



*Governors' Wives
in Colonial Australia*
Anita Selzer

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Anita Selzer



National Library of Australia
Canberra, 2002

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*For my parents,
for their continuous love and support
over the years.*

Foreword

When my husband, Michael, was appointed the twenty-seventh governor of Western Australia in November 1993, one of the first things that I felt compelled to do was learn something of the many families who had lived in the elegant and impressive building that was to be our home for the next six-and-a-half years. Government House in Perth, with its Gothic arches and Jacobean-style turrets, old colonial brickwork and mullioned windows, begs to share its history with you. And despite its grandeur, when you stand in the stillness of the main foyer looking at the high-beamed ceiling, the superb heraldic glass window and magnificent jarrah staircase, it is surprisingly easy to imagine this unique building responding not only to its official function but also to the noise and clamour of family life through the decades.

In most vice-regal residences around Australia, portraits and photographs of past State governors are prominently displayed and, at Yarralumla in Canberra, photographs of their wives are shown alongside those of former Governors-General. Images of State governors' wives are not always as easy to locate. It took the Friends of Government House in Perth nearly three years to collect portraits and photographs of all the wives of governors since Captain James Stirling and it was with a sense of great satisfaction that we were able to place these 'missing links' on permanent display.

Equally satisfying was any information uncovered about the personalities behind the images. With some notable exceptions, there seemed to be little officially written. Ellen Mangles was just 13-years-old when James Stirling first saw her astride two galloping donkeys, with one foot planted firmly on each of their backs, her long hair flying in the wind. When one looks at her portrait and learns something of the serene young woman who brought her courage and sense of fun to the young colony as the first governor's wife, the pages of history seem to colour with the warmth of her personality, and life in those early times becomes easier to imagine.

There were several anecdotes that I enjoyed sharing with visitors to Government House which gave insight to the strength and capability of some of the governors' wives. Not least of them was the heroic story about Philomena Weld who had to wait until after the birth of her tenth or eleventh child before

joining her husband in Hobart. Sir Frederick Aloysius Weld was Governor in Western Australia between 1869 and 1875 before taking up the vice-regal position in Tasmania. In the height of a storm on the sea journey to join him, Lady Weld had to take over the helm because the captain and first mate of the vessel were hopelessly intoxicated. There is nothing to indicate in her delicate portrait, dressed in the very feminine fashion of the day, that Philomena was an accomplished yachtswoman who could navigate and sail her way across the Great Australian Bight with her new baby and her other children on board.

Whilst Frederick Broome's public quarrels with his subordinates and an imbroglio with Chief Justice Onslow cloud accounts of his time in the gubernatorial role, stories of Mary Anne Broome soften the perceptions of the couple's impact on the community in the 1890s. Lady Broome, like many of her compatriots, was concerned for young women growing up with limited schooling and little exposure to genteel society. Apparently, along with her many other duties, she regularly received girls at Government House to help with their education and perhaps influence their general demeanour. As an accomplished journalist and author who had been previously married to a high-ranking naval officer, she would have had much to offer them. A story that has endured in the West is that, before Frederick was knighted, they were known to all as Mr Broome and Lady Barker; the inference being that Mary Anne was too proud to drop her title. In truth, she was widely known in her own right for her books and articles and it was probably for this reason that the title stuck.

Though the administrative role of colonial governors disappeared as our system of democratic government evolved, many duties have remained unchanged and the role of twenty-first century State governors still includes important constitutional, ceremonial and community functions. I was particularly conscious of the continuing links with my predecessors through the numerous organisations of which, as wife of the governor, I became patron. Many women's groups like the National Council of Women, the Girl Guides and Red Cross had their beginnings because of the encouragement and active involvement of former governors' wives.

Reading Anita Selzer's widely researched and insightful account of five of the many women who accompanied their husbands to the Australian colonies to take up vice-regal duties, I was struck more by a sense of familiarity across the years than by the differences in the role at various stages of history. Through the chapters of *Governors' Wives in Colonial Australia*, the women and their Victorian times come alive. Anita Selzer has drawn from extensive sources to piece together comprehensive pictures of these 'first ladies' and, in so doing, has revealed the softer, more personal side of governors who might otherwise go down in history as autocratic.

Governors' Wives in Colonial Australia has given great pleasure to this reader who, having largely relied on the anecdotal when speaking of former governors' wives, welcomes the factual depiction of the very real women who brought their diverse personalities to the role. Readers of this engaging book will gain more than an historic insight of vice-regal life, as so much of what is written here is equally applicable today.

Marlena Jeffery
Canberra

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Introduction

Until recently, it has predominantly been influential men who have determined what constituted 'history'. In this pattern of historical discourse, women were rarely included and the main focus of Australian history has been the public lives of men—especially those men involved in politics and diplomacy, or the military.

In recent decades a shift in history content has occurred. Female historians working in the field of social history are researching the lives of both men and women. This social history approach has led to the emergence of women's history, which places women at the centre of historical inquiry.

Initially, Australian women's history followed the male historical pattern, with a focus on celebrated women—the high achievers and trailblazers in public fields of endeavour. It has since moved on to examine the private sphere of home and domesticity and the complex relationship of the home to the public domain of the marketplace and politics. Within the private sphere, social historians have



John Linnell (1792–1882)
Portrait of Eliza, Wife of Governor Darling 1825
oil on wood panel; 30.3 x 24.5 cm
Pictures Collection R9878

presented a history of housework—the mechanics of cooking, washing and the home, for example. Women's life cycles have been explored from infancy to marriage, through childbirth, fertility control, health and old age. Women's sexuality and their role within the family have also been documented. Rural women too—uncelebrated until recently—are now receiving attention in women's history.

Governors' Wives in Colonial Australia contributes to this change of focus. Traditionally, any analysis of Australian colonial society has focused on men in positions of power—for example, governors like Bligh, Macquarie and Hotham. Discussion of or reference to their wives (and private lives) has largely been omitted. *Governors' Wives* places the women at centre stage and enables their voices to be heard.

Vice-regal women in the colonies

The lives of five vice-regal women who accompanied their husbands to the Australian colonies during the nineteenth century are examined in *Governors' Wives in Colonial Australia*:

Eliza Darling, New South Wales, 1825–1831

Jane Franklin, Van Diemen's Land, 1837–1843

Mary Anne Broome, Western Australia, 1883–1889

Elizabeth Loch, Victoria, 1884–1889

Audrey Tennyson, South Australia, 1899–1903.

Each colony had its own unique history and characteristics. New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land began as convict colonies, with Western Australia joining them by the mid-nineteenth century. Victoria was part of New South Wales until 1851 and was known as the Port Phillip District. South Australia was founded as a colony of free settlers rather than as a settlement of convicts.

The first of the five vice-regal women to arrive in Australia, Eliza Darling came to the wilderness of New South Wales, an infant colony-in-the-making, in the 1820s. Born on 10 November 1798 in Staffordshire, England, Eliza was the daughter of Ann and Lieutenant Colonel John Dumaresq of distinguished French lineage. She had two sisters and three brothers and came from a close-knit family, which she described as remarkably warm-hearted.

Eliza's husband, Governor Ralph Darling, was appointed to administer a convict society, with its inherent problems. His role was to uphold law and order and discipline in the penal settlement and to oversee the welfare of the free. Darling faced a licentious press, which added to his administrative problems, and a

crippling drought. He had to contend with a belligerent colonist, a lawyer named William Charles Wentworth, who aspired to be elevated to the top of colonial society. The product of a convict mother and aristocratic father, Wentworth conducted a vigilant campaign in an attempt to undermine Darling's position as governor of New South Wales.

Similarly, Jane Franklin arrived in a penal settlement of conflicting interests and hostility towards government, Van Diemen's Land. Born in London on 4 December 1791, she was the daughter of Mary and John Griffin, a silkweaver of Huguenot descent. She had two sisters, and a brother who died in childhood. Her mother died when Jane was young. Her father's housekeeper raised Jane and her sisters until they attended boarding school.

Like Ralph Darling, Governor John Franklin had problems with colonial government officials—in particular, his Colonial Secretary and Private Secretary. Franklin also faced a hostile press and colonials who plotted his political demise. In spite of that, the Franklins set out to promote the intellectual life of the convict colony.

Mary Anne Broome was born in Jamaica on 29 May 1831, the oldest daughter of Susan and Walter Stewart, Jamaica's Acting Colonial Secretary. She spent her early years growing up in Jamaica, but was subsequently separated from her parents and her two younger sisters and two brothers. As the daughter of a colonial administrator who was frequently transferred as part of his job, Mary Anne had to endure separation from her family. It was common for older children like Mary Anne to be left with relatives while the younger ones accompanied their parents to their colonial destinations.

As the wife of Governor Frederick Broome, Mary Anne arrived in Western Australia at a time of transformation from a 'Cinderella' colony to a prosperous settlement. Western Australia had a poor beginning—the sandy soil impeded the



Amélie Romilly
Portrait of Jane Griffin, later Lady Franklin
(1792–1875) 1816
Reproduced from *Portrait of Jane: A Life of
Lady Franklin* by Frances J. Woodward
(London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1951)

development of agriculture; the colony suffered drought and crop failures. The population was small and disease was rife. By 1850, convict labour was needed to provide a workforce for landowners in farming settlements to the south and east of Perth. During the Broomes' stay, gold discoveries in the 1880s brought prosperity, increased the population and changed the economy of Western Australia.

Elizabeth Loch was born in Wiltshire, England, in 1841 to a noble family, the daughter of Elizabeth and Edward Villiers, niece of the fourth Earl of Clarendon and granddaughter of two peers. She had a twin sister who later married Robert Lytton, First Earl of Lytton, Viceroy of India and British Ambassador.

Elizabeth arrived in the colony of Victoria during a land boom. 'Marvellous' Melbourne (a term coined at this time) flourished during the governorship of her husband, Sir Henry Loch. In the 1880s, new railways were built facilitating the spread of the suburbs. The city expanded with new immigrants and increased wealth. Building activity flourished; the face of industry and offices changed with new technology (gas, steam and coal). The material progress of Melbourne altered its old face as a provincial town to a new metropolis.

Audrey Tennyson was born in England on 19 August 1854, the daughter of Zacyntha and Charles Boyle. Her father was an educated man, an Oxford scholar and diplomat, the son of a vice-admiral. Audrey was the only surviving daughter of seven children. An eighth child, another daughter, died at a young age. Perhaps this explains why Audrey appeared to be dominated by a possessive mother.

The Tennysons came to a clean city—Adelaide, South Australia. It was a cultured city which, unlike the other colonies, did not carry the taint of a convict origin. Audrey especially enjoyed going to the theatre and attending lectures, indulging in Adelaide's cultural offerings. The Tennysons arrived just as interest and debate concerning federation accelerated—an issue that would occupy the attention of Audrey and her husband, Governor Hallam Tennyson.

All five vice-regal women were from the upper echelons of British society. Four were born in England and one in the British colony of Jamaica. All were raised as English women with an English lifestyle—some more privileged than others. Eliza Darling and Mary Anne Broome grew up in more straitened circumstances than the rest. Neither Jane Franklin nor Mary Anne Broome was raised by her mother, a factor that may explain their more independent characters.

These five women have been selected because substantial information about them is available and accessible. Regrettably the letters and diaries of most of the colonial governors' wives from Queensland have not survived. What does exist does not provide an adequate source for research. The colony of Queensland is



Portrait of Audrey, Lady Tennyson
Pictures Collection neg.4487

therefore not represented in this book. However, until 1859, Queensland was part of the colony of New South Wales.

Governors' Wives in Colonial Australia provides a voice for women in Australian history, and through their own words—whether in the form of letters, journals or diary accounts.

Letters, diaries and journals as a form of communication

During the early to mid-nineteenth century, women were denied access to formal education, the professions and a political voice. Personal chronicles like letters, diaries and journals constitute a literary legacy for women in nineteenth-century Australia. The governors' wives in colonial Australia used the medium of letter writing to communicate with their families in Europe. It was often the only means for families to sustain relationships while separated geographically. Sent by sea mail, correspondence to loved ones abroad could take weeks or months to arrive. In these letters, and in diaries and journals, the reality of life as a colonial governor's wife was constructed, recorded and preserved. This written record provides a first-hand account of aspects of colonial life and is therefore an essential source of historical information.

While the correspondence was of a private nature, issues arising in the content were at times of public concern. On occasions, the wives wrote about their role as a vice-regal—for example, describing a state function or their participation in a ceremonial occasion. Frequently, aspects of their public life are revealed in their private writing. Through their letters, their public and private worlds became linked and the divisions between them blurred. Issues of the day and of vice-regal life were blended with stories about children and family life.

Nineteenth-century change in Australia

The nineteenth century brought social, economic, legal and political changes for women in Australia. It was in this era that first-wave feminism surfaced and women won the vote initially in South Australia (1894) and then in Western Australia (1899). Leading female activists campaigned for and achieved access to higher education for women. Women's rights were extended in marriage and divorce laws.

The late nineteenth century witnessed a shift from the home as a site of labour for working-class women. Many working-class women left domestic work to find employment in factories, especially in the clothing and boot trades. Nursing and teaching became new areas of employment for women of the working and middle classes.



Portrait of Lady Loch
Reproduced from Supplement to *The Australasian Sketcher*
14 January 1885, p.6

The question of equal pay arose in the late nineteenth century as women demanded the same rate of remuneration as men for the same work. This period also marked a shift from large to smaller families. From the 1890s, more information became available about methods of birth control.

These changes do not appear to have made a direct impact on the way governors' wives led their lives. Jane Franklin lived in the period before these major changes took effect. She was, however, an unconventional woman for her time, the product of her upbringing and environment. Mary Anne Broome, an independent author, worked for money to supplement her husband's income. Perhaps the changing times enabled her to do so a little more freely. Eliza Darling, Elizabeth Loch and Audrey Tennyson were more conventional in their roles as upper-class Victorian ladies. Audrey Tennyson lived at a time when most of these changes were taking place, but they did not seem to affect how she saw her role in society.

The ideal Victorian lady

Each society develops its own definition of how women should behave and the mores expected of them. This feminine ideal has taken different forms in various cultures over time. For example, the feminine ideal of the nineteenth century was quite different from that of the twentieth century. In nineteenth-century Australia, the dominant feminine ideal was imported from Britain. The expected model varied depending on class. For the upper class in particular, the feminine ideal was that of a Victorian lady. This was an artificial social construct, which placed women in the private sphere of their own home and family, removed from what was then considered the taint of the public arena. The ideal Victorian lady was delicate, retiring, and frequently confined to her sofa.

A myriad of images emerges in the ideal of the Victorian lady. She had to be the 'Angel of the House'—genteel, refined, dutiful, cooperative, self-sacrificing and conciliatory. She was also passive, submissive, and economically and intellectually dependent, initially on her father, and subsequently on her husband. Sexually, she was innocent and pure. Physically, she was frail.

The Victorian lady was expected to be the moral guardian of society. Spiritually, she was to be devout and ladylike in her manner and behaviour. This is not to suggest that the upper-class Victorian lady had no duties or responsibilities. In her role as a homemaker, she was expected to engage in hiring and supervising servants and overseeing a nursery for her children. More affluent families employed a range of domestic servants to run the home, including chefs, butlers, maids, governesses, tutors and nursery maids. In a well-to-do family, for example, a nurse may have been employed as well as the nursery maids to care for the children in a separate nursery wing within the home.

An upper-class Victorian lady was also expected to take responsibility for organising meals and entertainment—for the management of social life within the

home. One of her main tasks was to adorn her home with accomplishments, such as painting, music and fancy needlework, and to provide a refuge from the labour that supported the household. An acceptable pastime for the Victorian lady was unpaid charity work, like helping the poor and infirm.

The British feminine ideal of the nineteenth century was transplanted on Australian soil. In colonial Australia, upper-class women were not expected to engage in paid work, but it was acceptable for a woman of this class to participate in charity work. On the other hand, men of the ruling class were expected to occupy the realm of state affairs and/or the marketplace. In this colonial period, the social roles of upper-class men and women were clearly defined and separate from each other.

For colonial governors and their wives, this public-private split was not as clear-cut. The primary role of the governor, who represented the pinnacle of the upper class, was to attend to affairs of state, performing his constitutional and ceremonial duties. However, within his public role as statesman, he was obliged to play a social role in the colony. The governor, as head of society and the Queen's representative, was required to entertain the elite of colonial society and the wealthy. Practically though, it was usually the governor's wife who occupied the role of social hostess and through this position



Governor Sir F. Broome, Lady Broome and Monsieur
Puppy 1890s
photoprint
Courtesy Battye Library 53320P



she entered the life of the colony as its 'first lady'. As a vice-regal, she was expected to be a society leader and to be involved in aspects of the governor's social and ceremonial roles.

The feminine ideal, colonial-style

While the governor was the Queen's representative, the governor's wife was primarily his consort. As his partner, she was expected to represent an 'English lady', embodying its feminine ideal. She had to undertake the duties and responsibilities befitting that role—homemaker, social hostess, the governor's travelling companion and charity worker.

The five vice-regal women described in this book embodied the feminine ideal of the Victorian lady to varying degrees. Eliza Darling, Elizabeth Loch and Audrey Tennyson were traditional homemakers. Mary Anne Broome, although financially independent as a result of her published work, managed to run a home and even cook, taking care herself of household chores when without servants. Jane Franklin did not fit the mould of a traditional homemaker. She bore no children of her own, although she was a stepmother to Franklin's daughter. Adventurous and free-spirited, she preferred travelling and intellectual pursuits. She did not enjoy being a social hostess for her husband. The other governors' wives fulfilled this role more willingly.

Mostly the wives were present as the governor's companion, even if their role was a passive one. The governors' wives were frequently required to travel the countryside. Whereas the governors inspected farms and small settlements, their wives fulfilled a social role, meeting colonists along the way. They accompanied their husbands in performing ceremonial functions like laying the foundation stone of a public building or church, or opening a school or railway.

Charity work also occupied their time: each vice-regal wife adopted a 'hands-on' approach to charity work. Apart from donating money, each woman actively became involved in causes important to her. Poor women and children were the chief beneficiaries of their charitable interests.

As Patroness of the Sydney Female School of Industry, Eliza Darling was a key figure in the running of the institution. She wrote and published a manual for the students of the school. Jane Franklin wanted to improve the plight of female convicts and actively involved herself in their cause. Mary Anne Broome's interests included children and soldiers. Elizabeth Loch initiated a Queen's Fund to assist needy adults and children. Audrey Tennyson visited the sick and the poor, and played an active role in the establishment of the Queen's Home in South Australia, intended as a birth and confinement centre for rural and needy women.

It was not unusual for women of the middle and upper classes to play a role in educating their children—whether it be reading to them, or teaching them the piano or more academic subject matter. All five governors' wives filled the role of educator, either privately educating their children at home (Eliza Darling and Audrey Tennyson) or teaching young girls in the public sphere—Eliza Darling through her written manual for girls at the Female School of Industry; Jane Franklin and Mary Anne Broome through their classes for young girls and Broome's published work as a writer; Elizabeth Loch through her attempt to improve the needlework curriculum for girls at school. This role as educator, however, was not necessarily an expected one for a governor's wife.

Jane Franklin and Eliza Darling stepped beyond the parameters of a nineteenth-century lady by entering the masculine political world. Out of love and devotion to their husbands, both women became involved in the affairs of state. In each case, their aim was to protect and defend their husband. In the process, the division of the private sphere of home and family and the public sphere of politics became blurred.

None of the five vice-regal women fits the image of a delicate Victorian lady, frequently confined to her sofa. Eliza Darling did need to recover from frequent pregnancies and births, and Audrey Tennyson suffered regularly from headaches. At those times, they sought refuge in their beds, however their health did not preclude them from leading active public lives.

Mary Anne Broome too did not conform to expectations of a Victorian lady. Prior to her marriage to Frederick Broome, she was a widow and mother, and therefore not considered chaste upon marrying Frederick, a man several years her junior. This was unusual and unconventional for the time. As well, before her marriage to Broome, she had established a career as an author. As a result, she enjoyed a degree of financial independence.

Governors' Wives in Colonial Australia highlights aspects of the vice-regal women's public and private lives. It examines the extent to which the wives of governors embodied the British nineteenth-century ideal of an upper-class woman. The essential roles of the wives and their degree of involvement are identified, from their own writing.



John Linnell (1792–1882)
Portrait of Mrs Darling and Two of Her Children 1825
oil on wood panel; 53.4 x 64.7 cm
Rex Nan Kivell Collection NK1102
Pictures Collection

Wife and Mother

Although the nineteenth century was a time of social and economic change, the ideology of the role of women as homemakers remained largely unchallenged. The changes do not appear to have made a direct impact on the way the five governors' wives led their lives. But the letters left behind by the vice-regal women are very telling. Their personal chronicles depict aspects of married life, shedding light on the private lives of wives of public men. The letters sent abroad to loved ones (or to relatives elsewhere in Australia) reveal common traits among the couples. They depict a sense of partnership, companionship, loyalty, respect, affection and even romantic love. The letters span more than 70 years, from 1825 to the turn of the century. They indicate that all five vice-regal women upheld the feminine ideal as wives, although Jane Franklin, as a homemaker, defied it.

Eliza Darling

Eliza Darling was particularly attached to her mother whom she saw as her role model. 'My own Mother, always has been my Rock and my Fortress—my Shield and my Deliverer.'¹ Information about Eliza is drawn from her letters to her mother in England and her brother Edward Dumaresq, a commissioned officer ordered by Governor Arthur to survey land in Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania). While she lived in New South Wales as the governor's wife, she wrote about family and other matters to her loved ones. Her letters indicate that she was a loyal, supportive wife who loved and revered her husband, referring to him as 'the General'. She describes him as 'the most wonderful man that ever lived'.² For her, their marriage was 'the happiest state'.³ Supportive and affectionate, and always concerned about her husband's well-being, Eliza wrote of him to her brother Edward, 'I cannot see him thus suffering without feeling great anxiety'.⁴

In a letter to her daughter Cornelia years later, Eliza revealed: 'We were old fashioned enough to think that to love positively, to love one another was an essential ingredient in a happy marriage.' Eliza and Ralph Darling shared a 'deep affection and respect' for one another. In Eliza's own words, their marriage 'proved long and rewarding'.⁵

Eliza Darling admired her husband's conscientiousness, describing him as:

indefatigable, very seldom indeed leaving his office till 12 o'clock at night ... rising with the day, and never going out or joining the family except at meals—yet still the business seems to multiply and is, or seems to be always, of the greatest importance. The only comfort is that the people do seem satisfied, and very properly to appreciate his character, but I am sorry in saying that it is the only comfort for it is, after all, nothing to compare to the satisfaction of thinking that he is doing good to those around him, and contributing to the happiness of many.⁶

Seven Darling children survived infancy—Frederick, Sydney, Augustus, Caroline, Agnes, Charlotte and Cornelia. Eliza bore two babies (both named Edward) who died of whooping cough—one a few weeks after his birth, and the other at seven months of age. She was a loving mother who established a close relationship with her children. Forlorn at the loss of her infant, she wrote to her brother:

sorrow [at] the death of one dear indeed—our little Edward, who just a month since was a perfect picture of infantile health, strength, and beauty, died on the 2nd of this month of that frightful plague whooping cough.⁷



Josiah Gilbert (1814–1892)
[Portrait of Mrs Tipping and Two of Her Children] 1850
chalk and crayon drawing; 49 x 59 cm
Rex Nan Kivell Collection NK5258
Pictures Collection

To aid their recovery, she moved to the country with her other boys who also suffered from the whooping cough. 'I am very ill from fatigue, we have moved here for a change of air for the three Boys who are doing well.'⁸

Ralph Darling was also devoted to his children. He was described as formal and stiff in public, but at home was relaxed and clearly enjoyed family life. Concerned about the career options of his children, Ralph

Darling envisaged an army commission for his son Frederick, but Fred had other plans. He chose the ministry, perhaps because Eliza was a devout Anglican. Prayer and regular church attendance had dominated the Dumaresq household and Eliza's life from early childhood. For her, religion was the central axis of her life. Her faith in God influenced her views, attitudes and behaviour. She turned to prayer and religion for comfort and for an explanation of life's perils. So Eliza was quite happy that her son Frederick became a minister. However, she was anxious about his health for Frederick contracted consumption:



Unknown photographer
[Mother and Baby in a Garden] c.1860
photograph; ambrotype; 11.4 x 9.4 cm
Pictures Collection P761

our dear Frederick—His work has already been too much for him—and pulmonary symptoms have shown themselves—He is forbidden doing any duty this winter, and the treatment pursued has removed the unfavourable symptoms—a milder climate must be tried ... we hope this separation be spared us and that he may be permitted to follow the very gratifying and promising prospects which were opening to him ... affection and love he gained by his Ministry.⁹

Recurrent pregnancies took their toll on Eliza Darling's health. She wrote, 'I have not for more than twelve years known what it is to feel quite well, and frequently during that period have passed, sometimes six, sometimes nine, sometimes twelve and more months at a time either confined to my bed or sofa.'¹⁰

Jane Franklin

While Ralph Darling was Eliza's only love, John Franklin was not the first man whom Jane Griffin loved. In her twenties, Jane formed relationships with at least two other men—Dr Peter Mark Roget (compiler of *Roget's Thesaurus*) and a European named Butini. It was not until she was in her thirties that Jane married John Franklin, declaring that she would open her whole heart exclusively to her husband.

In her letters to her husband, Jane Franklin addressed him tenderly as 'my dearest love', and signed off as 'most affectionately yours'. John Franklin became



William Romaine Govett (1807–1848)
after Franz Xaver Winterhalter
Queen Victoria, Prince Albert and Five of Their Children 1847
pen drawing; 23 x 29 cm
Album of William Romaine Govett
Rex Nan Kivell Collection NK5991/44
Pictures Collection



Foster and Martin, Melbourne (photographers)
[Sir Henry Brougham Loch, Governor of Victoria (1884-1889) and His Family]
Pictures Collection

the focus of Jane's life. However, she felt threatened by competition with his daughter Eleanor, by his first wife. Still she had acquired a stepdaughter, and did her best to love her and raise her to be of good character, though she thought Eleanor had not the 'beau ideal of the female countenance or mind'.¹¹ But Eleanor was not allowed to interfere with Jane's desire to join her husband'.¹² She remained behind in England, partly because of the threat of war, but also because Jane feared that the child would occupy too much of Sir John's time and separate him from her. Perhaps Jane Franklin did not make much effort to understand Eleanor, who appeared to be an unhappy little girl. Apparently, as a grown woman Eleanor quarrelled with her stepmother.

While home and family were not high priorities in Jane Franklin's life and she had no children with her husband John Franklin, she was nonetheless totally devoted to him. She was his companion, ally and trusted confidante. He saw his wife as a political asset and relied upon her views and advice on government matters.

Mary Anne Broome

Like Jane Franklin, Mary Anne Broome was romantically involved before her marriage to Frederick Broome. At 21, she married Captain George Barker with whom she had two sons, John Stewart and Walter George. Barker died in 1861 leaving Mary Anne a widow at the age of 30.

In 1865, she married New Zealand sheep-farmer Frederick Napier Broome, 11 years her junior, who was to become governor of Western Australia. This marriage was based on love, friendship and a common literary interest. Annie, as he called her, captured Frederick's heart. Their relationship blossomed and deepened with time. Frederick Broome declared his intense love for his wife in two poems, 'The Music of the Spheres' (1874) and 'To Annie' (1895).¹³

Twelve years after their marriage, awaiting Mary Anne's arrival in Natal, South Africa, Frederick wrote of his feelings for her and their sons:

I am expecting my dear Lady Barker to leave England in about a month from this. She will not bring out the little lads with her. They are to stay at a nice place near Torquay. My heart is sore at the thought of parting with them altogether, as it must virtually be, for I dearly love them.¹⁴

In 1886, he described his Annie as 'the same dear good wife she has been these 20 years'.¹⁵ Mary Anne obviously reciprocated the strong feelings of her husband. After his death, she wrote:

I cannot take up what remains to be of life without him. Nothing could have been so unexpected as the calamity which has laid my life in ruins.¹⁶



The Tennysons and their sons at the time of their arrival in South Australia, 1899
photograph
Tennyson Collection
Manuscript Collection MS479

Mary Anne bore six sons: two to her first husband, George Barker, and four to Frederick Broome. During the nineteenth century, army officers and colonial administrators had to move wherever their work took them. Usually, their wives accompanied them. Their children often remained with relatives in England so that they could continue their education. Mary Anne had to leave her sons behind when she accompanied her first husband to India where he was stationed as a soldier after their marriage. She found it difficult to say goodbye to her sons, Jack who was then five and toddler George. Her maternal feelings are revealed in her diary:

Jane, John, my precious darling Jack and I left London by the 8 o'clock train this morning. I saw my poor little George's face all covered with tears and heard his last piteous cry to me to take him, as I put my head out of the window of the cab for one more look. I almost cannot describe in words the wrench it is to part with these children—my constant companions—my unfailing companions. Jack was delighted with all he saw on the way down, he does not at all realise that I am going away but is in a state of wild delight and excitement.¹⁷

Mary Anne and Frederick's eldest sons—Guy and Louis—were 12 and eight when their father was appointed governor of Western Australia in 1883. Guy remained in England where he lived with his tutor and continued his education. Mary Anne's letters to Guy are not of a personal nature; she informs him of the places visited, people met and duties performed. It is difficult to deduce the nature of their relationship. Guy appears to have been less easygoing than his siblings, who more readily accepted separation from their parents. This was the inevitable situation of upper-class colonial children. Guy was unhappy about his mother's departure and her promise of frequent letters did not seem to assuage his distress.

Louis accompanied his parents to Western Australia and was sent to the local school, which was within walking distance of Government House. There is no mention of appointing a tutor, as would have been the custom at that time.

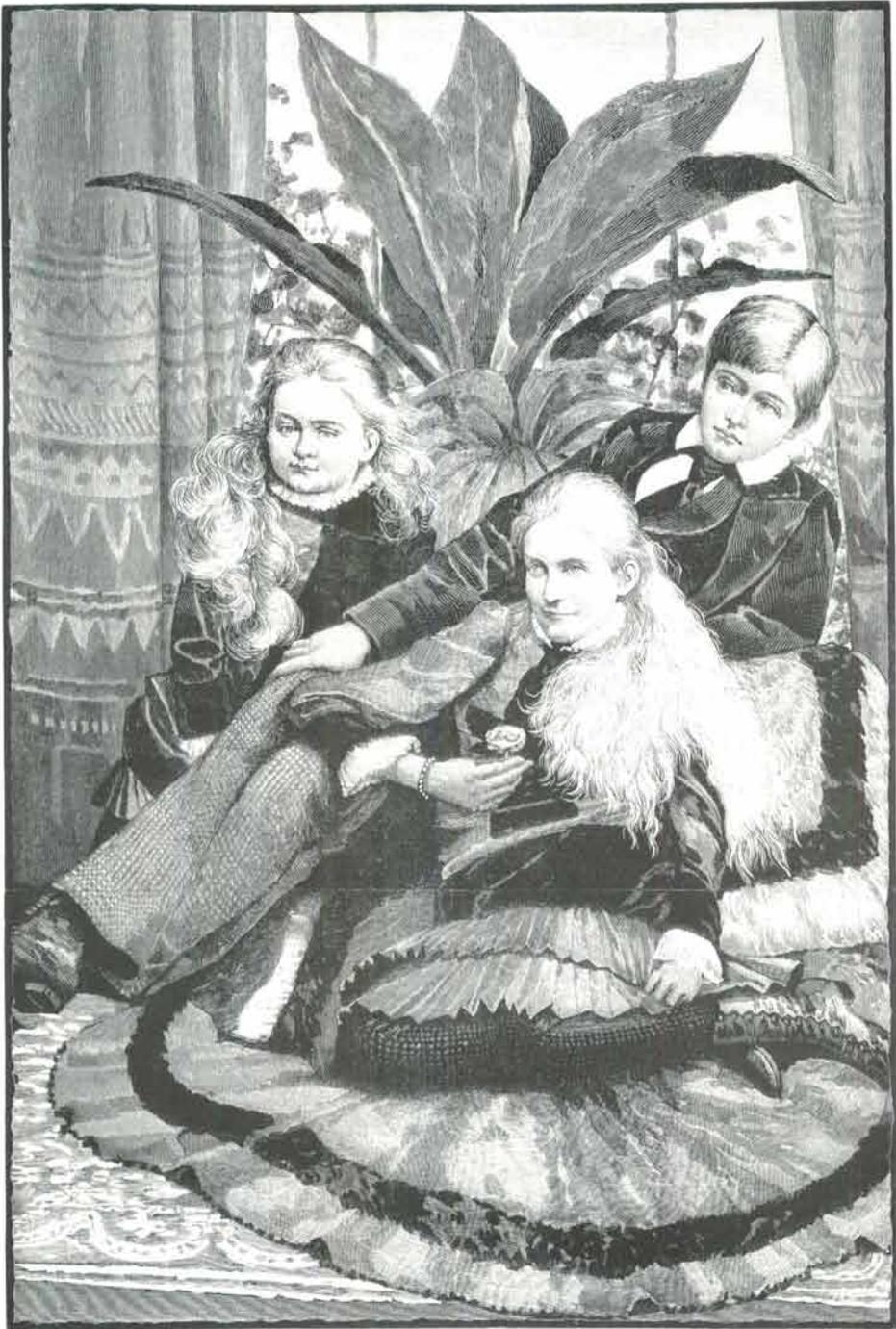
Elizabeth Loch

Like the Broomes, the Lochs had a happy marriage and were a devoted couple. Elizabeth Villiers came from a well-to-do English family and, in May 1862, married Henry Loch from a well-known Scottish family. They had three children. Upon arrival in Australia, Douglas was 11, Edith eight and Evelyn six.

The Lochs appear to have been a happily married couple, attentive to each other's needs, displaying care and concern whenever either partner was ill. Once when Henry was ill at night, shivering, Elizabeth recalls how she had difficulty in getting him warm. On another occasion, Elizabeth was ill with a sore throat. Her personal maid, Emma Southgate, whose diary is an important source of information on the Loch's vice-regal life, observed that Sir Henry Loch was 'so attentive' and 'so very anxious' about his wife's condition. He was 'up and down all night'.¹⁸

Despite his busy schedule as governor of the colony of Victoria, Henry Loch made time to be with his children. Together, they engaged in his favourite pastime—riding horses. 'Henry rode with Evelyn this afternoon—he had a tailor to make them some habits, but they are disgracefully bad—the jackets much too short waisted and quite shapeless because I wanted them loose.'¹⁹ In her diary, Emma Southgate noted 'Sir Henry and Master Douglas may have felt worn out when they arrived home late on Saturday night, after their long hours in the saddle going to Frankston.'²⁰ Elizabeth Loch was amused at how her husband and son seemed like two boys together.

Family time was important to the Lochs and Emma Southgate records that 'As in the previous December [1884], the Lochs spent Christmas Day very quietly, enjoying a day with their children, quite free from engagements of any kind, and this meant that most of their staff had a free day, too.'²¹



'The Governor's Family' [The children of Governor and Lady Loch]
Reproduced from *The Australasian Sketcher*, 14 January 1885, p.7

Henry and Elizabeth Loch also liked to involve their children in aspects of their vice-regal life and they occasionally accompanied their parents to official functions or ceremonies.

The Lochs' two little girls had grown rapidly since they came to Australia, and when Miss Edith, who was now 11, had been asked to perform a very important ceremony, we can imagine the excitement. Of course the girls had been used to watching official functions of all kinds, and during their parents' recent visit to Adelaide had even accompanied them on occasions such as their inspection of the University. And now Miss Edith had been invited to christen, and to launch, the largest ship ever built in Australia.²²

Audrey Tennyson

Like Jane Franklin and Mary Anne Broome, Audrey Tennyson was an older bride. She was 30 years of age when she married Hallam Tennyson, the son of English poet Alfred, Lord Tennyson. They had three sons, Lionel, Alfred Aubrey and Harold Courtenay.

Audrey Tennyson and her husband worked closely together during his term as governor of South Australia. While Hallam Tennyson attended to his duties as governor, Audrey acted as his helpmate. Most mornings, she allocated time for correspondence when her other duties allowed. She was her husband's secretary and confidante and, according to her, exerted a great influence over him. Referring to Hallam as 'H' in letters to her mother in England, Audrey wrote:

'I have been dreadfully busy, long discussions with H on various subjects, writing draft letters for him, listening to his, etc. which means very little but is all so important and cannot be put on one side ... Hallam is greatly guided by me.'²³

Not only was Hallam Tennyson Audrey's husband and partner, and father to their children, but he was also her best friend. In their correspondence, she told her mother of Hallam's loving and tender nature. She valued the time spent alone with him, especially their walks in the Botanical Gardens.

Family time was also very important to Audrey who savoured the moments spent with her husband and sons. On one occasion, in a letter to her mother, she described her birthday gifts:

I have had a very happy birthday & lots of pretty presents. H gave me Macaulay's Essays in 5 little green leather volumes, so pretty. Lionel & Aubrey, little silver matchbox & some work of their own, & little Harold, bracelets & ring of beads which rejoices his little heart to see me wear, & a kindergarten paper mat he has plaited himself, & a little card he has stitched and also a little Japanese box he bought.²⁴



E Kricheldorf
Portrait of Audrey E. Temyson with Her Children 1903
sepia photograph; circular image; 20.7 cm
Pictures Collection PIC 6676

Audrey also made sure that the family shared an outing together whenever possible, usually with a picnic basket at hand. Her maternal nurturing side was revealed in the following account of one of their picnic teas:

Today the boys have a holiday and H & I have been playing croquet with them, & after luncheon we are going to take the billy for a picnic tea somewhere, the two boys riding & we driving. I gave them a holiday for Easter from Thursday morning, & that afternoon we went to a lovely spot in the Morialta woods ... all of us walking & Harold riding Drummerboy ... We sat under the trees near the creek watching them when all of a sudden we heard poor little Harold cry & then say, 'I'm caught in a trap.' Hallam was near him & shrieked, 'He has got his hand in a trap!' You may imagine how I flew and there was the poor little hand caught tight between the large rusty teeth of the trap which fit close into each other when it is

closed. It required all H's strength to press open the spring and I expected to find the fingers all cut off, or at the very best all of them broken—but there was only the signs of pinches all about his hand & after I had sucked there really was not a mark to be seen. It was the greatest marvel I ever knew.²⁵

From her letters to her mother, Audrey Tennyson appears to have been a caring, devoted mother constantly mentioning her three sons. Her boys were lively lads and Audrey spent time with them whenever possible and the youngest, Harold, was her pride and joy. However, she was mindful of the need to discipline them when necessary and once confiscated a gift from their grandmother as a disciplinary measure. Audrey wrote to her explaining the incident:

I am sorry to say that the boys have been so tiresome about writing letters lately that I have now said that they shall have no presents till they have written their letters to thank [you] for them & and as they did not write to you last mail to thank you for their knives, I have taken them away, till after this mail goes, provided they have written in time & I have done so with several other things they have received.²⁶

Although she had a nursemaid for her youngest son, Harold, Audrey enjoyed being with him and feeding him. A letter to her mother illustrates his escapades and her eagerness to have fun with her sons:

Little Harold drove me miles several times this last week in the pony cart turning corners & passing things—tho' not thro' the busiest parts of the streets—he often wanted to give me the reins to pass things. I said 'O no, you can do it quite well' and then he did.²⁷

In her letters Audrey also expresses concern for her sons' progress in sport, anxious that they not be disadvantaged by their sojourn in the colonies:

men down there with whom they have been playing lawn tennis are amazed at the way & the good style in which these little fellows play lawn tennis, and Mr Jose [the Tennyson boys' tutor] says that Lionel really plays 'marvellously well'. I feel so anxious that they should be as good as possible at everything so that tho' they will go late to school they may not be behind the other boys if possible in sports etc.²⁸

Notes

Letters of Audrey, Lady Tennyson are found in: Papers of Audrey, Lady Tennyson, National Library of Australia (MS479/49).

