 1867.</p>	<p>2009,2025.1 to 2</p>
<p><i>One drawing</i>: 'The Natives of Tasmania bewailing the loss of their country.'</p>	<p>Charles Merrett 1837-1847</p>	<p>Purchased from G.A. Robinson's widow, Rose in 1867.</p>	<p>Oc2006,Drg.83</p>
<p><i>One oil on canvas</i>.* - Wurati (Woureddy).</p>	<p>Benjamin Duterrau 1834</p>	<p>Purchased from G.A. Robinson's widow, Rose in 1867.</p>	<p>Oc2006,Ptg.22</p>
<p><i>One watercolour drawing</i>: 'Tom'</p>	<p>William Buelow Gould 1833</p>	<p>Purchased from G.A. Robinson's widow, Rose in 1867.</p>	<p>Oc2006,Drg.40</p>

<p><i>Two prints:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cohunguam and Munight - Moonwillie <p><i>Three drawings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Waran-drenin - Parn-garn - Morum-morum-Been 	<p>William Strutt</p> <p>1851-2</p>	<p>Purchased from G.A. Robinson's widow, Rose in 1867.</p>	<p>Oc2006,Prt.236</p> <p>Oc2006,Prt.237</p> <p>Oc2006,Drg.41</p> <p>Oc2006,Drg.719</p> <p>Oc2006,Drg.720</p>
<p><i>Five drawings in chalk and crayon on paper.</i></p> <p>Portraits of Aboriginal Tasmanians.</p>	<p>Unknown, but possible Thomas Lempriere.</p> <p>Pre-1852</p>	<p>Purchased from G.A. Robinson's widow, Rose in 1867.</p>	<p>Oc2006,Drg. 44 to 48</p>
<p><i>One drawing:</i></p> <p>Tasmanian canoes</p>	<p>Unknown</p> <p>Pre-1852</p>	<p>Purchased from G.A. Robinson's widow, Rose in 1867.</p>	<p>Oc2006,Drg. 81</p>
<p><i>One drawing:</i></p> <p>Cape Barren Geese</p>	<p>Robert Neill</p> <p>July 1830</p>	<p>Purchased from G.A. Robinson's widow, Rose in 1867.</p>	<p>Oc2006,Drg. 82</p>
<p><i>Twenty-nine drawings:</i></p> <p>(7 are on the opposite side so only 22 objects)</p>	<p>George Augustus Robinson</p> <p>1829-1839</p>	<p>Purchased from G.A. Robinson's widow, Rose in 1867.</p>	<p>Oc2006,Drg. 100 to 122</p>
<p><i>One drawing:</i></p> <p>'Mook-aba-rang'</p>	<p>Unknown</p> <p>Pre-1867</p>	<p>Purchased from the sale of Dr. Richard King on 20 August 1867.</p>	<p>Oc2006,Drg. 319</p>
<p><i>Group of six drawings:</i></p> <p>Aboriginal men and women from the Murray River region.</p>	<p>Isaac Coates</p> <p>1845-1872</p>	<p>Source unknown</p>	<p>Oc2006,Drg. 49 to 54</p>

<p><i>Four prints (attached to a single sheet):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aboriginal Burial of the dead - Portraits of Rainbird murderers, - Man of South Australia - Woman of South Australia 	<p>Unknown c.1857</p>	<p>Noted as 'From Dr. Thurnam's collection?'</p> <p><i>Not confirmed as Davis collection but as joint publishers of 'Crania Britannica' there is likely to be a link.</i></p>	<p>2016,2038.1 to 4</p>
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Appendix 3:

Eighteenth and nineteenth-century European representations of Indigenous Australian people in the British Museum.

