

CHAPTER NINE

PUBLISHING

Of the French people who have taken up residence in Australia a number have been publishers. A few have produced books, but most have turned out periodicals. This chapter is concerned with them and their work, irrespective of its scope; French-Australian authors will be featured elsewhere.

PERIODICALS

It seems that the earliest French periodical in Australia was Le Journal de Melbourne; its publisher, owner, printer and principal writer was himself a Frenchman, Maxime Ferriere.

From his paper we learn that Ferriere lived in the Goulburn Valley before settling in Melbourne: the sympathy and understanding he displays for miners suggests that like Fauchery (see Chapter Three) he was an intellectual with a taste for adventure who had tried his luck on the goldfields.

He was already established as a printer, a dealer in stationery and a dealer in wines, when he started the Journal de Melbourne, a four-page paper which was to come out every Saturday, with the first issue dated Saturday 27 November 1858. The writer-publisher introduces the periodical, saying "... ne sommes-nous pas le premier à initier le journalisme français en Australie?" (Are we not the first to undertake French journalism in Australia?) He expresses the belief that most readers will be miners or former miners. Maxime Ferriere must have had strong powers of persuasion given the \$529,400 total donations (some \$70,000 today) raised from about 30 donors towards publication costs and hazards. The donors' surnames are mainly English, although a few sound French: Beaupre, Blanc, Chabot, Charlemont, Dupuy, Duval. Not one of these names is cited in any study of the French in Victoria, further proof of a much larger French presence than is generally assumed.

The second issue of Journal de Melbourne duly came out on the following Saturday 4 December, and the third issue on 11 December, with some of the copy in English. This last issue contains a note in which Maxime explains that "letters just received from Europe" compel him to leave Australia and return home, thus discontinuing publication. Documents published in the same issue show that donors had been reimbursed their £ 529.4.0 and subscribers invited to claim refund of money paid. The publisher expresses his hope of returning. But did he? Certainly the paper never resumed publication.

The next two French periodicals, also published by French Australians, were likewise shortlived. Revue Australienne, a monthly, first appeared on the Sydney scene in December 1873; only four issues were released, the last one in March 1874. The periodical described itself as the "Journal des Intérêts Français en Australie, Nouvelle Calédonie, Nouvelle Zélande, Fiji, Tahiti, Polynésie" and was much more business-oriented than the earlier Melbourne publication. Achille Balliere, in his book on the escape of leaders of the Commune, mentions meeting a "Monsieur Bonnard, rédacteur de la Revue Australienne" (Mr Bonnard, writer for the Revue Australienne). Henry Bonnard later wrote a book on New South Wales which was published in Bordeaux, France.

L'Oceanien, also a Sydney-published French newspaper, started and ended in that same year of 1874. The State Library of N.S.W. was unfortunately unable to produce a copy so we cannot describe it.

The next French newspaper venture is well-known. The Sydney-published Le Courrier Australien, whose first issue dates back to 30 April 1892, is the oldest surviving foreign-language newspaper in Australia.

In its first editorial, signed "Le Redacteur en Chef: Christian de la Jarriette" (The Editor), Le Courrier recalls the earlier-named but short-lived L'Oceanien rather as an example NOT to follow, and states that this NEW paper:

- will never espouse the aims of any political party;
- will not express radical or seditious views;

- has as its only ambition to inform, educate and entertain;

- wishes to mirror the common aspirations of all those who have made Australia their new homeland (in French this reads: "... ceux qui ont fait de l'Australie leur patrie nouvelle"). To emphasize the idea of the "new homeland", the editorial ends with ADVANCE AUSTRALIA! in large print - a strong statement from a migrant community before the federation of Australia in 1901.

In fact, the founder of the newspaper was not Jarriette but Charles de Wroblewski, a Polish aristocrat who had married the daughter of Jean de Bouillon Emile Serisier, French pioneer of the N.S.W. town of Dubbo. Wroblewski headed the paper for four and a half years, then passed on the reins to Leon Magrin, a French-Mauritian. Magrin must have been young at the time as he is again listed as owner in 1940, but never worked continuously as manager or editor during the 44-year period.

Georges Proust, a French gentleman with wide-ranging business interests, ran the paper from 1901 to 1918, followed by Paul Chauleur from 1918 to 1927. Shortly after, Magrin bought out the publication, relinquishing ownership in 1940 to the Mouvement de la France Libre so that the Free French (better remembered now as "Gaullists" - not "Degaulists", which is wrong) could have their own media of expression. A member of the Free French committee Albert Sourdin, was appointed editor and held the post until 1973, making him the longest-serving (33 years) editor of Le Courrier Australien.

Albert's first years coincided with what were surely the Courrier's days of glory. The ^{emphasis on} political neutrality advocated in 1892 was all but forgotten in favour of the struggle for the just cause ... a cause by no means favoured by all French residents at the time. Those who had the privilege of meeting Albert Sourdin will remember a man of great drive, sparkling wit and humour.

Albert's eldest son Jean-Pierre, born in France in 1925, arrived in Australia at the age of 11. He had a completely bilingual education and joined De Gaulle's Free French Naval Forces in 1943. After the Second World War, a Commonwealth Retraining scholarship paid for his studies at Sydney University. He joined the Courrier Australien in 1954 and in 1973 took over from his father as director and editor.

Apart from the paper itself, the Courrier published the Annuaire Français d'Australie biennially from 1957 to 1982, and since 1959 has produced "Aspects of France", school project material reprinted from the newspaper which boasts print runs of 80,000.

The Courrier nowadays carries many advertisements from the "Ethnic Affairs" and other government agencies. During its first 70 years of existence, the Australian government was not yet preoccupied with ethnic groups but the French consulate was. Almost every issue of those years contains search notices concerning the whereabouts of French migrants, warnings to prospective young soldiers to register, etc.