Eliza Darling's letters are found in: Darling Family Correspondence 1832–1836, 1850, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales (ML MSS 2566); and Letters of Eliza Darling to Edward Dumaresq, 1820–1858, Archives Office of Tasmania, (NS953/309)

- ¹ Letter, 21 August 1835, **Darling Family Correspondence 1832–1836, 1850.**
- ² Letter, 25 May 1835, *ibid.*
- ³ Letter, 20 August 1827, Eliza Darling to Edward Dumaresq.
- ⁴ Letter, 31 October 1828, *ibid.*
- ⁵ Letter, 11 January [year unknown], Eliza Darling to her daughter Cornelia, **Darling Family Correspondence 1832–1836, 1850.**
- ⁶ Letter, 26 June 1826, Eliza Darling to Edward Dumaresq.
- ⁷ Letter, 16 August 1828, *ibid.*
- ⁸ Letter, 16 August 1828, *ibid.*
- ⁹ Letter, 28 February 1833, **Darling Family Correspondence 1832–1836, 1850.**
- ¹⁰ Letter, 16 March 1829, Eliza Darling to Edward Dumaresq.
- ¹¹ Penny Russell (ed.), *For Richer for Poorer: Early Colonial Marriages*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1994, p. 57.
- ¹² *ibid.*, p. 57.
- ¹³ See Appendix.
- ¹⁴ Frederick Broome to Sir John Forrest, 17 June 1877, Incoming Correspondence of the Colonial Secretary's Office. State Records Office, Western Australian Archives (3317/1897).
- ¹⁵ Frederick Broome to Sir John Forrest, 5 December 1886, *ibid.*
- ¹⁶ Letter, Mary Anne Broome to Sir John Forrest, 19 August 1897, Incoming Correspondence of the Colonial Secretary's Office, *ibid.*
- ¹⁷ Excerpt from Mary Anne Broome's diary, 4 October 1860, in B. Gilderdale, *The Seven Lives of Lady Barker*. Auckland: David Barends, 1996, p. 49.
- ¹⁸ Emma Southgate, *Diary of a Lady's Maid: Government House in Colonial Australia*, edited by Helen Vellacott. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1995, p. 127.
- ¹⁹ Letter, Lady Loch to an unnamed family member, 13 September 1884. Scottish Records Office *op.cit.*
- ²⁰ Southgate, *op. cit.*, p. 128.
- ²¹ *ibid.*, p. 185.
- ²² *ibid.*, p. 241.
- ²³ Letter, 8 July 1902, Audrey, Lady Tennyson to Zacyntha Boyle. Papers of Audrey, Lady Tennyson.
- ²⁴ Letter, 19 August 1901, *ibid.*
- ²⁵ Letter, 8 April 1901, *ibid.*
- ²⁶ Letter, 6 January 1901, *ibid.*
- ²⁷ Letter, 9 December 1901, *ibid.*
- ²⁸ Letter, 9 December 1901, *ibid.*



Johnstone, O'Shannessy & Co (photographers)
Lady Elizabeth Loch c.1901
photograph; 36 x 42.5 cm
In *Administrators of the Government of the Colony of Victoria
from Foundation to Commonwealth*, Album 377
Pictures Collection NL5401

Homemaker

Running a vice-regal household involved employing and supervising the members of staff. Supervising the establishment was a role the vice-regal women were expected to fulfil. Most of the governors' wives experienced problems with their servants, who were either brought to Australia from England or employed locally. A shortage of servants arose during the late-eighteenth to early-nineteenth centuries in Australia and 'servant girls' were imported to fill the employment gap. This chapter discusses the issues involved in employing domestic servants. The sources available vary greatly in quantity but Audrey Tennyson's letters to her mother provide a rich source and her experiences probably reflect the experiences of the other women to a great extent.

Eliza Darling

Eliza Darling 'lost' one of her servants to a millinery business and her convict housemaid was not very reliable, with a predilection for alcohol, but Eliza kept a watchful eye on her domestic staff. An upbringing in more straitened circumstances had taught her that there was no time for indolence. Her servants would have had to work hard. Unfortunately there is no written record shedding light on the servants in her employment. However, she had a clear view on what her role as supervisor was: 'It is a woman's duty in every station, to look well to the ways of her household and see that her maidens eat not the bread of idleness.'¹

Jane Franklin

Jane Franklin was not a traditional homemaker and defied the upper-class feminine ideal in this respect. She was criticised for not upholding the conventions of a governor's wife: paying calls and receiving callers, attending public functions and entertaining, dressing well and providing an elegant, refined colonial environment.

One historian has found Jane guilty of not placing sufficient importance on her vice-regal role: 'For the wife of a governor to neglect the social and domestic

duties which in her case were quite rigidly codified, to leave the tasks of companion and hostess to others, went beyond eccentricity to culpability.¹²

Elizabeth Loch

In a well-run, upper-class household during the nineteenth century, it was customary to employ a number of servants. One could expect to find a cook, housemaid, nursemaid, lady's maid, laundress, seamstress, dairymaid and housekeeper. The Loch vice-regal household employed nearly all those servants. Sir Henry and Lady Loch brought members of their domestic staff with them from England to Australia and they included Mr Hawkins, the butler; Mrs Calla, the cook; Agnes Stokes, the kitchen maid; Emma Southgate, Elizabeth's lady's maid; and three other servants, Henry, William and Mary. The Loch children were accompanied by their special attendants: Lucy, the nursemaid, and Mademoiselle Heyman, the girls' French governess, and Mr Sturgess, Douglas's tutor. Sir Henry Loch was attended by his aides-de-camp, Lord Castlerosse and Mr Hughes, and by his private secretary, Captain Traill.

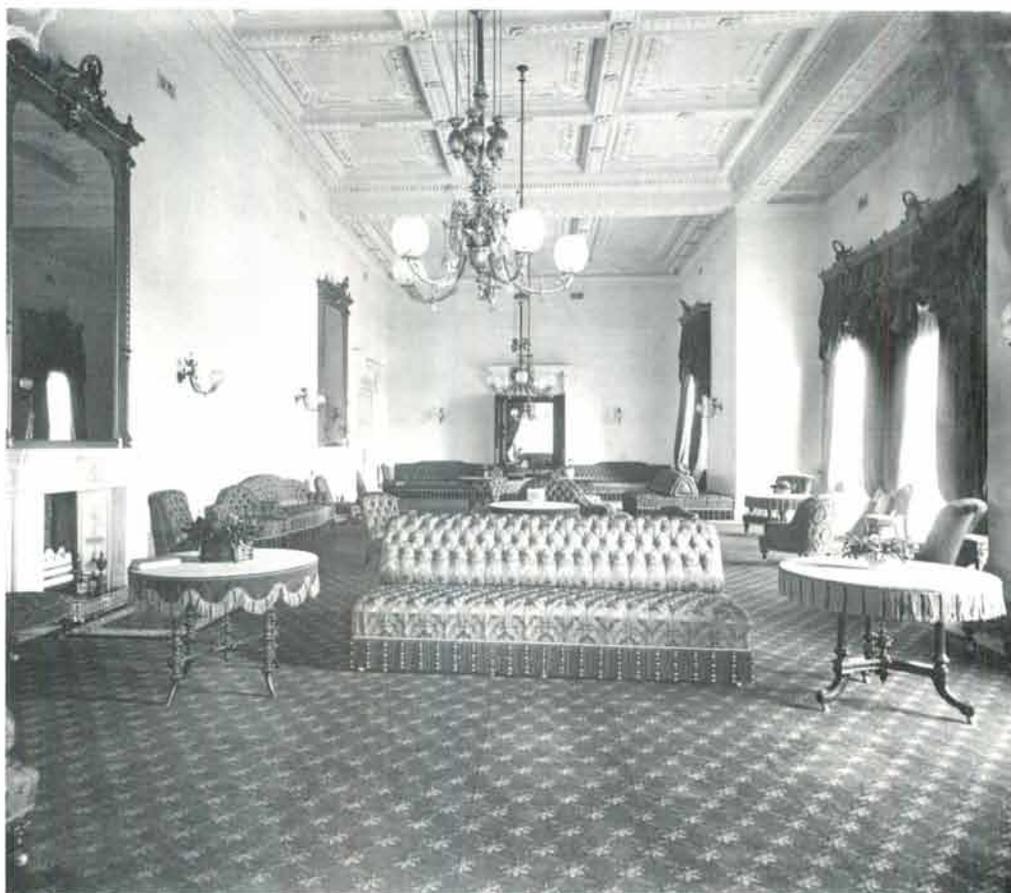
The staff benefited from the kindness with which the Lochs treated them. 'As 25 December [1894] approached, the Lochs did all in their power to make this first summer-time Christmas a particularly happy occasion for their staff. With their usual generosity they planned a lavish Christmas dinner, to which their staff could invite their Melbourne friends.'¹³

Emma Southgate's job was to assist Elizabeth Loch with her wardrobe—help her into an array of elegant Paris-designed gowns and bonnets. A large wardrobe was packed for every country visit—a necessary precaution for Victoria's changeable climate. 'But it fell to Emma's lot ... to pack and unpack the elaborate costumes and bonnets of the day, and to sponge and brush the travel-stained garments each evening.'¹⁴

Agnes Stokes, the kitchen maid, was employed to 'keep all the tables clean, get and clear all kitchen meals, sweep the kitchen twice a day, do all the kitchen washing-up, mincing, pounding, sieving, make all the sauces, clean all fruits, whisk all eggs, keep the chef supplied with clean basins and tools of all sorts, and cut and cook all fancy vegetables'.¹⁵

Alongside that arduous work, Agnes enjoyed other tasks. She commented that:

The job I liked best was making ornaments for the supper tables and ballroom. We melted heaps of lovely wax candles, took out the wicks, and half filled the little *bombes*, bolted them together and shook them well. We then stood them in cold water, opened them and turned out lovely little fairies, angels, duck boats, birds, and the most beautiful flowers and fruits, bunches of grapes, and all sorts. The tables look grand.¹⁶



Charles Nettleton (1826–1902)
State Drawing Room, Government House [Melbourne] 1870s
photograph; 38.5 x 53.5 cm
In 'Views of Melbourne and Suburbs', Album 219
Pictures Collection

Mary Anne Broome

Perhaps unlike other governors' wives, Mary Anne Broome had to learn to perform domestic duties out of necessity. Despite her undoubted empathy for her domestic staff, she still experienced problems with them. While in New Zealand with her husband Frederick, before his appointment to Western Australia, Mary Anne had to maintain the household during a changeover in servants. There were times when she had no servants, yet she retained her sense of humour.

I am writing to you at the end of a fortnight of very hard work, for I have just gone through my first experience in changing servants; those I brought up with me four months ago were nice, tidy girls and as a consequence of these attractive qualities they have both left me to be married.⁷

As a consequence of this catastrophe Mary Anne was forced to learn to cook, which caused her some unhappy moments—'some of my earliest efforts were both curious and nasty,' she commented. On one of these occasions, she decided to bake bread.

One night I had prepared the tin dish full of flour, made a hole in the midst of the soft white heap, and was about to pour in a cupful of yeast to be mixed with warm water (you see I know all about it in theory), when a sudden panic seized me, and I was afraid to draw the cork of the large champagne bottle full of yeast which appeared to be very much 'up'. In this dilemma I went for F. You must know that he possesses such extraordinary and revolutionary theories on the subject of cooking, that I am obliged to banish him from the kitchen altogether, but on this occasion I thought I should be glad of his assistance. He came with the greatest alacrity; assured me he knew all about it, seized the big bottle, shook it violently, and twitched out the cork: there was a report like a pistol-shot, and all my beautiful yeast flew up to the ceiling of the kitchen, descending in a shower on my head; and F turned the bottle upside down over the flour, emptying the dregs of the hops and potatoes into my unfortunate bread. However, I did not despair, but mixed it up according to the directions given, and placed it on the stove; but, as it turned out, in too warm a situation, for when I went early the next morning, to look at it, I found a very dry and crusty mass. Still, nothing daunted, I persevered in the attempt, added more flour and water, and finally made it up into loaves, which I deposited in the oven. That bread *never* baked!⁸

Mary Anne mentions she had a lady's maid named Catherine, but gives no other indication of staff in her employment, though she refers to the lack of good servants in the colony:

we went to Western Australia, where we arrived in the middle of winter, and the contrast seemed great in every way, especially in the domestic arrangements, for servants were few and far between and of a very elementary stamp of knowledge. I tried to remedy that defect by importing maid-servants, but succeeded only in acquiring some very strange specimens. In those days Western Australia was such an unknown and distant land that the friends at home who kindly tried to help me found great difficulty in inducing any good servant to venture so far, and although the wages offered must have seemed enormous, the good class I wanted could not at first be induced to leave England. Later, things improved.⁹

Audrey Tennyson

Like Eliza Darling and Elizabeth Loch, Audrey Tennyson was comfortable in the homemaking role. She capably supervised her servants and the running of her household both at Government House in Adelaide and at the country residence at Marble Hill. Though she kept a watchful eye on her servants she also experienced problems. In her letters to her mother she provides copious information about her experiences with domestic staff in the vice-regal household.



Conrad Martens (1801–1878)
Govt. [ie Government] House from the Domain 1850
hand-coloured lithograph; 15 x 25.5 cm
In *Sketches in the Environs of Sydney*
Pictures Collection S8661

Her household staff comprised: Clarke, her personal maid; Hitchman, the butler; Thomas, the head footman; Horn, Harold's nursemaid; Mrs Bates, the cook; Mademoiselle Dussau, the boys' French governess; and Maurice, their tutor; the office porter, messenger boy, staff housemaid, groom, coachman and two laundrymaids. Further help was employed when the vice-regals entertained.

Many of Audrey's letters discuss problems with various members of her staff. Her sons' education was important to her and she relied upon Mademoiselle Dussau and Mr Maurice to oversee it, apart from teaching their history lessons herself. Mademoiselle Jose Dussau also helped Audrey to arrange flowers for social functions held at Government House. Mademoiselle, as Audrey called her, was of a similar age and became a close companion.

By January 1901, however, Mademoiselle was not in Audrey Tennyson's good books. Audrey suspected that the French governess was romantically involved with the children's tutor, Mr Maurice. Upset at the prospect of a liaison between her sons' teachers, Audrey was concerned that if she raised the subject with Mademoiselle Dussau, she might resign and at this point Audrey did not want to lose the governess. Eventually Hallam Tennyson discharged Mr Maurice, whom Audrey blamed for their affair. A series of letters to her mother on the subject reveal how concerned she was.

Mr Maurice and Mdlle [Mademoiselle Dussau] are on too intimate terms to be good for them, or pleasant for any of us, & the poor children are not nearly as happy as they used to be in consequence. He soon proved himself absolutely useless as A.D.C. [aide-de-camp] & he is not very much better as tutor, & he has very much upset our former happy peaceful family party.¹⁰

Thus Audrey Tennyson imposed a strict moral and ethical code of behaviour on her employees. Her views in part reflect a conservative attitude about relations between the sexes and are indicative of the late-nineteenth century. However, she also grieved over the fact that Mademoiselle, her trusted friend and companion, did not inform her of a relationship that was taking place under her very roof. While her grief was compounded by her initial lack of female company after arriving in South Australia, she was also concerned that her children would be adversely affected by their teachers' relationship:

We have no idea what footing he [Maurice] and Mdlle are on. They have behaved better & been less inseparable the last day or two, & yesterday, Sunday, which hitherto they have spent entirely in each other's pockets, they were very little together & he was very silent all day—at the same time she now wears a thick gold wedding ring on the little finger of her left hand which she has never worn before, but which of course we do not *know* has been given her by him, and all I can see is that I consider they have both behaved abominably, & she being so much older than him ought to have known better. If they are not engaged, they ought to have been from the way they behaved, & if they *are*, after all the kindness I have shown her & the confidence I have placed in her & the friend I have made of her, she ought to have come & told me, being as she is, under our roof & care.¹¹

Things have been getting worse & worse & the children more & more neglected & bullied by him so that their one idea was to get away from them both as much as possible. They were always making signs at each other & looking & laughing across the table or giggling—making it odious for everyone else. You may just imagine my joy at getting rid of him ... She has lost my confidence & friendship & as I have always said till Mr Maurice's arrival that she was the comfort of my life—you may know that this is a great loss to me, for I have literally no woman to make a friend of—not that I really want one, for I have plenty of people who love me & whom I love at Home & I can pour out to you my worries, & have always a ready listener about anything in my Hallam.¹²

Other letters reveal more problems with domestic servants. She became disappointed with the performance of Clarke, her personal maid, who did not attend adequately to her duties.

Clarke came back from her four weeks holiday on Tuesday & is very indignant, & very much hurt with me, because in looking for some things I wanted during her absence I found all my things, new & old, in such an awful state, everything tossed helter-skelter into any box handy, without a single piece of paper & all tumbled like old rags, that I sorted everything & put them in apple-pie order. She says I might have waited till her return.¹³



Unknown photographer
[Group of People in Garden] 1890
1 of 27 photographs; 19.1 x 27.3 cm
In 'Album of Photographs of Harlaxton,
Toowoomba and Brisbane'
Pictures Collection P277a

Horn, her youngest son's nursemaid, was another problem. Audrey did not like rudeness and was annoyed with her for being disrespectful towards her. On 2 April 1902 she wrote to her mother:

I had a fearful row with Horn yesterday. She was so impudent to me ... I told her unless she apologized she was to leave my service that day. She knew I was in earnest so she said in the evening she was 'extremely sorry' etc & so I forgave her but told her I fully meant what I said—so I hope she will be more careful now.¹⁴

A footman also gave her trouble and on 26 January 1902 Audrey wrote to her mother asking her to find a suitable replacement. He had to have specific qualities, which she stipulated in her letter:

Thomas has finally so disgraced himself that he has had to be turned off at a moment's notice ... We shall have to cable home & ask you to find us a very good first footman, smart, clever, with a *good head* as poor old Hitchman often loses his—must be steady & respectable with a *personal* character, & he must sign a paper that he will remain with us as long as we are out here—which can't possibly be many years ... You can tell him that *all* our former servants came out with us & are now

with us, except Thomas, & signed a similar agreement. We have butler, two footmen & an odd man, & of course help when we entertain. If he is sharp & attentive the first footman travels about with us wherever we go & so sees an enormous amount.¹⁵

But not all her servants were difficult. Mrs Bates, the cook, at both Government House in Adelaide and at Marble Hill, the Tennysons' summer residence, was Audrey Tennyson's right-hand when providing entertainment. She was a reliable jewel among the household staff. A wizard in the kitchen, she busily prepared food for 450 guests for the Tennysons' first ball at Government House and Audrey reported to her mother on 25 June 1899 that: 'Mrs Bates has got 22 turkeys, 10 tongues & 10 hams, 6 saddles of cold mutton, a very favourite dish! 4 fillets of beef, 30 chickens, 6 dozen pigeons besides cutlets, sandwiches & soup & fish mayonnaise etc. & of course, endless sweet things.'¹⁶

Not surprisingly Mrs Bates was highly regarded by Audrey who, on 2 July 1899, wrote of her culinary ability: 'Mrs Bates did *admirably*. Nothing could have been better, very good & pretty & well done. How she does it all I can't imagine, she only had a charwoman for 3 days at 5/- a day & 2 on the day itself. She is quite insulted if I beg her to have help.'¹⁷

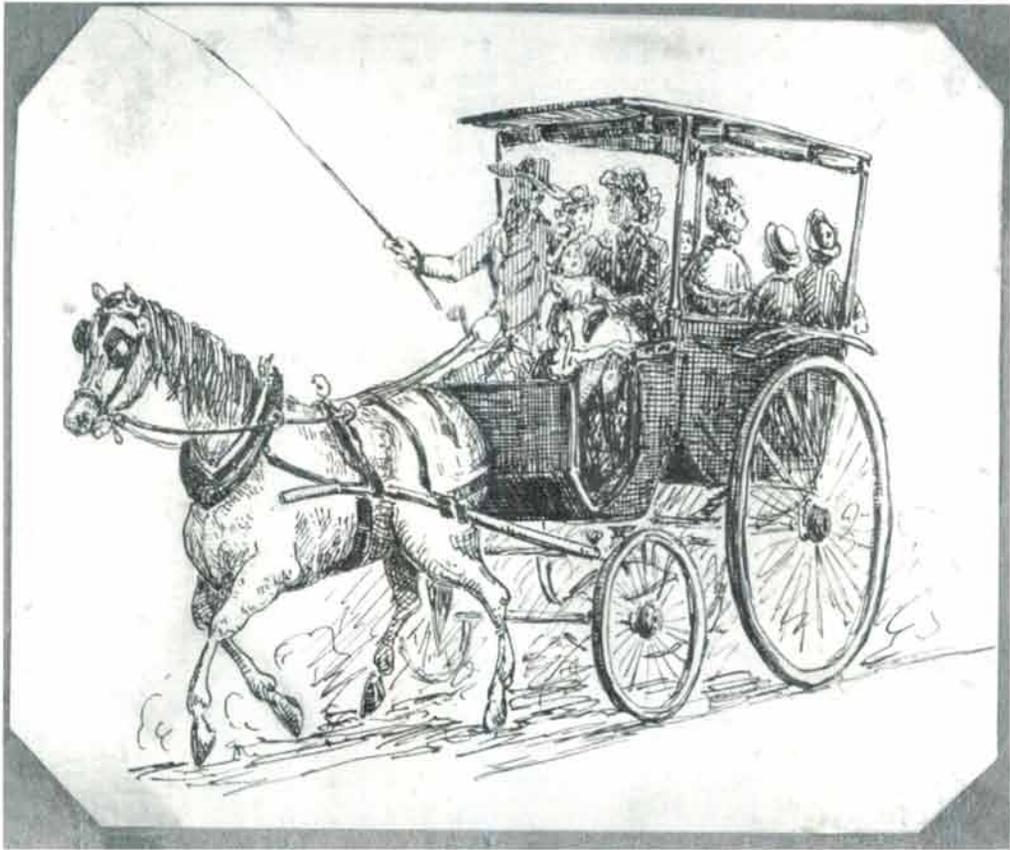
On 21 October 1901 Audrey described her cook as 'the one person I can thoroughly rely on for keeping order'.¹⁸ Once when Audrey was ill with influenza and did not attend a garden party held at Government House she wrote to her mother: 'It seems to have gone extremely well ... The great Bates made everything, jellies & creams & Macedoines in little glass cups with cream at the top.'¹⁹

On another occasion and at short notice, the 'great Bates' was able to prepare a meal for a horde of hungry soldiers:

Mrs Bates is the help & comfort of my life. I told her the other day 200 soldiers of the Imperial Contingent might be coming up on the Friday & this was Monday evening. 'Delighted,' she answered. 'But can you be ready? Mind, 200 hungry thirsty men?' 'Oh, yes, that will be all right, don't you worry,' which means that everything has to come up from Adelaide & we can only send down our cart twice a week when it takes the laundry up & down.²⁰

Mrs Bates certainly appeared to be a remarkable woman. Illness did not prevent her from carrying out her duties and she would not have dreamt of letting her mistress down. On one occasion, a doctor was summoned to Government House when Mrs Bates became ill:

She [Mrs Bates] told Dr Marten he *must* pull her together. She had only gone to bed at 3 am & been ill all night. It was only by being really severe I forced her into bed till 11 o'clock with mustard poultice on her stomach & some medicine; & then she got up again and did everything, poor soul, and then on Saturday a large official



Harold John Graham (1858–1929)
[Horse and Carriage] c.1882
pen and ink drawing; 7 x 8.5 cm
In his *Sketches in Victoria and Tasmania*
Pictures Collection R9866/39

luncheon & on Monday the 2nd ball—& if you could see *how* they eat, & about 900 people for the two, besides the house full & valets & endless waiters & workpeople to feed, & only she & her two girls & charwomen who can only do the washing-up etc, & never in the least fussed, perfectly calm & composed, all endless cakes for refreshments, coffee, tea, & two or three kinds of ices going fast the whole time. She is simply marvellous & so economical, she told me this morning she had made 20 lbs [pounds] of butter from all the cream left over & will make the cakes for the garden parties with it.²¹

With more visitors descending upon Government House for the Federation celebrations, Audrey marvelled at Mrs Bates' relentless efforts: 'Mrs Bates absolutely refuses a chef to help her or a cook, tho' our dinners every night will be 30, ditto luncheons—just the house party, & sometimes 50, besides large reception refreshments & huge garden party. She is a treasure. The other G. Houses have got 2 extra chefs in.'²²

The Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York, in Australia to open the new Federal Parliament in Melbourne on 9 May 1901, were Audrey and Hallam Tennyson's guests at Government House in Adelaide in July 1901. Again, Mrs Bates busily cooked up a storm.

Mrs Bates did marvels as usual ... she & her kitchen girls were the only cooks, & one woman who could help with the servants' cooking. She had 30 every meal in the servants' hall besides extras coming in at all odd times & an average of 18 in the housekeeper's room, for all the bands, police, orderlies, detectives etc. came in & fed; & we never dined less than 25 up to 48 in the diningroom & 2 receptions of between 7 & 800 people, every single thing, ices and all, made at home—& they make regular meals when they come to G. House. I was complimented on our cook.²³

But good or bad, servants have to be paid. Their wages were drawn from the Tennysons' own salary and Audrey was mindful of the expense she and Hallam incurred with their domestic staff. They also had to provide some of their staff with food, clothing and accommodation.

You would be surprised at the wages we have to give & a great deal of our salary will have to go in that way. The office porter, £115 [115 pounds], *not* fed here—the message boy, 7/6 [7 shillings and 6 pence] weekly & fed here—the staff housemaid over £40 & fed. The groom £40, fed and clothed. Coachman £105 housed but not fed & clothed. Capt Wallington, £400 & lives with us. Capt Lascelles [aide-de-camp] £200 & feeds when he likes. Laundrymaid £42 & fed. 2nd £32 & fed, & of course housed.²⁴

In 1899 she wrote of the comfort of her home in the colony, Government House in Adelaide, and of the beautiful garden surrounding it.

The garden is extremely pretty & plenty of trees with 3 or 4 gardeners ... Brilliant borders of roses, plumbago, orange & lemon, great shrubs of verbena, oleanders, huge geraniums, & the grass with different palms very green from constant watering. It is quite a comfortable house tho' terribly bare of furniture but all very clean, having been repainted and papered—great big high square bright rooms & we are all very comfortably housed much more roomily than at home and have 3 spare rooms & a maid's room for *relations* only or officials!!!²⁵

Now you would like to hear about the house. We are very agreeably surprised with it—the rooms are very large, lofty & airy. The house is painted a kind of light buff—& is a *long* low building of two stories [sic]. There are two entrances, the one in the pictures with a portico is the public one & people come in there & write their names in that hall in a huge red leather book—a new one of course for us. In this hall there is nothing but the table, two carved chairs with silk on one side, & two large ditto on the other & big mahogany & gilt doors on each side & at the end; the right hand doors lead into one of the three drawingrooms—the end ones facing the entrance into the state diningroom, & the left hand side into a very nice room called the Admiral's room, which we use as the schoolroom. Facing these doors



South front. Government House, Adelaide c.1900
photograph
Pictures Collection NL32562

from the hall are more folding doors into the ballroom & across the ballroom facing the schoolroom doors are other folding doors into H's library & business room, & then the billiard room & staff rooms are beyond with their bedrooms over ...

The ballroom has all been newly decorated—pale green with dais at the end facing the windows—it's a long room & a large picture of the Queen & gilt brackets & mirrors & red settees all round.²⁶

At Government House a drawing room was used for serving coffee and tea after dinner. Men usually remained in the dining room after dinner to drink port and smoke cigars. At other times, the governor's wife used the drawing room as a reception room for her callers.

While at Government House, Audrey also busied herself overseeing its renovation. She described it in her letter of 17 March 1901:

All the staircase & passages have hitherto been a very dirty dark yellow marble paper, glazed, too awful for words; now we are going to have a very good *dado* to

match cedar doors and page yellow distemper, which will be better than paper. Everywhere the wood is painted now is to be white, and the middle of the three drawingrooms a lovely french green, & the two end ones, pink. New carpets, new chintzes wherever we like, and all the old furniture renovated—& a large bow window built out in the ballroom with painted glass. We shall be so grand we shall not know ourselves.²⁷

Audrey Tennyson well fulfilled the duties of a governor's wife as a competent homemaker and all five vice-regal women brought different strengths and weaknesses to their role. What they appeared to have in common, and was probably a vital necessity, was a strong marriage.

Notes

Letters of Audrey, Lady Tennyson are found in: Papers of Audrey, Lady Tennyson, National Library of Australia (MS479/49).

Eliza Darling's letters are found in: Darling family correspondence 1832–1836, 1850, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales (ML MSS2566); and Letters of Eliza Darling to Edward Dumaresq, 1820–1858, Archives Office of Tasmania (NS953/309).

- ¹ Letter, 16 March 1829, Letters of Eliza Darling to Edward Dumaresq.
- ² Penny Russell (ed.), *For Richer for Poorer: Early Colonial Marriages*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1994, p. 59.
- ³ Emma Southgate, *Diary of a Lady's Maid: Government House in Colonial Australia*, edited by Helen Vellacott. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1995, p. 97.
- ⁴ *ibid.*, p. 177.
- ⁵ Agnes Stokes, *A Girl at Government House: An English Girl's Reminiscences: 'Below Stairs' in Colonial Australia*, edited by Helen Vellacott. Melbourne: Currey O'Neil, 1982, p. 61.
- ⁶ *ibid.*, p. 62.
- ⁷ Mary Anne Barker, *Station Life in New Zealand*. London: Macmillan, 1890, Letter XI, p. 70.
- ⁸ *ibid.*
- ⁹ Mary Anne Broome, *Colonial Memories*. London: Smith Gilder, 1904, p. 219.
- ¹⁰ Letter, undated, probably 8 January 1901, Audrey, Lady Tennyson to Zacyntha Boyle. Papers of Audrey, Lady Tennyson.
- ¹¹ Letter, 20 January 1901, *ibid.*
- ¹² *ibid.*
- ¹³ Letter, 16 February 1902, *ibid.*
- ¹⁴ Letter, 2 April 1902, *ibid.*
- ¹⁵ Letter, 26 January 1902, *ibid.*
- ¹⁶ Letter, 25 June 1899, *ibid.*
- ¹⁷ Letter, 2 July 1899, *ibid.*
- ¹⁸ Letter, 21 October 1901, *ibid.*
- ¹⁹ Letter, 14 October 1899, *ibid.*
- ²⁰ Letter, 24 April 1900, *ibid.*
- ²¹ Letter, 6 October 1900, *ibid.*
- ²² Letter, 16 May 1901, *ibid.*
- ²³ Letter, 18 July 1901, *ibid.*
- ²⁴ Letter, 30 April 1899, *ibid.*
- ²⁵ Letter, 12 April 1899, *ibid.*
- ²⁶ Letter, 16 April 1899, *ibid.*
- ²⁷ Letter, 17 March 1901, *ibid.*



Briton Riviere (1840–1920)
Lady Tennyson and the Poet's Old Wolfhound Karenina 1899
oil on canvas; 150 x 122.4 cm
Pictures Collection R10627

Social Hostess

Social structure

Until industrialisation made its impact on Britain, English society was hierarchical and fairly static. The titled ranked as the highest order—the peerage with its dukes, earls and barons, for example. Below the nobles were the gentry—country families with property, squires, bishops and doctors belonged to this group. Bankers followed in the social pecking order. Further down the scale were tradesmen and artisans. At the bottom of the social pyramid were farmers and the working class. Industrialisation however brought many changes, including new wealth and a new social class.

During the nineteenth century, Australian colonial society was changing and fluid, not structured strictly according to the English model. There were the rich and poor (landowners and labourers), educated and uneducated, black and white, free people and convicts (except for South Australia).

In the colonies, one could break into a higher social class through the acquisition of wealth, business partnerships or a good education, or through an appropriate marriage into an established family with good social connections. However, the established elite did not always welcome newcomers to their social ranks. Jane Franklin, in a letter to her sister in England¹, related the story of a colonial marriage where the granddaughter of a female convict intended marrying a nephew of Colonel Arthur, a former governor of Van Diemen's Land. While Jane Franklin frowned upon the matrimonial match because of the granddaughter's convict origin, the marriage was an example of the fluidity of colonial society.

Though the governor's wife was at the centre of colonial society, her social activities were ordained by official protocol. She was expected to entertain regularly, hosting such official functions as lunches and dinner parties, musical evenings, garden parties and formal receptions, including balls, at Government House. Official guests included high-ranking army officers, Members of Parliament, ministers, mayors, magistrates, physicians, bishops, bankers, the landed gentry, their wives and titled visitors from abroad. Her role served the

purpose of advancing her husband's interests as well as serving her government and, through this role, she entered the arena of state affairs. This was a role Jane Franklin preferred not to play.

Despite the fluidity of Australian society, there still remained a certain social hierarchy. In Sydney, for example, a gentleman's social position was determined by the office he held, and the social status of his wife by her husband's official rank. The order of precedence in New South Wales began with the Governor, who held the highest social rank.

Some vice-regal wives fulfilled the role of social hostess better than others, particularly Elizabeth Loch and Audrey Tennyson. Jane Franklin was criticised for not devoting enough time to this social duty. She appeared to retire from many government functions claiming ill-health. However, if her health was so poor, one needs to ask how she managed to travel so extensively in Australia during her time as the wife of the governor of Van Diemen's Land. Somehow, her health managed to enable her to pursue a range of other interests.

Etiquette of calls

True to the feminine ideal, a governor's wife was expected to entertain to maintain the social networks that were important to him and the government. She managed the social affairs of the vice-regal household by following a strict code of etiquette. This code involved organising introductions, leaving cards to arrange meetings and paying social calls. The upper class thus preserved its claim as the social elite. The calling card became a means to secure this end. It served to screen those wishing to enter into high society.

A governor's wife was usually advised by an aide-de-camp (ADC, governor's assistant) on the guest list for social functions at Government House. Calling cards were then delivered to the homes of those deemed socially acceptable. Etiquette demanded that recipients return a card to the governor's wife or make a call and visit her. During the week, the governor's wife was 'at home' to receive callers on days announced in the official government paper—the *Government Gazette*.

The etiquette of calls served as a basis of social interaction for the upper class. It was customary for society ladies in the colonies to be driven by horse and carriage to deliver their calling cards notifying their presence. Usually, a footman would hand the card to the butler or another servant who would then pass it on to the lady of the house. It was then up to her to receive her callers. These calls were termed 'morning calls' although they were mostly made in the afternoon between 2 pm and 5 pm. If one was better acquainted with the lady of the house, especially in the case of the governor's wife, the call was made later in the day.²



VISITING GOWN.

'Visiting Gown'
Reproduced from *The Sydney Mail*, 24 May 1890, p. 1154

Specifying reception days allowed the governor's wife time to carry out her numerous other duties. Callers were received in the drawing room where visits were usually brief and conversation was light.

Both the governor and his wife could receive calls without being obliged to return them. Often they would issue invitations to functions at Government House on the basis of calling cards received.

Entertaining other vice-regals

Governors were required to host visits by other vice-regals—and this could be very expensive. Audrey Tennyson was mindful of the cost when providing for the needs of Australia's first Governor-General, Earl Hopetoun, and Lady Hopetoun, who were their guests at Government House in Adelaide in 1902. In a letter to her mother on 11 May 1902 she wrote:

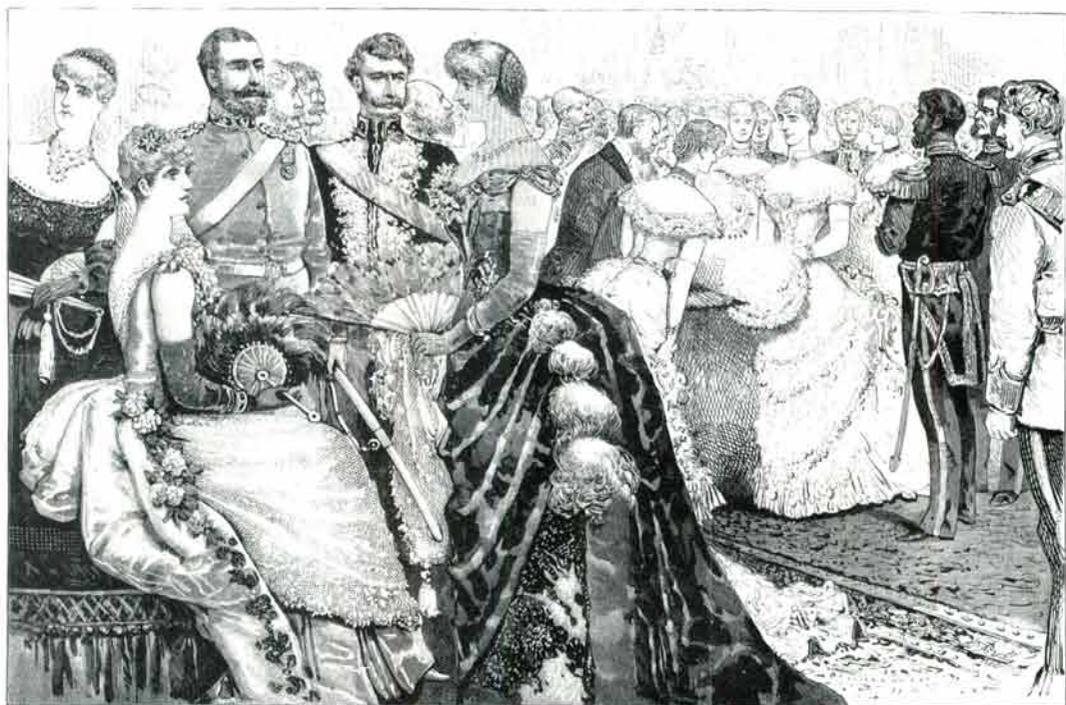
I am afraid their visit will cost us a fearful amount, for they in themselves were a party of 7 & the menservants are always a fearful expense ...

