

‘A BIT OF A FROGGY’:  
GEORGE COLLINGRIDGE DE TOURCEY  
IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT

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In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Collingridge de Tourcey family re-located from Paris to Sydney; first, in the 1870s, the three surviving brothers, in their early thirties or thereabouts, who subsequently brought out their sister and recently widowed mother. The eldest, Charles (1844-1907), a Jesuit priest who was one of the early fathers at Sevenhills in the Clare Valley, South Australia, eventually returned to Europe—not to France, but to England, where he carried on the French-sponsored mission of advancing Catholicism. His idealism was religious. The youngest, Arthur (1853–1907), made a return trip to the Old World towards the end of his life, spending significant time in Cairo on his way to France. George (1847–1931), the middle brother, never returned; which is not to say he never looked back, but when he had made his decision to seek his paradise in Australia, it was a binding commitment.<sup>1</sup> He and Arthur from the outset threw themselves into the colonial art milieu, determined to energise local practice on Parisian models. Their idealism was in the end overtaken by that of others. The Collingridges (as they mainly identified themselves) were a family who knew they had a contribution to make, and who readily acted upon that. George in particular provides an interesting example of how the immigrant gradually accommodates himself to his new habitation, and while never turning against his own cultural roots, grows a new patriotism. For George, that took particular shape in his inquiry into the earliest European history of his new homeland, and resulted in his comprehensive survey of early maps, charts and records of maritime discovery in the Pacific, his then authoritative *Discovery of Australia* (1895). But it also informed, and is expressed through, his achievement as a landscape painter.

The de Tourcey part of the family name reaches back to the fourteenth century; and the family were entitled to sport the *fleur-de-lys*. George Collingridge was not one to take that too seriously, but some echo of it would recur when he began looking for floral emblems for Australia. Originally Colyngrige of Towersey and Thame,<sup>2</sup> the Collingridges were gentry of Buckinghamshire, who maintained their ancestral religion through the years of repression, and were one of the more distinguished of the recusant families in

their corner of Oxfordshire, near Hethe, where a tongue of the county protrudes into Buckinghamshire. The most prominent Catholic family in that particular district were the Fermors—Arabella Fermor achieved fame of a kind as the heroine of Alexander Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* (1712). Throughout the eighteenth century, and into the nineteenth, the Collingridge family maintained a strong connection with France. They went to France for their education, given the difficulty of acquiring a Catholic education in England, and a persistent sprinkling of them were ordained in France.

This is all by way of background to an unexplained event. In 1850, George's father, a tenant farmer, sold off his stock, crop and equipment at only one week's notice, and took his young family to London. It was not a good time to be selling up; and one thought is that the Collingridges got caught up in a land dispute with a needy because financially reckless, and of course dissolute, Duke of Buckinghamshire. On the other hand, a somewhat over-exultant Cardinal Wiseman, model for Robert Browning's self-indulgent Bishop Blougram,<sup>3</sup> unfortunately alienated the Protestant community by his bombast at the time of the re-establishment of a hierarchy of Catholic dioceses in England (1850), 'more Ultramontane than the Pope himself' according to *The Times*, and brought about a public reaction of the kind that the old English Catholic families had most feared—public burnings in effigy on Guy Fawkes Day, for example. Generations of apprehension came to a turbulent head. The youngest of the Collingridges, Arthur, was born in London; and almost immediately the family relocated to Paris.

There, George first entered a school not far from the Arc de Triomphe, for George remembered the victorious French troops returning from the Crimean War, with Napoleon III at the head of the parade. The school became newsworthy when it burned down; and the report shows either a degree of naivety or insouciance on Collingridge's part, or ill-advised concern for his own property, for he went back inside the burning school to retrieve his hat. That sufficiently alarmed his schoolfellows: 'L'Anglais va être brûlé!' they all cried,<sup>4</sup> which tells us that he was at that stage still something of an exotic among them, and that if it were an English language school then the others were there to acquire the language. It was not a nest of little undersized rosbifs. From then on, Collingridge's further education was entirely in French, first with the Jesuits' Pension Petit at Vaugirard, and later at the École des Beaux-Arts. The two older brothers had entered the seminary; George and his younger brother

continued the artistic disposition of their mother, who by the evidence that survives with the family today was quite accomplished in small studies. The next older brother, Alfred, was also very gifted: a devotional image of Mary, done in French crayon, is really very beautiful. The two younger brothers were rather more secular in their interests.