The reprinting of stories run by the Courrier unfortunately is beyond the scope of this book, but we were unable to resist the following story from Western Australia, published in the issue dated 25 April, 1903.

It recounts the unfortunate fate of one Fernand Maillet, whose picnic outing with friends was to turn to tragedy. Having run out of drinks, the group attempted to buy more wine from a local Swiss winegrower by the name of Lauffer. Probably afraid that the group had already had "one too many", Lauffer refused. An argument ensued and Maillet, who is described as ^{having} a generally quiet manner who had taken little part in the discussion, suddenly pulled out a revolver, aimed at Lauffer and shot him dead.

Since there was neither premeditation nor motive, a petition in favour of Maillet was organised with the help of the French Consul-General, and it was widely expected that Admiral Bedford, the governor of Western Australia, would grant a pardon. But this was not to be. Maillet was executed in Perth, apparently the only Frenchman in Australia to have met such a fate.

The Courrier has always had correspondents in Paris and receives and publishes notes from French societies and businesses Australia-wide. Aside from these features, Jean-Pierre Sourdin writes up most of the copy himself.

But it is difficult to avoid the feeling that the paper has seen better days, ^{which is not} surprising since it began:

- when the French were the second largest non-British European community in Australia;
- when French was THE international language;
- when it was "classy" to be able to speak and understand French, unlike now when it suffices for a touch of class to put "Le" in front of anything and everything - Le Specs, Le Joke, Le Boat, and next it will be Le Queensland Railways, etc...
- when news from France took months to arrive while that in Le Courrier was fresh;
- when it became, after 1899, the official journal of both the Alliance Française and the French Chamber of Commerce. Both organisations long since began bringing out their own publications;
- when travelling to Europe was beyond the reach of most.

Yet Le Courrier Australien managed to live on as a weekly for a span of 81 years until it was forced to tighten its belt and appear on a monthly basis from 1973 onwards. Now, for a mere \$19 a year, anyone can receive the 16-page French bulletin each month of the year. Somewhere along the line, the newspaper had a slight change of heart towards Australia, no longer regarding it, apparently, as the "new homeland" of the migrants of last century. The French prime minister is now referred to as "NOTRE premier ministre" (OUR prime minister), while the Australian head of government is described as "le premier ministre AUSTRALIEN" (the AUSTRALIAN prime minister).

Jean-Pierre Sourdin outlined the enterprise for us in the following way:

"The office of Le Courrier Australien is a vast clearing ground for all things French in Australia; the noble and the nether have visited the old-world rooms, all have contributed to the richness and diversity of the oldest foreign-language newspaper in Australia."

The clearing-house and its keeper certainly helped us to locate a large number of French residents scattered across Australia's states, and we hope the Courrier will live to become a centenarian.

Another Frenchman extremely active in the publishing of periodicals was Maurice Carton, mentioned in the previous chapter. Carton alone was responsible for the release of five French journals, more than all the other French publishers put together. In chronological order, the journals, all monthlies, were:

- Le Français à l'Université de Melbourne (1903-1906)
- Trident (1906-1908)
- Le Petit Français (1907-1912)
- Le Français Classique (1908-1910)
- Le Français en Australie, Journal de la Jeunesse Australienne (1913-1921)

Unlike the publications described earlier, Carton's were essentially educational. But he too worked as publisher, director and principal writer, except in the case of Trident. His last

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journal was not only the longest-lived but also the most successful, claiming sales of 4,000 copies per issue. Its purely educational content was cut back in favour of news after the start of World War One, when Maurice Carton took on the role of a crusader for things French against things German. His native town of Arras in France was one of the hardest hit by German bombs in the Great War, and each issue of Le Français en Australie blasted the "crimes abominables" perpetrated by the German Kaiser and his troops in France.

9-a. BOOK PUBLISHERS

On 30 October 1860, 22-year-old immigrant Ferdinand François Baillière landed in Melbourne with a set aim - to represent his family's book business.

His uncle Jean-Baptiste Baillière, born in the northern French town of Beauvais, had likewise migrated, but no further than to the capital, Paris. In 1825 he had opened a bookshop there that exists to this day as the publishing house J.B. Baillière et Fils, specialists in publications on veterinary science.

What made the Baillière family unique was its leaning for "empire building", at least a century before the growth of the multinationals. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the Baillière's were established as scientific booksellers and publishers in Britain, the USA, Spain and France. Australia was to be their next outpost.

Ferdinand settled at 85 East Collins Street, between what are now the Atheneum and the Baptist Church. He later moved across the road to 104 East Collins Street.

Baillièrè not only sold scientific books from many countries but also exported Australian publications to England and dealt in surgical instruments. Within three years here he became "Publisher in Ordinary to the Victorian Government", probably the only person ever to hold that title. It was in this way that he embarked on a series of scientific and other publications ... none of them in French.

The first, released in 1862, was a handbook/guide to help gold seekers interested in moving to the province of Otago, in New Zealand. It was written by Sigismund Wekey, a revolutionary Hungarian emigré. In 1863 Baillièrè produced two books, both reports from inland explorers, M'Douall Stuart and John McKinley. He then continued with his family's speciality of medical books, but was soon to put all his ^{energy into} what became Ferdinand Baillièrè's major publishing achievement - directories and handbooks.

His first directory was the Victorian Gazetteer of 1865, containing 442 pages of descriptions of localities with a strong emphasis on geology. It was republished twice, in 1870 and 1879, but in the meantime had been joined by the New South Wales Gazetteer, in 1866, and by a string of Post Office Directories, one for each colony, that came to be known as the BAILLIÈRE'S, and which were compiled by Percy Whitworth. In later years, an association apparently developed between Marcus Clarke and Baillièrè, who published Clarke's History of Australia for schools in 1877, and who tried hard to find a European publisher and translator for his "For the Term of his Natural Life".