The waiters here are £1 a day or night, & food & drink. For the journey to Melbourne for one night for Lord & Lady H & 2 staff, their valet brought a list of wine they wd require—2 bottles of whisky, 2 bottles of claret, 1 bottle port, 9 bottles Spa water (which costs I don't know what out here!). Then he took a menu to Mrs Bates, saying they required fish, 2 chickens, a tongue, ham, fillet of beef, & other things I forget—dessert, pears, apples, grapes & bananas; bacon & eggs to fry for their breakfast, tho' they stop at an excellent station for breakfast & are due at Melbourne at 10; tea, coffee, 2 large bottles of cream, milk, rolls, bread, 1 lb butter etc.³

Audrey's letters often contained social chit-chat and gossip, and she was not shy about expressing her opinion of the other vice-regals they met. She and Hallam entertained the Victorian Governor, Sir George Clarke, and his wife, Lady Clarke, and daughter Violet, whom they considered to be charming people.⁴

Audrey also discussed a visit by the previous Victorian governor and his wife, Lord and Lady Brassey:

The Brasseys' visit has been a great success and we are all great friends. I like her immensely & he is a dear old boy & very amusing. I cannot think how it is he is not popular, which he certainly is anything but, from all accounts. She is very handsome, bright & merry, very tall with beautiful figure & beautifully dressed ... She is devoted to children & has made great friends with ours ... We are to go & stay for the Melbourne Cup in November, as they say it is one of the sights of the world.⁵



'Lady Loch's Birthday Reception, Government House'
Reproduced from *The Australasian Sketcher*, 2 June 1885, p. 104

The Season

Social life for the upper class in the colonies was organised as part of a calendar of events. In Britain, the main social events of the year took place during 'The Season', a concept that was transplanted onto colonial soil, although it differed slightly in form. The northern hemisphere social season began around Easter and continued until August, occupying British high society with social functions like dinner parties, balls, concerts, and sporting events such as race meetings and yacht races. In the colonies, a similar calendar of events was organised but it was not as structured, with events scattered throughout the year.

In Melbourne, for example, the social calendar officially began in Melbourne Cup Week in November (first run in 1861). However, when Elizabeth Loch first came to Victoria in 1884, her social season began at the end of July with receptions at Government House, followed by the Mayor's ball and a parliamentary dinner at Government House in August. She spent the next few months travelling with Governor Loch to fulfil both his ceremonial role and her social role. Then in October, she again entertained guests at Government House, and held a garden party and a State Ball in November. December ended the official social calendar

with a formal dinner party. In summer she travelled to Mount Macedon, the vice-regal summer retreat, where she and her husband entertained houseguests.

Balls

On 5 November 1884, Elizabeth Loch held her first ball at Melbourne's Government House during the festivities of Cup Week. Guests began arriving around 9.30 pm. The vice-regal party, comprising Sir Henry and Lady Loch and their children, Douglas, Edith and Evelyn, entered the ballroom accompanied by the governors of South Australia and Tasmania, together with their aides and the Lochs' houseguests. After the band played the National Anthem, dancing commenced and continued until 2 am with a break for supper in the dining room. The ballroom was decorated with flowers, greenery and flags, and the ball was deemed by Emma Southgate to be 'a great success'.⁶

After the State Ball, the Lochs hosted a concert the following night. Over 500 guests crowded into the ballroom to hear the vocal and orchestral performances, featuring items by Beethoven and Mendelssohn and operatic solos. A reception followed in the drawing room during which supper was served.

Elizabeth Loch not only entertained on a lavish scale but also with style. She held another grand ball on Wednesday, 3 November 1886. Gowns worn on that occasion were exquisite. Guests at vice-regal social functions enjoyed the opportunity to display the latest fashions available in the colony, frequently ordered from abroad. As hostess, Lady Loch wore a beautiful lemon satin dress, trimmed with lace.

A customary celebration by vice-regals in the Australian colonies was the Queen's Birthday. *Australasian Sketcher* reported:

There was a very pleasant expansion of a hospitable custom introduced at Government House on Tuesday evening, May 26, when the customary ceremonial dinner which celebrates the birthday of Her Most Gracious Majesty was followed by an 'At Home', when Lady Loch received about a thousand guests, the members of both Houses of Parliament, with their wives, being among those present.

At the state dinner, which preceded the 'At Home', about seventy gentlemen sat down, His Excellency the Governor having on his right hand the Bishop of Melbourne, and on his left Mr Graham Berry. Mr Kerferd occupied the vice chair, being supported by Lord Lynton and Mr Justice Molesworth. After dinner the gentlemen adjourned to the state drawing room to find it crowded with ladies patiently waiting the return of their lords, and with ladies and gentlemen occupied in being presented to Lady Loch.⁷

Emma Southgate continued the story:

When the presentations were over, the company adjourned to the ball-room, and about 10 o'clock this very fine room was a most brilliant picture. The walls were



Charles Nettleton (1826–1902)
Dining Room, Government House [Melbourne] 1878
albumen silver photograph; 37.2 x 52.5 cm
In 'Views of Melbourne and Suburbs', Album 217
Pictures Collection

beautifully decorated with trophies of gay flags, whose resplendent colours shone under the brilliant lights placed at short intervals along the walls. At one end of the room a green alcove had been formed, and here tall waving palm trees and noble-looking tree ferns towered high above the heads of those beneath. Around the room were arranged cosy lounges, where pleasant moments were spent watching the brilliant throng, which, ever changing, each moment presented some new harmony, some delicious juxtaposition of colour and effect which gratified the eye and interested the observer. The brilliant costumes of the ladies, charming as many of them were, did not stand out in such strong and bright relief as is sometimes noticeable, for the very obvious reason that a large number of the gentlemen present were in uniform, and in uniform so attractive-looking that they equally divided attention with the ladies. I never noticed before such a large proportion of officers, and presume the recent war scare has something to do with this marvellously rapid increase of bold warriors.⁸

Elizabeth Loch firmly believed in the value of such functions: 'balls and races ... I think they do us no harm if they do not occupy all the thoughts and entail waste of money'.⁹

Audrey Tennyson provided a different perspective on hosting a ball. She commented to her mother on how exhausting continual entertaining could be.

As I have a few minutes I will begin my letter tho' I feel tired & weary & am yearning for a little real rest. It is terribly hard work, day after day, public functions, & when you go to bed & feel one is over & dead tired, that the next day you must begin again & so on ...

I really was too tired to stand & had people up to sit & talk to me & I could see everybody coming in & out ... An extra is played until all have arrived, then H & I enter the room with the House guests & staff, God Save the Queen playing, & then instantly the vice-regal set of Lancers is formed & sometimes one other set, everybody else looking on, & after that all dance, & I only danced the one this year but H danced in each square dance, the set being arranged of the prominent people by the ADCs—it is considered a great compliment to dance in the vice-regal sets.¹⁰

Receptions

Elizabeth Loch enjoyed holding receptions at Government House on a lavish scale. She invited about 1200 guests to her first reception in Victoria, held on the afternoon of Wednesday, 30 July 1884. Callers inscribed their names in a visitors' book and left their cards. After being presented to Lady Loch in the drawing room, they moved into the ballroom, where a string band played. Refreshments including tea and coffee were served in a room adjoining the ballroom. Cut flowers and plants decorated the reception rooms. A second reception followed two days later with over 1500 invited guests.¹¹

Garden parties

In most of the Australian colonies, garden parties for 1500 to 2500 people were annual events at Government House. Unexpectedly, the English beverage of tea was often not as popular as the coffee served. A big hit at Audrey Tennyson's parties was a macedoine served in custard glasses with ice cream. This was a dish of fruit embedded in jelly and made by Mrs Bates, Audrey's indefatigable cook.

At the end of October 1884, Governor and Lady Loch in Melbourne held an afternoon garden party with 2000 invited guests and a large marquee was erected in the grounds of Government House to accommodate them. Elizabeth Loch had an arrangement with her twin sister who organised for elegant clothes to be made for her in the famous fashion houses of Paris. At the garden party, Elizabeth wore one of these creations, a white silk suit trimmed and embroidered with white lace, and covered by a loose sleeveless cloak of the same material, set off by a spectacular bonnet of yellow velvet and lace with a white tulle veil. Her



*Lady Tennyson - Lord Richard - M^{rs} Wray - Hallam - M^{rs} Angus.
 Bayl Angus - Baby - M^{rs} Angus - Dudley Angus.
 Harrisvalla St. W. ... 92: My tea - October 9th 1901.*

The Tennyson family and guests at a picnic in South Australia, probably near Angaston, 1901 photograph

Tennyson Collection

Manuscript Collection MS479/20

daughters wore cream silk dresses with white lace trim and hats made of straw. Guests were invited to wander through and enjoy the garden, as well as the ballroom and State dining room.¹²

Dinner parties

Attendance at a Governor's dinner party provided the opportunity to make and develop acquaintances with the colony's social elite. These were usually formal affairs requiring formal dress. Ladies wore long evening gowns, gloves and jewellery, and adorned their hair with a variety of accessories. Gentlemen wore shirt, tie, jacket, waistcoat, black pants and gloves. Dinner parties usually began around 7 pm. Upon arrival, guests were shown into the drawing room where they chatted before dinner was served. They would then be ushered into the dining room for dinner. After dessert the ladies retired to the drawing room where coffee and tea were served while gentlemen remained in the dining room to enjoy port and cigars.

Regattas

Although Jane Franklin was not as active a social hostess as some of the other vice-regal women, she is remembered partly for the colony's first regatta, held on 5 January 1827, and which she organised. The Franklins decided that Hobart Town should have an annual regatta to symbolise and celebrate the anniversary of Abel Tasman's discovery of the island in 1642. Jane Franklin accepted the responsibility of organising the regatta with the help of navy and army officers.

The regatta was intended to serve as a social function—and an attempt by the Franklins to unite the disparate factions in the colony. To promote this end, the Franklins declared the first regatta a public holiday, hoping to bring together a cross-section of society. They succeeded, and people from all classes attended. Jane Franklin adopted an emblem, a wattle blossom, to promote a sense of pride in the colony.

People gathered around 10 am on the day of the regatta. Dressed in their best clothes, they wandered down to Sullivan's Cove. Scottish bands played while 70 or so boats formed a fleet. The governor's vessel headed the boat procession. There was a whaleboat race followed by sailing boats and dinghies. Marquees were erected by the well-to-do to protect them from inclement weather and so that they could entertain their guests in style. Jane Franklin's floral emblem—the wattle blossom—was on display everywhere.

Almost every booth, tent and tree was adorned with wattle blossoms and blue ribbons, or hung with sheets of 'poetical' fancies and mottoes.¹³

Unfortunately the results of this first regatta were not recorded but the Royal Hobart regatta is still held every February and is celebrated by a public holiday.

Race meetings: a social event

Horse racing was popular in the colonies and in Victoria the Melbourne Cup provided a grand social and ceremonial occasion for racing enthusiasts and the well-to-do. Held annually from 1861, it was a major public event and a social highlight throughout the colonies. The vice-regals entertained guests, including governors from other colonies, who came to attend Cup Week and its associated festivities. Among the Lochs' guests in 1884 were Sir William Robinson, then Governor of South Australia, and his daughter; and Sir George Strahan, Governor of Tasmania. All were invited to a ball on 30 October 1884, hosted by prominent landowners Sir William Clarke and Lady Janet Clarke, who were highly regarded in Melbourne's elite social circles. Emma Southgate reported the views of a social columnist in the *Australasian* on the staging of the ball:

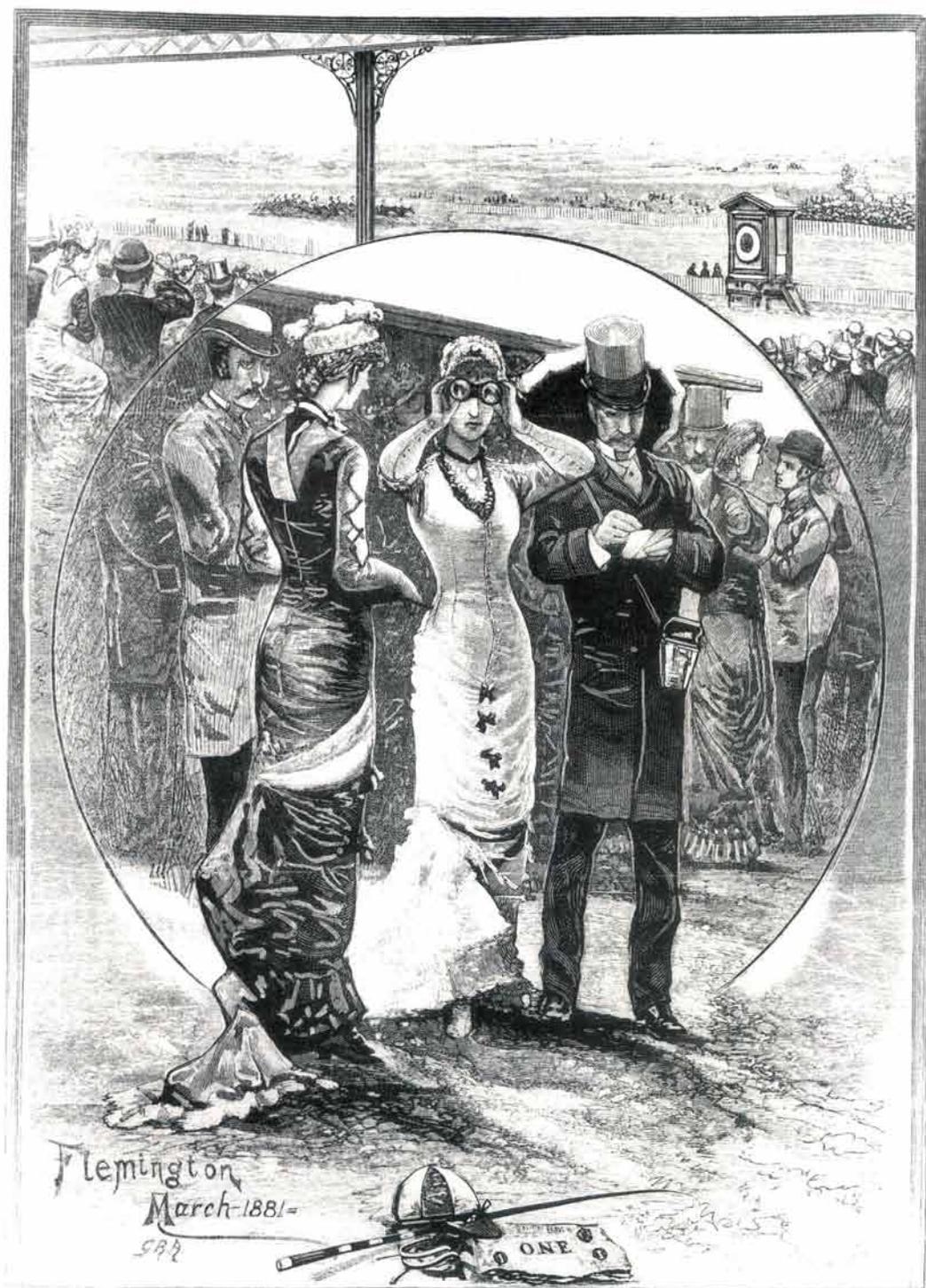
Any person outside to make his fortune
might import a load of monkeys and white
eggs. His eccentricity has reflected us
from the deadly monotony of man's usual
appear by wearing both.



Adelaide Cup Meeting: The Government House Party, c.1899
photograph
Tennyson Collection
Manuscript Collection MS479/20

Several fastidious social critics, whose memory ranges over a much longer vista of fancy balls than I can recall, agreed ... that the Clarke ball of 1884 was the most brilliant ever held in this city ... The bare Town-hall was transformed into a bower of beauty almost beyond recognition ... Here, blossomed and bloomed huge azaleas of all known colours, and magnificent rhododendrons added their wealth of foliage and colour; from pillar to pillar were festooned long ropes of pittosporums, in the centre of whose half arches hung fairy-like baskets of flowers, the foundations sometimes being roses or azaleas, while delicate fern fronds and drooping coloured plumes filled up the top part ... Lady Clarke, attired as 'Marie Antoinette', received her guests, accompanied by Sir William, who wore the dark uniform of the old Victorian Yeoman Cavalry.¹⁴

Spring fashion at the Melbourne Cup is not a twenty-first century invention, but had its roots firmly established in the nineteenth century. According to the *Argus*



The Autumn Races at Flemington, Victoria
Reproduced from *The Australasian Sketcher*, 12 March 1881, p. 9

newspaper, lace was the latest rage at Flemington racecourse on Cup Day 1884—even parasols were covered in lace. The fashion columnist reported gowns of satin with threaded lace, especially in shades of blue and grey. Lady Loch wore a grey satin gown with a trimmed lace bodice.

Refined taste in apparel was everywhere visible, and there was an utter absence of that competition in dress which was the bane of former years ... we at once come to the conclusion that the only place to witness a full display of the spring fashions is at Flemington on Cup Day.¹⁵

During their time in South Australia, Hallam and Audrey Tennyson made their way each November to Melbourne for the Cup meeting. As part of the ceremony preceding the Melbourne Cup race, the South Australian vice-regal couple would officially arrive in a horse and carriage before taking their place in a private box in the grandstand. They would lead a procession of carriages of titled and other prominent guests. Invited to share the governor's box were members of the colonial elite who were also usually guests of the vice-regal couple at lunch.

In a letter to her mother, Audrey described the procession of VIPs in 1899. Her description of the weather that year appropriately depicts Melbourne's familiar inclemency:

We had quite a procession of carriages, the first with four horses & postilions in which were Lord & Lady Brassey, the Admiral—who has precedence of all visiting Governors, & myself ... We drove on to the course & then to the vice-regal box as usual & then constant presentations to people as one walked about—& discussions [on] which horse to back, walks to the paddocks etc. etc. Luncheon in a private room & at the end, tea before returning home before the last race.

Yesterday, instead of a fine day for the world-renowned 'Melbourne Cup' when there would probably have been 130,000 people & the marvellous dresses of everyone a most wonderful sight, it was the most pelting day I have ever witnessed. The streets as we drove through them were running rivers in many places inches deep, & simply tearing down the streets ... We had to all go in mackintoshes & umbrellas ... We should have been such a pretty procession.¹⁶

Functions and fashion

Audrey Tennyson played an active role as her husband's social hostess. She held and attended various balls, and gave dinner parties entertaining celebrities and people of notable rank both at Government House and at Marble Hill. Visiting the vice-regals in Melbourne and attending the race meetings there were considered major social events for the South Australian governor and his wife. For recreation, Audrey Tennyson enjoyed going to concerts and plays and was frequently in the public eye.

With a high social profile, Audrey was conscious of what she wore and how she presented herself. Poised, and wanting to appear as elegant as possible, she saw it fitting that the governor's wife be well dressed. Her code of dress was a statement of her vice-regal status. It defined her as a member of the colonial elite and reflected her prestigious social position.

She wore the latest styles imported from Paris or London, and had two regular dressmakers in England, Mrs Ker Lane and Mrs Durrant. Audrey usually wrote to her mother, Zacyntha Boyle, in England to order clothing from her regular dressmakers and hats from her milliner, Mrs Edwardes. It was customary at that time to wear hats or bonnets during the day and more elaborate headdresses or jewelled feathers for evening functions. Audrey's mother would ship the completed order to South Australia by sea mail. In her letters, Audrey complained of not being able to buy fashionable items in Adelaide. In other cities, however, French fabrics, jewellery and accessories were available and there were tailors and seamstresses who could copy the latest European fashion both in fabric and in style.

Audrey's letters to her mother often contained a detailed description of her attire for formal functions. For a Queen's Birthday reception, she wore her 'white satin of Mrs Lane's embroidered with pearls & crystals, my tiara, pearls round my neck'.¹⁷

In accordance with the etiquette of the day, after her brother Cecil died in battle during the Boer War in South Africa, Audrey had to put aside her colourful clothes to go into mourning. She wrote to her milliner in England asking to return hats that she could not wear during her period of mourning. For the same reason she could no longer wear three vibrantly coloured gowns she had ordered from Mrs Ker Lane.

As a vice-regal, it was also necessary for Audrey to follow a strict code of etiquette and wear mourning following Queen Victoria's death in 1901. By the tone of a letter to her mother, Audrey seemed to fret over the arrival of appropriate mourning clothes in time for the opening of the Federal Parliament. She had given her mother the responsibility of ordering the clothes and shipping them to her in Adelaide.

At the opening of Federal Parliament in 1901, French influences dominated the dress of the female guests. The once-fashionable crinoline of the mid-nineteenth century was no longer in evidence. It was replaced by sleeker, more alluringly shaped garments, fitted tightly at the waist and hips. Silk remained popular for affluent women as the nineteenth century progressed. Lace trimmings, brocade or tulle were added for decorative effect.

For gala occasions, gowns were tightly corseted in the fashionable European style. Accessories included hats, pearls and diamond necklaces; and flowers,

including roses, were a popular choice for hair decoration at society balls.

In her letters Audrey conveys a feeling of desperation at not always having the appropriate clothing. She was exasperated about the process of getting the right clothes to wear, the length of time it took and the extra payments required for customs duty. The need to incorporate changing fashion trends in her wardrobe, often resulting in some gowns being worn only once or twice, irritated her.

Eventually Audrey found a local dressmaker who designed garments for Lady Brassey, the wife of a past governor of Victoria, regarded widely as well dressed. Audrey could now keep up with the latest fashion by ordering her garments closer to those special occasions.



Portrait of Catherine Helen Spence 1890s
albumen photograph; 16.4 x 10.5 cm
Pictures Collection P2234

Recreation and entertainment

Audrey Tennyson particularly enjoyed entertaining over lunch. Rather than lavish dinner parties, she preferred to invite a few guests at a time for a more intimate and friendly function. Her guests included other vice-regals, titled and notable people, including, on one occasion, social reformer Catherine Spence.

Yesterday we had the famous old Miss Catherine Spence [public speaker, lecturer and writer] who is so keen about Proportionate Voting and has lectured all over the world, more or less, on it. I am afraid I do not understand it. She is a most clever bright kindly sympathetic old lady, well read, full of fun, very tiny, with a look of the dear Queen & much her height, aged 75, but brisk & energetic as ever. She came out here [from Scotland] at 13 in 1839. She & Hallam made great friends.¹⁸

Audrey also enjoyed a night out at the theatre. She liked to mix with celebrities of the day. On one occasion, contemporary actor Julius Knight was

invited for luncheon. Audrey had seen him in a leading role in a play called *Under the Red Robe* and was impressed by his performance. She also documented her enjoyment of a musical play called *Sweet Nell* starring a young Victorian performer—Nellie Stewart, popular actor and singer.

Audrey's cultural and artistic tastes ranged widely. She enjoyed attending or hosting musical concerts—another popular form of vice-regal entertainment.

In her letters she mentions attending a recital by Australia's grand opera star Dame Nellie Melba, as well as inviting a concert pianist, Elsie Stanley Hall, to play for royal guests staying with them at Government House, Adelaide. Audrey thought that Hall, a Professor of Piano, was a gifted pianist.

Elizabeth Loch and Audrey Tennyson were both exemplary hostesses. Jane Franklin, however, did not view this role with the same level of importance. She concentrated on being her husband's ally and on following her own cultural interests. Eliza Darling was busy with charity work and family issues, while Mary Anne Broome was occupied with her personal and charitable concerns and travelling with the governor.



Miss Nellie Stewart
coloured postcard; 13.6 x 8.5 cm
[Sydney: Talma & Co., c.1905]
David Elliott Theatrical Postcard Collection
Pictures Collection PIC Album 998/570

Notes

Letters of Audrey, Lady Tennyson are found in: Papers of Audrey, Lady Tennyson, National Library of Australia (MS479/49).

- ¹ A. Atkinson & M. Aveling (eds), *Australians 1838*. Sydney: Fairfax, Syme & Weldon, 1987, p. 238.
- ² D. Pool, *What Jane Austen Ate and Charles Dickens Knew*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993, pp. 66-69.
- ³ Letter, 11 May 1902, Audrey, Lady Tennyson to Zacynthia Boyle. Papers of Audrey, Lady Tennyson.
- ⁴ A. Hasluck (ed.), *Audrey Tennyson's Vice-Regal Days: The Australian Letters of Audrey Lady Tennyson 1899-1903*. Canberra: National Library of Australia, 1978, p. 194.
- ⁵ Letter, 14 June 1899, Audrey, Lady Tennyson to Zacynthia Boyle. Papers of Audrey, Lady Tennyson.
- ⁶ Emma Southgate, *Diary of a Lady's Maid: Government House in Colonial Australia*, edited by Helen Vellacott. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1995, pp. 90-91.
- ⁷ *Australasian Sketcher*, 29 June 1885, p. 102.
- ⁸ Southgate, op. cit., pp. 135-136.
- ⁹ Letter, Lady Loch to Theyre Weigall, date unknown. LaTrobe Australian Manuscripts Collection, State Library of Victoria (MS11474 Box 32/6f).
- ¹⁰ Letter, 6 October 1900, Audrey, Lady Tennyson to Zacynthia Boyle. Papers of Audrey, Lady Tennyson.
- ¹¹ Southgate, op.cit, pp. 54-56.
- ¹² *ibid.*, pp. 82-84.
- ¹³ A. Atkinson & M. Aveling (eds), op. cit., p. 268.
- ¹⁴ Southgate, op. cit., p. 84.
- ¹⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 88-89.
- ¹⁶ Letter, 4 November 1899, Audrey, Lady Tennyson to Zacynthia Boyle. Papers of Audrey, Lady Tennyson.
- ¹⁷ Letter, 28 May 1899, *ibid.*
- ¹⁸ Letter, 2 April 1901, *ibid.*



Frederic  unge (1807–1874)

Jane, Lady Franklin 1842

chalk sketch after Thomas Bock

Collection: Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston, Tasmania

Traveller

While in office, colonial governors travelled extensively throughout the colony in order both to familiarise themselves with their constituency and to 'fly the flag' for the Mother Country. They used whatever transport means were at their disposal or were necessary to reach isolated areas within the colony, including horse and carriage, railways, ships, and boats.

Governors' wives were normally expected to accompany their husbands on these tours, thereby fulfilling an important social role. They appeared by their husband's side at ceremonial occasions like laying the foundation stone of a church or other public building, or opening railways or schools. Sometimes, the governor's wife performed this public function herself.

Eliza Darling did not record her travels in a journal, as Jane Franklin did, nor in her letters home, which tended to be of a more personal nature. As the governor's wife, she must have travelled with her husband throughout the colony of New South Wales, but there is no written record available of her travels.

On the other hand, Jane Franklin was a seasoned traveller and methodically recorded her extensive travels in Australia. Soon after her arrival in Van Diemen's Land, she and her husband toured the island and then travelled to South Australia and Port Phillip (initially part of New South Wales, later becoming Victoria). She made history as the first woman to climb Tasmania's Mount Wellington. She also travelled overland from Melbourne to Sydney, from Hobart Town to Macquarie Harbour, and she visited New Zealand.

Throughout her travels in the colonies, Jane Franklin recorded her thoughts and views in diaries and in letters to her husband or to her sister, Mary Simpkinson, in England. Her writing describes her environment and the people she encountered. She used her travels to promote the interests of Van Diemen's Land, discussing colonial affairs with those in prominent positions whenever possible.

As expected, Elizabeth Loch and Audrey Tennyson travelled with their husbands and participated in social activities both of a public nature and in private with their own circle of friends. Mary Anne Broome travelled with her husband to settlements throughout Western Australia—her travel accounts were

later published. Devoted to her husband, she accompanied him wherever his colonial appointments took them around the world.

The records of the travels of governors' wives not only serve to illustrate the important social role that the women fulfilled in their respective colonies, but illuminate the development and geography of the country they describe, and the conditions in which the colonists lived.

Jane Franklin in Van Diemen's Land

In 1838, Jane Franklin travelled with her husband to Maria Island off the coast of Van Diemen's Land, which had served as a penal settlement between 1825 and 1832, when it was abandoned in favour of Port Arthur. Still standing were the brick buildings used for prisoners' barracks and a gaol, as well as wooden buildings used as workshops for manufacturing cloth, a tannery and shoemaking. There were also soldiers' barracks, a hospital, a surgeon's rooms and a store.

Sir John Franklin inspected the colony of Van Diemen's Land annually. On one of those visits in April 1839, he wrote to Jane's sister in England:

The country is making a steady progress and improvement, as is manifested by the settlers bringing more land under cultivation, by the enlargement of farm buildings, and by the additional fencing. The roads are greatly improved since my last visit to the northern side, and the whole state and appearance of society and of the country shew that we do not deserve the bad character which has so unjustly been given us. And as for our moral improvement, I will only tell you that, on this tour, I have assisted the laying of the foundation stone of four new churches, and there are two others nearly ready for this ceremony.

I can most positively state that the originally free portion of the community can bear a very advantageous comparison with that of any other country of intelligence, industry and moral conduct. I have made it a point on this excursion of visiting the house of every settler that laid in my way, often unexpectedly. I have gone into the apartments of the assigned servants for the purpose of inspecting them and of affording the men the opportunity of speaking to me, if they had any cause, or of my speaking to them when I saw cause, and on no occasion was I spoken to, by any servant, in the language of complaint against his master.¹

The same year, Jane accompanied her husband on a vice-regal visit to the Aboriginal settlement at Flinders Island in Bass Strait, arriving there in the government schooner *Eliza*. The settlement had been established in 1832 by the Government of Van Diemen's Land to confine the Aborigines of that colony in a village called Wybalenna. The intent was to introduce them to 'civilised' European ways, train them in British work habits, teach them to read and write and to follow the laws of British society.



John Skinner Prout (1805–1876)
Residence of the Aborigines, Flinders Island 1846
lithograph; 27.8 x 38.6 cm
Pictures Collection S348

The Franklins met George Augustus Robinson, the commandant of Wybalenna, who was seeking government support to remove the Aboriginal settlement to Port Phillip. Robinson explained the program run at Wybalenna to Governor Franklin. It was based on the ethic of hard work where the men were trained to be agricultural labourers and roadmakers; the women were trained to be domestic workers. Schooling and prayers were part of the daily ritual at Wybalenna. The program separated Aboriginal children from their parents in an attempt to 'educate' them to a European lifestyle. While at Wybalenna, the Franklins inspected the Aboriginal terrace, burial ground, public buildings and church.

From Port Phillip northwards

Also in 1839, with atypical adventurousness for someone in her position, Jane Franklin chose to travel overland from Port Phillip to Sydney with a small escort party. On 14 April, Sir John Franklin wrote to Jane's sister Mary Simpkinson about the trip:

She [Jane] is accompanied by Sophie Cracroft, and escorted by my private Secretary Mr. Elliot, and by Capt. Moriarty, a most excellent person and skilful bush traveller, and by Dr. Hobson a young medical officer of great ability just

returned to this Colony after finishing his education in England. Mr. Powlett expects to join them. Her own maid and my own personal servant, her husband, are also of the party, in addition to the cart drivers. Sir George Gipps has kindly written to direct that every assistance should be afforded to the party, at each of the Police stations along the road, and the good Bishop has also informed me that he has requested the good offices and kind attention of all the clergy and of his friends after she enters the settled districts.

The party are well provided with horses and carts, tents and provisions, and the only question as to the accomplishment of the journey appears to rest on the time the rain begins to fall heavily which might swell the rivers and render them impassable.

A little rain would be of service by causing the grass to spring up and afford food for the horses. Jane and the whole party will of course return to Port Phillip if these heavy rains set in before they get across the Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers.

The journey is expected to occupy about 28 days but not more than half of that will be spent in districts that are not (more or less) settled, and we are informed that there are now stations nearly the whole way. It is not supposed that they will have to sleep in the Bush more than 5 or 6 nights.²

Constantly keeping her husband informed throughout the trip, Jane wrote of her visit to Port Phillip (Victoria) where she witnessed a corroboree.

After a long delay during which the men were painting themselves the home tribes began their dances. For this purpose they had thrown aside their skins or blankets and were perfectly naked (except bundles of heavy fringes hanging round their loins like aprons), their breasts, arms and thighs, and legs were marked with broad white belts of pipe clay and borders of the same were traced round their eyes. Round their ancles [sic] they wore large ruffs of the gum tree branches and in each hand they held a piece of hardwood which they were constantly employed in striking against each other. The leader of the band was an elderly man, dressed in a blanket who stood with his face towards a group of women squatted on the grass, and who beat time with their hands on some folded opossum skins, thus producing a dull, hollow accompaniment. They sang also the whole time, in the style of the Flinders Island people, led by the old man.³

Travelling north, Jane's party reached the steep banks of the Murray River.

The water in the deepest part did not come above the horses girths, and the current was not sufficiently strong to render it a matter of any difficulty to stem it. The water here may be about 80 yards across, and the stream tho' thus easy of passage, was much more rapid than any we had hitherto seen. In times of flood it is dangerous on account of this rapidity—as well as on account of the steepness of its banks.⁴

She recorded her observations of the Murray Valley, including the dwellings and the crops being farmed. Local settlers informed Jane that maize was sown extensively as a preparatory crop for wheat in soils too rich for the latter.



George Hamilton (1812–1883)
[*Camp; Journey from Port Phillip to South Australia*] c.1840
pencil drawing; 18,9 x 30 cm
Rex Nan Kivell Collection NK705/14
Pictures Collection

Further north, Jane wrote of their encampment on the banks of the Murrumbidgee River.

Our arrival here has anticipated our expectations. Every thing seems to have prospered with us. If it rains heavily, it is not while we are upon the road; if the permanent water holes are so far distant that a forced march is necessary to reach them, the same heavy rains have filled some intervening ones, which could not have been calculated upon, and which abridge our exertions. The rivers are still so low, that the water in the deepest has scarcely come above the axle trees, and the difficult banks of the creeks, which if concealed under water would be really dangerous.⁵

In spite of her temerity, Jane was conscious of the possible dangers confronting her on this journey:

We have had no bushmen to present their guns or pistols at our heads, and thrust their hands in our pockets.⁶

During her trip, Jane Franklin mixed with the elite members of New South Wales society, including Anna King, the wife of former Governor Philip King; Lady O'Connell, the wife of Sir Maurice O'Connell, Lieutenant Governor of New South Wales; and Lady Gipps, the wife of Sir George Gipps, Governor of New South Wales at the time.

I have had shoals of cards, but have been out and as morning visitors have received only old Mrs. King and Major Smith. Mrs. King came before 12 o'clock, she can scarcely be called old. I don't know that I should take her to be more than 55. I told her I intended to take her back with me, to which she made no objection. Captain and Mrs. King left two or three days before we arrived for Port Stephen.

On the day of our arrival we received cards and dinner invitations from Sir Maurice and Lady O'Connell (Sir George and Lady Gipps also). Lady Gipps said her answer depended upon mine and the invitation was accepted.⁷

Jane and her party spent a week in the Illawarra south of Sydney, nicknamed the 'Garden of New South Wales' because of its fertile soil, good climate and lush tropical plants. She wrote of her impressions of the Illawarra district, a verdant tract between the mountains and the sea. Advised that land in the district provided an excellent investment property, Jane considered the prospect for herself and Sir John. Despite a recent drought in the area, she observed the harvest to be as productive as ever, with maize the chief crop.

Her visit to the Illawarra coincided with a period of considerable growth in the region. It was developing into an area of small farms rather than large estates owned by landlords and worked by convicts. Free immigrants and ex-convicts were the mainstay of the population, as transportation of convicts was coming to a close. The remaining convict labour worked on the erection of a harbour and many new



William Nicholas (1807–1854)
Portrait of Lady O'Connell c.1847
oil on canvas; 76 x 56 cm
Pictures Collection R11487

buildings in Wollongong, the main centre. The district was well known for its wheat, vegetables—and snakes.

Jane's first stop on her trip to the Illawarra was Campbell Town, which she noticed had a poor water supply, with the nearest river being the Nepean which was over 40 kilometres away. The town's population comprised 250 people, mainly of Irish origin. Jane observed that the road was good and that the town had a mounted police force. She compared the forest, a few miles from Campbell Town, to that of Van Diemen's Land and found it to be similar—thick and bushy.