(Further details available at britishmuseum.org/collection)

Object/s and Artist	Date of entry	Source	Current departmental location and Object number
<i>Sixty-nine watercolour drawings of animals and plants</i> by the Port Jackson Painter(s).	1827	Donation from the executors of Sir Joseph Banks collection.	NHM Banks MS 34
<i>Eighteen drawings, Aboriginal and Māori portraits</i> by Charles Rodius.	1840	Purchased from J F Clarkson (for £5).	P & D 1840,1114.64 to 81
<i>One print</i> of the 'Founding of the settlement of Port Jackson at Botany Bay in New South Wales', by Thomas Gosse.	1856	Note in catalogue record: 'Transferred from British Library'	P & D 1856,1011.105
<i>One print</i> of 'Corroboree' by Walter Preston	1863 (?)	-	P & D 1863,0110.29
<i>Two drawings:</i> Illustrations of exhibits at the 1862 exhibition by Leila Waterhouse Hawkins	1865	Henry Christy bequest.	AOA Am2006,Drg.60 and 61
<i>Fourteen working print proofs</i> of 'A Man of Van Diemen's Land' by John Webber.	1868	Purchased from Sotheby's.	P & D 1868,1212.351 to 364
<i>Ten working print proofs</i> of 'A Woman of Van			1868,1212.365 to 374

Diemen's Land' by John Webber.			
<i>Sketchbook</i> with drawings by Conrad Martens.	1868	Purchased by A.A. Burt, dealer in prints and drawings.	P & D 1868,1114.354-387
<i>Thirteen plates from Absalom West's Views of New South Wales.</i> Printed by Walter Preston and Philip Slaeger, after J. Lewin, J. Eyre, and Richard Brown[e].	1869	Purchased from George E. Mason, a printseller and bookseller.	P & D 1869,0213.29 to 42
<i>One print</i> of 'View of Melbourne, Port Phillip', Joseph Wilson Lowry after W.F.E. Liardet.	1871	Purchased from J.W. Lowry.	P & D 1871,0812.1638
<i>Two prints</i> from the <i>Series of twelve profile portraits of the Aborigines of New South Wales</i> (1836) by W. H. Fernyhough	1875	Purchased from print dealer George Ellis.	P & D 1875,0508.43-44
<i>Wood-engraved vignette</i> of 'An Aboriginal Dinner Party' in <i>The Hobart Town Almanack</i> , etched by Thomas Bock.	1879	-	P & D 1879,1109.54-63
<i>The Davis Collection</i> (see Appendix 2)	1883	Purchased from the sale after Joseph Barnard Davis's death	AOA (see Appendix 4)
<i>Two drawings</i> by John William Lewin:	1893	Donated by executors of the	P & D

<p>- 'Blueit – native of Botany Bay, NSW', 1810</p> <p>- 'Towwaa, native of Jervis Bay, NSW', 1810.</p> <p><i>Nine prints from the Series of twelve profile portraits of the Aborigines of New South Wales (1836) by W. H. Fernyhough</i></p>		estate of Sir Richard Owen.	1893,0803.49 1893,8083.50 1893,0803.51 to 59
<p><i>Four hundred and eighty-eight drawings (originally five hundred and twelve): The Watling collection</i></p>	1902	Bought for £52.10/-.	NHM
<p><i>India-Proofs of Wood-Engravings by The Brothers Dalziel, for Wood's Natural History of Man.</i></p>	1913	Purchased from Gilbert Dalziel, son of Edward Dalziel.	P & D 1913,0415.183
<p><i>Four Lithographs of the Present Picture of N.S.W. engraved by John Heaviside Clark after John Eyre.</i></p>	1917	Donated by Nan Ino Cooper, Baroness Lucas of Crudwell and Lady Dingwal. In Memory of Auberon Thomas Herbert, 9 th Baron Lucas of Crudwell and 5 th Lord Dingwall.	P & D 1917,1208.4348-51
<p><i>Twenty-one oil portraits of Aboriginal Tasmanians and Victorians, by Robert Hawker Dowling</i></p>	1924	Donated by Henry Foster McClintock on behalf of the McClintock family	AOA Oc2006,Ptg.1 to 21
<p><i>Two Drawings by Henry Laing</i></p>	1943	Transferred from British Museum	P & D 1943,0409.2-3