Ferdinand Baillièrè's career came to an abrupt end on 30 August 1881 in Melbourne's worst suburban railway accident up until then. The publisher, then aged 43, was one of three passengers who lost their lives when the Brighton express train derailed at Jolimont.

There is no trace of the Baillièrè business after 1881, and some 90 years went by before another French bookselling and publishing company was registered in the country.

In October 1971, a company by the name of River Seine Publications was incorporated in the state of Victoria. The majority of the capital was subscribed by seven leading French publishers, aided by French government subsidies handed out during a state cultural export drive. The French shareholders were the prestigious literary house of Gallimard, language specialists Didier and Hatier, Dictionnaires Le Robert, comic-strip album publisher Casterman, and the old established firms of Garnier and Flammarion.

But River Seine's roots go back to 1958, when it started as a weekend book-selling sideline for Jean Rosemberg and his wife Catherine, who emigrated to Australia in 1952, away from battered post-war Europe. Jean had trained as a publisher after the war, had started up his own publishing house in Paris and released the country's first-ever collection of cheap paperbacks. As a migrant, it proved impossible to join the trade on arrival. But publishers back home asked Catherine, a Victorian high school French teacher, and Jean, a qualified accountant and business manager, to sell their publications in their leisure hours. But a few years later, when they finally decided to take up books on a full-time basis, they named the new firm after a horse placed third in the Melbourne Cup that year, a strange comment on the cultural link between the two countries.

From the start, most of River Seine's turnover was generated from wholesale and retail sales of imported books and educational material, from France at first, then from other European countries and the USA. But Rosemberg, flaunting trade scepticism, soon embarked in local publishing in order to fill the gaps in imported teaching materials not specifically targeted at the Australian market. River Seine's first Australian-published titles came out in 1974, aimed at French and German teachers, along with language cassettes and posters for the classroom.

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River Seine currently has a catalogue of some 30 of its own publications, which Rosenberg describes as having evolved from "the worst to the best". He recalls that an early and relatively cheap book of French plays aimed at English speakers caught the attention of an Irish publisher, anxious to launch it on his own market. But he finally decided it was so poorly produced, in terms of paper and type, that it would not sell in Ireland...at any price.

Since then the level of production standards has come to rival the country's finest, with high quality graphics, design and print. In the early 1980s, thanks largely to the impetus of Monash University associate professor of German Michael Clyne, River Seine expanded into "language science", "language and society" and "multiculturalism". Among its publications are titles such as "Cross Cultural Encounters", "Multilingual Australia", "Community Languages: Their Role in Education", not to mention the most exhaustive study on "Francophonie" yet published, including in France.

As for the French teaching texts published in Melbourne, River Seine scored a double success - exporting its own releases overseas and even selling copyrights to a US publisher in 1986 for two of its titles, the first time an Australian publisher had sold rights for French books to the Americans.

In its 25 years of existence to date, River Seine's successive bookshops in Melbourne's inner city area have attracted not only students and teachers of French along with would-be travellers, but also a diverse cross-section of the French community both from Victoria and inter-state seeking books or gifts, but also lured by a watering-hole of French culture away from home. Topping the list of best-sellers through the years were the classic Moliere and contemporary writer Camus, along with low-brow thriller writer San Antonio.

The company allowed potential authors, both French and Australian, to find an outlet here to publish their theories on language teaching methods and have them distributed worldwide. They produced materials better suited to Australian learners

The "French Connection" was always strong and many of River Seine's authors were French academics or teachers living in Australia at the time of publication. The first was Luc Bessiere, a Latrobe University French lecturer who joined the firm for a spell. Others were Lily Piel, Josiane Hay, Paul Cauchy, Lise Arwas, Danielle Kemp, Jacqueline Mayrhofer, Anne-Marie Nisbett and Christiane Bostock.(*)

Rosemberg retired as River Seine's manager in 1983, to be succeeded first by Australian-born former French teacher Jan Livingstone, then ^{by} Anna Bailly. It was headed at the time of printing by bilingual Quebecois Canadian Jean Papillon.

But a chapter on French publishers in Australia would hardly be complete without mentioning Gaston Hoertel. The Frenchman's first encounter with Australia dated back to World War One, at Gallipoli, where he served with French forces entrenched near Australian troops. After his return to civilian life, Hoertel worked in the family printing business in Paris, and it was only three decades later, in 1948, that he decided to emigrate to Australia.

Hoertel opened his own letterpress printing works in Sydney, where his knowledge of French, at a time when no other French book publisher existed in the country, enabled him to act as publisher for a few French publications. His name figures as the publisher of Antoine Denat's Australian works (see preceding chapter). Hoertel died in 1975, and the information on him was supplied by his daughter Denise Fahrer.

(*) FOOTNOTE (smaller type)

River Seine through the years also has provided employment to a host of French migrants from Mireille de Beaucorps, its first secretary, and including Rita Lemoine, Jacques Vauzelle, Francoise Creevey, Isabelle Rosemberg, Marie-Helene Britt, Annick Bouchet, Daniele Robineau, Daniele Reynaud, Jean-Loup Breton and Mathilde Lefort.

CHAPTER TEN

FOOD AND WINE

INNS AND RESTAURANTS OF THE PAST

Hasn't our vocabulary grown over the past century or so? Now we have hotels, motels, restaurants, pubs, cafes, bistrotts to dispense prepared food, and sometimes accomodation. All those used to be known as INNS in the past.