In 1863 George Collingridge was apprenticed to Viollet-le-Duc, who apart from all his activity in promoting and supervising neo-medieval restoration in Paris in particular, was also appointed Professor of Arts and Aesthetics at the *École des Beaux-Arts* in the very year Collingridge enrolled there. Viollet-le-Duc's appointment was not well-received: he was shouted down when he attempted to lecture, and he was replaced by Hippolyte Taine in the following year.<sup>5</sup> How much this affected Collingridge is not known. Perhaps he discovered he had no interest in architecture. What he certainly discovered was an enthusiasm for woodblock engraving: Viollet-le-Duc prepared his own drawings of sculptures for example, and building plans, and engraved his own woodblocks. Collingridge negotiated release from his articles and apprenticed himself instead to the leading wood-engraver of the day, Horcholle—and within a year, had become so adept that he was earning more by that craft than his master. In addition, he took classes in figure drawing, though by the evidence of his subsequent work this does not appear to have been his *forte*. And much more significantly, he studied with Harpignies, a prominent landscape painter as well as, incidentally, an engraver.

What happened next was of abiding influence on Collingridge. He met Corot. Harpignies happened to be one of Corot's close acquaintances, and that may have provided a channel of access, though Collingridge claimed to have sought him out. You could always bump into Corot if you knew which neck of the woods he was in, at Barbizon or Ville-d'Avray. The way Collingridge tells it, he became Corot's only pupil.<sup>6</sup> Collingridge's narrative history of himself always bears close scrutiny, though there is no reason to doubt the larger contours of it.<sup>7</sup> In this instance, we have to overcome the objection that Corot took no pupils, or—if some broadening of the term is conceded—the claim excludes such famous figures as Pissarro and Berthe Morisot. There can be no doubt that Collingridge was permitted to sit alongside Corot while he painted; possibly he was permitted to sit alongside the master and paint, and listen to *père* Corot's ruminations about nature and watch his attempt to capture changing light. Collingridge's timing was excellent. He was an art student at

the most exciting moment of the nineteenth century, though his remembrance of the first *Salon des refusés* does not indicate that he derived any benefit from the new experimentation—he thought the paintings there and in the next exhibition, in 1873, ridiculous. His association with Corot was just as Corot was developing his trademark studies, the *souvenirs*.

What this points to is a reminder again of the context. The family carried with it a long history of recusant devotion; it had arrived in Second Empire Paris where Isabella carried the torch of religion while Napoleon devoted himself to the pursuit of other interests. Piety went in one direction, *gay Paris* in quite another. There were unresolved tensions between the republicans and the established/disestablished church, and between French Catholicism and the Vatican. Napoleon played his own duplicitous games with Austria and the emerging Italian nationalists. When Garibaldi's forces laid siege to the Vatican itself, two of the Collingridge brothers answered the call to arms, to defend the Pope. First Alfred, who left his seminary in 1866, and enlisted in the Papal Zouaves; and shortly after, in 1867, George enlisted with them too. The brothers' readiness to go to Rome testifies to their particular kind of faith, and in the case of George, perhaps also to a kind of romanticism. Alfred died of his wounds; George was decorated three times for his valour. He was at the battle of Mentana, where the Zouaves together with French troops with the new long-range *chassepot* rifles, drove off Garibaldi.

For the next eighteen months Collingridge was on patrol duty in Rome and in the hills and mountains beyond. One story he related in various interviews, of swimming the Lago di Vico (which gradually increased in size with each re-telling), recalls the earlier story of the burning school, for although French was the language of command among the Zouaves, he was still identified as the English Sergeant. His own orientation was nevertheless entirely French, and that seems to have been the instinct of the family as a whole. For a few years after he returned from Italy, he worked as an engraver for *Le Monde illustré*, and went on a special commission with Daniel Vierge to depict a royal wedding in Spain. When the German army laid siege to Paris, the Collingridges claim to have taken the last departing train—they went to London to weather that storm, and the communard uprising that followed. When that all came to its inevitable and unhappy end, the family voted to return to Paris. That was now their home, that was their preference. They had by that expressed commitment changed cultures.