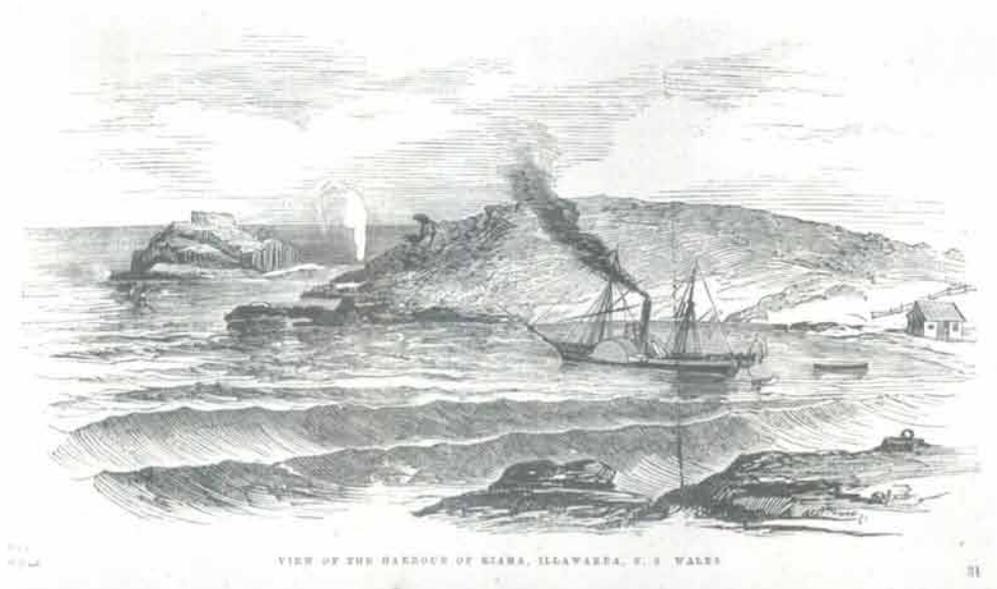
Jane Franklin admired the orchards and local flora—banksia, honeysuckle, red and orange flowers, fig trees, nectarines and laurels—on the way to Wollongong, where she and her party visited pioneers' huts and the military barracks. There she was concerned by the lack of light and air entering the premises; she saw men lying on bare floors—only the ill slept on a mattress. In the township of Wollongong, Jane's party was shown the local police court residence and mounted police barracks, as well as a marketplace in the centre of the town and an Episcopal church.

While travelling on horseback towards the Illawarra Lake, Jane observed the changes in soil along the way, with pure sand in some spots and good soil in others. The party was impressed by the view of mountains towards the south of the lake and stopped to watch a waterfall on the other side. The travellers proceeded on to the Illawarra Stockade, where convicts worked, and stopped later at Dapto, described as having good grass and forest land, cultivated plains and farms. The party spent the next few days at Kiama, Wollongong, Bulli and Appin, before returning to Sydney. Gaps then occur in Jane's diary, so information on the remainder of this trip is unavailable.

A visit to New Zealand

In 1841, accompanied by Governor Franklin's aide-de-camp and a small support party, Jane Franklin visited New Zealand, landing in the boat *Favourite* at Port Nicholson. She travelled to the French settlement of Akaroa where she was struck by the 'civilised' fashion in which the indigenous people behaved.

From Auckland, Jane's party travelled to the Bay of Islands. Locals commented on Jane Franklin's enquiring nature, seemingly curious to learn everything she could of the area. Her next stop was the harbour of Hokionga, which Jane observed was one of the great western harbours in New Zealand, and the chief station of the Wesleyan mission.



Walter G. Mason
View of the Harbour of Kiama, Illawarra, N.S. Wales
 wood engraving; 11.7 x 22.4 cm
 Sydney: J.R. Clarke, 1857
 Pictures Collection S1306

Back in Tasmania

In 1842, Jane's party crossed the Victoria Valley, forded the Dee River and arrived at the township of Marlborough.⁸ Along the way they had to negotiate forests, rugged mountains, deep gullies, fast-flowing rivers and murky swamps. At night Jane slept amongst the fern leaves, and often the tents were soaked by rain. Yet in this role Jane Franklin seemed to revel.

On the return leg of this trip, accompanied by the Governor's aide-de-camp and orderly, her maid, a doctor, a free settler and a working party of 20 convicts, Jane visited a disused penal settlement at Macquarie Harbour on the west coast of Tasmania. Governor Franklin's surveyor had prepared the route for the party. Putting aside concerns for her safety, Jane had made the journey undeterred by stories of the deaths of white convicts who had previously attempted it.

Mary Anne Broome in Western Australia

Mary Anne Broome enjoyed accompanying her husband, Governor Frederick Broome, on his country tours. He travelled extensively throughout Western Australia to familiarise himself with country districts so that whenever questions

of railways or harbours or any other improvement arose, he was not ignorant of the place in question.

Lady Broome was a seasoned traveller and endured the hazards of travelling very well. In numerous letters to her son Guy in England, Mary Anne wrote of her travels in the colony. In Geraldton in October 1883, she wrote:

We have been busy, whirling about in all directions, visiting schools, hospitals, churches, institutions of all sorts and kinds, and making excursions in every direction. That was our daylight work, and every night brought its banquet or entertainment of some sort, for the Geraldton people have evidently royal ideas of hospitality.⁹

While in Geraldton, Governor Broome was called on to officiate at numerous ceremonial functions. One particularly historic ceremony marked the beginning of work on the telegraph line in that area.

The governor had been asked to drive in, or plant, the first pole of the new telegraph line, stretching far, far away through the wild and distant country between this and Roebourne in the North-West territory. The pretty ceremony took place in another bush-bower, arranged so as to shelter us from the sun; and there were heaps of speeches and good wishes for the new line. I asked for, and was given, a little bit of the great coil of telegraph wire, and they hammered it into a sort of bangle or bracelet for me on the spot. So you will see it some day, as I shall always wear it.¹⁰

From Geraldton the Broomes travelled to Dongarra at the mouth of the Irwin River, where the farmers and settlers of the district staged a banquet and agricultural show for the Broomes. An avid nature lover, Mary Anne was struck by the beauty of the yellow, pink, gold and silver flowers.

We drove in a sort of procession of little carriages, which got along much better than big ones would have done, and allowed of the horses being constantly changed. First came the governor and his private secretary, driven by the Member of the district, and with two mounted orderlies, following close behind. Then I was very happy in the next carriage, because my charming driver—the Resident Magistrate—knew every leaf and flower, and could tell me their names, and all about the birds. This carriage of ours was simply a mass of nosegays. They were piled up in front till we appeared to have an apron of flowers over our knees. Then came two more vehicles, one with the Inspector of Police, who had charge of us, and another gentleman, and the last held the servants. So you see we made quite a grand procession.¹¹

From Dongarra, the vice-regals travelled in their van to the Sand Plains, which Mary Anne Broome described as an 'ocean of sand'. There, she saw a wonderful world of flowers surrounding the party and a notable absence of animal life.

After a mile or so, we entered upon the great 'sand plains' as they are called, but this is really a strip of the Sahara or Desert which lies in the centre of Australia;

a little corner or tail of it comes down here and makes a narrow belt, less than 70 miles [110 kilometres] across, between the capital land round Dongarra, and the good sheep-country at the other side of the sand-belt. There is no way of escaping it, and all that the government have been able to do is to dig a well and fence it in, and put rude hollow tree-troughs for the sheep and cattle to drink at, wherever they could find water. So it is just possible to get stock across this bit of desert, especially after the winter rains, when the wells are full. Then, every here and there, some ten or twelve miles apart, perhaps, is a little copse or thicket, like an oasis, of an acre or two, where the shepherd can camp and make his fire and let his sheep rest and feed a little.¹²

The Broomes' next stop was Tipper's Thicket, named after a murdered shepherd. Here, the vice-regals were welcomed by shearers and station hands and enjoyed a warm fire and nourishing dinner. They stayed at an old-fashioned homestead where oranges, figs, peaches, vegetables and vines were plentiful. From Tipper's Thicket, the party travelled to the Berkshire Valley.

The orderly brought me this afternoon such a beautiful and curious flower, or rather two flowers, which he had picked from a low tree—not a bush, he said, and indeed they seemed to belong to one of the endless varieties of gum trees, from the aromatic smell of the stalk and leaves. One was a large beautiful crimson flower, like a closely-set ball of fringe—or like a cactus flower, cut short and trimmed. The bud was the curious part, however. It was as large as the flower, but it had on a comical night-cap or extinguisher, of a pale green, and you could not see a division or place where it was likely to open anywhere. I must tell you, the night-cap ended atop, in a tall fantastic peak or stem; in fact, it was exactly like the barreta, or pointed cap the Portuguese lads wear in Madeira.

Well, I held these flowers carefully in my hand for about an hour, and was looking about me at the endless stretch of flowers when someone cried, 'Look, look', and there was my bud blowing! The green cap had split exactly halfway down the green bowl which held the flower as neatly as if cut round by the sharpest pen-knife, and it was rising slowly, slowly, with the vivid crimson fringe bursting out below it. I wish I had seen the beginning.¹³

It is thought that the flower is the *Eucalypts macrocarpa*.

After their stay in the Berkshire Valley, the Broomes moved on to visit a mission called New Norcia. Well-maintained roads and houses on each side of the street formed an inviting sight for the Governor and his wife, who were greeted by a band, schoolchildren and local Aboriginal people.

As soon as we came upon the Mission land we observed here and there a large cross 'blazed' upon the trunks of the trees as a boundary mark, and after we had slowly mounted a rather long incline, more than a hill, we came upon the prettiest imaginable sight. Just below us lay a wide fertile valley, with a large and prosperous village or, indeed, town, mapped out by excellent roads and streets, with neat little houses on either side. In the centre stood a good-sized chapel, with fine schools

near it; and the large monastery on the opposite side of the road seemed to have a splendid garden at the back, stretching down to the river-side. Between our cavalcade, however, and this building were many arches and flags, and a great concourse of people, chiefly natives and half-castes, all in their best clothes.¹⁴

From New Norcia, the vice-regal couple travelled through the eastern districts to York, Northam and Newcastle, about 95 kilometres north-east of Perth. In Newcastle they enjoyed an agricultural show, a bazaar, a banquet and a ball. Their journey took about 11 hours to travel 135 kilometres. They travelled to York by train, stopping at Guildford, a large village surrounded by vineyards and fields. Mary Anne was struck by the prosperous-looking farms and good soil in the eastern districts.

On a later excursion the Broomes paid a visit to Bunbury, a seaport over 160 kilometres south of Perth. Leaving Perth by road, the party headed for Fremantle where they boarded a steamboat to take them to Bunbury, located in a small flower-filled valley. There, the vice-regals were entertained with a reception, balls, banquets and shows. From Bunbury, Mary Anne travelled by van to Vasse, a seaside village further south and visited 'the most enchanting garden you ever saw ... planted with all sorts and conditions of flowers'.¹⁵

Like other vice-regal families, the Broomes enjoyed escaping the heat during summer by moving to their summer residence—in the Broomes' case on Rottnest Island, not far off the coast of Fremantle.

Here we are comfortably established in our charming summer home, and I must tell you all about it, from the very beginning! First of all you must know Rottnest is a little island about a dozen miles [20 kilometres] long, and three miles [5 kilometres] wide, some 12 or 14 miles [20–22 kilometres] from the mainland, right in the track of the cool sea-breezes. There was a time when I actually thought the name—meaning 'rat's nest', and given by the Dutch discoverers long, long ago—ugly, but now I like it, and would not change it on any account. High hills run down the middle of the island, and on the highest peak stands a lighthouse. There is a nice little Government cottage which stands on a green rising ground in a lovely situation, with the most delicious beach and bathing-place imaginable just below it, only a few yards off. The house holds lots of small bedrooms which is exactly what is wanted over here, and everything seems capitally planned and arranged for our summer picnic life. The cottage stands in a sort of enclosure neatly walled in, with grass all round, and green as any emerald.¹⁶

Elizabeth Loch in Victoria

Like Mary Anne Broome, Elizabeth Loch accompanied her husband on country tours. The program for one such visit in 1884, their first to Sandhurst (now Bendigo), indicates the detailed planning required to meet their commitments. The *Argus* newspaper reported:

Gully mine, and make a flying journey to Eaglehawk, and arrive back in Sandhurst in time for His Excellency to lay the memorial-stone of the new public offices at half-past 4 o'clock. The banquet to His Excellency will commence at 6 o'clock, and the special train will start on the return journey to Melbourne at 8.10 p.m.¹⁷

One month later, the Lochs completed another full program, this time at Ballarat. With an early start from Government House, they travelled in their own train from Spencer Street Station and reached Ballarat around midday. Governor and Lady Loch opened the Art Gallery at Ballarat and later boarded a steam launch for a short cruise on the lake. At 5.30 pm, the Lochs returned to the hotel to prepare for a banquet at 6.30 pm, followed by a Masonic Ball at 9 pm. They retired around 1 am. The next day, the vice-regal couple attended the races, and did some sightseeing. They were shown some of the town's major buildings, including a Jewish synagogue, churches, the town hall and post office. Arriving at Ballarat train station at 5 pm, they reached Melbourne soon after 8 pm, returning late to Government House.

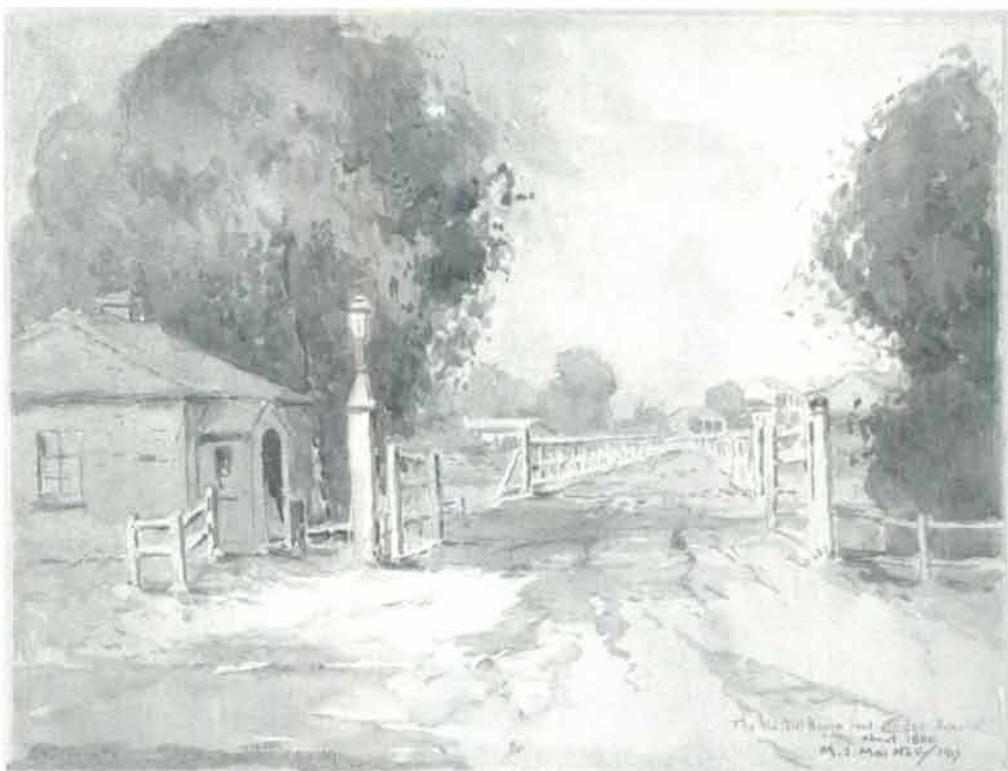
The following month, Sir Henry and Lady Loch travelled to Warrnambool, a coastal town in the western district of the colony. On 15 October 1884, they left Government House at 7.15 in the morning for Spencer Street Station and travelled all day, reaching Warrnambool around 5 pm. Emma Southgate, Elizabeth Loch's maid, recorded details of the trip in her diary.

At one place there were some Aborigines at the station to receive Sir Henry and, after a long chat about the country and that it all belonged to them before the white men came, they showed Sir Henry a wonderful knack of throwing a piece of wood in such a way that it will kill a bird and come back to them. It's called an ... [boomerang].¹⁸

While in the Warrnambool district, the Lochs stayed at Airlee, a house lent to them for their visit. Emma's diary provides an account of an excursion to a rural show in Warrnambool.

At 12 the party returned and dressed for the agricultural show where a banquet will be given and much speech making. We went to see what it was like, and really the people are quite a sight, thousands in the field where the show took place. There was a splendid show of cart horses, ponies, cobs, and all classes; implements for farming purposes, flowers, vegetables, butter, bread, fat sheep, wool, pigs, carts, phaetons, etc., etc.

After the banquet the Governor and party occupied a tent and the horses that had taken prizes filed past them. Then some good riding and jumping took place. At 4 o'clock we had to return to Airlee to prepare for the ball and reached home just in time to receive them. Lady Loch had a rest till 6 p.m. then dressed for the ball in amber and black trimmed with black Spanish lace and amber feathers in her hair, ornaments: rubies and diamonds. The ball commenced at 9.30 and went off well. Lady Loch and Sir Henry returned home about 12.30.¹⁹



Matthew James MacNally (1874–1943)
The Old Toll House and Bridge, Benalla about 1880-1917
watercolour; 25.8 x 33.7 cm
Pictures Collection R22

During the summer of 1885 the Lochs travelled in rural Victoria. They toured the Australian Alps with 'three cab loads of luggage' (including bedding). The first stop was Benalla where they lunched on chicken and ham. The heat was intense, reaching 115 degrees Fahrenheit in the sun and 98.5 degrees in the shade.

Emma Southgate noted in her diary the travelling conditions facing the Lochs and their travelling party. Unexpectedly, for people in their social position, conditions were not always first class.

Got up at 6 a.m. and found Lady Loch had hardly slept at all. The bed, tho' it looked clean, was infested with bugs. Poor Master Douglas' legs are completely bunged up.²⁰

On their travels, the Lochs and their party set up camp late each afternoon. There was a tent for dining, two others for food, one for Henry and Elizabeth Loch, another for their son Douglas and Emma Southgate, and another small tent used as 'a retiring room'. The group would gather around a campfire after

dinner. Bathing facilities were often limited, with only one basin shared between 30 people. If there was a river close by, it served as a makeshift bathroom. Emma commented, 'Washing is not a part of camp life it seems.'²¹

In the hot summer months, the Lochs retreated to the cooler climes of Mount Macedon, 65 kilometres from Melbourne. There they engaged in 'an endless round of tennis parties, polo matches, race meetings and garden parties ... dances and amateur theatricals'.²² The Lochs' first visit to Mount Macedon at the beginning of 1885 was spent in a house rented from the owner of the *Melbourne Age*, David Syme. 'His house was in a magnificent position on the hillside, and although quite large, enough for a family ... residence there.'²³

Country tours often afforded a break from the routine and commitments of vice-regal life and the Lochs seemed to enjoy them. Travelling involved performing specific duties, but also allowed for socialising. In October 1884, the Lochs took a train from Spencer Street Station for Sunbury and a buggy ride to Rupertswood. They had been invited there for a social visit at the home of wealthy benefactors Sir William and Lady Clarke, whose sprawling estate covered 25 hectares.

At that time, the Clarke's house was considered to be a mansion. On its eastern side was a conservatory; at the rear, the servants' quarters occupied three storeys. A tennis lawn and tennis house were in the grounds, surrounded by shrubs, roses and other flowering plants. Away from the house, on a bend of the river, an orchard garden flourished with peas, French beans, marrows, asparagus, and other seasonal vegetables, oranges, lemons and cherries.

A visit to New South Wales

In June 1885, Governor and Lady Loch travelled to Sydney for a private visit with Lord and Lady Loftus, their vice-regal counterparts in Sydney. They were accompanied by the Governor's aide-de-camp, Lord Castlerosse, his valet and Emma Southgate. The Governor intended to discuss issues of defence and federation with Lord Loftus.

The vice-regal party took a special train for Sydney, which departed Spencer Street Station for Albury, where they needed to change trains to the different gauge railway line in New South Wales. Emma noted the luxurious form of travel on this trip: 'Berths for ladies and gentlemen, with sheets, pillows and every convenience: lavatories, brushes, combs, towels, sponge, dressing room. Saloon—smoking and dining room and kitchen attached. Two waiters in attendance.'²⁴ Lady Loch and Emma Southgate shared a cabin with four berths. The luxurious provisions extended to meals, with a hot dinner served of turkey, chicken, new potatoes, salad and green peas, accompanied by jelly, dessert and wines.



Spencer Street Station -

Unknown photographer
Spencer Street Station 1880s
photograph; 38 x 24 cm
In 'Album of Photographs of Melbourne, Victoria, Sydney, Brisbane, Mudgee,
Launceston, New Zealand and Europe'
Pictures Collection Album 40

The Lochs enjoyed the culture on offer in Sydney, venturing out to the opera at night. They toured the city and the harbour. Elizabeth Loch attended a fundraising fete organised by Lady Loftus to raise money for a hostel for needy girls. Vocal and instrumental entertainment was provided. Refreshments were served by the Chinese immigrant and caterer Quong Tart, whose tearooms were a popular meeting place in Sydney.

On 10 June 1885, the vice-regal party left Sydney for their return to Melbourne. Emma recorded in her diary:

The special left Sydney at 9—dining saloon, kitchen, smoking room, lavatory, dressing room and beds with sheets if we like to rest, writing paper and ink and every convenience in the sitting room ... At 11 a.m. they fetched me to have some oysters and bread and butter which I enjoyed immensely. At 1.30 a capital luncheon of chicken, green peas, new potatoes, dessert, bread and butter ... At 7.30 we dined. Soup, turkey, dressed cauliflower, new potatoes, roll, butter, cheese, dessert, claret.²⁵

More travels in Victoria

In December 1885, Sir Henry and Lady Loch toured Gippsland, attending many receptions and banquets along the route. The vice-regal couple visited nearly every town in the district. First, they took a train to Drouin, a small community of about 400 people. There, the farmers, their wives and children welcomed the arrival of the Governor. The party's train then stopped at Warragul, Traralgon and Rosedale.

In Sale, where the Lochs spent a day, their host, Mr Pearson, was a wealthy pastoralist, racehorse owner and successful mining speculator. The Governor and his wife took a steamer from Sale for Bairnsdale, passing from Lake Wellington to Lake Victoria, through McMillan's Straits, across Lake King and into the Mitchell River. As they left the steamer at Bairnsdale, they were greeted by the sounds of the National Anthem, much cheering and the local brass band. The next day, the vice-regal couple travelled to Bruthen where they were again greeted by the Bairnsdale Brass Band, which had proceeded ahead of the vice-regal party. Returning the same day to Bairnsdale, the Governor was guest of honour at a banquet hosted by local shire councillors. Emma Southgate commented, 'But for Lady Loch, at least, the twelve hours of travel, sometimes very rough travel, were over and she was able to sink into bed.'²⁶

Such a packed itinerary was tiring and demanding for Elizabeth Loch, but she saw it as an important part of her social role in the colony.

During the tour of Gippsland, Sir Henry Loch, accompanied by his son Douglas and his party, visited the Ramabyuck Mission Station, two hours' travel from Bairnsdale. Received by the Superintendent, Reverend Haganear, and 120 of the Aboriginal inhabitants, the Governor and his entourage inspected the maize fields cultivated by the Aboriginal people and the cottages in which they lived.

Literacy, numeracy and religious instruction were taught at Ramabyuck Mission. Tasks for Aboriginal children there were gender-specific. The girls were taught sewing and housework to prepare them for their future domestic role, while the boys were instructed in gardening and outdoor work, for their future labouring role.

A visit to Tasmania and South Australia

In mid-March 1886, the Lochs sailed to Tasmania, where they were met by Sir Henry's private secretary. They spent time sightseeing and Elizabeth attended numerous social engagements, including a theatre visit and a concert. Sir Henry's visit was largely a private one, however he made a point of seeing some of Hobart's public institutions.



Unknown photographer
Portrait of Quong Tart c.1890s
photograph; 13.9 x 9.9 cm
Pictures Collection PIC 7193

In July 1886, the Lochs and their children visited Adelaide, South Australia. Sir Henry and Lady Loch went to the Botanical Gardens, attended a reception at Adelaide's Government House and a bachelors' ball. In a busy social program they managed to include several concerts.

The Chief Justice of Adelaide accompanied the Lochs and their daughters on a visit to Adelaide University. There the vice-regal family was particularly interested in experiments in acoustics and electricity. They also visited a chemistry laboratory where a water experiment was conducted. After the

University, their tour included the Public Library, the Museum, government offices, post and telegraph offices and the Industrial School for the Blind. Emma Southgate also records that Douglas accompanied his father to an official function in Adelaide—the inspection of branches of the police force at their barracks in North Terrace.²⁷

A local newspaper reported on a banquet in the Adelaide Town Hall, held in honour of Governor Loch:

The banquet given by the Ministry in honour of Sir Henry Brougham Loch was a timely and pleasant compliment to a man of more than ordinary mark. Apart from his official position as Governor of Victoria, the visit of a gentleman of such distinction and ability would claim special recognition. Sir Henry Loch had earned laurels in the service of his country long before the Colonial Office placed him at the head of the Victorian Government. The heroic part he played in the Chinese war touches the sympathies of all true Englishmen, and gives him the right to the esteem of everyone who can appreciate courageous devotion to duty in the face of extraordinary difficulties and hardships ... It is not in after-dinner speeches that men such as Sir Henry Loch are seen at their best. He is a man of action rather than words, but still at Saturday's banquet our distinguished visitor spoke remarkably well.²⁸

Audrey Tennyson in Central Australia in 1899

Like Elizabeth Loch, Audrey Tennyson accompanied her husband whenever he travelled. During their vice-regal tenure they visited Central Australia, Melbourne, Sydney and Tasmania. Audrey wrote to her mother at length about her travels, which included a train trip to Central Australia in July 1899.

Here we are right up in Central Australia as far as the railway goes [Oodnadatta] & when we looked out of the train windows this morning it really looked as if we had come to the end of the world. Just close round us 1/2 a dozen white, low, one-storeyed houses of wood with iron roofs, an hotel rather larger than the rest, a railway station, a most primitive little school & besides that, nothing to be seen but dreary red soil, not a plant, a tree or shrub to be seen, but far away in the distance a slight rise in the ground of some hills.²⁹

Their train had travelled through the night. By morning, it stopped at Beltana, then Leigh's Creek. At Farina, the next stop, the townspeople awaited the Tennysons' arrival. Schoolchildren sang 'God Save the Queen' and presented Audrey with bunches of flowers.

Everything, even every vegetable they have, is taken out fortnightly *only* by train, so you may be sure they had to pay well for it. We shook hands & talked with all the adults including the blacks, all very warm & so delighted to see us, poor people, beaming ...



Samuel White Sweet (1825–1886)
Deaf, Dumb and Blind Asylum, Adelaide 1869–1889
albumen photograph; 20 x 14.5 cm
In 'Captain Sweet's Views of South Australia'
Pictures Collection PIC Album 951

These people are much better off than most of the townships. There are 200 inhabitants & church & school & clergyman, but many have none of these things, & have not even a store, so they depend absolutely & entirely on the fortnightly train. And yet, somehow, perhaps with only two or three families, hundreds of miles from anybody they are all quite happy & contented & say they love the free bush life. All very well dressed—their parents, if not they, having come from home, & are sometimes years without coming down to Adelaide. Their husbands mend the line or have the station, post & telegraph office all in one, or are store keepers or little hotel keepers—or own camels for carrying things from the train to the distant stations (farms). And at all these townships along the line the oxen & cattle are put into the trains having been driven 30, 40, 50 miles [48–80 kilometres] & more from the nearest stations & brought down to Adelaide either for export or for the town.³⁰

From Farina, they travelled to Blanche Cup, a stopping place on the railway from Port Augusta to Alice Springs west of Lake Eyre. The next stop was Coward Springs, where there was a wooden inn, one or two houses and a water bore. The party finally arrived in Oodnadatta where the local Aboriginal people seemed to fascinate Audrey.



Unveiling a memorial to Mathew Flinders at Mount Lofty, South Australia, 1902
photograph
Tennyson Collection
Manuscript Collection MS479

But what struck one at all these out-of-the-way places is the happiness & content of all these people. They say they *love* the free life. Mrs White [the stationmaster's wife] told me a great deal about the natives. She has two—Mary Jane & Annie—as servants to help her & evidently likes the blacks & feels for them but she says they are very trying. She can teach them all the rough work—but at any moment they may come & say 'I tired work—must go walkee-about one week or one moon etc.' and off they go to the camp which is about 1½ miles [2.5 kilometres] from the township if any of their tribe happen to be there. There is always a camp of some tribe or other there, for at Oodnadatta stores & blankets are given away by Government every week to any blacks who come & ask for them. They are given out every Saturday now by the trooper [the Police Sergeant] ...

They have been treated brutally by white men, but, thank God, Government is taking up their cause very strictly this session & ill treatment will be most severely punished ... They are dying out fast however, & our making them wear clothes near white people & giving them blankets, alas helps to kill them for they throw off the clothes when they go off on their hunting grounds for lizards & kangaroos, emus & their eggs, rabbits & rats, & if fancy takes them, give away or leave behind their blankets.³¹

Aboriginal social structures and culture were of particular interest to Audrey Tennyson. She wrote to her mother:

They smash their wives' skulls in sometimes & the women go on just as if nothing was the matter with them tho' you can see all their heads indented in. They are *never* allowed to marry or mix with other tribes, this is an unpardonable offence, & no girl may cross her brother's path, if he is anywhere she must pass at the back of him, not in front; & a brother-in-law may not cross a sister-in-law's path. They are very secret about their laws & customs & it is most difficult to get anything out of them.

Many of the religious ceremonies the women are not allowed to know anything about & are sent far away when they are performed.³²

Great excitement surrounded a corroboree attended by the vice-regals. Audrey observed that there were three different tribes at the corroboree—Arunta, Alberga and Macuna.

As we approached, several of the natives snatched up big logs of burning wood & rushed to light up all the fires round they had prepared, & round the big fire already burning we found about 100 women and girls & two or three children all seated with their legs close to them like tailors, close to the fire & close to each other, grouped in a mass about 5 rows & 20 in a row, & in front of them two or three chiefs clothed with these dun-coloured felt government hats & long walking sticks, others sitting with wooden instruments in their hands. At the words of command these men began to hit them together & a low monotonous sort of chant was moaned out by them & then taken up by the women & then we saw about 50 or 60 naked natives (I was told after there was one woman among them but I did not make her out) all dressed with their war-paint & head-dresses, & the gypsum or white clay mixed with human blood in patterns all over their faces like masks & in patterns over their bodies & feathers—and all holding a bunch of emu's feathers in each hand. They all suddenly appeared in a sort of rush towards us from their wherleys where they had been hiding till our arrival, then they went thro' all sorts of weird gestures supposed to be representative of tracking an enemy or emu-hunting etc. Every few minutes the knocking of the sticks stopped & then the women stopped their dirge & off the dancers flew to the fires & almost touched the flames to get warm, & scratching their chests like monkeys or more often turning their backs close into the flames.³³

The Tennysons visit the east coast colonies

The Tennysons were in Melbourne for Cup Week in November 1899 and, while there, Audrey enjoyed playing croquet, lawn tennis and strolling in the Botanical Gardens. The following year they travelled to Sydney and visited the Jenolan Caves in New South Wales. From Sydney, they took a train to Mount Victoria, where a coach picked them up with their luggage and drove more than 58 kilometres over the Blue Mountains. The views from there were grand—wooded hills, high cliffs, rocks and bubbling rivers. The vice-regal couple stopped at the Halfway Inn, changed horses, had a meal and tried to keep warm.

We mounted to 4500 feet [1500 metres] & found lots of snow lying there, had been 10 days before 4 feet [1.22 metres] & in drifts 6 & 7. We drove full tilt through the most awful roads of deep mud with 4 horses & round & round sharp corners, & arrived at 7.30 at the Jenolan Caves, ordered dinner, found roaring wood fires in the hotel & tiny bare-floored bedrooms, & at 8.30 started off to see the Imperial Caves which are all lit with electric light—most wonderful & beautiful with enormous stalactites and stalagmites & all sorts of phantastic [sic] shapes, one exactly like a huge elephant's head with great flapping ears, little eyes, long trunk & tusks, all formed by the dripping of water—another like a dead goose hanging

with all the white downy breast & head & orange beak formed by some iron in the water.³⁴

Along the Murray

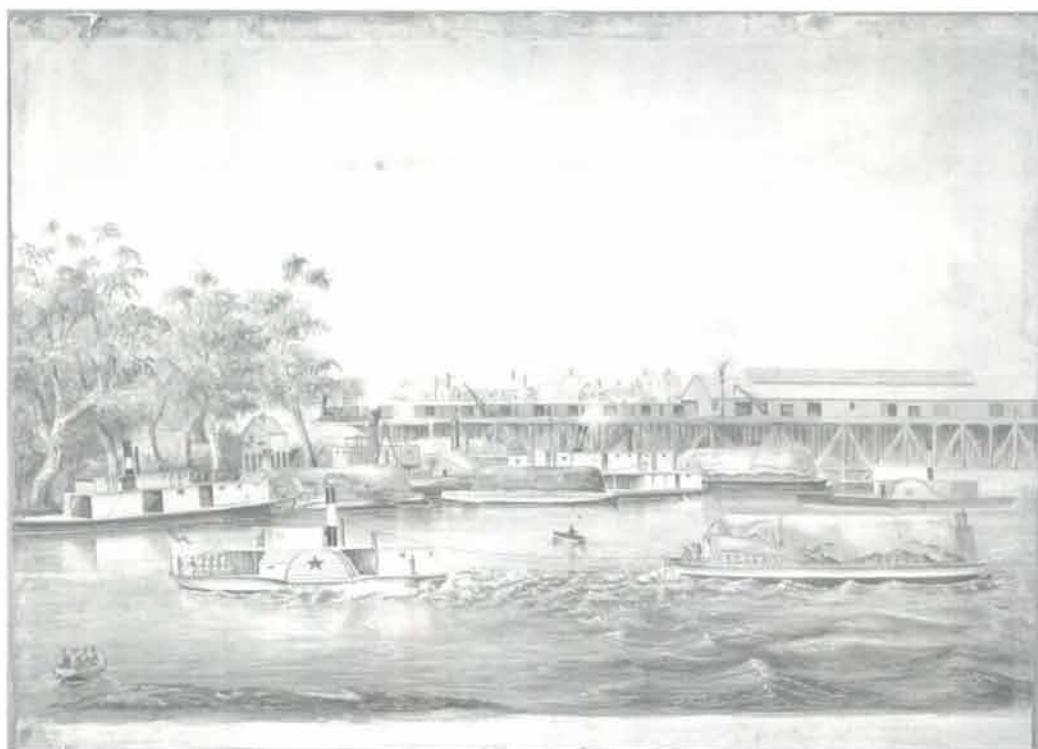
In October 1900, Audrey took a week-long trip on the river boat *Nellie* down the Murray River, visiting settlements along the way.

It is a most curious boat, I believe like the dahabeeyahs on the Nile, a sort of oval shape three decks high out of the water. On the upper is the smoking room, the captain's & 1st mate's cabins & the wheel, with wide platform all round to sit, then on the next, all our cabins. We have each a cabin except the boys who have a four-berth one & one or two over. We sleep with the doors open & have our trunks outside on the platform that runs all round, & the saloon & little sittingroom are on this deck but we are always outside as there is shelter overhead. On the 3rd deck level with the shore is the kitchen & the men's rooms etc. & the engines below. We have a crew of 8 men & two stewards & a nice old Captain with white beard called King.

The colouring this evening is too beautiful for words & the reflections of the trees in the water marvellous. We steamed all night Friday & about 10 o'clock yesterday arrived at the first village settlement, called Moorook. Oh such places! just a few wretched shanties, many of them nothing but a little lath & plaster and canvas ceilings with straw over it & then the iron roof & just canvas to partition off the rooms. These are just put up by the people themselves in their plots of ground. Oh, the dust & the heat with no shade & a little later the swarms of mosquitoes are awful, they say.³⁵

In the same letter, she described the small settlements along the Murray for her mother.

There are 7 of these little village settlements on the Murray. We have visited 4 & shall visit three more on our way down. They were started by the Government about 7 years ago with so many thousand pounds lent to the settlers to buy plant, materials, engine for pumping etc., and then the men worked & only drew enough money from the profits just to pay for bare food & clothing for themselves & families, but of course there were good & bad men, men who slaved 14 hours & more, working from sunrise & often late by moonlight. One man who did this drawing only 7/- [7 shillings] a week from the funds & making up for the wants of his family from his own little private plot & always toiling on & on in the hopes of paying off the Government debt & then having the ground, implements etc. all their own. Then there were other men who worked or pretended to work their 8 hours a day & drew their 30/- & more a week, so naturally there was soon discontent. The Government then appointed an Inspector, a Mr Mackintosh, who is on board with us, & for the last 4 years he has spent his time visiting these settlements. He settles all the quarrels, appoints a manager in each settlement, arranges with him each visit what work is to be carried on during the next month



Unknown artist
[Murray River Paddle Steamers including Elizabeth] c.1880
watercolour; 55 x 76 cm
Pictures Collection R5045

& the manager tells each man his work every day. Then the men themselves choose their own chairman. They have cows & horses from which they get what milk they require & make butter with the rest & if possible sell some, everything working to pay off the debt.³⁶

This plan was not successful. Audrey thought that it was sad to see the deserted and derelict shanties—many had decided to leave.

A visit to Tasmania

Hallam and Audrey Tennyson holidayed at Eagle Hawk's Nest while in Tasmania in November 1901. Located 80 kilometres from Hobart, it received provisions and mail only twice a week by boat. Audrey enjoyed the time spent there—it provided a pleasant diversion from their usual busy round of social engagements. With Hallam, she ventured out to walk through the bush to a place called Fitzroy's Glen. The track was rough and she had to scramble across trees lying across it. With thick scrub on either side, they followed the track past some magnificent trees 65 metres high.

There was only the track that the woodcutters have used for bringing down the wood ... You never saw such a track going steep down with huge boulders one had to jump down, & thick scrub.³⁷

Audrey and Hallam walked along the beach to see the 'blow hole' and Tasman's Arch on Tasman's Peninsula, where the sea had formed a huge cave in the cliff face. She described in detail the beauty of what she saw—'the sea all shades of blues & greens'.

And then to Melbourne

In Melbourne the following year, after Hallam Tennyson had been appointed as acting Governor-General in May 1902, Audrey Tennyson wrote about the impressive Government House they occupied.

All the State Apartments, ballroom the same size as Buckingham Palace, Diningroom huge & Drawingroom, with special entrances & cloakrooms, all are away from the living part & all to themselves. We have a beautiful suite of rooms, a row opening into each other—my bathroom, sittingroom, bedroom, H's dressingroom, his bathroom—a delicious sittingroom—& I have another sweet little room downstairs opening on to stone verandah & croquet lawn where I am now writing. We have a very nice drawingroom not large, & diningroom when a small party. The boys will have the extra ADC's room for their schoolroom.³⁸

Six weeks later, the Tennysons hosted a dinner in honour of opera singer Nellie Melba, and later attended her concert.