In chapter two, thanks to Francois Peron who was his guest, we met James Larra. Probably he was in fact Jacob Lara, descendant of a Spanish-Jewish family living in Bayonne, south west France. He moved to London in the 1780s, was arrested in 1787 for having stolen a silver tankard, was tried and sentenced to death. As happened to many others, "Royal Mercy upon condition of being transported to ... New South Wales" was bestowed on the prisoner who thus arrived at Port Jackson in 1790.

Once in New South Wales Larra did not do too badly. His "good conduct" brought him a conditional pardon in 1794, permission to marry the same year, a first Grant of ^{Land} ~~Land~~ in 1797, and a final pardon in 1800. Also in 1798 he applied for, and obtained, a licence to open an inn that became The Freemasons' Arms at Parramatta.

According to Peron, both Larra and his wife were French; they employed "an excellent French cook, a native of Paris" (a convict of course) and two other convicts of French origin. Also the visitors were "served in the French style".

So it can truly be said that Larra was Australia's earliest French restaurateur (or innkeeper).

In the decades after the gold rush French innkeepers seem to have multiplied. There was Lauridon of the Bendigo Hotel; ^{Pron of the Washington Hotel,} Chiltern; Ambroise Grandjais from Savoie in Beechworth. In Ballarat Féroud from Antibes was running a restaurant and bakery Lafayette; in the Bullarook Ranges a Captain Fléchoir from Strasbourg had an inn with splendid furniture made by a carpenter from Franche-Comté greatly admired by fellow Alsatian Eberlé.

In Melbourne, as we have seen earlier in chapter three, Antoine Fauchery had founded but not kept for more than about a year, a café-estaminet français. A pension française subscribed £2 towards Commune escapee Michel Serigné in 1873; proprietor was M. Didier and address 208 Lonsdale Street East. Comettant mentions a Melbourne French restaurant La Mascotte but no proprietor's name. At about the same time Sydney's Hotel de France, also known as Courvoisier's Hotel after its owner, was being patronized by French visitors. Earlier Sydney had Timothée Cheval's Café Français which was later taken over by Jules Grandiol who "informed Messieurs les Gourmets (connoisseurs of fine cuisine) that they could obtain in his restaurant a service à la carte unequalled in any other place in Australia".

Later in the nineteenth or early twentieth century in and around Sydney we also find the Trocadero café restaurant français at 68 Castlereagh Street, which boasted a "dining room reserved for ladies", as well as Maison Souchère of 53 Pitt Street, ^{and} Adolphe Diner Parisien at 24 Hunter Street, ^{while} Leon Houroux of Rock Lily Hotel, Narrabeen, announced cuisine française de premier ordre. But no doubt Sydney's best known French restaurant was Paris House, established by O. Desneaux at the corner of King and Philip Streets about 1890. It prided itself in being the "only one in Australia with an essentially French atmosphere". One of our older ^{Sydney} friends told us that in the 1920s and 30s it was the "centre of bohemian life" in Sydney. It had pioneered popular restaurants in Sydney, ^{and} served for 2/6 a three course meal on the

ground floor, whilst private rooms upstairs could be booked with meals costing 4/6. There was a clientele of journalists and barristers since the turn of the century, which moved to Lorenzini's after a Turk bought Paris House in the mid-thirties. Very few restaurants remained French between the two World Wars. An exception was Emile Poinciset's Maison Française in Sydney, regular advertiser in the Courrier of the 1920s and 30s.

Talented French chefs, willing to work for others, have always been in demand. The best known must be Alex Chenevier, who died in 1986 aged 85. He was head chef at Melbourne's Australia Hotel, and vice-president of the Australian Guild of Professional Cooks which instituted a scholarship in his name as a memorial.

A NEW WAVE OF FRENCH EATING PLACES

Starting in Sydney in the 1960s, there was a growth, slow at first, of genuine French restaurants - not only those advertising French cuisine, which have been with us always, but places where the food is actually prepared by French people and service is in the French style, including wine.

The liquor licensing laws made it much easier in New South Wales to run a real French style restaurant. The earliest that we can recall, such as Pierre Balm^a's La Guillotine (Pierre is a direct descendant of Jacques Balm^a, the first man to climb Mont Blanc in 1786), Fred Robin's Le Chifley, and Gloche-merle in Kings Cross, all had their little wine bars where patrons could get any wine by the glass, drink it before or with their meals, and then obtain better food at reasonable prices no higher than in "dry" places. Regrettably we have no data available on the licensing laws in all states, but in Melbourne certainly, the situation was, and to a large extent still is, quite

different. Any French meal without wines is just unthinkable, and yet, probably under the influence of the large brewing companies, the sale of open wines in Victoria is firmly in the hands of well-established outlets that dispense beer also.

Licensing laws make the economics of a real French style restaurant completely different from one Australian state to the next. In Sydney French places can offer meals at prices competitive with any other eating place, making it viable for them to be open for lunch and dinner and ^{to} spreading ~~ing~~ overheads over at least twelve meals a week. In Melbourne a restaurant is not permitted to sell wines at all, the patrons buying their bottle in a licensed bottle shop, causing the restaurateur to lose at least one third of his sales potential. Alternatively the restaurant can try to obtain a "full license", but there were, and mostly still are, so many complicated and costly requirements (drink waiter, for instance) that hardly any of the genuine French restaurants in Melbourne went further than the "bring-your-own" license.

Melbourne restaurateurs of fifteen to twenty years ago told us how strict the supervision was: at 10pm all bottles and glasses had to be removed from diners' tables, and police would come to check two or three times a week. As a consequence the French restaurants in Victoria and other states with similar laws developed rather as small eating places with higher prices, open only for five meals a week, but where no effort was spared to provide the best cuisine, refined dishes, unique if possible, so as to make the patrons' outing into a real gastronomic adventure.