Yet as Collingridge was to admit within a few years, France was not the best country to live in. Bad seasons—rain and floods—ruined the harvests, spread disease among livestock, and damaged viticulture. The rural economy collapsed, and then the national economy. Britain too was in the grip of a depression. The government of the Third Republic did not impress. Arthur and Charles separately emigrated to Australia, and George was not slow in following, sending samples of his work ahead to the *Illustrated Sydney News* and joining his young brother there early in 1879.

The Sydney that awaited George was well on the way to establishing itself, just as was marvellous Melbourne in the sister colony, and building on much the same basis of good fortune. Sydney was starting to represent itself in terms of culture: its gingerbread Town Hall was halfway built, the two competing cathedrals were up (though one burned down), the Post Office building was well under way, the main buildings of the residential colleges at the University had been completed. But chief among the wonders of Sydney was the Garden Palace, where in 1879 the first International Exhibition in the southern hemisphere was held. It was the most distinctive building in Sydney, with a prime position along the ridge of Macquarie Street, just along from Government House. Collingridge knew about international exhibitions. He had participated in some capacity at the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1878—he was no doubt being jocular in recounting that he had judged some of the Australian wines there, but there he did become well acquainted with the two New South Wales commissioners, Jules Joubert and the Hon. Edward Combes, who had trained as an engineer in Paris, and who was an accomplished amateur water-colourist, exhibiting in the Paris Salon as well as in London. Joubert came back to Sydney not only a Chevalier of the Légion d’honneur, but brought with him ‘the French government’s promise that it would pay for the dispatch to Sydney and Melbourne of some of the articles, practical and ornamental, that had so impressed the visitors to Paris in 1878’.<sup>8</sup>

The exhibition building provided the Collingridges with their opportunity. Within a year or so of George’s arrival, he and Arthur orchestrated the formation of the Art Society (subsequently the Royal Art Society) of New South Wales. They had been painting scenes of the old streets of Sydney, and established the Rocks as a sketching ground; but much more importantly they opened up the Hawkesbury as a landscape subject. Arthur, who lived at Ryde, had already discovered a number of sketching sites along the Parramatta River.

They brought the Hawkesbury to the considerable attention of the next wave of painters, Julian Ashton and Arthur Streeton, McCubbin, Conder, Fulwood and Daplyn. And they appear to have been ahead of Ashton in undertaking *plein air* painting, though that would not cause Ashton to hesitate in his own claim to have initiated the practice in Australia. George had painted alongside Corot by the ponds and in the forests about Ville-d'Avray; he was well acquainted with the technique. And as a new arrival from Paris, he carried with him some of the artistic excitement from what he continued to maintain was the centre of the artistic world. In particular—and how familiar this demand was from the painters' circles in Paris, and would be again in Sydney and in Melbourne—the brothers wanted a society in which artists made the decisions about exhibitions, and what was to be shown, and where, not a committee of local and no doubt well-meaning patrons.

The function of the existing organisational structure, the somewhat stultifying Academy of Art, was mainly to promote the establishment of an Art Gallery. In view of the attacks on the Louvre during the communard rioting, it was intended that Sydney offer a haven for significant works of art. Its mission had little to do with the achievements of local artists. The chief mover and shaker of the committee promoting the Art Gallery, president of the trustees, was Eccleston du Faur, whose Huguenot forbears had left France three generations previously. He had grown up in England, and was therefore a mirror inversion of George Collingridge, thoroughly brought up and educated as an English gentleman (he had gone to Harrow with Bulwer Lytton), though remaining proud of his French connections.<sup>9</sup> Du Faur was an austere, somewhat haughty man, rigorous in advancing the cause of art as he saw it. Notwithstanding the presence of such as Sir Thomas Sutcliffe Mort on the management committee, the Academy managed very little more than to arrange loans of works of art from its members and friends. It had no resources to support the local art community, should that thought ever have occurred to it. As the opening of the exhibition approached, the Academy, in the person of du Faur and his fellow trustee E. L. Montefiore, a talented black and white artist, took it upon themselves to approach the French armed transport *Le Rhin*, which had carried the exhibits from the Paris exhibition and was responsible for their safe-keeping. They were distinctly unimpressed by the space which had been allocated to the display of the French exhibits, and they felt that the art in particular would not be well presented. They not only informed the