The concert on Saturday was a wonderful sight—the streets densely packed with thousands of people who waited to see [Melba] for hours before she arrived. And the Town Hall that holds 2300 people was packed, most of them guinea seats, and when she appeared the audience rose & shouted & yelled & waved their hands & handkerchiefs, & after her first song there was a perfect stream of bouquets brought along and lifted up to her on the platform—one a long ladder of flowers and ribbons & a large star at the top with an electric light, from Nellie Stewart the actress and great friend. She certainly has a most lovely voice tho' not a very grand one—but her charm also consists not only in her voice but her delightful quiet and simple way of singing and standing and manner. I did not take very much to her when she dined here, but I believe she is an extremely kind woman.³⁹

A week in Brisbane provided a pleasant if tiring diversion for Audrey, a particularly festive week for her including balls, the Great Show, races, dinners and concerts.

Well, I really felt so worn out with the travelling up to Brisbane & back (I shall have been over 8000 miles [12 800 kilometres] by train when we get back from Sydney crammed into 8 nights, 2 whole long days & 8 half days in five weeks).⁴⁰

The governors' wives certainly led busy lives, attending to their families, being social hostesses for their husbands, working for different charities and fitting in time to travel with their husbands, as part of their vice-regal role. They did not always travel in first-class style or enjoy salubrious conditions. These were horse and buggy days, after all. The journeys were often long, arduous and hazardous. Country visits were frequently crammed with official duties. Their travels throughout the colonies, however, brought them in touch with a wide range of people and cultures, and provided them with the opportunity to witness first-hand the developing maturity and sophistication of colonial life in nineteenth-century Australia.

Notes

Letters of Audrey, Lady Tennyson are found in: Papers of Audrey, Lady Tennyson, National Library of Australia (MS 479/49).

- ¹ O. Havard, 'Lady Franklin's Visit to New South Wales 1839', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, vol. 29, 1943, p. 287.
- ² *ibid.*, pp. 282–283.
- ³ *ibid.*, p. 294.
- ⁴ *ibid.*, p. 299.
- ⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 307–308.
- ⁶ *ibid.*
- ⁷ *ibid.*, p. 317.
- ⁸ E.J. Woodward, *A Portrait of Jane: A Life of Lady Franklin*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1951, pp. 237–240.
- ⁹ Mary Anne Broome, 'Letters to Guy', in A. Hasluck (ed.), *Remembered with Affection*. London: Oxford University Press, 1963, p. 50.
- ¹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 52.
- ¹¹ *ibid.*, pp. 55–57.
- ¹² *ibid.*, pp. 59–60.
- ¹³ *ibid.*, p. 66.
- ¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 71.
- ¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 86.
- ¹⁶ *ibid.*, p. 96.
- ¹⁷ Emma Southgate, *Diary of a Lady's Maid: Government House in Colonial Australia*. Edited by Helen Vellacott. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1995, pp. 60–61.
- ¹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 77.
- ¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 79.
- ²⁰ *ibid.*, p. 104.
- ²¹ *ibid.*, p. 106.
- ²² *ibid.*, p. 108.
- ²³ *ibid.*
- ²⁴ *ibid.*, p. 138.
- ²⁵ *ibid.*, p. 148.
- ²⁶ *ibid.*, p. 182.
- ²⁷ *ibid.*, p. 234.
- ²⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 236–237.
- ²⁹ Letter, 26 July 1899, Audrey, Lady Tennyson to Zacyntha Boyle. Papers of Audrey, Lady Tennyson.

- ³⁰ *ibid.*
³¹ *ibid.*
³² *ibid.*
³³ Letter, 4 August 1899, *ibid.*
³⁴ Letter, 31 July 1900, *ibid.*
³⁵ Letter, 21 October 1900, *ibid.*
³⁶ *ibid.*
³⁷ Letter, 15 November 1901, *ibid.*
³⁸ Letter, 7 August 1902, *ibid.*
³⁹ Letter, 30 September 1902, *ibid.*
⁴⁰ Letter, 9 September 1902, *ibid.*



VIEW OF THE FEMALE ORPHAN SCHOOL,

Near Parramatta

Joseph Lycett (1775–1828)

View of the Female Orphan School near Parramatta, New South Wales

hand-coloured aquatint; plate mark 23 x 31.5 cm

Rex Nan Kivell Collection NK4478/26

Pictures Collection

Charity Worker

In nineteenth-century Australia it was customary for women of the colonial elite to participate in charity work. These women involved themselves in charitable causes in three ways: as subscribers to societies and institutions; as members of ladies' committees; or as initiators in establishing and running their own charities.

All five governors' wives engaged in charity work in one form or another. Three—Eliza Darling, Elizabeth Loch and Audrey Tennyson—instigated the establishment of major charities in their respective colonies, while Jane Franklin took an interest in the welfare of convict women and Mary Anne Broome gave parties for young people and disadvantaged children. All the vice-regal women fulfilled the expected role of charity worker and upheld this aspect of the feminine ideal.

Eliza Darling and the Sydney Female School of Industry

Eliza Darling played a central role and was a dominant force in a privately run charity, the Sydney Female School of Industry, established in 1826 by wealthy women in the colony of New South Wales. Eliza Darling held the most prominent position as patroness of the school. Her involvement was extensive and there were times when she visited the school daily. She managed the school with other women from the colony's social elite: in particular, the four Macleay sisters, daughters of the Colonial Secretary, Alexander Macleay. Christina was treasurer; Fanny was secretary; Kennethina and Rosa Roberta were committee members. Other committee members included wives or daughters of well-to-do graziers and merchants, military officers and the clergy. The women managed enrolments, staff, finance, and the dismissal or expulsion of students. They were also responsible for the students' clothing, physical welfare, education, religious instruction and discipline. It was the first colonial charity to be founded and managed entirely by women. Governor Darling provided a grant for the building and land, but the school depended on private fundraising. Money was raised by voluntary subscriptions. The committee's annual bazaar was also a successful fundraiser for the school, contributing one-third of its annual income. Between 1826 and 1836, the Macleay family donated a substantial sum of money through subscriptions by individual family members.

In April 1826, Eliza Darling wrote to her brother Edward Dumaresq about the 'King's Birth-night' ball and her work at the school.

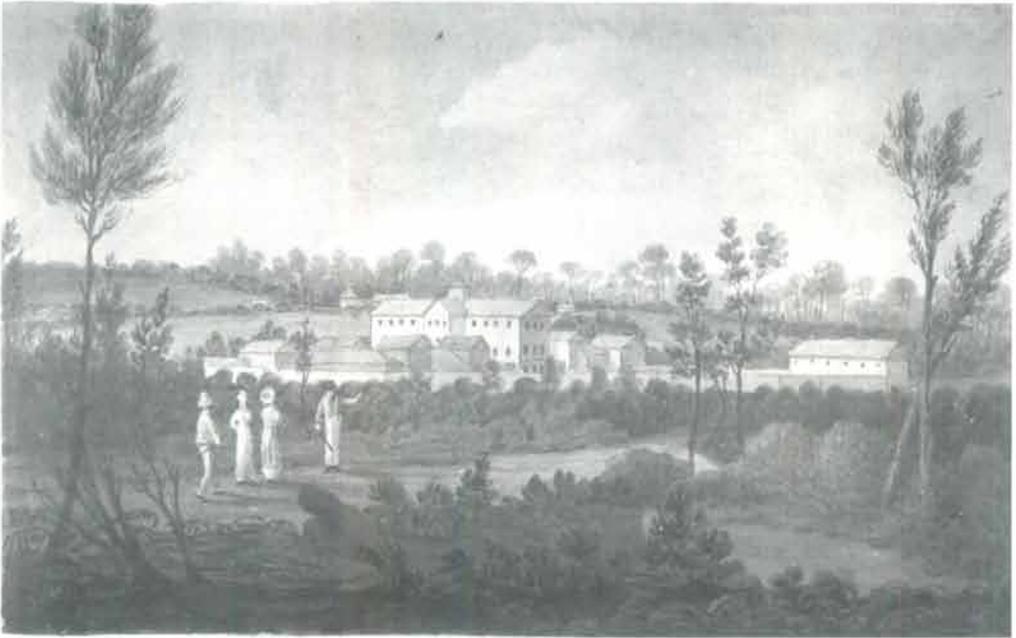
We are, that is myself, Mrs Powell, Wells & Misses Macleay, all as busy as possible making grand preparations for the very *grand Ball*, to be given here on the King's Birth-night—Mr Fraser & Mr Reid are both also very active, and Mr Condamine is to have one side of the Room as *his Charge*—to fit up with *Bayonets*, Flags, Gun Barrels—&c—one window to be taken out; & a wooden platform & shed to be built outside for the Band. Mr Fraser is to bring in Four large Gum Trees—and make Garlands &c—Mr Reid is painting silk Lamps—and we Ladies are making Roses & Lilies, and Golden Crowns. &c &c. Then I assure you the School of Industry gives me a good deal of employment. Plans for the *interior* arrangements of the Building—Plans for the management—Rules to draw up—Notes to write—Clothes *bought; cut out, made*, and all done under my own eye—not to say a word of the yet uncomfortable & unfinished state of our *own* domestic arrangements—Clothing for Convict Servants—Rewards to Dr—Presses to make—Closets to fit up—Rooms to furnish &c—This is to give you an Idea of my Business—that of a Public Nature seem endless.¹

Fanny Macleay also wrote about the 'Birth-night Ball' and fundraising for the school to her brother William Sharp Macleay in England.

We are all quite well here and have been enjoying all kinds of gaieties—Birth-night Balls, Races and *what nots*. As for me I am half dead with fatigue for in a short space of a fortnight we had ball dresses to make up (and fancy or contrive, which was not the least annoying part of the business), a long report to draw up of the proceedings of the School of Industry, a thing I quite detest, and also pretty bagatelles to make for a Sale in aid of the School funds. That we were industrious, or rather that the Gentlemen were generous, you will easily believe when I tell you that the Sale of Ladies work brought the Treasurer between 80 and 90 pounds! Our stall took the most money about 25 pds.²

The Sydney Female School of Industry educated working-class girls, who boarded on the premises. The girls were aged from seven to 14-years-old. They were taught plain needlework, knitting, spinning, reading, writing and arithmetic. Most of the time was devoted to needlework and religious instruction according to the tenets of the Church of England. Students were required to attend church twice on Sundays and engage in an hour of prayers and reading psalms nightly. The school emphasised moral virtue, honesty, order, cleanliness and industriousness, and deference to authority, including future employers.

That the school was still going strong after Eliza's departure from New South Wales in 1831 is shown in the 1843–44 annual report of the School of Industry, which listed various items made by girls at the school: shirts for babies and children, petticoats, nightcaps, handkerchiefs, pillowcases, tablecloths, napkins, towels, cuffs, collars and pinafores. Indeed, the girls' needlework contributed to the school's finances. Clothing was made for the girls at the school and for sale.



Augustus Earle (1793–1838)
Female Penitentiary or Factory, Parramata [ie Parramatta], N.S. Wales c.1826
watercolour; 15.9 x 25.7 cm
Rex Nan Kivell Collection NK12/47
Pictures Collection

The girls were trained in all branches of household work by actually performing the cooking, cleaning and washing in the school. Initially, most of the students were orphans, daughters of single fathers or from very poor families. In addition, a few girls who could afford it paid fees to enter the school.

Pupil monitors taught the younger students in the school. This was called the Bell or Madras system of education. Fanny and Kennethina Macleay taught writing, arithmetic and needlework to the monitors, who then taught two classes of girls. The students were regularly examined in literacy and numeracy.

Through the Sydney Female School of Industry, Eliza Darling and the Macleay women endeavoured to transplant an English evangelical spirit. They reproduced the ideas and practices of evangelicalism through what was taught in the Female School of Industry. In 1834 Eliza wrote and published a manual for the students of the school: *Simple Rules for the Guidance of Persons in Humble Life: More Particularly for Young Girls Going Out to Service*, which espoused evangelical principles. It maintained that, through religious observance, faith and moral guidance, the female servant could be saved from immorality and from turning to prostitution as a way out of poverty. The underlying assumption was that poor girls may turn to this way of life.

Eliza Darling devoted a lot of her time and energy to charity work while in the colony of New South Wales. She regularly subscribed to and attended Benevolent Society meetings and functions and in 1826 founded the Female Friendly Society. Her interest in the welfare of children was manifested in other causes like the Sunday School movement, provision of public entertainment for children, and the design of a schoolroom for the Sydney Free Grammar School. Together with her husband, Eliza Darling also patronised the Sydney Dispensary, founded to provide 'medical advice' to the poor.

Jane Franklin and female convicts

Before leaving England for Van Diemen's Land, the Franklins were asked by the noted prison reformer and British philanthropist Elizabeth Fry (1780–1845) to do something about the plight of convict women in the colony. Female convicts had been transported, first to New South Wales and then Van Diemen's Land, from the time of the First Fleet in 1788. They were predominantly English and Irish working-class women, transported largely for theft.

Jane Franklin became very interested in promoting the cause of female convicts.³ Jane favoured harsher punishment like hard labour and solitary confinement. Elizabeth Fry preferred a gentler approach. She favoured monitoring and rewarding good behaviour of female convicts with education and employment. Both women condemned the assignment system, in which convicts were assigned to settlers as servants. In a letter Jane Franklin wrote to Elizabeth Fry in 1841 she condemned the assignment system in Van Diemen's Land, especially as it applied to women.

You are aware that this Assignment of Men has ceased or is in the course of being abolished. It has been pronounced '*Domestic Slavery*' and the odium of the name has strangled the victim that bore it. You must not suppose however by my saying this, that I am ready to advocate the cause of Assignment. In my opinion, whatever may be said in its favor (and something may be said), it is an unrighteous cause and I rejoice in its abolition. But is it really abolished?

What becomes then of the fact that all the women convicts who come out here are still sent into Assignments. And not a single voice that I know of has been raised in England to save *them* from this tyranny and this degradation. Are the women wholly forgotten in England? or is Assignment stripped of its horrors and cleansed from its iniquity when applied to them? Alas! the fact is otherwise. The Assignment of women is an infinitely worse thing than the assignment of men. It has all the evils of men's assignment both as respects the 'slave' and the master or mistress and still more.⁴

In the period of early settlement, female convicts were assigned upon arrival into private or government service. They largely worked as domestic servants and



Unknown artist
[Elizabeth Fry Reading the Bible in a Women's Prison] 1830s
watercolour; 58.8 x 88 cm
Rex Nan Kivell Collection NK5649
Pictures Collection

laundered or did needlework. Two female factories were established in Van Diemen's Land: the Cascades Factory in Hobart and a similar institution in Launceston. These factories housed the newly arrived women and those working under assignment. They were places of punishment for assigned convict women.

Convict women returned to the Female Factory when they were pregnant. In her letter to Elizabeth Fry, Jane Franklin wrote about the plight of women in the factories:

when a female assigned servant is likely to become a mother she is conducted from her master's residence, wherever it may be, to the Factory of Hobart or Launceston, where she is retained and carefully tended till recovered from her confinement. She is then sent with her child (if at Hobart) to a small home in the town called the Factory nursery, to nurse it. There she has plenty of companions, plenty of food, no work, and moreover is liable to the agreeable casualty of being selected some day on application being made by an individual wanting a wet nurse, to enter in that capacity into a private family, a rich one perhaps (such is the paucity of free women to enter even the best services), where she meets with the usual bribes by which tender mothers strive to secure to their children the care of their hired substitutes. In ordinary cases, however, the child has been weaned, at the end of from 9 to 12 months, the mother either is removed into the nursery as a nurse of the class of weaned children, where she remains till reassigned to service, or she goes back to the factory, not this time to be tended with peculiar care, but professionally to be

punished for her original transgression. You will ask what is the nature of this punishment with which she is now to be visited, and may perhaps suppose that on re-entering the prison where, in compassion to her situation she was before treated with tenderness, instead of severity some signal ... of the reprobation in which her offence is held, will be inflicted on her. You might conclude perhaps that she is subjected to that most harmless yet most efficacious of female punishment, the being deprived of the ornament of her hair, as practised I am told in the Millbank Penitentiary. Oh! no!

At least then it will be concluded that these abandoned inmates of the Factory go into solitary cells, or are put to hard labour. But this would be a mistaken supposition. They are put into that class or yard in the Factory which has the best ration, are in no way separated from the rest, have no harder labour than the picking of a little oakum and sleep in the same common room with the other women of their division. The only shadow of punishment they receive is the detention in the Factory itself which is of 6 months duration.⁵

Other reports of the Female Factory differ from Lady Franklin's account. These reports indicate that conditions were appalling. Food rations were poor and monotonous. The factory was overcrowded and the inmates' hair was shaved as punishment. Infant mortality was high. To take a child into the Cascades Factory was virtually imposing a death sentence. The Cascades Factory was fetid and stifling. The Van Diemen's Land women faced bleaker weather than those in the Female Factory at Parramatta, New South Wales. They rarely saw sunshine and they were extremely isolated.

In 1841 Jane Franklin formed a committee and was patroness of the Tasmanian Society for the Reformation of Female Convicts, Van Diemen's Land. The committee's task was to promote the moral as well as religious welfare of the female prisoners in the Female Factory, and to communicate with the Principal Superintendent of Convicts and the Superintendent of the Female Factory. However, the committee dispersed in less than a fortnight. It was attacked in a local newspaper which argued that the committee should comprise married ladies, rather than the maidens who predominantly made up the membership. Nevertheless, Jane Franklin continued to make regular visits to the factory.

Perhaps at the behest of Jane Franklin, who felt strongly about effecting positive changes for the plight of female convicts before she left the colony, Sir John Franklin took action to temporarily close some dark cells at the Cascades Factory and shift the children's weaning nursery from the premises. However, infant deaths and forced weaning continued, along with problems of poor rations and overcrowded conditions. Acting on a surgeon's advice, Sir John took steps to add more cells to the existing buildings. A penitentiary was planned and an instructress was appointed to the factory.

Sir John also set up an extensive official inquiry into female convict discipline in 1841 which concluded that assignment, which isolated women from each other, was the best method of disciplining them. However, assignment was abolished and a new probation system for women replaced it in 1844.

Mary Anne Broome and soldiers and children

Mary Anne Broome was charitable in a different way from the other vice-regal wives. She extended her hospitality at Government House to young people in the form of 'The Volunteers', a voluntary group of soldiers in Western Australia. She was especially interested in the Guildford Cadet Corps, which her son Louis joined. It was known as 'Lady Barker's Own Cadet Corps'. On Louis' birthday, Mary Anne invited members of the Corps to his birthday party. One of the cadets recalled that she treated the boys in a kindly manner, and invited them to other celebrations at Government House. On their arrival she at once made the boys feel at home, and walked around the grounds with them, arm-in-arm. At Louis' party, she played a game of ninepins with them. Mary Anne ensured that a sumptuous dinner was provided for them. Much to their delight, the cadets were later taken by horsedrawn buses to a circus.⁶

Mary Anne loved to entertain children. She invited the children of their own friends, as well as 'Lady Barker's Own Cadet Corps', to a Christmas party at Government House, but the party had to be postponed due to a measles epidemic in Perth. She held three belated Christmas parties for the children of Perth during Easter that year, and intended that more children be invited the following year. Her goal was to ensure that every child in Perth be given a Christmas present and enjoy a party at Government House.

The third belated party catered for children from orphanages and institutions and was the most satisfying for her. These children did not normally receive treats, so they were thrilled with the decorations as much as with the gifts provided.

Elizabeth Loch and widows and children

Like Eliza Darling in New South Wales, Elizabeth Loch initiated the establishment of a charity in Victoria. Her charity was intended to assist widows and their children. She presented her idea, which included a commemorative function for Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in June 1887, to the Mayor of Melbourne.

Dear Mr. Mayor—Feeling deeply sensible that I am expressing the wishes of a large majority of the women and girls of Victoria, that we should unite together to mark at the present time in a special manner our love and admiration of Her Majesty; I venture to ask that you will allow a meeting to be held at an early date in the Town

Hall, to consider the best method by which an opportunity may be afforded throughout the colony for the women and girls to join with me in commemorating the occasion of the Queen's Jubilee by raising what I propose should be called the 'Queen's Fund', to be dedicated to the support of widows and children of those killed or disabled by accidents, and otherwise for their relief and support in cases of distress, for which no other suitable or adequate provision exists.⁷

Her idea emanated from an identified need to commemorate the virtues of the Queen as a woman and a widow, and the establishment of a charity seemed to be the most appropriate form of commemoration.

The Age newspaper reported some opposition to the establishment of a Queen's Fund:

The existence of such a fund would tend to promote rather than to check those reckless habits among workmen to which such a large number of accidents are due. It would at the same time make less provident because they would know need. Nor would it be very easy to distribute such a fund in accordance with the actual deserts of the applicants ... The relief given, too, would necessarily be only temporary and while it would afford no permanent benefit to the recipients, it would tend to dry up the other sources of public charity.⁸

Others shared the view that there were enough charities in Melbourne and people should try to help themselves. Some argued that the issue of poverty should be addressed through improving wages and employment opportunities for women and by providing compulsory national insurance for working men.

The Mayor of Melbourne introduced Sir Henry Loch to a crowd of 2000 people in the Melbourne Town Hall, where he announced the establishment of the fund in Victoria. The main aim was to aid female Victorian residents who needed relief. At the Town Hall meeting, a general committee was appointed comprising members of the provisional committee and their wives, mayors and shire presidents and their wives, clergy of all denominations and their wives. Melbourne's Mayor was appointed Chairman of the Fund and donations were sought immediately.⁹ Ten thousand pounds was collected in 1887 for the Queen's Fund.

The *Chronicle* acclaimed Lady Loch's scheme as beneficial to those in need.¹⁰ Other papers, including the *Melbourne Punch* and *The Age*, also supported it.

Lady Loch's scheme has this advantage ... it will prove of lasting benefit to the widows and orphans of our Sunny Land, to whom the 'Queen's Fund', as it is proposed to call it, will acquire a new significance, and inseparably connected as it will be with the Jubilee year of Queen Victoria's reign, will fittingly perpetuate the auspicious event we are so desirous of celebrating.¹¹

Elizabeth Loch was the first president of the Queen's Fund. Her sub-committee considered applications for relief, visited applicants, and decided on who should be assisted. Widows provided the largest group of women who applied to the



Sir Francis Boileau (1830–1900)
Town Hall, Melbourne 1894–1895

photograph; 50.5 x 47 cm

From his 'Photograph Album of the Boileau Family's Voyage from England to Australia in 1894–1895, including Ports of Call to Gibraltar, Colombo, Adelaide, Melbourne, Tasmania, Sydney and New Zealand' Pictures Collection Album 21

Queen's Fund. Women left alone with young children, elderly women who could no longer work, women disabled by sickness and unemployed women also applied for assistance. Elizabeth's idea of the Queen's Fund was to benefit women of all classes and all religions. Her scheme was praised for permanently investing the money, instead of holding extensive appeals, and for keeping administrative costs low.¹²

In Elizabeth Loch's view: 'Once women understand that the object of the fund is to help as many women in distress as possible, all are willing to give something according to their means'.¹³

The committee structure gradually changed. A salaried secretary was appointed and a sub-committee comprising women became the mainstay of the Queen's Fund, in compliance with Elizabeth Loch's wishes. Every Monday in March, June, September and December, the ladies of the distributing sub-committee met at the Town Hall to consider applications for relief.

The ladies of the distributing sub-committee faced an awesome task—how to distribute the limited resources to those who requested help. The aim of the Queen's Fund was to rescue women who were on the brink of poverty. Two-thirds of cases heard were assisted, with applicants expected to have resided in Victoria for at least 12 months.

The Queen's Fund still exists and carries out its functions today.

Elizabeth Loch's Jubilee Ball

Also to celebrate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in June 1887, a costume ball was held at Government House. Four thousand guests were invited by Lady Loch to celebrate this grand occasion. A temporary roof had to be constructed over the Fountain Court, which adjoined the old ballroom and drawing room. Elizabeth Loch dressed as Queen Elizabeth while the Governor presented himself as a diplomat. *Table Talk* devoted 11 pages to detailing what guests wore to the ball. Society ladies dressed as well-known historical figures from the Elizabethan and other historical periods. Lady Sybil Brassey, the wife of Sir Thomas Brassey (a later Governor of Victoria, 1895–1900), dressed as King Henry VIII's daughter Mary Tudor. Lady Janet Clarke, a wealthy philanthropist whose special interest was the welfare of women, dressed in mid-eighteenth century attire.

Lady Brassey, as Marie Tudor, wore a very rich robe of terra-cotta plush, loose and flowing from neck, edged all round with Russian point lace and grebe, the front and train being studded with diamond and sapphire buttons; sleeves of plush, puffed at shoulder, and divided with lace puffing, caught with a band of grebe studded with jewels, the lower part of the sleeve composed of quilted satin, terminating in a cuff of rich lace; a cap of plush covered with diamonds, and a long white veil; collarette of costly jewels, forming a trimming on back of bodice and terminating in front with large jewelled cross, strings of pearls worn on neck.

Lady Clarke, as a French Countess, wore ... a heliotrope satin dress of Louis XVI period, with rich embroideries of gold; powdered wig and patches.

Mrs. Cain, Mayoress of Melbourne, as Rubens' Wife. Gold satin petticoat, trimmed gold lace; overdress of black velvet, trimmed with gold coral, and lace, opening over gold satin embroidered waistcoat, full sleeves of gold satin, sashed with black velvet and edged with deep cuff of old lace and Elizabethan collar of same; a Rubens hat of velvet, with black and gold feathers; gold ornaments.¹⁴

Audrey Tennyson and the poor and the sick

Audrey Tennyson was a charitable woman and sympathetic to those in need. She extended her accustomed maternal role in the private sphere to the public domain by providing warmth and affection to those less fortunate living in public



Turner & Wood, Stoke
Bust of Queen Victoria 1887
porcelain; height 33.5 cm
Rex Nan Kivell Collection NK6768/1
Pictures Collection

institutions. She visited the poor and sick regularly and, in her letters to her mother, described her visits and the living conditions of those she visited.

Yesterday Capt. Wallington & I went across to the Workhouse [an institution for the destitute of the South Australian colony] which is just across the road outside Government House garden wall. It being my first visit, we were obliged to let the officials know & they met us at the gate & took us over the whole place—an enormous place—and I was amazed to see the number of old people—105 women & three times that number of old men. Of course it is for the whole of South Australia but I had no idea that there could be so many destitute people here where labour is so scarce & wages so high. Last year they gave out for indoor relief to 4460 people. A good many of the old people were bedridden, some only there while they are ill as they could stay no longer in the Hospital ...

Then we went to a separate building with a separate garden where no one is ever allowed except the clergy, doctor, or relations, so that no one may know the girls have been there. This is only for the first time of falling, I was horrified to find 19 there either with their babies or waiting for them, one girl of 14 ... Nearly all the babies were boys. They keep them with their babies for 6 months until they are both strong & well & they feel then that the babies will have every chance of being properly cared for; of course the mothers have to do work of different kinds. If they offend a 2nd time they go to the general lying-in ward & they sometimes have them there 4 or 5 times. It is all paid for by the government, & with most things so ruinous they cost 5/10½ [5 shillings and 10.5 pence] a week only—except the invalids, they cost over 13/- [13 shillings] a week. They do not encourage people to come into the Refuge but will always give outdoor relief to necessitous cases, widows & families, invalids etc. They come there once a month & receive tea, sugar, rice & different groceries for a month, besides tickets to bakers nearest their homes—and tickets for the butcher. In the house they have meat every day.¹⁵

Audrey Tennyson had a warm and amiable disposition and people responded kindly to her. She paid regular visits to see patients at the Adelaide Hospital.

I & Mdlle [Mademoiselle Dussau] went to visit the Adelaide Hospital again on Friday but only managed one perfectly *huge* ward so as to talk to all the people a little. Lots of Irish, & *all* had either had severe operations or were going to have them & all so well & bright ... One woman told Mdlle all about 'Broken Hill', the great mines of the Colony, about 400 miles [640 kilometres] from here. She says the youngest workers get 7/6 [7 shillings and 6 pence] a day & the men get 10/- [10 shillings], 12/-, & even £1 [1 pound] a day, but at 12/- a day it means they have hardly a penny to spend for everything is so ruinous, *everything*, even every vegetable, for nothing will grow there, comes from Sydney & has to come through Adelaide for duty & to Broken Hill; and it is cheaper to have them from Sydney. Sometimes they can't wash anything for two or three weeks on account of the dust storms when they can't go out or put anything out to dry—and have to keep every door & window shut no matter how hot.

One woman another time told me they suffer dreadfully from the lead affecting the eyes. She has been two years under a doctor here for hers, & lots of cases of

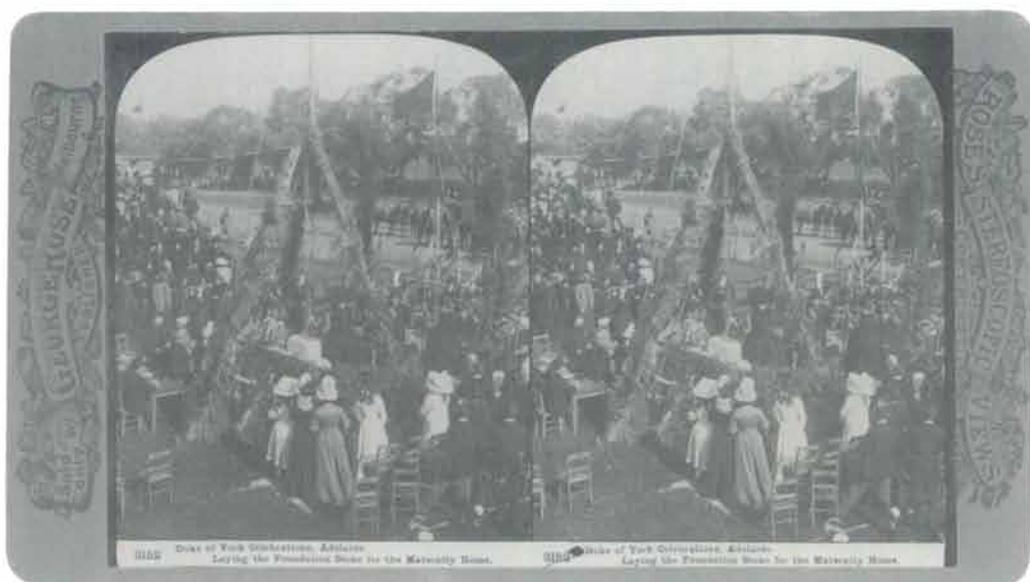


Samuel White Sweet (1825–1886)
Hospital, Adelaide
photograph; 20 x 14.5 cm
In 'Captain Sweet's Views of South Australia'
Pictures Collection.PIC Album 951

children come down to the hospitals here, also quantities of typhoid & rheumatic fever, & notwithstanding the terrible journey it is here, all rough wagons, no trains, the typhoid cases generally recover. The Adelaide Hospital doctor told me their death rate was 6 per cent in the hospital.¹⁶

Audrey Tennyson's maternity home

Through her travels with her husband Hallam in the outback of South Australia, Audrey Tennyson noticed the hardship country women experienced when giving birth. Often they were assisted only by neighbours who had borne children themselves; doctors and midwives were usually far away geographically. Audrey saw the need for an institution in South Australia where rural women could give birth and remain for their confinement. She thought that holding a bazaar could be a source of funding for such a large project. She became actively involved in organising this project and, like Eliza Darling, took a 'hands-on' approach to her charity work.



Duke of York celebrations, Adelaide. Laying the Foundation Stone for the Maternity Home stereograph; 10 x 18 cm

Melbourne: George Rose, 1901

Pictures Collection PIC Album 1000

I am now just starting a large concern which I have been thinking over for months & which will, I fear, mean a fearful amount of work—i.e. a huge Bazaar to start a 'Lying-in Hospital' for the colony of which there is *nothing* of the kind excepting the Workhouse. I do not mean Refuges, there are plenty of those, but for respectable and even well-to-do married women, & we shall have the Bazaar while the Royalties are here.¹⁷

Audrey organised a committee to discuss the founding of the maternity home. She had the support of various doctors and financial support from a philanthropist and other donors who established a Women's Queen Victoria Jubilee Fund. Audrey's plans to organise the bazaar were delayed due to the death of Queen Victoria on 22 January 1901. Shortly after, she went into mourning and decided to rename the originally intended Lady Tennyson Maternity Home The Queen's Home, as South Australia's memorial to Queen Victoria. More money was donated to her cause and, some months later, Audrey wrote to her mother of the acquisition of land for the home.

My great piece of news this mail is that the South Australian Company (two of whose Directors are Sir Stanley Clarke & Mr Johnstone who came to see us at Marble Hill with their wives when they were out here) have given us a piece of land, an acre, in a beautiful position for the Maternity Home ...

We have been several times to see the paddock & have now definitely chosen the plot, a corner piece with huge wide road & turf ride in front, a beautiful lookout in

front on to the race course, behind a lovely view of the hills, 200 yards [183 metres] from the trams, only 5 minutes' drive from the Hospital, & a most healthy cool position. It is a most splendidly generous gift & I am writing myself to Sir Stanley Clarke by this mail to thank him.

We are now getting out plans for the building & have had several offers from architects to make the designs free of charge, 2 of them being foremost men here. There have been indignant letters from anonymous architects at the idea of their doing it for nothing, but these we don't mind. The Committee are very kind & made me President but as there are only men on it I do not attend the meetings, but they tell me everything & are always ready to hear & carry out my wishes if possible, & come round & talk things over with me, so that I am in great spirits about the Home, & only hope I may see it started on a good working basis before we return home.¹⁸

Audrey Tennyson was appointed patroness of the maternity home and, at the meeting she held on 6 December 1900, a provisional committee was appointed to oversee its early planning. The committee comprised both men and women and two medical members elected by the Medical Board. In March 1902, Audrey wrote to her mother about progress on building the Home.

Such a pretty building with large wide verandahs on both floors, such wonderfully bright cheery pretty rooms opening on to the verandahs, large airy passages, & pretty entrance hall with pretty staircase coming down into it. Every convenience, bathrooms, pantries, cupboards, kitchens quite shut off, beautiful underground larder—& a laundry, separate building, joined by verandah. How I wish you could see it. It is yellowy white sandstone picked out with red brick, & mullioned windows. We shall begin with ten beds, I think, if we can, & I hope it will be opened early in May ... It is pretty sure to be photographed & then I must send you one.¹⁹

Audrey took pride in the fact that Hallam approved of the maternity home and that her name was associated with it. The building still exists today but its future is in doubt.

I took H to see the Queen's Home & he was much pleased with it, & the Matron is enchanted with it. We are anxious to open it on Victoria Day, May 24th, the most appropriate day for opening her Memorial, and excellent as it is a Saturday & we can therefore make a big thing of it.²⁰

In a later letter Audrey wrote about the Home's opening and of her successful fundraising stall. She had made patchwork quilts to sell at the stall to raise money for the Home.

I want to tell you what an enormous success the opening of the Queen's Home was on Saturday & I am sending you a copy of both papers as the *Register* describes the Home best and the *Advertiser* the speeches etc ... Of course I know you will like my little speech because I made it, & I am thankful to say I got thro' it without a



Samuel White Sweet (1825–1886)
Children's Hospital, Adelaide
photograph; 20 x 14.5 cm
From 'Captain Sweet's Views of South Australia'
Pictures Collection PIC Album 951

break, having learnt it by heart, but I was trembling all over when it was done & was glad to hide my face in my bouquet. People said tho' they could not hear most of the men, they could hear every word I said, & what makes me *very* conceited is that lots of people, I hear, told others not there that it was a far better speech than those of the Statesmen who spoke. What it is to be a woman & the governor's wife!!²¹

After a while, Audrey became disillusioned with the attitude of doctors not wishing to treat women who could afford to pay for their confinement. The doctors, who worked in an honorary capacity, felt that the institution should be for the worthy poor and those who could afford to pay for medical attention should go elsewhere. Audrey hoped that well-to-do women could also be admitted to the home if they could not give birth at home. Other female committee members also believed that geographically isolated women who could afford to pay should also be admitted to the Queen Victoria Maternity Home. A graduated system of fees was eventually introduced in the Queen's Home according to the patients' means.

I am sorry to say many of the doctors here are setting themselves dead against the Queen's Home because they are so furious at the idea of losing a few fees possibly;

Queen's Home

2.

Opening of the
for high
Darling
The dress fabrications
wanted to get at high
Tennyson's home. but
This is Tuesday
do I got as far as beginning
my letter yesterday & no
further. Each day one's
work seems to increase
& I have more & more
writing to do as I know
people better, for of course
it pleases people so
much more if I write

Extract from Audrey, Lady Tennyson's letter to her mother, Zacyntia Boyle, concerning the opening of the Queen's Home and showing a sample of the fabric used for the nurses gowns, dated 26 May 1902
Tennyson Collection
Manuscript Collection MS479

and actually a doctor the other day, who is extremely well-off, refused to sign a poor woman's paper for entrance because she had paid her two or three guineas for her other children & he was not going to lose his fee this time—and she sent in great despair asking the Marron to take her in in a few days, as her nurse had failed at the last moment & she had no one, & when I told our doctor of this case he thought it was quite right & natural of the doctor behaving like that. I don't know what happened, but the woman never came, poor thing. I asked how it is that doctors send *hundreds* of children yearly to the Children's Hospital & patients to the Adelaide Hospital, & I was told: 'Oh, because they belong to some Club & the doctors don't get paid except so much a year, but Clubs never include confinements!'

It really makes one's blood boil, for fancy what it is for these poor women to get the rest & quiet & the best trained nursing & food, & all pay something if they can, just for their food etc. We have had 8 babies born, 5 boys, 3 girls, one stillborn, & 4 women waiting & expecting daily.

I am going to suggest having our own resident doctor, & have no doctors on the Committee, for they absolutely put a stop to our doing anything that affects or may affect, their pockets. They have absolutely forbidden there being a private room that ladies could come to from the bush & places where they can get no doctor or nurse for perhaps 80 or 100 miles [130–160 kilometres], so that they can't come & are shut out, & yet I made a strong point of this in starting the Home. They never showed themselves up till after the Home was opened, & I have really got quite to despise doctors. We have 6 now on the staff & they each take a month in routine and are paid nothing, but they wished for the work & we had 17 applications. I am so anxious to get it on a right basis before I leave Australia. I am afraid I can't before I leave S.A.²²

Audrey Tennyson moved to Melbourne in 1902 to accompany her husband who had been appointed acting Governor-General.