Melbourne's French restaurant scene has produced an interesting character. Robert Perrault must be Melbourne's best known Frenchman; everyone

calls him "Bébert". Now 80 (in 1987), he first landed here in 1951. He was a butcher in France and one of those many French tradesmen who arrived here without a word of English (Bébert could only introduce himself as "Me, Frenchie"), but who, after a two-minute demonstration of his working ability, was hired with no further questions asked. Perrault's English vocabulary has not grown much richer in the 35 years since then, but he has. After a few years employed as a butcher, he went to work as a cook in cafeterias in public works around the country, including two years for Shell in the Simpson Desert. In 1968 he returned to Melbourne to open his first restaurant The Bull Frog, still in existence in Rathdowne Street Carlton despite two or three changes in ownership. Over the following years he founded, and in each case operated for a while, usually with partners, a further four French restaurants: L'Alouette, Le P'tit Chef, Chez Bébert and La Cuisine au Champagne. Le P'tit Chef is now Annick's. Having now been retired in the country for some years, Bébert well deserves the title of "grandfather of Melbourne's French restaurants". It was Bébert who told us about police surveillance in the early and heroic days of French eating in Melbourne. Incidentally, all of Bébert's places had a bell to be rung at the door, *for admittance.*

Second most well known identity on the Melbourne French culinary scene must be Philippe de France (which is supposed to be his real name), who runs a restaurant by the same name in Russell Street in the city and does some gastro-nomic writing. Some very fine eating places are spread all around the Melbourne suburbs. We have already mentioned la Chaumière (in chapter three - les Communards). Annie and Jacques Héraud^u's la Madrague has offered a similar first class cuisine for at least ten years, in spite of Jacques having to re-convert from computers (in Nice, France) to cooking. There are many more.

In Sydney, because of the licensing laws, the French restaurants developed

in a broader range. The wine-bar cum eating places a little along the plat-du-jour formula from France, where you can eat real French yet cheap cuisine, were soon followed by the country style bistrot type, such as l'Aubergade in Redfern, still popular after more than fifteen years, and also by a string of top class, often luxuriously appointed, would-be palaces of gastronomy. In 1982 Jean Luc Lundy's Bagatelle in Darlinghurst was the only restaurant to win a five-star award in the Australian Restaurant Guide. This author's preference (but it must be said he did not try many other places) would go to André Perez's restaurants le Lavandou and la Provence, both for gastronomic excellence and atmosphere.

Perez is a pied-noir (one of Algeria's French who left after independence in 1962, then did not feel well accepted in France) who was a second chef at the famous Negresco Hotel in Nice, migrated here in 1967, and is president of the Australian section of the Académie Culinaire de France. He found that getting established as a chef-owner entailed for him years and years of hard work, up to eighteen or twenty hours a day in various jobs, and that ~~the~~ "lack of human contact in Australia" made for an unfriendly environment.

After winning the battle for existence in Sydney and Melbourne, French restaurants have now spread everywhere. There are several in Perth, Adelaide and Darwin. Alice Springs has le Coq en Pâte. One can find them as far north as Port Douglas where Jean-Marie Piona, another pied-noir is established, down to a place as remote as Bicheno on Tasmania's east coast with Ram³adier's restaurant le Cyrano where they catch their own fish. In Hobart Roger Dufau's la Cuisine seems to be the only one, so that, we are told, it is hard to get a table there at meal times. Before moving to Hobart Dufau spent quite a few years in a similar venture in Toronto, Canada.

The only sad aspect of the now flourishing French restaurant industry in this country is that we can be certain that almost all these places - a few hundred of them in addition to the handful named - will, ^{eventually} disappear as FRENCH restaurants. After a number of years, be it five or twenty, the typical French owner-chef will be exhausted, and wanting to retire will sell the business. Just as typically the buyer will be Greek, Italian, German, or a New Zealander - anything but French. The only consolation is that in the meantime other genuine French eating places will have opened up. Only time can tell whether the total number will increase or decrease.

We must not, however, leave our French chefs without mentioning Gabriel Gaté. He does not own a restaurant, yet he is probably Australia's best known French chef. His book "French Cuisine for Australians", self-published in 1980 in the form of a lavish hardback, now out of print after sales of 16,000 copies, was republished late in 1986 as a paperback and is going very well. Apart from that Gabriel is much in demand for radio broadcasts on the same, apparently inexhaustible subject.

BUTCHERS, BAKERS, PASTRYCOOKS,
ICECREAM AND CHEESEMAKERS

Butchers There are quite a few French people who run butcher's shops in this country, but their nationality is usually quite inconspicuous. Long ago French butchers such as F. Paul & Co. boucherie française in Sydney in 1903, tried to attract their fellow countrymen's patronage by advertising in Courrier Australien, but these days they seem to have given up the practice.

One butcher at least is unusual. In Darwin exists Australia's only butcher's shop specializing in horse meat. It is called Top End Chevaline Meat. Anybody who has lived in France must have come across some of the many

boucherie chevaline. Horse meat is not as tasty as beef, but it is much cheaper to buy and is recommended to people afflicted with some ailments, horses being immune to several cattle diseases.

In Australia horse meat is prohibited for human consumption in all states except the Northern Territory. In Tennant Creek an abattoir opened a few years ago where horse meat is processed for export. So Anne-Marie Roquet, who migrated here from France with her husband and two elder sons in 1971, obtained permission, after cutting a lot of red tape, to establish a shop supplied by the Tennant Creek abattoir, and thereby to achieve a "first" in Australia. The Roquets seem especially proud to have attracted a number of old Australians as regular customers.

Bakers and Pastrycooks French bread, in particular the baguette and the croissant, constitutes one of France's main attractions to the visitor. Many bakers throughout the world, whether French or not, have tried to emulate the product in their local bakeries. As for the Australian results, it seems possible to produce genuine croissants here, with the best ones tasting as good as the best in France despite a tendency to be a little fattier. But bread? Not baguettes or ficelles. They may be quite good but they never taste like the genuine French product!