French attaché of their opinion of the facilities, but encouraged him to see for himself.<sup>10</sup>

In consequence of which, the French exhibits were not permitted to come ashore. A Fine Arts Annexe was hastily assembled in what had been a cabbage garden and painted out in a discouraging maroon just two days before the official opening, and all the paintings, sculptures, tapestries, glass and pottery were jostled together much as in the Paris Salons. At least that touch looked authentic. The building, damp to begin with and rapidly attractive to termites, remained the preserve of the New South Wales Academy of Art once the exhibition was over. Local artists had virtually no access to hanging space there—the practice of the time was to exhibit in the windows of music shops. George Collingridge had been a member of a Paris art group, ‘L’Union’; he had also been associated with the Aquarellists, and knew something about organising a collective. With his brother Arthur, he called a meeting in the Sydney Coffee Palace in June 1880. Eighty-eight fellow artists declared themselves dissatisfied with the New South Wales Academy of Art, and took the first steps to form themselves into the Art Society of New South Wales, with George as first Vice-President. The republican Lucien Henry, exiled to New Caledonia and recently granted amnesty, was there; so was another friend, W. C. Pignuit, newly resident in Hunters Hill. Almost immediately George approached the Premier, Sir Henry Parkes, for permission to use space in the capacious halls and chambers of the Garden Palace, and there for the next two years the Art Society held its own exhibitions, presenting Australian art to the public. Over two hundred works were shown in the first exhibition. The local artists had made their point.

For the duration of the exhibition, the different navies of the world were represented at the moorings in Sydney Cove. Invitations to various entertainments and receptions aboard *Le Rhin* were much sought after, and the local press was diligent in reporting them. George prepared a detailed illustration of the official ball for the *Illustrated Sydney News*; and of the first mass said at La Perouse, at the grave of Father Receveur, in the presence not only of the French Consul but of the captain and officers of *Le Rhin*.<sup>11</sup> The point to be made is that Collingridge took it upon himself to pay especially close attention to the visiting French; in an illustration of the arrival of foreign exhibits, he gives central position to a crate from France, for example. *Le Rhin* had from time to time been used to transport convicts to New Caledonia,

Sydney's chief *bête noire* at the time, but the *Illustrated Sydney News* and other papers chose to refer to it as a French man-of-war.

And then, sensationally, in September 1882 the Garden Palace burned down, an early and unequalled rehearsal of Sydney's evolving love affair with pyrotechnical display; with it the year's work of the Art Society, assembled for the October exhibition, went up in flames. So too did everything else, police records, convict records, scientific collections, Aboriginal carvings, even Eccleston du Faur's ten-year systematic survey of the whole of New South Wales. George Collingridge, in his role as one of the principal illustrators with the *Illustrated Sydney News*, prepared a drawing of the ruin and then a woodblock engraving of it, published on October 25 (p. 8). His friend Lucien Henry watched the conflagration from his (Henry's) terrace house in Potts Point, and then painted a large dramatic oil of the scene, with the light of the leaping flames reflected on the fig trees in the Domain, and the deeply symbolic gloom beyond. J. C. Hoyte, the inaugural president of the Art Society, composed himself sufficiently to paint his version of the inferno, with the crackling red and orange of the fire reflected both in the sky and the placid waters of the Harbour.<sup>12</sup>