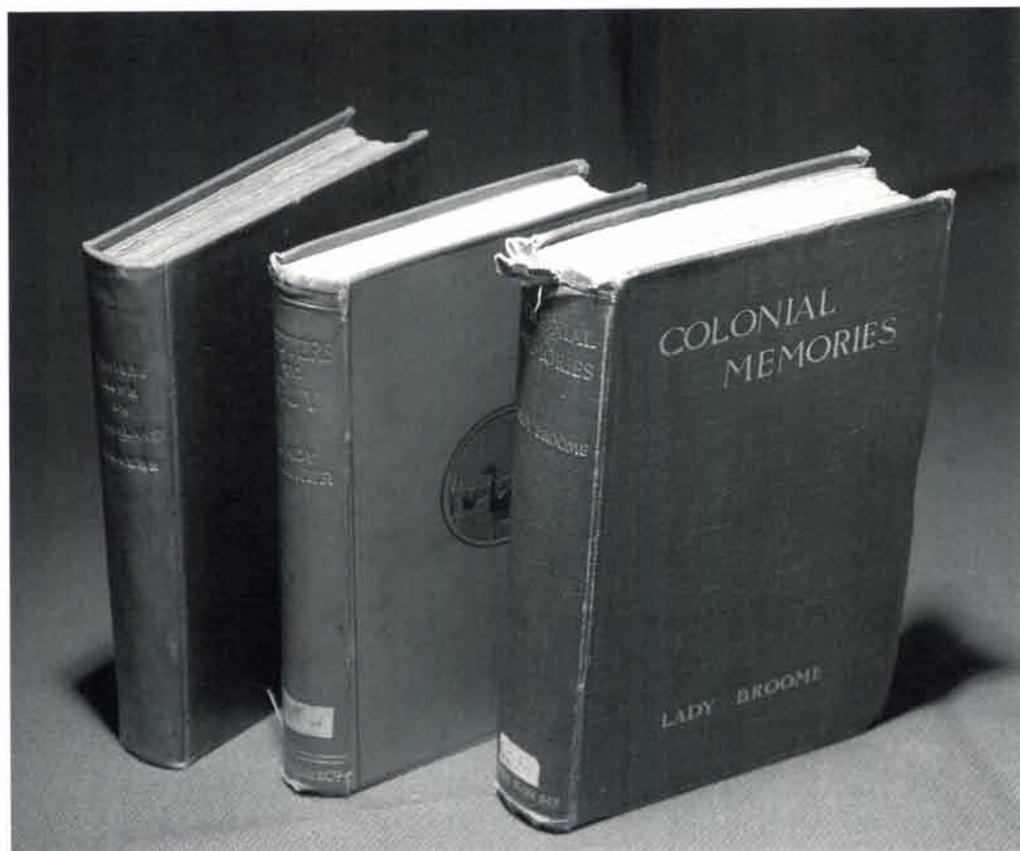
Charity work was one of the few public activities available to upper-class women during the nineteenth century. Through their charitable contributions, the vice-regal women of colonial Australia played a valuable public role. They were well placed to participate in charity work and to use their influence to seek benefactors. Poor women and young children were often the target of their concern, and this was part of a broader reform movement characterising nineteenth-century philanthropy.

Notes

Letters of Audrey, Lady Tennyson are found in: Papers of Audrey, Lady Tennyson, National Library of Australia (MS479/49).

Letters of Eliza Darling to Edward Dumaresq, 1820–1858, Archives Office of Tasmania, (NS953/309).

- ¹ Letter 14, 18 April 1826, Eliza Darling to Edward Dumaresq.
- ² Letter, Fanny Macleay to William Sharp Macleay, 28 April 1826, Macarthur Papers, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales (ML A4301).
- ³ This discussion draws on K. Daniels, *Convict Women*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1998.
- ⁴ Letter, Jane Franklin to Elizabeth Fry, letter XXIX, G. Mackaness, *Some Private Correspondence of Sir John and Lady Jane Franklin 1837–1845*. Rev. ed. Sydney: D.S. Ford, 1977, Part II, p. 22.
- ⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 23–24.
- ⁶ B. Gilderdale, *The Seven Lives of Lady Barker*. Auckland: David Bateman, 1996, p. 239.
- ⁷ *Herald* (Melbourne), 23 April 1887, p. 3.
- ⁸ *Age*, 9 May 1887, p. 5.
- ⁹ J. Swain, 'The Queen's Fund, Melbourne, 1887–1900', *Melbourne Historical Journal*, vol. 11 1972: pp. 11–41.
- ¹⁰ *ibid.*
- ¹¹ *Melbourne Punch*, 26 May 1887, p. 241.
- ¹² Swain, *op. cit.*
- ¹³ Letter, Lady Loch to Mr C.H. Pearson, 29 July 1887, Pearson Papers, Latrobe Library, State Library of Victoria.
- ¹⁴ *Table Talk*, 24 June 1887, pp. 9–19.
- ¹⁵ Letter, 21 May 1899, Audrey, Lady Tennyson to Zacynthia Boyle. Papers of Audrey, Lady Tennyson.
- ¹⁶ Letter, 2 July 1899, *ibid.*
- ¹⁷ Letter, 19 November 1900, *ibid.*
The Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York, in Australia to open the new Federal Parliament in Melbourne on 9 May 1901, visited the Tennysons in July 1901.
- ¹⁸ Letter, 8 June 1901, *ibid.*
- ¹⁹ Letter, 9 March 1902, *ibid.*
- ²⁰ Letter, 14 April 1902, *ibid.*
- ²¹ Letter, 26 May 1902, *ibid.*
- ²² Letter, 27 July 1902, *ibid.*



Lady Barker (Lady Broome)
Colonial Memories (London: Smith, Eldo & Co., 1904),
Letters to Guy (London: Macmillan and Co., 1885) and
Station Life in New Zealand (London: Macmillan and Co., 1870)

Paid Worker

During the nineteenth century it was unusual for a middle- to upper-class woman to engage in paid work. It was assumed she would be mistress of her home and uphold the feminine ideal. Some women—‘daughters of wealthy landowners, or successful business or professional men—were expected to marry within their class and lead lives of comfort and leisure’.¹

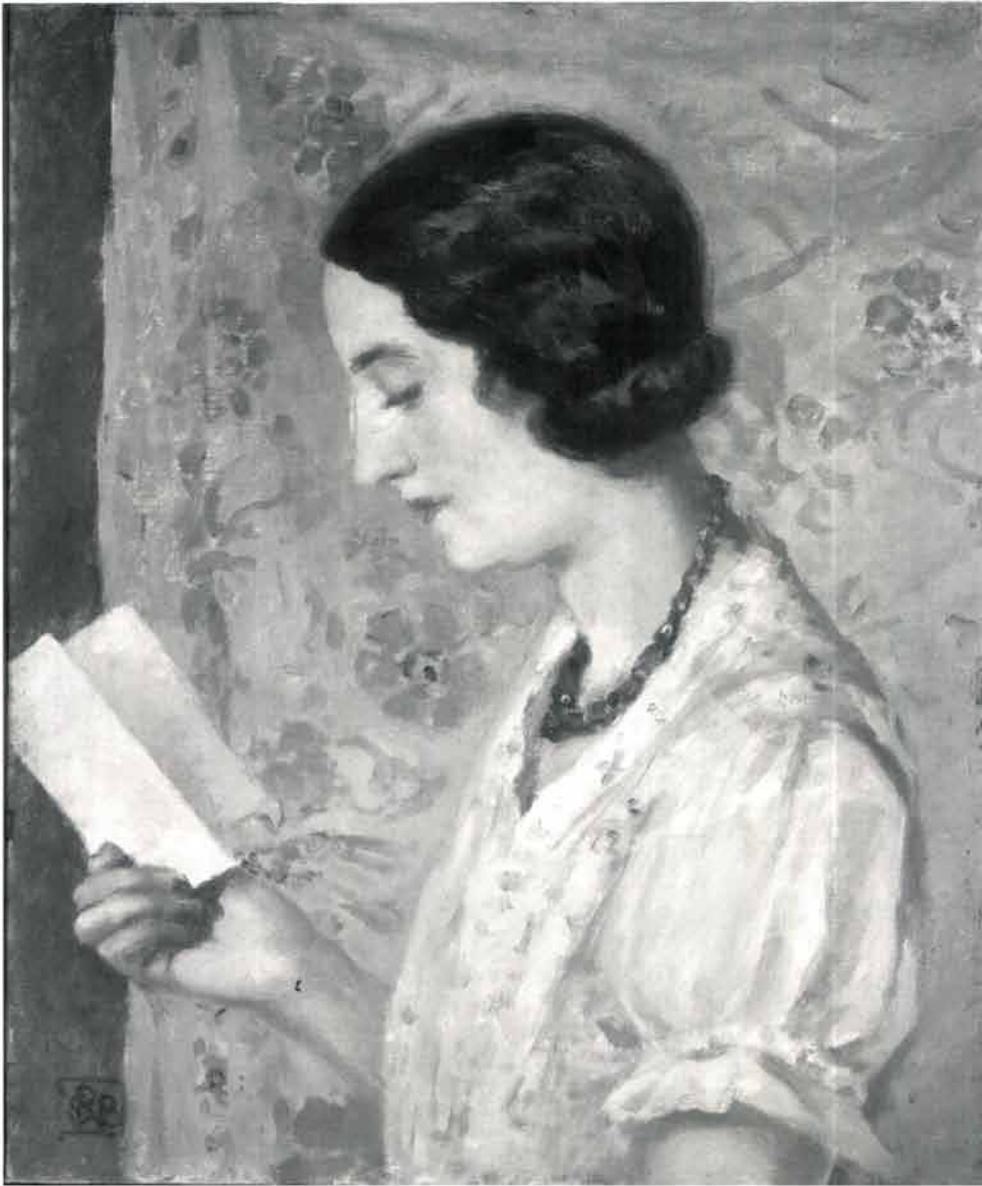
True to this nineteenth-century feminine ideal, four of the vice-regal wives upheld the precept of not engaging in paid work. However, Mary Anne Broome managed to defy convention and pursue a paid literary career—before her husband became governor of Western Australia, during his term of office and subsequently.

Women writers have battled a long history of neglect. They were made invisible, excluded from the masculine-defined and controlled literary canon, some resorting to male pseudonyms in order to be published. For example, Ethel Florence Lindsay Richardson, author of the Australian novel *The Fortunes of Richard Mahoney*, published under the name Henry Handel Richardson. Mary Anne Broome, in contrast, entered this predominantly male profession and achieved success under her own name.

Mary Anne Broome came from an upper middle-class family. She lived in a highly structured Victorian society with established norms. Yet, she became a successful writer and enjoyed a degree of financial independence. Ironically, because of the popularity of Mary Anne’s writing, Frederick Broome became known as the husband of Lady Barker, the name under which most of her works were published.

Although Frederick Broome later became a literary figure in London, his salary from journalism and poetry was inadequate to sustain a family. Well-educated, highly intelligent and capable, Mary Anne was able to supplement the family’s income through her own paid work.

Whenever Frederick secured employment opportunities abroad, Mary Anne followed her husband—her own writing career took second place. But she was among a small number of nineteenth-century women, in Australia and in England, who wrote for a living, supporting themselves and their families.



Rupert Bunny (1864–1947)
Portrait of Henry Handel Richardson c.1910
oil on canvas; 58.7 x 48.6 cm
Pictures Collection R4000

Published in a variety of genres—travel writing, children’s fiction and non-fiction—Mary Anne felt more confident writing non-fiction, usually based on her own experiences: ‘In moments of self-examination she had to recognize that her strengths lay more in recounting true events than in constructing fictional romances.’² She also edited a family magazine, *Evening Hours*, for three years and contributed articles to the English *Cornhill Magazine* for five years.

Macmillan Publishers in London commissioned Mary Anne to write for them. During the 1870s, Macmillan published most of her books, encouraging her to write under the name Lady Barker (from her first marriage). In the nineteenth century, the nobility was highly regarded and Mary Anne's publisher felt that the title of Lady Barker would appeal to Victorian society. She also wrote as Lady Barker for other publishers, including Routledge, Warne, and Smith, Elder and Co.

Frederick Broome was knighted in 1884, during his governorship of Western Australia, at which time Mary Anne became Lady Broome and her final work, *Colonial Memories*, was published under this name. However, it was as Lady Barker that she had 18 books published, 16 during a prolific eight-year period.

Mary Anne Broome's writing before and during her role as the governor's wife provides an insight into her character, values and views. Brief excerpts of some of her published work are cited to illustrate the way she wrote about the places and people she encountered.

Life in New Zealand in the 1860s

Frederick Broome was a sheep farmer in New Zealand during the 1860s, before his colonial appointments. From New Zealand, Mary Anne wrote letters to her friends in England about life on a sheep station. The letters were later edited by her in the anthology *Station Life in New Zealand* (Macmillan, 1870), which was to become a bestseller.



Charles Decimus Barraud (1822–1897)
Near Wellington, New Zealand, May 22, 1852
oil on canvas; 22.9 x 40.7 cm
Rex Nan Kivell Collection NK3376
Pictures Collection

In a letter to her sister Louisa, Mary Anne wrote about her social life in New Zealand:

the last two weeks have been *the gay ones* of the whole year; the races have been going on for three days, and there have been a few balls; but, as a general rule, the society may be said to be extremely stagnant. No dinner-parties are ever given—I imagine, on account of the smallness of the houses and the inefficiency of the servants; but every now and then there is an assembly ball arranged.³

Pursuing a theme that she was to take up later as a governor's wife, she complained of the inefficiency of female servants.

The great complaint, the never-ending subject of comparison and lamentation among ladies, is the utter ignorance and inefficiency of their female servants. As soon as a ship comes in, it is besieged with people who want servants, but it is very rare to get one who knows how to do anything as it ought to be done. Their lack of knowledge of the commonest domestic duties is not surprising.⁴

Good domestic help seemed to be a perennial problem in the British colonies during the nineteenth century.

Explorations

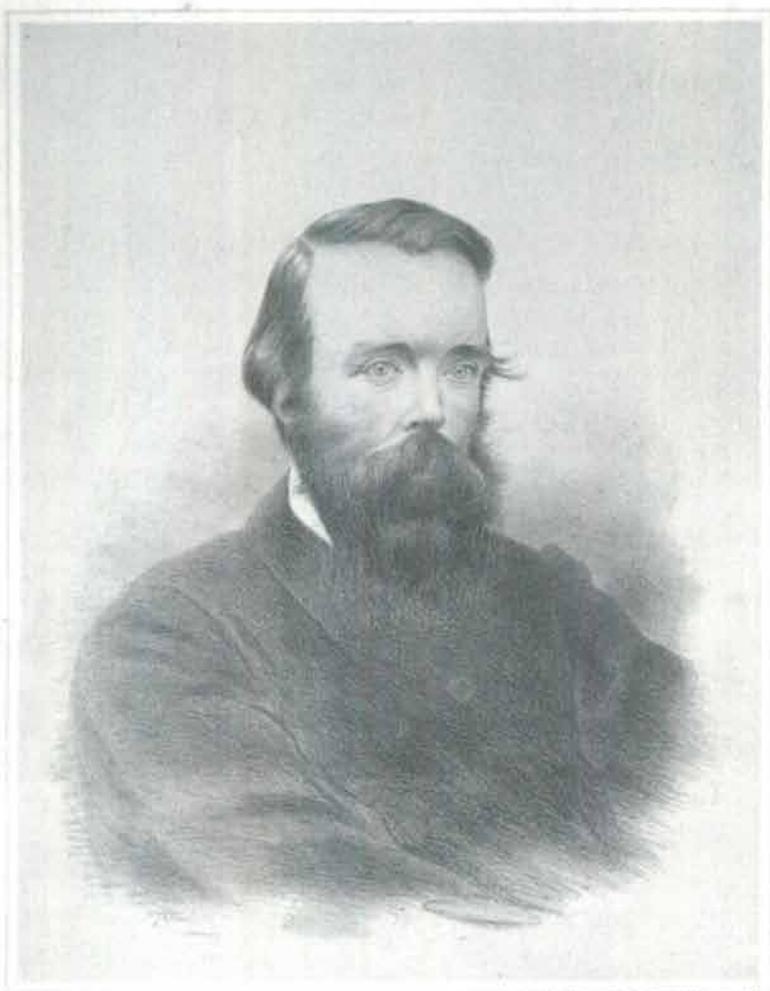
In *Travelling Over Old and New Ground* (Routledge, 1872), Mary Anne Broome details aspects of life in remote corners of the world. Based on other sources, the book focuses on explorations in Australia, New Zealand, North and South America, Africa, India and Japan. Of particular interest to Mary Anne was the story of Robert O'Hara Burke and William John Wills, the Australian explorers who lost their lives at Coopers Creek in Central Australia after being the first to cross the continent from south to north in 1861. Mary Anne devotes the first chapter of *Travelling Over Old and New Ground* to the story of Burke and Wills. In her opinion, Wills, Burke's second-in-command, showed the leadership qualities necessary to head the expedition, not Burke.

Looking at it dispassionately, and with the most earnest wish not to depreciate Mr Burke's character or services, I cannot make myself think he was fitted to be the head of such an Expedition.⁵

Housekeeping in South Africa

Mary Anne joined her husband in Natal, South Africa, in 1876, a year after he was appointed colonial secretary there. Her observations of life in Natal were recorded in *A Year's Housekeeping in South Africa* (Macmillan, 1878).

The role of working-class indigenous men and women in South Africa interested Mary Anne. She commented on the divisions of labour, of especial interest to her as they contrasted so markedly with an English way of life.



R. O'Hara Burke
Leader

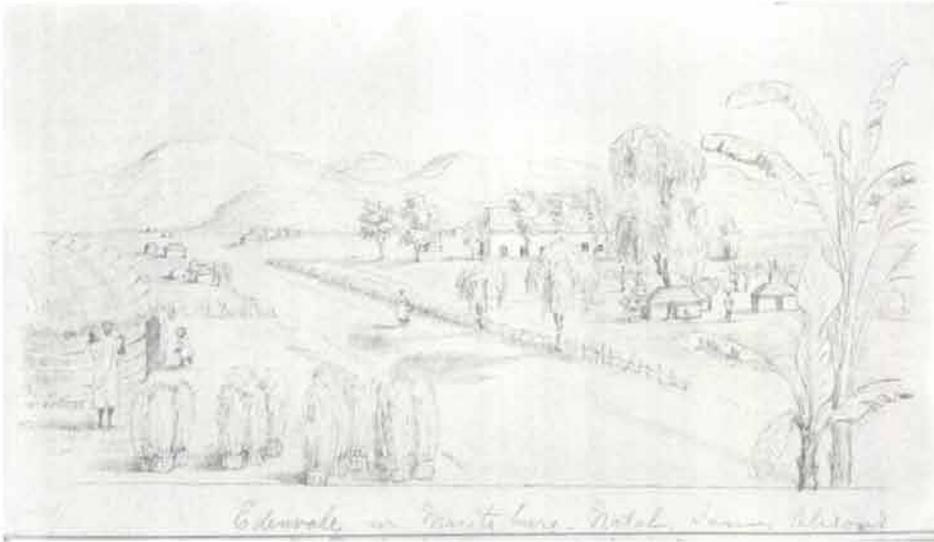
ROBERT O'HARA BURKE,

Leader of the Victoria Expedition

1841-1861

Portrait by E. Gilks, 1861

Edward Gilks (b.1822)
Robert O'Hara Burke, Leader of the Victoria Exploration Expedition, Died June 29th 1861 at Coopers Creek
lithograph; 22.5 x 17.5 cm
Melbourne: E. Gilks, December 1861
Pictures Collection S7873



Frederick Mackie (1812–1893)
Edenville nr. Maritzburg, Natal, James Alison's 1855
pencil drawing; 12 x 19.8 cm
Rex Nan Kivell Collection NK2092/87
Pictures Collection

We must bear in mind, however, that it is a new and altogether Revolutionary idea to a Kafir that he should do any work at all. Work is for women: war or idleness for men. Consequently their fixed idea is to do as little as they possibly can, and no Kafir will work after he has money enough to buy a sufficient number of wives who will work for him.⁶

Education was important to Mary Anne and, in her view, the key to uplifting a society's standards. She put forward an idea to elevate the status of the indigenous population.

Now if we were only to import a small number of teachers and trained artisans of the highest procurable degree of efficiency, we could establish training schools in connection with the missions which are scattered all over the country and which have been doing an immense amount of good silently all these years. In this way we might gradually use up the material we have all ready to our hand in these swarming black people; and it appears to me as if it would be more likely to succeed than bringing shiploads of ignorant, idle whites into the colony.⁷

Children's fiction

In addition to her non-fiction books, Mary Anne Broome also wrote fiction—for children.

One of her early fiction works was a book of short stories, *Ribbon Stories* (Macmillan, 1872), written for younger children. One of the stories, 'Ella's

Dream', told of a little girl who had the irritating habit of asking too many questions.

'I will try and cut myself some bread.' So she took up the knife and began to cut the nice brown loaf, but she could not manage it. The horrid knife slipped every time, and came down crack on the plate, until I wonder it did not break it. Every time it came crack it said a word, like this. 'What . is . bread . made . of? Why . do . they . make . it . of . wheat? Who . grinds . the . wheat? Where . is . it . ground?'⁸

Holiday Stories for Boys and Girls (Routledge, 1873) was based on letters sent by Mary Anne to her older sons, Jack and George. Comprising eight stories, the book has an unlikely heroine called Molly.

Her appearance was decidedly repulsive. Imagine a tall, thin, sallow child, with a shock head of black hair, which was cut short, but not short enough to prevent it from falling over her eyes and giving her the appearance of a young savage.⁹

Molly was an orphan cared for by her aunt, Mrs Welby. Mary Anne paints a picture of Mrs Welby as cold and controlling. The aunt promises Molly that she could have a plant if her room was tidy. However it was not, so Mrs Welby forbade her to have the plant. Molly independently went out and bought herself a rose-tree. When Mrs Welby saw the rose-tree, she reacted predictably:

'I forbade you to buy that plant,' said Mrs Welby harshly, and she approached the window outside which the rose was blooming in the sunshine. Molly sprang forward, so as to place herself between her aunt and her treasure, crying, 'Oh don't be angry with it, Aunt; I bought it with my own money, and I am going to try to be tidy, I am indeed!' 'You should have tried some weeks ago,' said Mrs Welby, 'it is too late now.'¹⁰

Sybil's Book (Macmillan, 1874) is a tale of four young teenagers, based on the lives of four young women of the author's acquaintance. The book depicts the social life of young upper-class women in the late nineteenth century. Written for teenage girls on the subject of human relationships and family life, it was comparable to Louisa M. Alcott's *Little Women* (1868) and Susan Coolidge's *What Katy Did Next* (1872).

In *Sybil's Book*, Mary Anne promoted one of her favourite subjects, the value of education for girls—the book was intended to specifically interest girls and to promote their reading. Her interest in the education of girls prompted Monday afternoon discussion groups at Government House.

At the insistence of the character Sybil, the book adopts a heroine, Adelaide Sartoris. Before 'coming out' into society, as was expected of an upper-class English girl in the nineteenth century, Adelaide expressed being bored at home. She wished to go to school:

'Because it is altogether too dreadfully dull,' she cried. 'You don't consider that I have been here all my life, and shall probably go on living here until—well, until I marry somebody or other someday, perhaps. This would be the best time to get away for a little; to a nice school I mean.'¹¹

Mary Anne Broome's fiction is littered with moralising and her own values are constantly exposed in her writing. In *Sybil's Book*, the heroine is the recipient of a homily on unselfishness.

If you are nice and polite to anybody in order that they may admire you for it, be very sure they will do nothing of the sort, whereas if you never think of yourself at all, but just do what is unselfish and amiable for *its own sake*, then the reward will come, perhaps to your own surprise.¹²

Letters to her son Guy

Following his term as colonial secretary in Natal, Frederick Broome was appointed Governor of Western Australia. Frederick and Mary Anne left for Australia in 1883 with their younger son, Louis, who was then eight. Their older son, Guy, at 12-years-of-age, remained in England to continue his education. Mary Anne wrote regularly to Guy informing him of her travels and her vice-regal duties in Western Australia. At a later stage, she edited these letters and compiled a book, *Letters to Guy*, published by Macmillan in 1885. She wrote and published this book while living in Western Australia.

Sailing from Mauritius, the Broomes arrived initially in Adelaide, South Australia. Writing to Guy, Mary Anne detailed her first impressions of her surroundings.

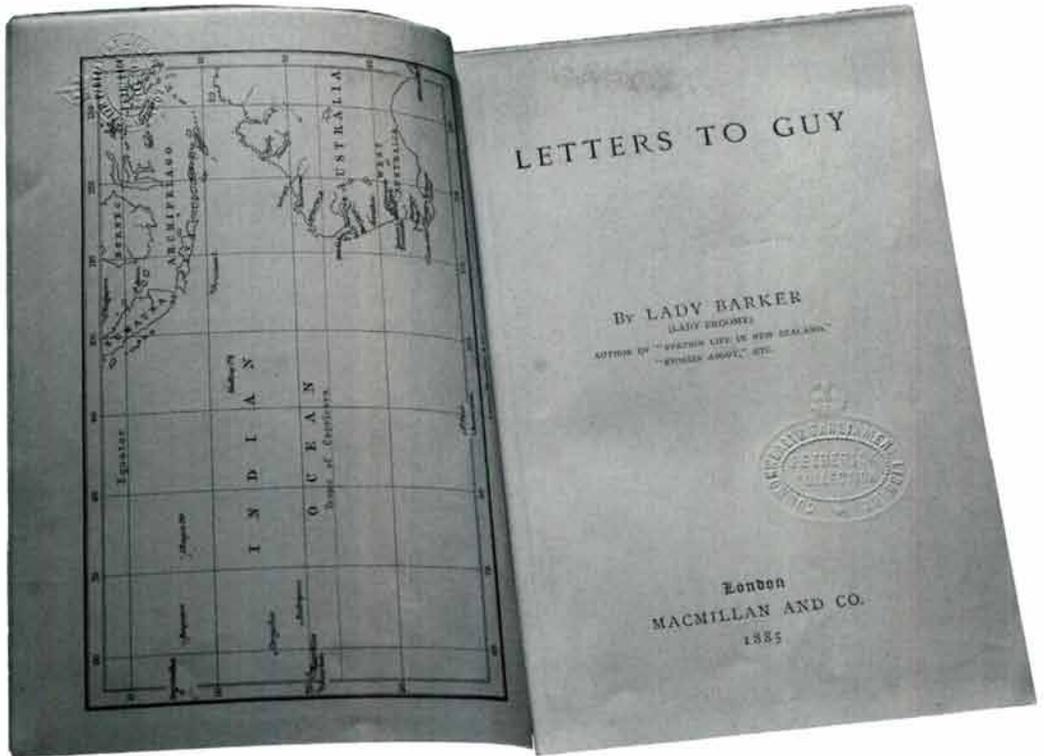
The shops looked gay and busy though it was nearly midnight, and lots of people were about—returning from the theatre, I heard.

At last we reached the station at Adelaide, and then all our troubles from cold and sleepiness came to an end directly. A nice warm carriage, a few minutes' swift drive, then a big brightly-lighted house, kind outstretched hands of welcome, blazing fires, supper which we were all very much too sleepy to eat, and then delicious beds.¹³

We did a great deal of sight-seeing besides the schools, and I assure you Adelaide is not only a very fine, large city, with imposing, handsome buildings now, but it promises to be twice as large, and four times as handsome, within the next ten years. It is no age at all for a large town, but to look at it you would suppose it had been standing there for a century at least. It is now mid-winter, when it is naturally rainy, but we have lighted on perfect weather so far, crisp and cold and clear, and yet the sunshine is quite warm.¹⁴

In the same letter, Mary Anne described the South Australian countryside.

One bright afternoon we drove up—climbed up, I might say—to Marble Hill, the charming country-seat which South Australia provides for her Governor during the



Lady Barker (Lady Broome)
 Title page and frontispiece of *Letters to Guy*
 London: Macmillan and Co., 1885

hot summer months, and where, I believe, it is always cool and pleasant. You can't think how pretty the road was—very steep, but at every turn a lovely valley opened out, or else wooded hillsides, still gay with a remnant of autumn leaves on vine and fruit trees. Here and there a Devonshire-like coombe sharply cleft the range.¹⁵

A true patriot, Mary Anne embodied nationalistic pride and symbolised the high regard displayed towards Queen Victoria, the English monarch. Like Audrey Tennyson, Mary Anne held Queen Victoria in great affection. She noticed with pride how the people of Western Australia, who lined the dock to welcome the Broomes on their arrival in the colony, displayed a sense of loyalty towards and love for Queen Victoria—typical of Australian sentiment during the colonial period.

As the land was neared we could see, on shore, fluttering flags, and red coats, and green arches, and all sorts of gay and pleasant ways of welcome. Everybody had come down to the pier to receive your father, and I felt very choky and foolish, because I was really, in my heart, so pleased and glad to find our new home such a charming place, and so many people thus kind and cordial in welcoming us. And

then, besides the personal feeling of gratitude to individuals for their pretty and hospitable greeting, I always have a proud swelling of my heart to see how loyal Englishmen are, all over the world, and specially in Australia; loyal even when such thousands and thousands of miles of sea stretch between them and their Queen and Empress. All these arches and flags and mottoes are very nice as welcoming your father, but how much nicer do they become when they are just the words in which the West Australians say, 'We love our dear Queen so much that we are ready to be cordial and pleasant to whomever She chooses to send to represent Her.' So, whenever I tell you of all the honour and hospitality shown to your father and me, you must always *first* think that it is really our darling Queen to whom all her distant subjects vie with each other in showing their love and loyalty.¹⁶

Mary Anne ensured that Guy was informed of every place his parents visited. In another letter she wrote of the breathtaking beauty of Albany.

It is a pity I can't make you see the pretty views from every point at Albany, or give you a better idea of what great capabilities it possesses. I think it is really the most magnificent natural harbour I have ever seen.¹⁷

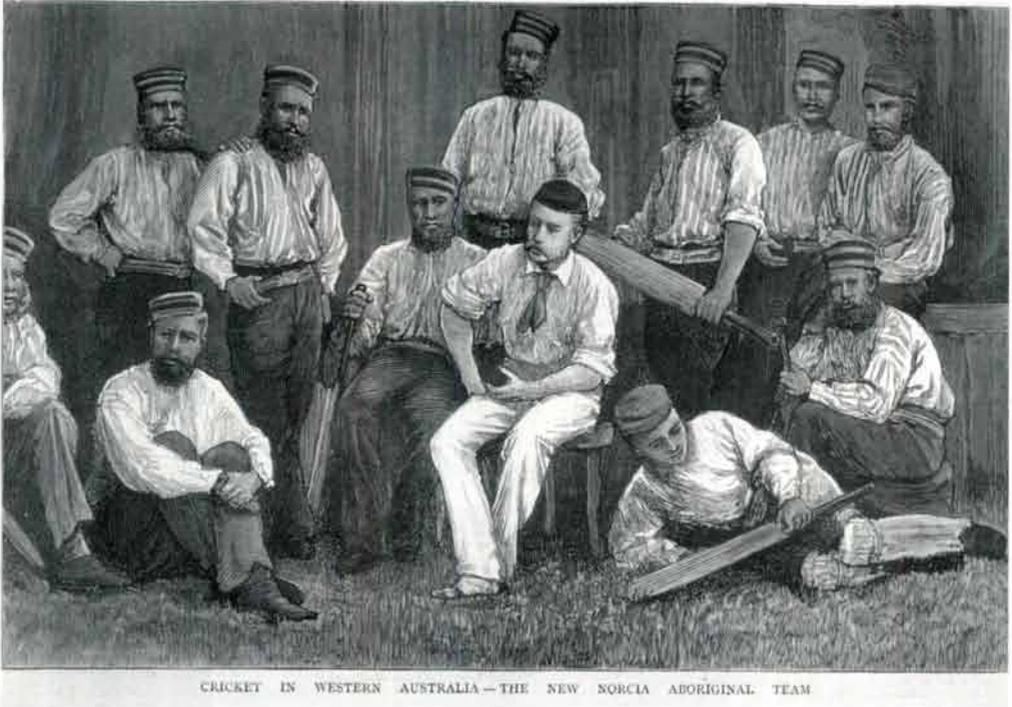
Governor Broome and his wife travelled throughout the countryside of Western Australia. Mary Anne was overwhelmed by the Sand Plains and tried to describe their magic to Guy.

I don't know if I can in the least make you understand what this bit of country was like, and it looked still more weird and strange, seeing it as we did, for the first time, with the dawn gradually spreading over it, and the sun coming up, red and round, over the distant eastern edge. If you can fancy an ocean of sand instead of water you will have some faint idea of the way we could see all round us for miles and miles and miles. And not a calm ocean, either—an ocean with waves and large billows turned into sudden stillness, as though by a magic wand.¹⁸

A nature lover who appreciated natural beauty, Mary Anne commented on the wildflowers that flourished on their visit to the sandy plains.

During many months of the year all this sandy waste is absolutely bare and desolate; but our overland journey had been so timed that we should cross it when all the wild flowers were out. And it was certainly the most wonderful sight you can imagine, nor do I expect that anything I can write can give you the least idea of their beauty. The first wonder is that they are there at all, for the little bushes on which they grow seem just to sit lightly on the top of the sand; and there they are, blooming away without a drop of water, and under a fierce sun. They do not last more than three months in blossom under these conditions, but they are very astonishing and beautiful.¹⁹

Later, visiting a mission where Aboriginal children were taken from their families and taught the 'European' way of life, she remarked to Guy:



Cricket in Western Australia, the New Norcia Aboriginal Team

hand-coloured wood engraving; 16.5 x 24 cm

London: s.n., c.1879

Pictures Collection S9884

You can imagine how hard it must have been at first to catch these savages, and to teach them anything at all; and knowing this made it more wonderful to see all these civilised, comfortable, industrious people, whose parents were very little better than beasts of the field in habits and customs. But perseverance and kindness and infinite patience have worked a change like a miracle. One saw the result of it all during the long, pleasant day spent in visiting schools and workshops, going into the neat, comfortable cottages, and finally sitting down to watch a capital game of cricket between the natives and the lay Brothers, most of whom were Spaniards, or of Spanish descent. You would have liked to see that game, and I am sure the way the natives ran would have astonished you! They make capital cricketers, with their correct eye and accurate aim, and love of the game.²⁰

After visiting Bunbury, Mary Anne drove 100 kilometres to the seaside town of Vasse, where the Indigenous people were again of special interest to her.

The Vasse is a very pretty little place, and the climate most healthy and delicious. I had a pleasant drive one afternoon, with the clergyman's wife, to a primitive sort of small Mission Home for native children. It was a cottage in a romantic-looking spot in the very heart of the forest, where the children can play about, and follow their own wild and savage instincts, for it does not do to coop them up in ever so nice a playground. Their health suffers if they have not a certain amount of

freedom, and they dig up queer roots, and occasionally catch and broil a snake. But when I saw them they were neatly dressed, and looked quite as civilised as any schoolchildren anywhere. Their manners were simple and natural, and they seemed very affectionate, and grateful, and happy. About a dozen girls and boys were at home, and I had a very pleasant hour with them. They immediately took me into their entire confidence, and showed me all the favourite play-places.²¹

Mary Anne wrote to Guy about an epidemic that hit Perth in late December 1883:

Perth was without bread one fine morning. All the bakers had gone to bed with measles. I could not get myself supplied with butter or meat, besides having no bread ... And the worst of it was that several people died entirely of not knowing how to take care of themselves, for it was unusually damp, showery weather, and they left windows open, or even managed to get up and go out of doors, and consequently got a chill. It is more than thirty years since an outbreak of measles has appeared in the colony, so there was a whole generation to catch the disease.²²

Passing through York, one of the earliest rural settlements in Western Australia, Mary Anne noticed an unusual animal, which she described to Guy.

The strangest animal (or is it a reptile, I wonder?) hereabouts is what the natives call a York Devil. It is quite ugly enough for its name, but seems peaceable and harmless enough. It must possess something of the nature of a chameleon, for it changes its colour gradually to match the stone or gravel or wood on which it finds itself. It is about the size of the palm of a man's hand, with a queer, rugged, knobby body, and four short feet like a lizard; its long neck and spiky head give it a weird and uncanny look. I cannot say it is very lively, nor did I perceive that it ate anything. I kept one, tethered by its leg to the tap of a water-barrel in the garden, for some days; but as I was told that they invariably die, and die slowly after months of starvation, I could not be happy until I had taken it to its favourite rocks.²³

As well as detailing her travels, Mary Anne shared with her son aspects of their domestic life at Government House.

I have not told you half enough about the cows and the poultry! They are all very happy, and get on famously. I have lots of little chickens, and ducks, and baby turkeys. But the hawks lead me a sad life, and seem to be far too clever to get themselves trapped or shot. Then every Sunday evening there is a long list of casualties to report, because the horses are allowed to run in the paddock on that day, and they generally reward me for the indulgence by galloping wildly over my youngest chickens, and leaving many killed and wounded behind them.²⁴

I have never told you of two or three delightful picnics we have had, lunching in the bush each time. The ground was carpeted with a quantity of maidenhair fern, and lovely flowers, though no flowers are equal in my eyes to the glories of the sand-plains. But it was very delightful strolling about in the cool green shade, or sitting down on a fallen log and listening to the whistling and chattering of the magpies.²⁵

On one of these brilliant Saturday afternoons I made a 'kylie [boomerang] tea' on the racecourse, some five miles [8 kilometres] away from Perth. I took a large party, riding and driving, and there was also a dog-cart, with the kylie-throwers—native policemen—and the tea. You would have liked it immensely, and although it was really very cold, even in the sun, when we stood still to watch the two men fling their kylies, still I could hardly get anyone to turn their backs on the circling flights, and come to the fire and have tea. We were obliged to go as far away as we could from glass windows and people; and the racecourse was the only place without trees.²⁶

Colonial reminiscences

Mary Anne wrote *Colonial Memories* (1904) under the name Lady Broome. A non-fiction work, it was her final publication on the history of the places that she lived in or visited. In her distinctive descriptive style, she detailed the growing sophistication of colonial society in the 1880s.