A few French bakers have worked in Australia in the past - earlier in this chapter we mentioned Ballarat's bakery Lafayette - but even more so than with eating places, a completely new generation has started up since World War Two. It appears that Brisbane is the one place in the nation where this new generation of French bakers has conquered the largest share of "fancy" bread sales. There are many small firms and two large ones.

Number One is Michel's French Bakery at Bulimba, and three other shops, all the creation of Michel Marteau. We had no opportunity to call at that apparently thriving business, but in August 1985 paid a visit to Number Two, which is the Pique-Nique Basket in the West End market, where we met André (from Reims) and Christiane (from Paris) Pichelin. With their three children they migrated to Australia in 1970, feeling insecure at home after the "semi-revolution" of 1968. They chose Queensland in preference to other states on the strength of photographs seen in France of magnificent Barrier Reef landscapes. André had served a baker's and pastrycook's apprenticeship in France which entailed twelve hour working days not much better than those of the 1930s so vividly portrayed here in the television serial based on La Maison des Autres by Bernard Clavel, himself a baker before he became a successful writer.

In 1972 the Pichelins started Paris-Parade, making biscuits that were sold door-to-door. After they lost everything in the 1974 Brisbane floods André went to work in various clubs for up to eighteen hours a day, and this eventually paid off. In 1979 he was able to start the Pique-Nique Basket, concentrating at first, he says, on traditional bread. André and Christiane now have a staff of fifteen, reporting proudly that nearly all of them are French, and that five former staff have managed to establish their own businesses in the same trade.

We discussed the problem of Australian French bread not tasting like the genuine article and here at last I received an explanation. Representatives of Paris flour mills had recently visited Brisbane and found that the flour here was produced under a system discarded in France long ago. Apparently our local flour has not rested enough, and is also too rich in gluten, whereas the French flour is more "balanced".

Sydney has a host of French shops serving croissants and pastry made on the premises; whereas those selling French bread sometimes make it themselves, or sometimes get it from other compatriots. The oldest pastry shop in existence seems to be the Paris Cake Shop, dating back to the late 1950s. In 1971 it was taken over by Jacques Choiboisseau, and according to gastronomic writer Leo Schofield, is where one can find "the best croissants in Australia". The other shops were mostly opened in the 1980s, and according to a Sydney Calendar magazine, now number at least two dozen, with Michel Catoen having four outlets in the northern suburbs, "Jules et François" four in the south* east, and Apert of La Bretagne three in the same area.

Melbourne, like Sydney, has a "forebear" bakery shop that goes back to the 1960s. Le Croissant in Burwood was founded by its present proprietor, Bianchi, who still has not lost his Marseilles accent. For a number of years Le Croissant was the only place to get really authentic croissants, and some French would make a trek of several hours to and from the Burwood shop, mostly on weekends, to obtain the week's delicacies. In more recent years Melbourne, like Sydney, and to a lesser extent the other capital cities also, has witnessed the establishment of a large number of bakeries and pastry shops, including a chain The French Bakehouse, that is not French Australian owned but employs many French bakers.

Some French establishments specialize in bread and croissants only; most sell, and usually make, pastry; and a few specialize in confectionery. Back at the turn of the century "L. Giraud's Superior Confectionery and Pastry" could advertize itself as being "the only firm in Australia for French confectionery". Even these days only a few specialize in that line. At present the Courrier advertizes chocolats français made in Sydney by Liliane Sulla-Marsa.

Gastronomic writers concur in the opinion that the Australian public is now realizing that French pâtisserie is something completely different from the cakes and sweets they were used to at home.

Icecream Former academic turned icemaker, Luc Bessière, did not want to start in a venture completely new to him before being thoroughly trained. So he spent the best part of 1982 attending classes eight hours a day, five days a week at the Institut Rabelais near Paris, in order to absorb the technology taught there to professional glaciers.

In February 1984, with an Australian partner, he opened "La Glacerie" in Bondi. He says that it was still a problem to adapt French quality to Australian regulations. To be called "icecream" the product has to contain 10 percent fats, but "La Glacerie" concentrated more on fruit sorbets not subject to such requirements. The success was immediate. Even while employing up to ten people Luc and his partner just managed to meet the demand both from passing trade and from restaurants. Their sorbets were unique in Sydney, and were served in a really French atmosphere.

Luc and his original partner left the business in April 1986, but other French Australians have continued it since then. And other places, such as La Douce France now offer icecreams and sorbets along with pâtisserie.

Cheesemakers Although there have been other French migrants who tried to set up as cheesemakers here and there, only one has succeeded in staying in the industry up to the present. Of the few cheeses with French names produced in Australia, all but his are produced by other Europeans. And here no disparagement is intended for there are excellent cheesemakers in Europe besides the French.

The only French Australian who makes cheeses today is Gilbert Pesenti. Scion of several generations of cheesemakers in the French Jura, himself a graduate of the Ecole nationale d'industrie laitière (school of the dairy industry) of Poligny, Jura, Pesenti migrated to Australia in 1963. After a few jobs in and out of his own trade ("and of course," says he "as a taxi-driver"), he started his own business Frenchese in 1978 in Sydney. Later he built new premises in Nowra on the south west coast of New South Wales and part of the Illawarra dairy district. He moved his factory there in 1981 and manufactures under the logo of a unicorn.