		Department of Ethnography.	
<p><i>Final state print</i> of ‘A Man of Van Diemen’s Land’ by John Webber.</p> <p><i>Final state print</i> of ‘A Woman of Van Diemen’s Land’ by John Webber.</p>	1957	Unknown.	<p>P & D</p> <p>1957,0705.11</p> <p>1957,0705.12</p>
<p><i>Seventy-two drawings:</i> The Raper Collection.</p>	1962	Presented to the NHM.	NHM
<p><i>One print</i> of ‘License inspected’ from <i>Sketches of the Victoria gold diggings and diggers as they are</i>, by S.T. Gill.</p>	1969	Purchased from T. Millar.	<p>P & D</p> <p>1969,0614.32</p>
<p><i>One print</i> of ‘Portrait of Bennilong: a Native of New Holland’.</p> <p><i>One print</i> of ‘Corunguam and Munight’ by William Strutt.</p>	1982	Unknown	<p>P & D</p> <p>1982,U.2888</p> <p>1982,U.2890</p>
<p><i>Two drawings:</i> - ‘A native of Port Jackson in the [attitude of defence No27.] - ‘Taugerbanna no 5.’</p> <p><i>Two final state prints</i> of ‘A Man of Van Diemen’s Land’ by John Webber.</p> <p><i>Two final state prints</i> of ‘A Woman of Van Diemen’s Land’ by John Webber.</p>	Registered in 2006 and 2016	Unknown	<p>AOA</p> <p>Oc2006,Drg.42</p> <p>Oc2006,Drg.43</p> <p>Oc2006,Prt.143 and 146</p> <p>Oc2006,Prt.144 and 147</p>

<p><i>One print</i> of 'Corroborree' by Walter Preston</p> <p><i>One drawing</i>, copy of Petit's <i>Portrait of Yerran-gou-la-ga</i>, by W.D. Steyning.</p> <p><i>Seven prints</i> from G. Hamilton's <i>Colonial Sketches</i>.</p> <p><i>Five prints</i> from S.T. Gill's <i>Australian Sketchbook</i>.</p> <p><i>Two prints</i> by George French Angas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'The Palti Dance'. - 'The Kuri Dance' <p><i>One print</i> of 'Portrait of Bennilong'.</p> <p><i>One print</i> of 'An Australian Family-Part from New South Wales' <i>History of Mankind</i> by Friedrich Ratzel, after Gustav Mutzel.</p>			<p>Oc2006,Prt.238</p> <p>Oc2006,Drg.84</p> <p>2016,2033.1.a-g</p> <p>2016,2036.1 to 5.</p> <p>2016,2037.1</p> <p>2016,2037.2</p> <p>2016,2039.1</p> <p>2016,2041.1</p>
<p><i>One print</i> of 'Native of the Bogan' from Mitchell's <i>Three expeditions</i> (1838).</p> <p><i>One print</i> of 'Corroboree' by S.T. Gill, from <i>The Australian Sketchbook</i> (1865).</p> <p><i>One print</i> of 'Nouvelle-Hollande: Terre d'endracht. Pillement after Lesueur.</p>	<p>2016</p>	<p>Donated by Jonathan C. H. King.</p>	<p>AOA</p> <p>2016,2024.1</p> <p>2016,2024.2</p> <p>2016,2024.3</p>

<p><i>One print</i> of ‘Nouvelle-Hollande: N:velles Galles du Sud. Norou-Gal-Derri’, Roger after Petit.</p>			2016,2024.4
<p><i>One print</i> of ‘Nouvelle-Hollande: N:velles Galles du Sud. Ourou-Maré’, Milbert after Petit.</p>			2016,2024.5
<p><i>One print</i> of ‘Nouvelle-Hollande: N:velles Galles du Sud. Gnoung-a-Gnoung-a’, Milbert after Petit.</p>			2016,2024.6
<p><i>One print</i> of ‘Nouvelle-Hollande: N:velles Galles du Sud. Ourre-kine’, Milbert after Petit.</p>			2016,2024.7
<p><i>One print</i> of ‘Nouvelle-Hollande. Port du Roi Georges.’ After Sainson (1829).</p>			2016,2024.8
<p><i>One print</i> of ‘Sauvage de la Nouvell-Hollande venant de combattre’, from Arago’s <i>Promenade Autour du Monde</i>.</p>			2016,2024.9
<p><i>One print</i> of ‘Timbéré’ (Timbery), from Arago’s <i>Promenade Autour du Monde</i>.</p>			2016,2024.10
<p><i>One print</i> of ‘Benelong: a native of New Holland’, by S.J. Neele (1803).</p>			2016,2024.11

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