In those days we sadly called ourselves 'Cinderella', but the Fairy Prince—Responsible Government—was not far off, and I am proud to remember that my dear husband, then Governor of the colony, was one of those who helped to open the door and let Prince Charming in ... enormous progress has been made, and many of the works and wants which, we only dreamed of and longed for, have suddenly become accomplished facts. Our Cinderella's shoes have turned out to be made of gold.²⁷

Mary Anne recalled the establishment of the telegraph, a major advance in communications to a remote colony like Western Australia. Her husband, referred to by her as 'F', invited her to attend the opening of the telegraph line.

Another morning—and such a beautiful morning too!—F looked in at the drawing-room window, and asked if I would like to come with him to the Central Telegraph Office—a very little way off—and hear the first messages over a line stretching many hundreds of miles away to the far North-west of the colony.²⁸

Mary Anne fondly reminisced about the time she and Frederick spent in Western Australia.

That was the delightful part of those patriarchal times—only fifteen or twenty years ago, remember—that all the joys and sorrows used to find their way to Government House. I always tried to divide the work, telling our dear colonial friends that when they were prosperous and happy they were the Governor's business, but when they were sick or sorrowful or in trouble they belonged to my department; and thus we both found plenty to do, and were able to get very much inside, as it were, the lives of those among whom our lot was cast for more than seven busy, happy years.²⁹

The Broomes were present in the West at a time when early gold discoveries hinted at the beginnings of a resources boom to follow.

The rumours of gold which had begun to fill the air during our day, necessitated first, telegraph stations, and then the establishment of outlying posts of civilisation; the nucleus of what are already turned or turning into flourishing towns.³⁰

Diggers used to go up the coast, as far as they could, in the small mail steamers, and then strike across the desert, often on foot, pushing their tools and food before them in a wheelbarrow. Naturally, they could neither travel far nor fast in this fashion, and there was always the water difficulty to be dealt with. Still a man will do and bear a great deal when golden nuggets dangle before his eyes, and some sturdy bushmen actually did manage to reach the outskirts of the great gold region. The worst of it was that under these circumstances no one could remain long, even if he struck gold; for there was no food to be had except what they took with them. As is generally the case in everything, one did not hear much of the failures; but every now and then a lucky man with a few ounces of gold in his possession found his way back to Perth. Nearly all who returned brought fragments of quartz to be assayed, and every day the hope grew which has since been so abundantly justified.³¹

As already discussed, a subject dear to Mary Anne was the education and development of young girls. In *Colonial Memories* she compares the changes from her own youth to developments in more recent times. In her day, girls were not encouraged to take much exercise and activities were limited.

I am often asked what exercise we were allowed to take. We rode a great deal, though girls were hardly ever seen in the hunting field, and I wonder we survived a ride on a country road, considering that our habits almost swept the ground. We had no out-door game except croquet, which was just coming into fashion, and was pursued with a frenzy quite equal to that evoked by ping-pong or any other modern craze. Of course, there was always walking and dancing, though over the latter there still hung a faint trace of the stately movements of the generation before us. We all did elaborate steps in the quadrille, and although the waltz was firmly established in the ball-rooms of my youth, it was a slow measure compared to the modern rush across the room. The polka woke us all up, and we hailed its pretty and picturesque figures with enthusiasm.³²

Mary Anne commented on changes in attitudes towards the socialisation of girls.

Today's girl, as I know her to be, is a very great improvement on the early Victorian maiden. To begin with, she is much nicer and prettier to look at, because she can suit her dress and her *coiffure* to her individuality. Then she is not so dreadfully shy—not to say *gauche*, as we were, because she is not kept in the school-room until the hour before she is launched into society, as ignorant of its ways as if she had dropped from the moon.³³

Then the New Girl is so companionable. Her education has been conducted on very different lines to ours, and she does not dream of giving up her studies because she is no longer obliged to pursue them. Her individual tastes have been given a chance of asserting themselves, and I am often told of 'work' gone on with at



Harold Cazneaux (1878–1953)
Sisters 1906
photograph; 30.3 x 41.5 cm
Pictures Collection PIC C19:1

home. In fact her education has really taught her how to go on educating herself. Of course, I am speaking of intelligent girls, and I am happy to think they are far more numerous than they were even one generation ago.³⁴

Although Mary Anne saw many changes in education as positive, her conservatism resulted in mixed feelings about contemporary education trends, especially concerning what young girls were allowed to read.

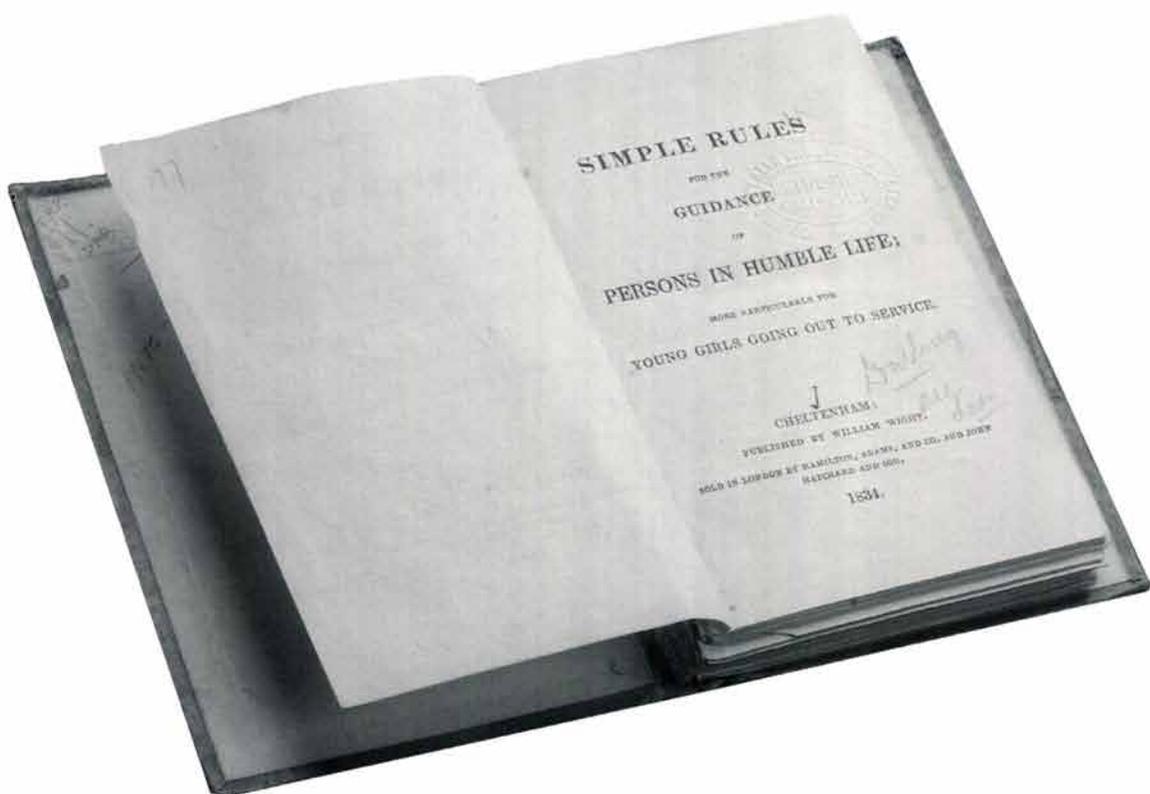
The delightful classes and lectures on all subjects and in all languages now so common were unknown in my day, to say nothing of the numerous aids to difficult branches of knowledge. Even history was offered to us in so unattractive a form

that although we swallowed, so to speak, a good deal of it, we digested little or none. Poetry was generally regarded as dangerous mental food, and, perhaps to our starved natures, it may have been. Our reading was circumscribed, and everything was Bowdlerised as much as possible. I am not sure, however, that miscellaneous reading does not begin too soon now, and certainly I am often astonished at the books very, very young girls are allowed to read. In this respect I confess I think the old way safer, to say the least of it.³⁵

While still constrained by the social mores of her time and by the ideology that saw a woman's role as firmly within the bounds of home and family, Mary Anne Broome set a precedent through her paid work as an author. The career she forged in a male-dominated profession set her apart and saw her publications popularly acclaimed within her own lifetime and after. This vice-regal wife fulfilled a most unexpected role—that of a successful writer who received recognition for her work independently of her husband and his position.

Notes

- ¹ B. Gilderdale, *The Seven Lives of Lady Barker*. Auckland: David Bateman, 1996, p. 147.
- ² M. McMurchy et al., *For Love or Money: A Pictorial History of Women and Work in Australia*. Melbourne: Penguin, 1983, p. 38.
- ³ M.A. Barker, *Station Life in New Zealand*. London: Macmillan, 1870, p. 36.
- ⁴ *ibid.*
- ⁵ M.A. Barker, *Travelling Over Old and New Ground*. London: Routledge, 1872, p. 7.
- ⁶ M.A. Barker, *A Year's Housekeeping in South Africa*. London: Macmillan, 1878, p. 61.
- ⁷ *ibid.*, p. 208.
- ⁸ M.A. Barker, *Ribbon Stories*. London: Macmillan, 1872, p. 32.
- ⁹ M.A. Barker, *Holiday Stories for Boys and Girls*. London: Routledge, 1873, p. 2.
- ¹⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 16–17.
- ¹¹ M.A. Barker, *Sybil's Book*. London: Macmillan, 1874, pp. 15–16.
- ¹² *ibid.*, p. 265.
- ¹³ Hasluck, Alexandra, *Remembered with Affection: Lady Broome's Letters to Guy*. Melbourne: OUP, 1963, p. 32.
- ¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 33.
- ¹⁵ *ibid.*
- ¹⁶ *ibid.*, p. 37.
- ¹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 38.
- ¹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 60.
- ¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 61.
- ²⁰ *ibid.*, p. 72.
- ²¹ *ibid.*, p. 87.
- ²² *ibid.*, p. 90.
- ²³ *ibid.*, p. 78.
- ²⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 80–81.
- ²⁵ *ibid.*, p. 131.
- ²⁶ *ibid.*, p. 133.
- ²⁷ M.A. Broome, *Colonial Memories*. London: Smith, Eldo & Co., 1904, p. 111.
- ²⁸ *ibid.*, p. 115.
- ²⁹ *ibid.*, p. 126.
- ³⁰ *ibid.*, p. 138.
- ³¹ *ibid.*, p. 121.
- ³² *ibid.*, p. 297.
- ³³ *ibid.*, p. 298.
- ³⁴ *ibid.*, p. 299.
- ³⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 299–300.



Eliza, Lady Darling
*Simple Rules for the Guidance of Persons in Humble Life: More Particularly
for Young Girls Going Out to Service*
Cheltenham: William Wight, 1834
Ferguson Collection 1762

Educator

Although it may not have been an expected role for them to fulfil, all five governors' wives were educators either in their own homes or in a more formal way beyond the home.

Eliza Darling, like her mother before her, spent time teaching her children. She had firm views on the education of children, believing that all children needed a solid education and needed to be taught to fend for themselves. In her letters to her family, she would often inform them of the children's progress in their studies (even after she left New South Wales).

At home, she would listen to her daughter Cornelia reading and learning her tables. Later, upon their return to England the Darling boys had tutors and a daily governess taught the girls, but Eliza always took an active part in their education.

In Sydney, she also played an important educative role through her involvement in the Female School of Industry, a school intended to morally reform wayward working-class girls and turn them into obedient servants.

Jane Franklin, Mary Anne Broome and Elizabeth Loch all involved themselves in education outside the home, both Jane Franklin and Mary Anne Broome conducting classes for the daughters of society families.

Jane Franklin, in partnership with her husband, took a genuine interest in and actively promoted education in the colony of Van Diemen's Land. Mary Anne Broome took an interest in the opportunities for learning for young colonial-born girls. She also used her letters to her son Guy in England to informally teach him of the wider world she was experiencing.

Elizabeth Loch advocated changes in the needlework curriculum for girls and she liaised with Charles Pearson, then Minister of Education, to instigate them.

Although Audrey Tennyson employed a male tutor and female governess to educate her sons, she enjoyed reading to them and teaching them history and music.

Educating working-class girls

As Patroness of the Sydney Female School of Industry, Eliza Darling's aim was to educate working-class girls and prepare them for positions as domestic staff in

society homes. To instruct girls in this role, Eliza Darling wrote a manual used by students of the Female School of Industry—*Simple Rules for the Guidance of Persons in Humble Life; More Particularly for Young Girls Going Out to Service* (Cheltenham: 1834; Sydney: 1837). The manual was reprinted several times, with 5000 copies printed in the third edition. It promoted the idea that women of the working class would occupy a humble role in life. They would remain subservient and needed to be educated to fulfil such a position of service. Eliza's manual instructed female servants on etiquette. In it she outlined the specific duties performed by different types of servant staff.

The underlying principle of *Simple Rules* ... was faith in God and the centrality of religion in one's life. The manual was sprinkled with scriptural doctrine. Readers were exhorted to believe that it was God who decreed that some would serve and others be served.

'Mother,' said Mary Shepherd to her mother as they were one day sitting at needle-work together, 'I have been thinking, that if God has made all men to be born alike, how is it that there should be such a difference between people as that some should be rich, living in large houses, with carriages and servants to do everything for them, and others, like us, obliged to work and do for ourselves.'

Mrs Shepherd: 'God himself has appointed it, and therefore when we know a thing to be His will, we ought to be sure it is all for the best whether we understand why it should be so or not; but this is so plainly for the good of every one, that even I can, I think, make you understand it, Mary. Man was never intended to live alone, but in society; no man can, by his own personal labour, without help from others, procure the comforts or even the necessaries of life; no one man could procure for himself food, clothing, fuel, house, tools, &c. but we are all obliged to help each other.'¹

The emphasis of Eliza's manual was on being a good Christian servant.

Regularly attend public worship, whenever you have an opportunity, twice every Sunday, with seriousness and reverence. If ever you go out on that day, to visit your friends, or take a walk with them, remember that though the Sabbath is a day of rest, and of relaxation from business, it is also a day to be kept holy, and to be used, chiefly, in glorifying the great Creator and Redeemer, and in preparing ourselves for a better world by prayer and meditation, by godly reading and conversation, and by a serious examination of the state of our minds and our conduct, especially during the week that is past.²

Throughout the manual, Eliza's 'rules' assume the acceptance of Christianity as a fundamental element in one's life: 'Never Forget that without Christ you can do nothing. Engage in no part of your duty without prayer ... Remember,' she wrote, 'the eye of God is always upon you.'³

The manual instructed readers to be hardworking, punctual, obedient, orderly, frugal, honest, patient, clean and kind. Eliza advised servants to remain in the one

place of employment for as long as possible. In her view: 'Servants who frequently change their places get poor character, few true friends and seldom prosper in the world.'⁴

Eliza's manual explained the various types of domestic service.

Many families employ only one household servant, who is necessarily a servant of all-work; others of a higher class in society, or more numerous in its numbers, keep a cook, housemaid, and nursemaid. To these are added, in families yet more exalted, (besides subordinate persons in each of the departments already named) lady's maid, laundress, sempstress, dairy maid, and sometimes housekeeper.⁵

She advised that the cook, whose duties included shopping, cooking and cleaning up, had to be clean, punctual and frugal. The manual even advises how saucepans and other kitchen items should be cleaned and the time that should be allocated to roasting, cooking vegetables, and making puddings and pastry.

The housemaid had to be neat, quick, gentle, respectful and good-tempered. Her duties were many:

To keep clean the passage or hall, staircase, parlours, or drawing room, and bed chambers, with windows, grates, and furniture, to wait at table, and answer the door if no man servant is kept; and occasionally perform needle-work.

Her first work in the morning is to open the shutters, carefully fastening them back; then to prepare the family room for breakfast. She clears away whatever may remain from the preceding evening, candlesticks, glasses, &c., and removes them to a place of safety; then rolls up the hearth rug, and takes it away to shake, and turns back the carpet, while she clears away the ashes, and cleans the chimney place and grate, fender, and fire irons, and lays the fire. She next brings the furniture in the middle of the room, and sweeps or brushes the carpet, shakes the curtains, sweeps the cobwebs from the ceiling ... After this she lights the fire, replaces the carpet and rug, dusts the window-frames, ledges, looking-glasses, chimney ornaments; then the furniture, and puts it in its place; cleans the brass locks, carries away all her brushes and dusters, and returns with the breakfast cloth and tea things.⁶

According to the manual, in small families the housemaid had other duties to perform, such as cleaning plates, waiting on tables, and needlework. Among other things, Eliza Darling gave advice on how to lay the cloth on the table, cleaning methods, and the order of serving food and beverages.

The nursemaid needed to be good-tempered, neat, active, upright, steady and thoughtful. Her job involved attending to the children's clothing, looking after the children's health—diet and exercise, rest, recreation and formation of their moral character. The manual provided guidelines on how to wash infants and look after a sick child, and recommended what exercises and play were suitable for children.

According to *Simple Rules*, the lady's maid should be obliging, neat, gentle and active, display integrity and not be involved in any scandal. She should have good

language skills—be able to speak properly, and to read and write. Her job entailed performing any personal service for the mistress of the house. She was responsible for the lady's wardrobe and had to oversee the duties of the laundress and housemaid, as well as the making and alterations of her mistress's clothing. The lady's maid had to help her mistress dress and undress, and required some knowledge of hairdressing, millinery and dressmaking. Her job was all-encompassing—to look after the personal appearance, health, comfort and happiness of the lady of the house. When her mistress was ill, the lady's maid needed to be able to administer medicine.

The laundress had to be strong, active, clean, frugal and needed to rise early in the morning. After filling the copper tub with water, she had to sort the washing and wash separately the muslins, fine table linen, body linen, kitchen towels, sheets, coloured items and flannels. The manual instructed on suitable washing methods, how stains could be removed, the use of starch, and ironing techniques.

Wealthy families often employed a seamstress whose job was to do the plain needlework, and to make and mend clothes. Instruction was provided on all types of plain needlework. The seamstress needed the ability to cut paper patterns and to stitch, mark and darn accurately. She should be orderly, neat, quick and 'ingenious'.

The dairymaid needed to make cheese, and manage the cows, dairy vessels and produce. Eliza Darling provided advice on how to look after the cows and the dairy utensils, manage the milk and preserve the butter. The dairymaid was to be clean, frugal, well-behaved, thoughtful and steady.

The housekeeper had an important role in a household. She represented the mistress of the home and was the manager of the household. She oversaw the work of all the other female servants and ensured their continued loyalty to their employers. She maintained peace and order among the female staff.

Her duties included the maintenance of housekeeping accounts, for groceries and other provisions, as well as having responsibility for ordering and monitoring the use of household supplies. Her job also involved admonishing, reporting or dismissing staff for what was considered to be improper conduct. She ensured that staff observed the Sabbath and she could dispense charity when her employers were absent.

The housekeeper needed certain qualities—commonsense, experience, maturity and education, a good temper and sound principles. In dealing with staff, the housekeeper should be just, kind and firm:

as the almoner of her employers, she should be benevolent, faithful, and active: feeling it a pleasure to be employed in relieving the wants of others; taking pains to discover and point out real objects of charity without partiality and prejudice; and exerting herself to the utmost of her power in making whatever passes through her hands as extensively and as really beneficial as possible.⁷



Chester J. Jervis
[Reading and Sewing] c.1860–1880
salted paper and albumen silver photograph; 18 x 22.8 cm
From his *Early Australian Photographs, 1860s–1880s*
Pictures Collection PIC Album 366

Promoting learning and culture

Jane Franklin pursued a wider horizon. Jane and John Franklin wanted to promote learning and culture throughout Van Diemen's Land. A contemporary of the Franklins, author Louisa Anne Meredith observed:

At the period of which I am writing, Hobarton was certainly not in advance of Sydney in point of society or intelligence, and the constant efforts of Sir John and Lady Franklin to arouse and foster a taste for science, literature, or art, were more often productive of annoyance to themselves, than of benefit to the unambitious multitude.⁸

It seems that the colonists were not quite ready for the Franklins' vision of a more sophisticated Van Diemen's Land.

When the Franklins arrived in Van Diemen's Land, schools were few and poor. Jane Franklin was keen to promote artistic and intellectual pursuits, particularly for girls in the colony. Wealthy colonists usually sent their sons to England to be educated.

In an endeavour to improve the educational opportunities for girls, Jane Franklin introduced a series of soirees for the daughters of well-to-do families and invited them to join her and be instructed in philosophy, science, classical music and books. According to Louisa Meredith, the soirees were not received as enthusiastically as Jane Franklin hoped.

Lady Franklin's attempts to introduce evening parties in the 'conversazione' style were highly unpopular with the pretty Tasmanians, who declared that they had no idea of being asked to an evening party, and then stuck up in rooms full of pictures and books, and shells and stones, and other rubbish, with nothing to do but to hear people talk lectures, or else sit as mute as mice listening to what was called good music.⁹

Another vision of Jane Franklin's involved establishing a special school for girls.

I wish such a school as I am thinking of to give a more solid and manly education than girls get at home, where the facilities for learning handy-works and show accomplishments are so numerous and so attractive.

The institution should be a few miles out of Hobarton, but near enough for me to visit frequently; not from a desire to interfere, but with the hope of establishing the most intimate intercourse between Government House and the school. I would have the older girls continually with me by turns, or together, so as to introduce them gradually into society and give them a taste for better things than they are accustomed to, and I should wish to be on the most friendly terms of fellowship and sympathy with the heads of the house. Such an institution, if it contained only twelve or twenty girls, would gradually leaven the whole mass. It would be a normal school for imitation, a pattern for manners, and those who never entered it would be influenced by it. The heads of it would be benefactors to the whole community and would meet with their reward.¹⁰

In April 1840, Jane Franklin explained her idea for a girls' school in a letter to her sister Mary Simpkinson in England.

I am no admirer of a school education for girls, and if fifty governesses, very sensible good women, could be found as easily as one or two, I should prefer importing them, in order to distribute them through the country in private families, to any other mode of encouraging female education. But not only are such people not to be found, but if they came, they could not be happy, and would not remain. No person such as I mean could act the part of a subordinate instrument in the rural or other families of this colony, nor would they be able to produce the same effect as if they had houses of their own with girls shut up with them, apart from domestic influences.¹¹

She had given some thought to the type of people she envisioned as teachers in her school.

I want people talented, benevolent, energetic, not daunted by difficulties, not easily disgusted, hopeful, fervent and steadfast ... they must come in a really missionary spirit, to do good, and a noble task it will be, to *regenerate* (for nothing far short of a new birth *can* do it) the race of girls in this colony. Their frivolity, emptiness and ignorance, and boldness of manner are deplorable—at least in this town. However naturally shy and reserved, they lose it all as soon as they go into society, and yet they are sharp witted, and pretty, and no doubt have as much moral aptitude for good things as the generations from which they sprang.¹²

She recommended a clergyman and his wife be employed to support the work of the teaching staff.

In addition to these two there should be an accomplished foreigner, a French, Swiss, or German lady, a Protestant, and of high character. Such accomplishments as are not found amongst these three, might be indifferently supplied here—sufficient to furnish a *show* of accomplishments to please the parents of the girls themselves, and to enable them to digest better, the more solid food which would be their indispensable regimen. A great proportion of the women of this country live in much seclusion. They ought to have a love of reading and of improving study. Their time is divided between housekeeping and their children and ... being able to read with enjoyment and profit, the best works of the wise and good, would be of inestimable advantage to them.¹³

The Franklins also planned to establish a colonial college. Reverend J.P. Gell, a Cambridge scholar, teacher and pioneer of higher education, was selected as the principal of the new college. He later married the Franklins' daughter Eleanor. Jane Franklin regarded Reverend Gell highly and felt confident of his ability to make the college a success, an opinion she shared in a letter to her sister Mary.¹⁴

A charter for the college was drawn up, however the Franklins encountered religious and political opposition. They envisaged the college would provide a form of higher education 'to which the new secondary schools, the Launceston Church Grammar school and Hutchinsons School Hobart were to act as feeders'.¹⁵ Referring to it as her 'hobby', Jane was keen to develop the college. However, it never eventuated—due to strong lobbying. Nevertheless, she did not abandon the idea of such a college for Van Diemen's Land. In 1843 when she left the colony, she bought 162 hectares of land near Hobart for the purpose of erecting a college within the following 20 years. It was finally founded in 1846.

Jane Franklin clearly aimed to convert Van Diemen's Land into an intellectual and cultural centre. She influenced her husband to found a society for the advancement of science in 1839. By 1848, although the Franklins had already left the colony, the society John Franklin founded was to become the first Royal Society for the advancement of science outside Britain. The Franklins also pioneered a *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science*:

we are about bringing out the first number of our 'Tasmanian journal of Science' which we expect you will all patronise by purchase in London. We cannot afford to give it away, for our sale of it, be it ever so considerable, will not pay the expenses. It is in contemplation to ask our friend Mr. Murray of Albermarle Street if he will undertake to republish it in London. There can be no doubt it will excite some interest and much indulgence will be shown to the infant efforts of our antipodean philosophers. Mr. Lillie is now writing the introductory paper which will give the origin of the Society (in the Library of Government House) and our purposes and resources.¹⁶

Jane planned to hold meetings once a fortnight or once a month at Government House to discuss scientific subjects. She also envisaged producing a quarterly journal detailing the natural history of Van Diemen's Land and providing scientific news from Europe.

Interested in establishing a botanical garden near Hobart, Jane Franklin bought 52 hectares of land in 1839. In consultation with members of the Science Society, she finally chose the name *Acanthe*, 'the vale of flowers', for the garden, which provided the venue for a museum of natural history modelled on a Greek Temple.

The inscription, composed by Mr. Gell in Greek, English, Latin, French, German and Italian, dedicated the museum 'for the purpose of preserving the productions of nature in this country and as a retreat for her Ministers and Interpreters'. Gell and others wanted Jane's name to be recorded on the stone, but to this she refused to consent, saying that it had been built with Sir John's money and by his approbation and it was he who should be known as its founder.¹⁷

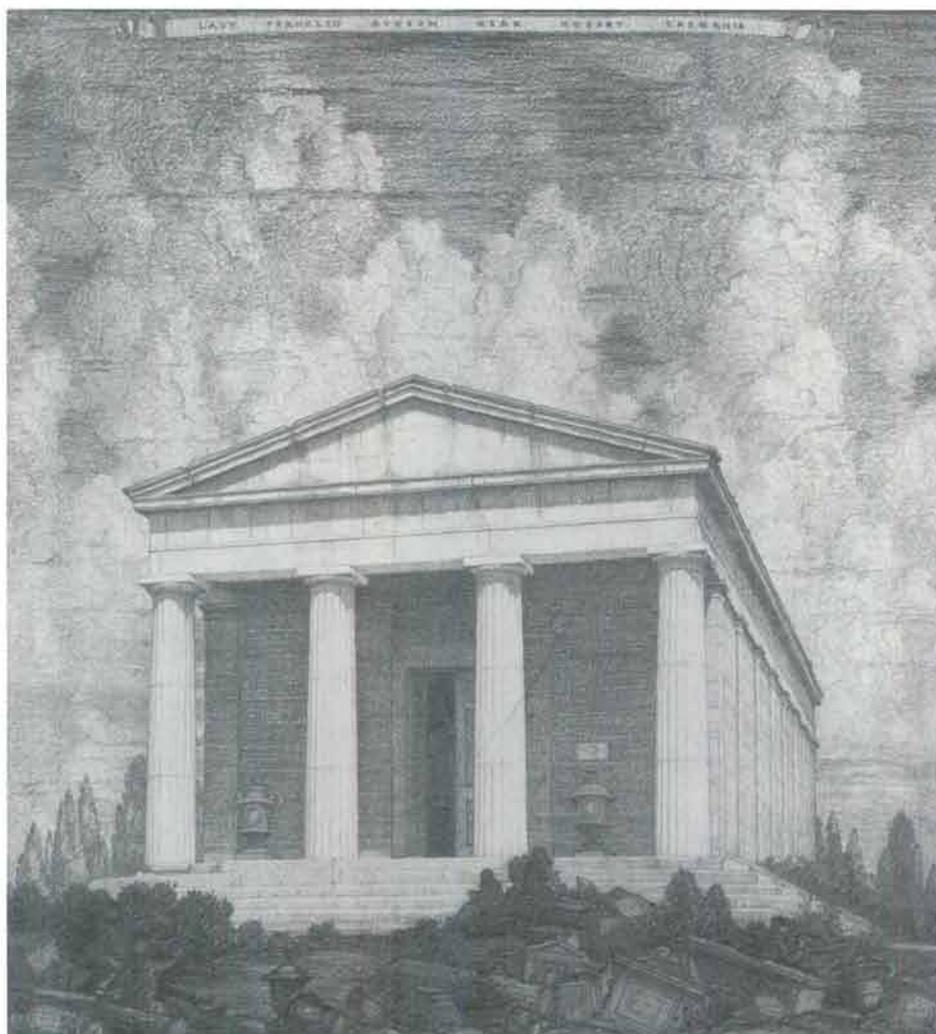
Jane Franklin was a woman with grand ideas, a visionary. In a letter to a friend, John Franklin wrote about his wife and her vision to change the name of Van Diemen's Land to Tasmania, in honour of its Dutch discoverer, Abel Tasman. The name of the colony was changed to Tasmania in 1855.

Domestic educator

Elizabeth Loch's involvement as an educator differed markedly from that of Eliza Darling and Jane Franklin. She wanted to improve the domestic education of girls, especially their instruction in needlework. In the nineteenth century, needlework was regarded as an essential part of a girl's domestic training. In the colony of New South Wales, needlework was 'a female domestic arts subject in the public school curriculum' from 1848.¹⁸

Elizabeth Loch felt so strongly about the needlework curriculum that she wrote to Charles Pearson, then Minister of Education in Victoria, on 17 July 1886.

I fear I have not made myself at all clear about the system of needle work I wish to see introduced here, as it has nothing to do with the 'dress cutting' system which may be very good but is more suitable for older girls—but if you glance at the little books Mrs. Longman has sent out, you will see the system is to teach from the first stitches on a scientific principle so that they may be thoroughly taught, combined with neatness and precision ... it is therefore like the grammar of needlework—but I quite think it will be better to get someone first to come out & teach privately and then if the Government & school teacher approve of the system they can take it up for state schools—the system has gone forward so quickly in England that it is sure to come out here, it is only a question of time.¹⁹



Hardy Wilson (1881–1955)
Lady Franklin Museum, near Hobart, Tasmania [Acanthe] 1915
pencil drawing; 48.8 × 44.8 cm
Pictures Collection PIC R532

In another letter, Elizabeth Loch informed Pearson that anyone wishing to train and attain a Diploma of Teaching in Scientific Needlework could apply to Miss Emily G. Jones, Directress of Needlework, Education Department, and listed her address in England. She advised the cost of the training would be about £10.²⁰

In 1900, Elizabeth Loch's suggestion of a more systematic approach to teaching needlework was echoed by Sewing Inspectress Miss Nisbet, when she recommended that sewing teachers adopt the following practices:

Every new stitch should be taught as an object lesson to the whole class; questions should be put, and recapitulation given as in ordinary object lessons. The stitches

required in the specimens for the year should be learnt during the early part of the year, and garments should not be begun till they have been mastered.

1. Begin your year's work by giving up the first three months to the practice of stitches.
2. Teach each by means of object lessons.
3. Do not leave a stitch till the children can do it neatly and quickly.
4. As you go along show them the reasons for the different processes.
5. Use the blackboard constantly for illustration.²¹

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the needlework curriculum taught to girls in state schools included: hemming; seaming (finishing seams); stitching; pleating; sewing on strings; herringbone stitch; gathering buttonholes; sewing on buttons; patching in calico, print and flannel; and darning stockings.

Domestic education in needlework and cookery at state elementary schools in Australia during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries aimed to train girls for their future roles as wives, mothers or domestic servants. Miss Nisbet summed up the benefits of this domestic education for working-class girls:

State education exists primarily for the benefit of the working classes, whose children have to make their own way in the world; and therefore for these girls the ability to make and mend is of the utmost importance. If we look to 'the relative value of subjects' in her life, a woman will rarely be called on to work a sum in square root or analyse a sentence; but nearly every day of her life she will require mending, and stockings have to be darned. The woman who can do these things well will be a thriftier, tidier, and therefore more useful member of society than the one who cannot.²²

Educating through experience

As it was for other vice-regal wives, education was important for Mary Anne Broome. In a letter to her son Guy in England, she wrote: 'the best thing for you now is to be working hard at your lessons at school, and playing in the cricket and football fields, and growing to be a man, and what is more an Englishman who must be a credit to his country, and proud ... wherever he goes. My boy will try to be that, won't he?'²³

While visiting South Australia with her husband, Mary Anne Broome was impressed with the education system there:

we went with the Minister of Education all over the splendid Government schools ... At one school the pupils, both girls and boys, sang really beautifully, not ordinary school songs, but lovely part music in unison. As you may suppose, the schoolmasters and mistresses who had this wonderfully forward rising generation under their care needed to be clever and to know a great deal.²⁴

Mary Anne's letters to her son were anthologised and published in book form in 1885. Through them she instructed her son about aspects of Australia, especially Western Australia, sharing the knowledge she gained during vice-regal trips.

While spending the summer months on Rottneest Island in 1883, Governor Broome and his wife took the opportunity to visit the 'native' prison there. Mary Anne was particularly interested in the Aboriginal people and was keen to share her observations with Guy.

There are about one hundred and fifty native prisoners over here, and it is rather curious to hear what their crimes have been. Sometimes they have committed the most causeless and senseless murders imaginable—murders so entirely without any reason that the judge has hesitated to hang them, because they appear to have acted on just a savage impulse. Last year a particularly brutal tribal murder was committed, where the murderers had a motive and were sufficiently civilised to understand what they were doing, so they had to be hung, alas! not merely as a punishment, but as a warning. But if there is any possible chance that the culprit may not have understood the wickedness of his act, then the criminal is sent over here, where he is kindly treated, and well taken care of, and where his punishment will be made into a means of civilisation for him. So that when it is over, and the man is sent back to his own tribe, it is hoped that he may be better, and not worse, for his stay at Rottneest.

Every Sunday the prisoners are allowed to roam about at perfect liberty all over the island to get their own food, so that they may not entirely forget how to provide for themselves. They have their breakfast before they go out and their supper after they come in; but they delight in finding dinner for themselves. First of all, they fashion small spears and fishing-lines, and go and fish, and they hunt for all the snakes in the island, and lizards, and every other native delicacy.²⁵

Mary Anne had definite views on how the government should treat and educate the Aboriginal people, especially the children.

You can easily imagine how impossible it is to get hold of the natives after they are grown up—for they are a very debased sort of savage—and to teach or civilise them in any way. So we chiefly look to what we can do for the children, to improve the condition of the next generation; and every effort is made to take the little creatures away from their parents if there is reason to believe them to be ill-treated; but if the parents are kind, then many inducements are held out to the mother to come and settle near the children, where she can see for herself that they are happy and well cared for. But generally the older natives soon get tired of any settled mode of life and go off suddenly, perhaps taking their little ones with them.²⁶

Sharing the government's view of the day—that the adult Aborigine was a 'savage'—Mary Anne endorsed the government policy of removing Aboriginal children from their parents.

Cultural education for girls

Like Jane Franklin, Mary Anne Broome wanted to provide an education for young women. In Perth, she conducted a reading and discussion class on Monday afternoons for the daughters of colonial families who, for a variety of reasons, had been unable to give them a rudimentary education. Mary Anne would read aloud to the girls while they worked.

We began with Green's 'Short History of the English People' and went on to Justin McCarthy's 'History of our own Times' and then Motley's 'Dutch Republic' and 'Thirty Years' War'. It was only an experiment at first, but it succeeded splendidly, thanks to the thirst for knowledge which all these pretty and charming girls displayed. No weather ever prevented them coming, and it would have been hard to decide who enjoyed those afternoons most, the reader or her very attentive and intelligent audience.²⁷

Education at home

Educating her children was important to Audrey Tennyson. She typified the upper-class feminine ideal by hiring a French governess to teach her children French and a male tutor to educate them in other subjects. However, Audrey Tennyson, directly participated in her sons' education. Each morning at 10.30 am, whenever her other duties permitted, Audrey would spend an hour with her sons, usually teaching them history or reading to them. Harold especially enjoyed Bible stories. In the afternoons she enjoyed playing the piano with her sons, teaching them to sight-read music.

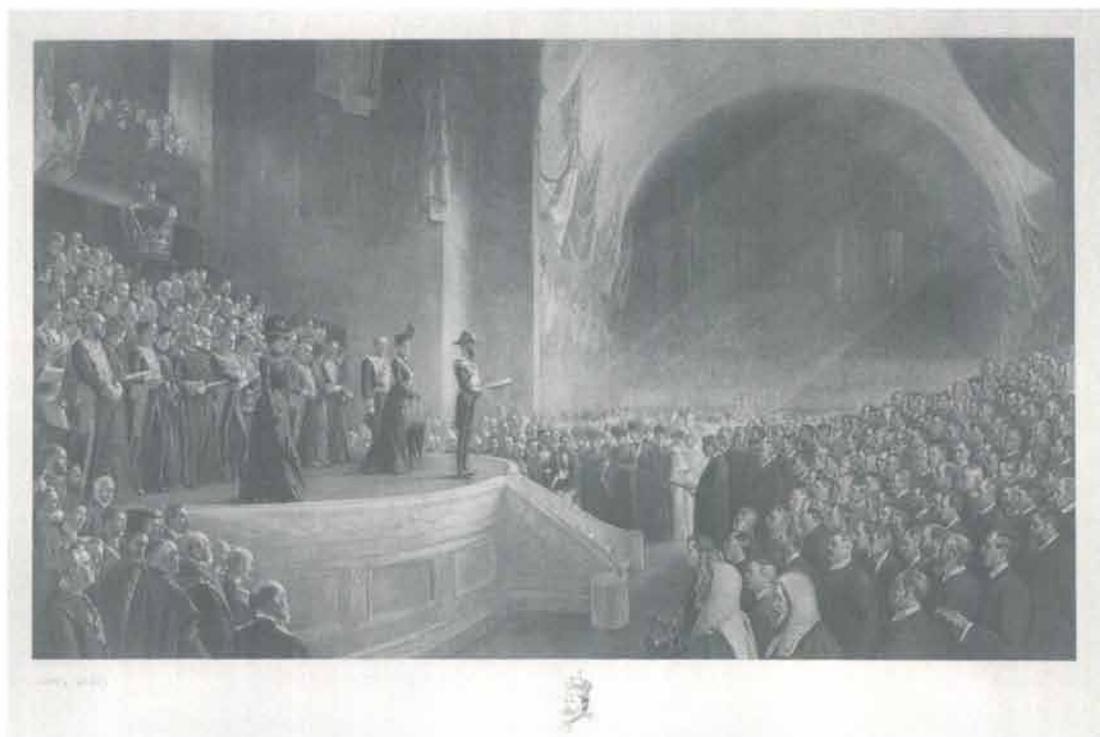
I have taken to playing duets with the boys every afternoon for their music lesson, so as to make them read at first sight well. They can never give up the time to play well, so I think they had better read at first sight and they will then be able to get a good deal of enjoyment out of a little knowledge of music.²⁸

Forced to decline an invitation from Lady Clarke, the wife of the Governor of Victoria at the time, Audrey explained to her mother that she did not wish her sons' education to be disrupted too frequently: 'I think I told you we ... stay with Lady Clarke who very kindly asked the boys too, but we have refused for them as it interrupts their lessons so terribly.'²⁹

The role of educator was not expected or prescribed for the wife of a colonial governor. However, all the women in this book assumed that role either at home with their children or/and outside the home. It was seen as part of their care-taking feminine role, an extension of their familial responsibility, for Eliza Darling, Mary Anne Broome and Audrey Tennyson. For Elizabeth Loch, it was more of a practical issue, and for Jane Franklin, an intellectual and cultural one.