Pesenti has assured his success by concentrating on a small number of products that are economically viable rather than bending to the pressure of marketing people who would wish him to manufacture the whole range of fromages existing in France. With his workforce of eight, Pesenti produces bries and camemberts in only two shapes and sizes, directing all their competence and effort into quality and taste. Heavily subsidized cheeses from EEC countries, chiefly from France, are the main competition, but then as Gilbert puts it: "The world of business is one of challenges which make life exciting, build character, and demand a continued scrutiny of new fields and an untiring reserve of ingenuity." The list of outlets where Frenchese products can be found is growing steadily into neighbouring states and by now the unicorn must be known to most specialist cheese shops.

PIONEER FRENCH WINE GROWERS

In the nineteenth century and up to the present France was the world's top wine producing nation in quantity, and perhaps it can be said in variety and quality too.

French people with skills in that field were therefore in high demand

abroad. A few of them who reached Australia played a part, largely forgotten now, in establishing our wine industry here. The story and the role of those pioneers has in fact been well researched and documented already, in particular by André Simon in "The Wines, Vineyards and Vignerons of Australia" (London 1966), so it is without regret that in the present book we will be content with a resumé.

The earliest references to French vigneronns appear in 1842 when a certain Bertheau arrived from Burgundy to manage vineyards for a New South Wales grower, then tried to plant his own vines in South Australia. After nine years there and three in Victoria, Bertheau gave up for financial reasons, but found success as a manufacturer of cordials and of liqueurs in Queensland, where a descendant of his was interviewed by Anny Stuer. Also in 1842, a Frenchman Frederic Brequet, with a Swiss associate, was the first to plant a vineyard in the Geelong area; they won a first prize for burgundy and claret in Victoria in 1850.

In 1847 T. Aubert became the first French wine maker in South Australia with his Sans-Souci label. Soon afterwards Camille Réau is signalled as one of the pioneer vigneronns of the Rutherglen area. In 1854 he created his own Tuileries wine.

1855 sees the arrival of P. Terrier from Burgundy, another expert engaged first in New South Wales as a wine/maker. In 1869 he planted his own vines in the Hunter Valley. When Henri Rochefort with his companions escaped from New Caledonia, he was very well received in Maitland by Terrier, whom he describes as "an exile from the Napoleon the Third coup d'état". (referring to the events of 1852).

Still in the late 1850s begins the story of Chateau Tahbilk, a vineyard

still in existence today in the Goulburn Valley. Owner Hugh Glass engaged French former gold digger Ludovic Marie as his manager. Marie was highly motivated and enterprising. He saw great opportunities in the property, formed a company, raised a capital of £25,000, and in 1860 purchased and took over 640 acres of the Tahbilk property from Glass. 65 acres of vines were planted in the first year under Marie's direction.

Like Ludovic Marie, Jean Pierre Trouette first came here as a gold digger. He was already connected with the wine industry in south west France, and was struck by the resemblance between the Great Western area, near Stawell in Victoria, and his native province where vines thrived. He also met and married Anne Marie Blampied from Lorraine, who had joined her brother Emile, a gold digger in Beechworth. A long-lasting partnership began between the brothers-in-law. The Great Western vineyard was not as ambitious a project as Tahbilk, beginning with only three or four acres in vines and growing progressively, but it too is still in existence.

In 1885 Great Western vineyard was bought by Hans Irvine who decided to specialize in sparkling wines. From the Champagne region in France he brought expert Charles Pierlot and a team of technicians who helped to set up a production that was to last for a whole century - indeed Great Western has long been synonymous with Australian champagne.

The next most notable French vigneron was the de Castella family. Or were they French? Apparently the descendants, made famous today by marathon runner Robert, insist that their ancestors were not French but Swiss, coming from the French speaking Swiss canton of Neuchatel. Certainly the most colourful member of the family, Hubert de Castella, became French by naturalization; he also had a mainly French upbringing. Hubert wrote at least four

*Footnote
(Catharine
found 6)*

books, two of which - Notes d'un vigneron australien and Les squatters australiens, both recently translated into English and republished by Colin Thornton-Smith - were published in France in 1882, and were influential in bringing about a new awareness there of Australia which had lost some lustre with the passing of time since the gold rush.

It was Hubert's older brother Paul who had started vine growing at Yering, north east of Melbourne. In 1862 he won the Argus Gold Cup for the best vineyard. Hubert bought part of the property, and explains that thanks to ^{fortune and} ~~to his young wife~~ "the fortune which accompanied his young wife" he was able to increase the size of his holding to 250 acres. By then (1881) it was the St Hubert's vineyard.

What characterizes Hubert is the broader vision he seems to have been the first to bring to the industry: participation in international wine fairs in Bordeaux, Paris, Vienna and Melbourne in 1880; the study of better conservation and transport methods; relentless campaigns, in France especially, not only for Australian wines, but also for Australia itself as a place where French vigneronns could and should emigrate.

South Australia too managed to attract a few French migrants from the wine industry. The Gelly family from Roussillon (the southernmost tip of France) settled in Beaumont near Adelaide where other French vigneronns from the same area, the Le Mazouan were already living. One of the Gelly daughters married Edmond Mazure, who acquired his own property in 1909 and created the label Rom^alo, later to become Seaview, one of the best known names in wines to this day.

A brief survey of French wine pioneers must end here, unless one wants to include Maurice O'Shea of Mount Pleasant (Hunter Valley) fame. His mother was French, and he studied in the French agricultural colleges of Grignan

and Montpellier before returning to Australia and World War One. Other wine properties did not stay very long in French hands but continued to employ a substantial number of French experts.

FRENCH VIGNERONS TODAY

(See ^{following pages} attached sheets)

10-5 FRENCH VIGNERONS TODAY

After a successful beginning in the 19th century, winemaking in Australia had virtually disappeared in the first half of the 20th, with the exception of the production of the so called fortified wines, drunk after dinner, in small glasses, like port is still drunk to-day.