Notes

- ¹ E. Darling, *Simple Rules for the Guidance of Persons in Humble Life: More Particularly for Young Girls Going Out to Service*. Sydney: James Tegg & Co, 1837, p. 1.
- ² *ibid.*, p. 48.
- ³ *ibid.*, p. 26–28.
- ⁴ *ibid.*, p. 29.
- ⁵ *ibid.*, p. 66.
- ⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 73–74.
- ⁷ *ibid.*, p. 113.
- ⁸ L. Meredith, 'My Home in Tasmania' in D. Spender (ed.), *The Penguin Anthology of Australian Women's Writing*. Melbourne: Penguin, 1988, p. 67.
- ⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 67–68.
- ¹⁰ W.E. Rawnsley, *The Life, Diaries and Correspondence of Jane Lady Franklin, 1792–1875*. London: Erskine McDonald, 1923, p. 68.
- ¹¹ G. Mackaness, *Some Private Correspondence of Sir John and Lady Jane Franklin*, rev. ed. Sydney: D.S. Ford, 1977, Part I, letter XV11, pp. 95–96.
- ¹² *ibid.*
- ¹³ *ibid.*, p. 86.
- ¹⁴ F. Woodward, *Portrait of Jane: A Life of Lady Franklin*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1951, p. 219.
- ¹⁵ Katherine Fitzpatrick, 'Sir John Franklin, (1786-1847)', in D. Pike (ed.), *Australian Dictionary of Biography, 1788–1850: A–H*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1966, p. 414.
- ¹⁶ Letter, Jane Franklin to her sister Mary Simpkinson, April 1840, in Mackaness, *op. cit.*, Part I, letter XV11, p. 97.
- ¹⁷ *ibid.*
- ¹⁸ A. Selzer, *Educating Women in Australia from the Convict Era to the 1920s*. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 67.
- ¹⁹ Letter, Lady Loch to Charles Pearson, 17 July 1886. Charles H. Pearson Papers, State Library of Victoria (MS 7390 Box 4402(b)).
- ²⁰ *ibid.*, undated.
- ²¹ *Education Gazette and Teachers' Aid* (Western Australian Education Department), March 1900, p. 11.
- ²² *ibid.*
- ²³ M.A. Barker, *Letters to Grey*. London: Macmillan, 1885, p. 32.
- ²⁴ *ibid.*, p. 33.
- ²⁵ *ibid.*, p. 110.
- ²⁶ *ibid.*, p. 116.
- ²⁷ M.A. Broome, *Colonial Memories*. London: Smith Elder, 1904, p. xx.
- ²⁸ Letter, 2 April 1902, Audrey, Lady Tennyson to Zacyntha Boyle. Papers of Audrey, Lady Tennyson, National Library of Australia (MS479/49).
- ²⁹ *ibid.*



Tom Roberts (1856–1931)
[Opening of the First Parliament of the Commonwealth]
monotype print; 66.5 x 99 cm
Melbourne: Australian Art Association, 1903
Pictures Collection S4145

Political Observer or Activist

Mary Anne Broome, Elizabeth Loch and Audrey Tennyson could not escape the increasing focus on politics and government in Australia in the 1880s and 1890s. They lived in the colonies at a time when interest in and talk of federation was escalating.

Eliza Darling and Jane Franklin lived earlier in the nineteenth century, when women were not so politically active. But both entered the world of politics in order to support husbands under attack in hostile political environments. Acting out of devotion to their husbands, they sought to protect and defend them. Others may have viewed their actions as political activism but their entry into the male-dominated political world was motivated purely out of love. This led them to defy the feminine ideal.

Although Eliza Darling and Jane Franklin shared a common concern in wanting to support and defend their husbands, they were quite dissimilar. Eliza Darling epitomised a conventional upper-class woman of the nineteenth century; Jane Franklin, although also upper-class, was quite the opposite. She was a highly intellectual woman with an independent mind and spirit, 'caricatured as a man in petticoats'.¹ Despite their differences, both vice-regal women stood by their husbands in politically difficult circumstances.

Political activists—Eliza Darling and Jane Franklin

Eliza's husband, Ralph Darling, was a major-general in the military service before he was appointed Governor of New South Wales in 1825. As a high-ranking military officer, he made an example of those in the army who were undisciplined and disorderly. In 1826 Joseph Sudds and Patrick Thompson from the 57th Regiment committed theft and were sentenced to seven years in a penal settlement. Governor Darling commuted this to seven years hard labour in the chain gangs.

Sudds and Thompson had their uniforms stripped from them in a military parade, and replaced by yellow convict garb. They were put in leg irons, chains and iron collars from which projected two spiked pieces of iron about 15.2 cm long and were drummed out of the regiment. Unbeknown to Darling, Sudds was gravely ill and died a few days later.

Prison doctors had not informed Governor Darling that Sudds was ill. Nor did he realise his commutation of Sudds' and Thompson's sentences was unlawful. The press in New South Wales—the *Australian* and the *Monitor*—condemned the sentences Darling imposed. In then attempting to control the press, Ralph Darling became embroiled in conflict with the civil jurisdiction.

Governor Darling was recalled in 1831 and a parliamentary inquiry into his conduct as Governor of New South Wales was held in 1835. Becoming involved in such affairs of state, Eliza Darling sought to defend her husband by petitioning the King (William IV). In 1835 she wrote to her mother about her intended actions:

I was exceedingly anxious to have your opinion in regard of my interfering with higher authorities ... It may be, still, tho' I hope not, necessary for me to act, but I am quite aware, my dearest mother of the necessity of perfect secrecy ... no one could have imagined such men as Hume and O'Connell [Darling's adversaries] would have the power they have to use, or rather abuse it as they have done ... I will tell you what my intentions are in case, the O'Connells prove too powerful for the General's friends who are now in earnest doing all they can ...

My intention is to petition the Queen for a private audience—herself to introduce me to His Majesty—All he can do, is to command his Ministers to support the General [Darling]—and if he does so the others must yield ... I have already laid a train, by which, if necessary I mean to get to the Queen—but this is known only to myself only ... The General is just now the Bone thrown out, for the dogs to pick at; to keep them [his adversaries] from attacking themselves.²

Eliza Darling actively intervened to help her husband clear his name of any inappropriate behaviour as Governor of New South Wales. Not only was she willing to seek an audience with the King, but she collaborated with Governor Darling's staff to absolve him. She wrote and gathered documents that could exonerate Ralph Darling from what she saw as an unfair and unwarranted charge against him.

Sir H. Hardinge [perhaps Sir Henry Hardinge of Lahore, then an MP] keeps us all so hard at work—furnishing him with copies of Despatches—Minutes of Council—Information on this point, and then again on another ... that I literally was so tired, having written volumes.³

In the same letter to her mother, Eliza praised her husband's tenacity and hard work.

At twelve last night—he was left still occupied—and the talent with which he conducts the whole business is ever confounding O'Connell—and all the lawyers.⁴

Charged with a number of offences including murder commuted to aggravated manslaughter, cruelty and oppression, the garbling of evidence and official



HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA AND EMPRESS OF INDIA

Her Majesty Queen Victoria and Empress of India
chromolithograph; 45.4 x 32.8 cm
Sydney: Sydney Mail, 19 June 1897
Pictures Collection S3201

documents, Ralph Darling was exonerated by a select committee of the House of Commons in 1835 which reported that he was not to blame over the Sudds–Thompson matter.

Happy and relieved, Eliza shared her feelings in a letter to her family.

Dearest Henry – William – Edward – Sophy – Susan and Fanny, I have this morning sent off a large packet of Journals which will give you an account of the progress of the anxieties of which this will give you the happy termination. The accompanying report was read in the House last night and I have copied for your gratification the accompanying note from the most noble fellow Sir H. Hardinge. This day being the King's last Levee this year, the General attended, and the King in a most gratifying manner, without his even receiving a word of notice, made him a Knight Grand Cross of the Guelphic Order—and so ends this eventful history.

Ever your own most affectionate
Eliza Darling⁵

Like Eliza Darling, Jane Franklin became publicly involved in the world of government and politics out of concern for her husband's and the colony's best interests. Jane Franklin acted not only as John Franklin's wife, but also as his political ally and best friend. He constantly relied upon her confidentiality and advice on political matters. In a politically hostile environment, Jane Franklin was seen by some as an enemy of the state—and a threat to the existing power-base of the colony.

The Franklins arrived in Van Diemen's Land at a time when political power was entrenched in the Arthur faction. Franklin's predecessor, Governor George Arthur, had a group of colonial administrators around him who wielded power in the colony. They continued to remain powerful after Arthur left his position as Governor. John Franklin appeared to the colonial administration as weak. His highly intelligent, forthright wife, on the other hand, was perceived as a threat to the established order. She intervened in conflicts between Sir John Franklin and his private secretary, Alexander Maconochie, and between Franklin and Colonial Secretary John Montagu.

The duties of the governor in Van Diemen's Land included administering the penal system. Sir John Franklin did not like the system, but could see no practical alternative. Franklin's private secretary, Alexander Maconochie, opposed the convict assignment system, under which convicts were assigned to colonists, who fed and clothed them and put them to work. Well-behaved convicts could be awarded a 'ticket of leave' enabling them to work for wages. If a convict misbehaved, a magistrate could send him or her to the harsh penal settlement of Port Arthur.

Alexander Maconochie thought that the assignment system was cruel, ineffective as a reform system and degrading of humanity. He wanted to see the



T. Humphrey & Co.
Portrait of the Earl of Hopetoun, Marquis of Linlithgow 1902
photograph; 19.5 x 14.6 cm
Pictures Collection PIC 6713/1-2

end of the assignment system, advocating that it be replaced by another system that encouraged industry among the convicts. Maconochie criticised the assignment system in the 'Report on the State of Prison Discipline in Van Diemen's Land', forwarded by Franklin to the Colonial Office, from where it was sent to the Home Office in London. Subsequently, it was used by the Molesworth parliamentary committee (1837–38) in Britain, established to consider the issue of transportation.

The report was published in 1838 and, in the subsequent furore, Franklin dismissed Maconochie as his private secretary. John Franklin discussed Maconochie's actions with Jane, his wife and confidante. Troubled by the whole episode, Jane Franklin attempted to mediate between her husband and Maconochie. And by doing so, she was seen as meddling in administrative affairs, considered to be beyond the domain of women.

A further event brought Jane Franklin to public view in political matters. In October 1841 John Montagu, the Colonial Secretary of Van Diemen's Land, had dismissed the district medical officer in Richmond, Dr Coverdale. A petition from Richmond residents persuaded the Governor to reinstate him. Montagu saw this as an attack by the Franklins against him, assuming that Jane Franklin played a significant role in persuading the Governor to reinstate the doctor.

Jane shared with local residents the fact that John Montagu perceived her as a political threat. He claimed that she had instigated the petition, which she denied. However, she did admit to advising her husband.

Sir John Franklin discussed with Jane an interview he had with Montagu. In a letter to her sister Mary on 6 November 1841 Jane wrote that Montagu wanted to implicate her in order to destroy her.

I perceived, as well as Sir John had, that Mr Montagu's real errand was to strike a blow to me—a blow of revenge for the past, and one which would paralyse me for the future.⁶

In April 1842, Montagu implied in a letter to Sir John Franklin that he [Sir John] was an imbecile. He also leaked to the press—the *Van Diemen's Land Chronicle*—his version of events, publicly implicating Jane Franklin's alleged involvement in the Coverdale case. Governor Franklin suspended Montagu from office in January 1842. Montagu wanted revenge. Not succeeding in persuading Sir John to rid himself of his wife as a political force, Montagu was determined to get rid of the vice-regal couple and have them removed from public office and from Van Diemen's Land.

In his attempts to discredit the Franklins, Montagu circulated despatches, letters and documents highlighting Sir John's inexperience. He accused Jane Franklin of interfering in government, and provided the Secretary of State in London and the



Portrait of Hersey Hopetoun, Marchioness of Linlithgow and her Dogs 1900s
sepia-toned photograph; 15.5 x 10.3 cm
Pictures Collection PIC 6711

press in the colony of Van Diemen's Land with documented allegations against her. She retaliated and insisted that Montagu's allegations were false.

Montagu had asserted that Jane Franklin offered to reconcile the two men through an intermediary, Dr Turnbull. In an attempt to bring out the truth and to clear her name, Jane wrote to Dr Turnbull on 17 February 1845:

And you dear Dr. Turnbull—there are some things that perplex me—Am I to conclude that the aspersions he makes which you do not contradict are true—is it true that he spoke of me before you and others of his friends in the way he states, and yet after this you resisted and combated my persuasion that he was going to try and save himself by sacrificing me.

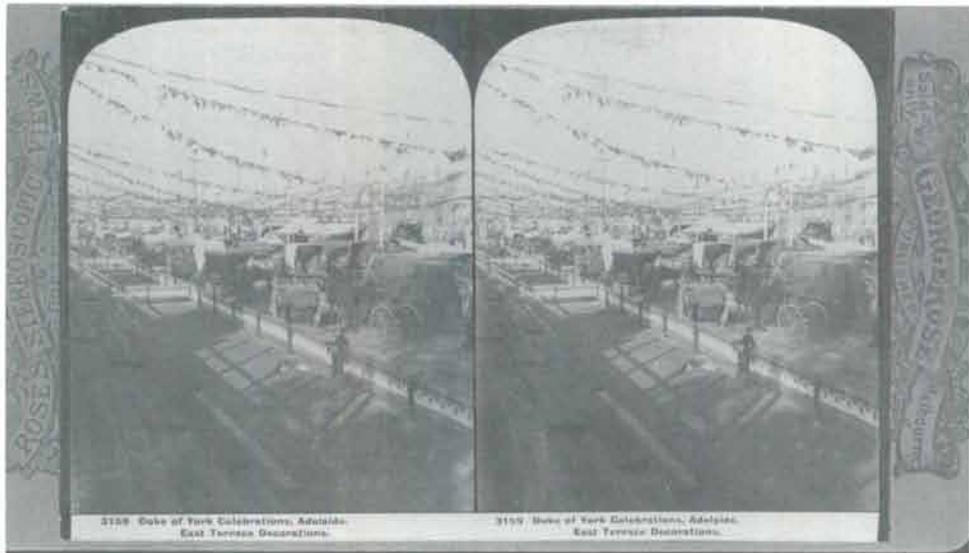
Again Mr. M. asserts that you and Mr. Forster and Mr. Ch. Arthur advised his answer to Mr. Aislabe in which he says that he has read in Mrs. F's handwriting that she did suggest to Mrs. Parsons the private petition in Dr. C's case etc—This you have not contradicted—am I to conclude you did advise, or acquiesce in that letter? If it be so, let me copy for you the exact words Mr. M. and you too have read in my own handwriting from the very same memo, which I wrote by Sir John's desire (I will put it on a separate piece of paper). Both Mr. M's assertion and the real extract from my memorandum which contradicts it, are at the Col. Office.

There is another part of your letter which appears to me to be equivocal; you say you were clearly of the opinion that Mr. M. was not pledged not to mention to the Sec. of State my name in connection with any facts necessary to his defence—May I ask of you why you form this judgement, or in what sense you make it? It would appear to imply that Mr. M. *had* ground to consider I was the cause of his suspension—Yet I can scarcely believe that to be your meaning ...

Another observation I must make—even at the risk of displeasing you—on the 2nd day, you state, that is after you had assured me that Mr. M. could and would be a sincere friend in future to Sir John, you heard Mr. M. declare that he had given me an opportunity of *retracing my steps*—and that if I did not avail myself of it, *I must take the consequences*. What this expression means I am rather at a loss to imagine, but at any rate it intimates a state of mind so hopeless, so hostile on his part that I almost wonder you could think it desirable to pursue the negotiation—do you think it was right even to *commence* it, with the conviction that Mr. Montagu believed, or the knowledge that he affected to believe, I had any steps to retrace, if those steps mean, as I presume they do, the steps which led to his suspension.⁷

The affair resulted in Montagu's suspension and dismissal as the colony's Colonial Secretary. He in turn made sure that Franklin's position as Governor of Van Diemen's Land came to an end. John Montagu succeeded in persuading the British Government that Franklin was not fit to govern the penal colony and that his wife interfered in affairs of state.

In 1843, Sir John Franklin was replaced as Governor of Van Diemen's Land by Sir John Eardley Wilmot. That year, the Franklins returned to England.



Duke of York Celebrations, Adelaide. East Terrace Decorations
 stereograph; 10 x 18 cm
 Melbourne: George Rose, 1901
 Pictures Collection PIC Album 1000

Jane Franklin appeared to play an active role in political affairs. She participated in writing the governor's letter to Maconochie and attempted to mediate between him and her husband. She also tried to mediate between Montagu and the governor. Sir John obviously confided in and briefed his wife on such matters. She was keen to further his interests and, in doing so, played too interventionist a role.

Federation

Audrey Tennyson had firm views on social and political issues, including the choice of Governor-General. She believed that the choice of the first Governor-General of Australia (Lord Hopetoun, a former governor of Victoria, 1890–1895) exacerbated colonial relations, especially Melbourne–Sydney rivalries.

I am afraid there is a good deal of disappointment over Lord Hopetoun's appointment [as Governor-General of Australia, July 1900]—it is most popular *everywhere* as regards his social position [he was a wealthy Scottish landowner] & capabilities which are well known out here, & in that way he will do well enough, but I think everyone feels that the position, a very difficult & unenviable one I should say, requires a much more abler man, in fact, a *great statesman*, to set the wheels going in the right line & to keep peace between all the petty jealousies of the different colonies, especially Melbourne and Sydney—who have always hated each other & now NSW is jealous of a former governor of Victoria being chosen instead of one of their own, being the Mother Colony.⁸

Perhaps Audrey's appraisal of Lord Hopetoun was correct. He was criticised for inviting the wrong man to form the first federal ministry. He also misjudged relations between himself and the State governors. Ultimately, Hopetoun unexpectedly resigned from office in May 1902. He was replaced by Hallam Tennyson who was appointed acting Governor-General before being confirmed in the appointment in 1903, his term ending in 1904. Audrey Tennyson wrote to her mother explaining her husband's role as Governor-General:

First of all, to answer you the question you specially ask me, i.e., whether Ministers consult Hallam or act entirely on their own ideas: of course he has now nothing to do *officially* with *State* Ministers, but whenever they see him I think they generally talk over things with him and he *unofficially* advises them, but of course they are in no way bound to follow his advice. But I think I may truthfully say that Ministers & politicians all over Australia, of either party, have great respect for his wise & sound judgement, & are always glad of discussing things with him. In fact it was only yesterday that a Minister said to him, 'It would be everything for ——— if he had a level head like yours to start him if he came in.'

Of course his own Commonwealth Ministers have to consult him & therefore he has to attend Cabinet Councils and tho' there are certain measures over which he has no control, tho' he can & does advise there are other measures which cannot be passed without his sanction—just as in the case with a State Governor & his Ministers.⁹

Audrey Tennyson enjoyed exchanging political views and certainly had her own ideas about Federation. In March 1902, she expressed reservations about how the smaller States were faring under a federal system.

The Federal Parliament etc. are getting more & more unpopular hourly. They certainly have managed in one year to put everybody's backs up—rushing everything to such an extent instead of going slowly & tactfully, & trying to keep the whole power in their own hands—Several individual people have told me lately that if the Commonwealth were put to the vote in the States tomorrow, there would not be one single vote in favour of it, & I firmly believe it, it has not done anybody any good except the well-paid Federal Parliament, & has raised everything in price. The people say they have entirely been deceived & that Federation is absolutely different from what they were promised.

A man from Queensland who mixes with all classes of men told me the other day that in Queensland the people are quite ready for a revolution, they are so furious with the results of Federation, & say they are quite strong enough to stand by themselves & break off from it.¹⁰

The feeling against Federation increases daily. The Labour members of the Commonwealth have insisted on tea duty & kerosene duty being taken off, which means at least £69,000 a year to this State & it is the general impression that poor South Australia is doomed, also Queensland & Tasmania—the three smaller States.¹¹

Federation seems daily to become more & more the despair of everybody—and you don't mention the subject to a single man or woman of any class that is not disgusted with the whole thing. One can only hope that it will turn out better than now appears.¹²

She also enjoyed the opportunity to observe parliamentary proceedings. Informing her mother in great detail of people and places visited, she recounted a visit to the South Australian Parliament in 1899 and it seems as though some things do not change over time, including the nature of and decorum in Parliament.

I went with Capt. Lascelles to hear the Debate on Household Suffrage for the Upper House. We heard very animated speeches & very rude personal jibes & constant interruptions. They behave extremely badly & the Speaker twice in one & a half hours had to insist on apologies & retracting what had been said ... I always enjoy debates immensely & wish I could go oftener.¹³

State visits were other enjoyable occasions. Here she recounts for her mother the dinner conversation at a State function the Tennysons attended in Melbourne in 1903, when Hallam Tennyson was Governor-General of Australia.

I turned round & talked hard to the Premier on my other side, both of us trying to conceal our amused feelings. Hallam, sitting on his right, talked to him a good deal, so I talked to the Premier, Mr Deakin. Presently the Mayor said to me, 'Look 'ere, Lady Tennyson, you're not paying *any* attention to me—you keep on talking to the Premier & leave me quite out in the cold!' 'Come, come,' I said, 'I wonder how many times I have turned round to talk to you & find you monopolising the G.G., which I *might* say, hurts me much!!'¹⁴

Queen Victoria

Hallam and Audrey Tennyson had enjoyed a warm friendship with the British monarch, Queen Victoria (1837–1900) and while in England had visited her regularly at her official residences.

As a child, Hallam and his brother accompanied their father, well-known English poet Alfred, Lord Tennyson, on visits to the Queen, and as his father grew more frail, Hallam took his place in visiting Queen Victoria at Windsor.

Audrey and their sons eventually joined him on these visits. Lionel, a lively young lad, accompanied Audrey and Hallam on one visit. He was warned to be quiet and polite. Queen Victoria found him charming, particularly when he said to her: 'Your Majesty, you've been a very good Queen to us all.'¹⁵ Audrey found the Queen to have a distinctive regal air and yet considered that she showed kindness and sympathy to those in need.

Audrey particularly appreciated the Queen's letter of condolence when her brother died fighting in the Boer War. She replied to the Queen's letter, thanking

her for her sympathy, and assuring her of the love and loyalty towards her shown in the Australian colonies. Audrey's letter also relays the excitement building in the colonies about an impending royal visit by the Duke and Duchess of York, and mentions how well she and Hallam had been received since their arrival in South Australia.

It is indeed good of your Royal Highness to have written me such a kind letter of sympathy about my dear brother. His death has been & always must be a very great sorrow to all those who loved him. To me from our earliest days he had been so much, & the joy and pride of us all. ... My eldest brother died a soldier's death also in the Soudan [sic] on the way to rescue General Gordon & I have another brother in South Africa in the Imperial Yeomanry & we pray he may return safely ... My husband would like the queen to know that it is a joy to see the delight and happiness of all classes out here at the idea of welcoming the Duke & Duchess of York and one and all are grateful to the Queen for allowing their Royal Highnesses to come. Hallam is keenly interested in his work here & our South Australians have been most kindly towards us. Still much as we shall have enjoyed our time, it will be very nice to be once more at home, when my husband will have finished what is required of him.

Thanking your Royal Highness once more for your most kind thought of writing to me.

I am Madam your obedient servant
Audrey Tennyson ¹⁶

Upon Queen Victoria's death in 1901, Audrey conveyed her grief and the colony's to her mother in several letters. She felt close to the Queen and nostalgically reminisced about her past visits with the monarch, affectionately describing the Queen as motherly.

We never received the *official* news of our beloved Queen's death till 4 o'clock yesterday the 23rd, afternoon, nearly 24 hours after the hour she passed away at home at 6.30 Jan 22nd.

There is heartfelt grief all over the colony and H [Hallam] was inundated with telegrams of condolence yesterday from all parts of the colony.

Dear 'Mother Queen', it is just what one feels I think, that one has lost a Mother ... it is almost as if the sun has gone out.¹⁷

The Boer War

It was during Audrey's time in South Australia that the Boer War (1899–1902) broke out between Britain and the Afrikaners of South Africa. Australia supported Britain and sent troops to fight for the mother country.



Unknown photographer
Boer War Contingent Leaves Victoria Barracks
gelatin silver photograph; 30.9 x 25.5 cm
Philippa Poole Photograph Collection
Pictures Collection PIC P656

There is tremendous excitement all over Australia about the Boer War, declared the day before yesterday. A great deal of cabling backwards & forwards to the Colonial Office. A great row in Parliament here & in one or two of the other colonies by the Labour Party who are furious at the money being voted & spent; & here the Premier offered a contingent to the Colonial Office without asking the leave of Parliament. He is of the Labour Party himself & he had to speak & act strongly against them which he has done very nobly, but the question was only carried by a majority of 8 after two or three days of heated discussion. The Colonial Office only allows 125 men from here & I suppose we shall treat them in some way at Government House before they sail on the 30th, & H will probably address them. It is to be settled today who are chosen out of all the Volunteers after a very strict medical examination & also who the officers will be that command them. No married man among the privates.¹⁸

In March 1900, Lady Tennyson entertained Australian troops who were leaving for South Africa at Marble Hill, the Governor's country residence.

Well, yesterday we had our Bushmen's Corps up—a splendid set of men & horses; 94 men, 6 officers, counting the doctor & the Vet who rank as lieutenants. They

were, we thought, the nicest quietest set of men of the three Contingents, all having come straight from the bush or having been brought up there—tremendously thickset strongly built men, wonderful horsemen & rifle shots. The horses too were the best we have sent out, such strong compact little beasts, never had corn in their lives, always fed on the grass & bushes of the Bush ...

The Commanding Officer, Capt. Hübbe, is German origin & told me he was the proudest man just now in the whole Empire at going out to fight for England and her Queen with such a splendid set of men under him ... Their dress is delightful, the regular bushmen's dress with very baggy trousers & Garibaldi shirt & of course slouch hats—all the mud-coloured brown of all our S.A. contingents—much the prettiest shade of any of those that have been here from the other colonies, it is browner & darker, & puttees and boots all to match.¹⁹

Although there may have been excitement expressed in the Australian colonies over the Boer War, not all of it was positive. Henry Lawson in a letter to the *Bulletin* said the effort came from a need for the sensational: 'Some of us are willing—wilfully, blindly eager, mad!—to cross the sea and shoot men whom we never saw and whose quarrel we do not and cannot understand.'²⁰

Audrey Tennyson took an active interest in the war. She wrote to an editor of a newspaper appealing to the British public for financial support, to send items of comfort to the South Australian contingent fighting in the Boer War. Her brother Ernest Boyle was Audrey's point of contact for the parcels.

May I through your columns appeal to the sympathy of your readers on behalf of the South Australian Contingents at the front in South Africa. They are in need of such comforts as are being sent out from England to our English troops. I appeal to the English people feeling sure that they will help me;—for they will not need to be reminded of the magnificent way in which South Australia like the other colonies has come forward to help the Mother country, freely.²¹

The garment industry in South Australia

In Australia during the 1870s and 1880s, women had access to few paid jobs—clothing manufacture, however, was one area that sought to employ women. This industry was gender-segregated, with men occupying the most highly paid jobs. It was men who were usually taught to cut and press men's clothing. Often, women working in the clothing manufacture industry were exploited through long hours of work, poor pay and poor working conditions. Many women turned to outwork, sewing garments at home to supply the clothing factories, while continuing to look after their young children. Widows, deserted women, women whose husbands were out of work and invalids were frequently employed as outworkers. They would collect pre-cut material from the clothing factory, as well as buttons, trimmings and instructions for completing the garments. (Outworkers usually had to provide their own cotton and threads.) In the late 1890s, women were paid as

little as four pence per garment for making colonial tweed trousers for factories. They could barely make a living on such pay.

Audrey Tennyson opposed the exploitation of sweated labour in factories. She believed female workers were taken advantage of and paid far too little for their work. Using her vice-regal position, she discussed this issue with Charles Kingston, Minister of Industries and Premier of South Australia (1893–1899). Hoping to bring about change, Audrey approached Kingston to address this social injustice by raising it in Parliament. She wanted to see an improvement in the plight of working women and girls. Unusually it was a lady inspector of factories who was sent to talk to her.

I have been talking to the Premier, Mr Kingston, about the terrible sweating system that alas is going on here, & he asked me to allow him to send a lady inspector of factories to talk to me about it, & she came & brought a lot of the clothes to show me the work & the prices. I found her a very interesting sensible woman, a Mrs Milman, a widow. Her husband died 15 years ago & she has lost all her 4 children & has always had this work at heart since she was a girl. She has been 6 years Government inspector of factories (chiefly shoe) but only as far as regards sanitary regulations for the workers, & she told me that all that part is greatly improved. She has also independently felt very strongly about the sweating system which is getting worse each year.

Mr Kingston, who is the Minister of Industries, promised to try & bring it before Parliament last session, but with Federation there was no time. This session she hopes much something will be done & I think so too, from what he said to me, & they will probably have a Government tariff for everything. She told me two years ago a committee of ladies got a room as a centre & went round to shops to ask them to send all their materials to them, & they would cut them out & give them to the workers & pay fair prices to them. It answered admirably for 18 months, then the manager fell ill. Another was appointed who was not competent & it all collapsed.²²

Although Audrey Tennyson lived at a time when women were granted the vote in Australia and witnessed the first wave of feminism, she remained a conventional upper-class woman. She was interested in and a keen observer and commentator of the world around her, including politics. She was not shy about expressing her views on political issues. Unlike Eliza Darling and Jane Franklin, she did not challenge the established order. An intelligent and informed woman, she remained within the confines of her gender and class.

Eliza Darling and Jane Franklin, on the other hand, entered directly into the male domain of politics—in defence of their husbands. In the process, their public and private worlds became enmeshed as they used their positions in an attempt to alter the course of administrative and political decisions—all in the name of love.

Notes

Eliza Darling's letters are found in: Darling family correspondence 1832–1836, 1850, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales (ML MSS 2566); and Letters of Eliza Darling to Edward Dumaresq, 1820–1858, Archives Office of Tasmania (NS953/309).

Letters of Audrey, Lady Tennyson are found in: Papers of Audrey, Lady Tennyson, National Library of Australia (MS479/49).

- ¹ P. Russell (ed.), *For Richer or Poorer*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1994, p. 63.
- ² Letter, 19 August 1835, Eliza Darling to her mother, Mrs Ann Dumaresq, **Darling Family Correspondence 1832–1836, 1850**.
- ³ Letter, 25 August 1835, *ibid*.
- ⁴ *ibid*.
- ⁵ Letter, 2 September 1835, Eliza Darling to her family, **Darling Family Correspondence 1832–1836, 1850**.
- ⁶ Letter, Jane Franklin to her sister Mary, 6 November 1841, in P. Russell, *op. cit.*, p. 66.
- ⁷ Letter, Lady Jane Franklin to Dr Adam Turnbull, 17 February 1845, in G. Mackaness, *Some Private Correspondence of Sir John and Lady Jane Franklin 1837–1843*. Rev. ed. Sydney: D.S. Ford, 1977, Part II, p. 90.
- ⁸ Letter, 22 July 1900, Audrey, Lady Tennyson to Zacynta Boyle. Papers of Audrey, Lady Tennyson.
- ⁹ Letter, 1 June 1903, *ibid*.
- ¹⁰ Letter, 17 March 1902, *ibid*.
- ¹¹ Letter, 30 March 1902, *ibid*.
- ¹² Letter, 14 April 1902, *ibid*.
- ¹³ Letter, 1 October 1899, *ibid*.
- ¹⁴ Letter, 28 October 1903, *ibid*.
- ¹⁵ Letter, 24 January 1901, *ibid*.
- ¹⁶ Letter (draft), Audrey Tennyson to Queen Victoria, undated. Tennyson Papers, National Library of Australia (MS479 (37/1 box 6)).
- ¹⁷ Letter, 24 January 1901, Letters of Audrey, Lady Tennyson to Zacynta Boyle. Papers of Audrey, Lady Tennyson.
- ¹⁸ Letter, 14 October 1899, *ibid*.
- ¹⁹ Letter, 4 March 1900, *ibid*.
- ²⁰ J. Ross (ed.), *Chronicle of Australia*. Ringwood, Vic: Chronicle, 1993, p. 442.
- ²¹ Letter, Audrey Tennyson to the Editor, 20 March 1900. Tennyson Papers, *op. cit*.
- ²² Letter, 16 July 1899, Letters of Audrey, Lady Tennyson to Zacynta Boyle. Papers of Audrey, Lady Tennyson.

Epilogue

Through their charity work, the vice-regal women in this book raised social consciousness about a variety of causes and issues. Eliza Darling's work highlighted the need to educate working-class girls and equip them with the skills necessary for domestic service. Jane Franklin condemned the assignment of female convicts as evil, and it was eventually abolished. Mary Anne Broome showed the need for kindness in the community, which she extended towards children and young people.

Elizabeth Loch highlighted the need to offer assistance to those less fortunate in society, like widows and children. Similarly, Audrey Tennyson drew attention to the plight of those in the community needing assistance, including the sick, the poor, pregnant women and factory process workers.

The five women played various roles as the wives of governors. As well as their charity work, they fulfilled the role of educator to their own children and girls of the working and upper classes. Mary Anne Broome indirectly educated a public audience through the medium of her published work.

As consorts to colonial governors, the wives filled the expected role of social hostess and were at the centre of society events. Admittedly, Jane Franklin preferred other interests to entertaining. However, the social role played by the wives is a reminder of the halcyon days of colonial times. It allows us to revisit and recreate the sumptuous parties and elegant balls of a bygone era.

Two wives, Eliza Darling and Jane Franklin, assumed a political role by actively intervening in their husbands' political and administrative decision-making.

This book documents aspects of the lives of nineteenth-century governors' wives who enriched the development of the colonies they inhabited. Their various contributions helped to shape the character of the colonies. History books in the past have documented and recorded information about Australian governors. In such an historical analysis, the wives have often been overlooked. This book helps to redress that omission.

Women's past is equally as important as men's. It has the same value. Historical analysis needs to incorporate all humanity, so that we have documented a balanced inclusive representation of our past.

In Australia's history, men and women have both contributed to the shaping of development and change. In the study of history today, the questions asked and frames of reference increasingly accommodate the experiences and realities of both genders. As eminent historian Marilyn Lake suggests, perhaps it is time to 'theorise afresh'¹ and to conceptually challenge the writing of history in the future.

Note

¹ M. Lake, 'Ordinary Women, Extraordinary Lives', *The Age*, 2 June 2001, Saturday Extra, p. 2.



AT LADY LOCH'S RECEPTION, GOVERNMENT-HOUSE.

'At Lady Loch's Reception, Government House'
Reproduced from *The Australasian Sketcher*, 25 August 1884.

Appendix

Poems of Sir Frederick Broome

THE MUSIC OF THE SPHERES

Yet Love's own planet is not there;
Her Venus, large and close and clear,
Will only bless the earth and air,
Will only rise—when thou art near.

When thy dear eyes, like gentle stars,
Shine through my happy, happy tears;
When thy sweet-sounding voice unbars
Its prisoned music in mine ears;

When at thy softly-murmuring lips,
And thy breathing, beating, breast,
I drink the enchanted cup that dips
The draught which lays the heart to rest.¹

TO ANNIE

The angel reined his crystal car,
Which just had crossed the heavenly dome,
And said—'God gives you yonder star,
I come to bear you to your home.'

'You are excused from pain and death,
Immortal pleasures are your own,
Yet you may keep your mortal breath.'
I said,—'I will not go alone!'

'Well! Choose you one, if so you please,
To be your dear companion there

For centuries and centuries.
Once made, the choice endures; beware!¹
And who is there that I would choose,
And be secure against regret?
What love could I not bear to lose?
What friend has never failed me yet?
'Tis not the beautiful, the young,
With whom I fain would share my star.
One only, all the world among,
I'd trust so long and take so far.
O grey-haired wife! O noble heart!
Who by my side for many a year
Hast borne my faults, espoused my part,
With many a smile and many a tear.
Thy form to be is always fair,
My hand, my heart, enclosing thine,
Can never tire to hold thee there.
I bid thee to this star of mine!
And if this vision of my pen
Is not, in some way, to come true,
The utmost wreck of worlds and men
Can matter nought to me and you.
E.N.B.²

¹ Frederick Broome, 'The Music of the Spheres', *Cornhill Magazine*, vol. 29, January–June 1874.

² Frederick Broome, 'To Annie', 12 March 1895, in B. Gilderdale, *The Seven Lives of Lady Barker*, Auckland: David Bateman, 1996, pp. 277–278.

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The wife of a governor of one of the Australian colonies was expected to embody the ideal of the 'English lady' and be the centre of colonial society. *Governors' Wives in Colonial Australia* explores how five viceregal women—Eliza Darling, Jane Franklin, Mary Anne Broome, Elizabeth Loch and Audrey Tennyson—fulfilled their role. Drawing on letters, diaries and journals, *Governors' Wives in Colonial Australia* provides an account of the role of viceregal women in colonial life.

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