After half a century of decline → it was only in the 1950s, with the new wave of European migration, that vine growing for the production of table wines ~~was~~ started afresh. And ~~like with~~ ^{as they did in} so many other trades, the French, after a long absence, ~~not surprisingly~~ reappeared in that field which is so much a part of French culture.

Starting a vineyard in the 1950s in rural Australia required some kind of pioneering spirit: grapes were, to say the least, an unusual crop, and winemaking, in a beer-drinking country, was seen ~~more~~ as an exotic pastime.

L.C.

Jean MIGUET, a Frenchman, was one of these pioneers and is now widely acknowledged as being responsible for the renaissance of the wine industry in Tasmania ^{over} ~~in~~ the last decades.

L.C.

Jean MIGUET migrated ^{to} ~~in~~ Australia in the early 50s to work on the ^{hydro} ~~hydro~~ ^{electric} project in Tasmania. The son of a vigneron himself, he decided to stay in the country after the expiration of his three-year contract ^{in order} ~~to~~ start with his wife a wine-producing venture. Having travelled extensively the island to look for a proper site, Jean Miguet selected a block of land at Lalla, near Launceston, to establish his vineyard. He called it La Provence, after the region of

France where he had spent some of his youth.

The beginnings for the Provence vineyards were not easy: the soil and the climatic conditions were adequate but the problem was to find ~~the~~ suitable types of vine to grow. After several unsuccessful attempts to import cuttings, and even seeds from France, Jean Miguet managed to obtain adequate varieties from established companies such as Wynns, Browns and McWilliams. The whole process of wine-making was very traditional at La Provence: the winery was a small shed on the property, the wine storage area was under the house and all the equipment ~~was made~~ ^{consisted} of hand machines.

Jean Miguet developed his vineyard until 1974 when, due to illness, he had to sell the property to a group of Launceston businessmen. He died shortly after in France where he had returned.

Jean Miguet was a strong believer in quality and argued with different bureaucratic departments for the introduction of an appellation control system, modelled on the system used successfully in France. Jean Miguet's wines may not be remembered today but his ideas have made their way, ^{now that} ~~since~~ an Appellation of Origin legislation has been passed ~~a few years ago~~ to protect the growing quality wine industry in Tasmania.

With the recognition that vine-growing and wine making could be successful propositions in Australia, and with the progressive acceptance of wine as a social drink, a number of ~~ancient~~ ^{older} wine-producing areas of Australia have started to

flourish again. One of these is the Port Macquarie area where the wine industry in the 1880 s, with more than 30 vineyards, was blooming and where, as we recalled in Chapter seven, Gérard Cassegrain established his "empire". It is not surprising then if ~~the~~^a son of Gérard and Françoise Cassegrain, John, decided, after his studies at the Roseworthy Agricultural College, to take advantage of the wine-producing qualities of his family's 400 acre property in the Hastings Valley district. After gaining experience in the Burgundy region in the traditional methods of wine-making and in the Hunter Valley with Murray Tyrrell, one of the great wine-makers in Australia, John Cassegrain established in the early 80s his own company, Cassegrain Vineyards, on the Pacific Highway. The Cassegrain philosophy is to make high quality wine and much emphasis is placed in particular on grape quality, i.e. the adjustment of particular varieties and management practices to certain types of soil and micro-climates. The Cassegrain Vineyards were officially inaugurated in 1985. John Cassegrain, despite his strong belief in the advantages of modern technology, keeps intact the links with tradition: the winery imports each year its own oak casks from France and displays proudly above its doors the family coat of arms with its motto: JE RESJOIS LES CUERS (I MAKE HEARTS REJOICE) (~~I REJOICE THE HEARTS~~).

We will talk in more detail in a later chapter of the existence of a French community in Forbes, in New South Wales, but we will mention here the name of another French

vigneron, Jacques Noël Genet, established in Forbes where he successfully took over a vineyard started at the beginning of the 2nd century by a French Swiss from Neufchatel. ~~Jacques Noël~~ Genet, who was born in Nice, migrated to Australia in 1951; his wines, ^{also} marketed under the name Provence, ~~just like Miquette~~ Sandhills Vineyards, are well appreciated by connoisseurs all over New South Wales.

It is in the aptly named Pyrenees mountain range, near Avoca, in Victoria, that another Frenchman, from Bordeaux this ^{time} ~~one~~, has put into practice his skills and experience in wine making. Christian Morlaes was brought ^{to} ~~in~~ Australia by the L.C. French cognac producer RÉMY MARTIN in 1982 with a mission: to produce in this country a Méthode champenoise wine in the (brut French) tradition. This new venture was accidental: when Rémy Martin bought the beautiful valley in the Pyrénées in 1961 and planted it with vines, the objective was to produce brandy for local consumption. It ^{was} ~~is~~ the oversupply of the Australian market, flooded with cheap production ^e ~~ion~~ from the irrigated areas of the Murray River, which forced the company to change its objectives. Rémy Martin realised that there was a progressive shift in the Australian taste from the traditional local bubbly, a sweet type of sparkling wine, to a drier style more in the French tradition. Christian Morlaes, a young oenologist, fresh from his experience at L.C. KRUG, one of the most respected French Champagne producers, was the man ^{for} ~~of~~ the situation. Under his personal ^{direction} ~~dedication~~,

We must not end this chapter on French Australians in Food and Wine without making two comments:

1. With the recent burgeoning of so many small businesses, Food and Wine is the field employing the largest number of French people.
2. By comparison with the other areas of activity analysed in the present book, it is the one where, literally, IT PAYS TO BE FRENCH. Having a French name, a French accent, French style, and creating a French atmosphere will greatly enhance the chances of success.

Also in Victoria, located south-west of Ballarat, is the Yellow Glen Winery with its French winemaker Dominique Landragin. They too specialize in méthode champenoise with base wines almost entirely composed of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier in various blends.