Lucien Henry would make his mark in Sydney in very short order, but to begin with he was a worrying presence, an ex-convict from New Caledonia released under a republican amnesty after he had served ten years of his original sentence for his part in the communard uprising. Sydney was intent on making itself respectable, and the proximity of a French convict settlement was acutely disturbing. The presence of political activists such as Henry was therefore not all that welcome in some quarters, but he quickly established himself inside the art community, and gained an appointment at the Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts, probably sponsored by the Hon. Edward Combes. He developed a series of local art nouveau motifs, making spectacular use of the waratah in particular. He was invited to design some stained glass windows for the new Sydney Town Hall, and the chandelier in the Hotel Australia; he interested himself in decorations for Farmer and Company's new department store in George Street, and he submitted a design for a crematorium and a new federal parliament house, in each case highlighting Australian detail.<sup>13</sup> Like Collingridge, he had early trained with Viollet-le-Duc, and Collingridge found him sympathetic as well as stimulating. No radical, Collingridge nevertheless absorbed Henry's criticisms of misdirected progress—material progress rather

than cultural progress—and followed his friend’s lead in a number of different directions. He carved a lyrebird panel in the manner of Henry’s chairs, he evolved his own floral emblem for Australia, the *lambertia*,<sup>14</sup> and as a key motif in decorating some of his publications, and like Henry he later (1915–1925) took up teaching at the Sydney Technical College, as much for what guidance he could give to the new nation’s upcoming artists and designers as for the financial return.

The few released political prisoners from New Caledonia were not the only arrivals from the French colony. In April 1881 several hundred distressed Italian settlers fetched up in Sydney, having been abandoned in northern New Guinea in a cruelly under-resourced colonising scheme organised by the Marquis de Rays, self-styled King Charles of New France. The Marquis, pained by the collapse of French potency in world affairs, and passionate to restore the ancient glory of France and of the Catholic Church—which like France had lost much of its previous moral authority—determined upon establishing a new French empire, if in effect a personal empire. He had his eye particularly upon the underdeveloped regions of the Pacific, approximately from New Guinea to the Solomons; a part of the world that has contributed more than enough times to the abiding allure of the promised land. France, perversely, had turned that ideal upside down with its penal colony in New Caledonia and the nearby Isle of Pines, and Sydneysiders were as wary of anyone arriving from there as they had previously been of Vandemonians, and for much the same reason. The new colonists, French, Italian and German, tempted by the vision of a free colony, and the glory of converting the heathen, had starved through lack of any planned support or ongoing maintenance (de Rays was soon afterwards sentenced for criminal negligence). Virtually marooned, theirs was a paradise lost, not found. Some found their way to New South Wales, utterly destitute; some straggled to the Philippines; and others, of course, to New Caledonia. Temporarily, the refugees were accommodated on the Sydney Domain, just behind the hospital. The locals were alarmed, as they frequently were throughout the nineteenth century—the bogey was sometimes French, sometimes American, sometimes Russian. On this occasion the Italians were suspected of being part of an expeditionary force, led by Garibaldi’s son, Menotti. George’s brother, the Reverend Charles Collingridge, was among those active in assisting the unhappy dupes.<sup>15</sup>

Remarkably—as much in his story is remarkable—George Collingridge claimed to have corresponded with the Marquis de Rays. He refers to this in his serial autobiography, *Round and Round the World* (1925–1927),<sup>16</sup> at a point where the narrative machinery has become somewhat fanciful, but in which there is also much which is recognisably factual.

The good marquis, utterly ignorant of the fact that Australia belonged entirely to Australians, wanted to found a colony for his countrymen, in Western Australia, at a place which he prematurely called Port Breton, situated along the coast where some of his countrymen had made discoveries and very careful surveys. In the abstract it was a very noble idea. In my answer to the Marquis de Rays I drew his attention to the fact that the Bretons of France were the same people, belonged to the same race as the Bretons, or British. He wanted his people to form an independent colony not even under French rule or control. So the whole scheme fell through. Downing Street, as in many similar cases, turned it down.<sup>17</sup>

The record is not as clear-cut as it appears. Port Breton is the name of the failed settlement in New Ireland, so that the marquis had been premature in more ways than one. Collingridge was aware of the subsequent ‘well-known failure’ in New Ireland, though he did not identify the settlement there as Port Breton. Perhaps it served as a portmanteau place-name for the marquis, to be used wherever it might become applicable. As the abortive project took place in 1880–81, de Rays’ correspondence about a preceding prospect, a noble idea as he thought it, must either have been waiting on Collingridge’s arrival in Sydney, or it took place in France. In either case, Collingridge’s pedantry about the Bretons and the British belongs to a later phase in his life, when he developed his interests in languages and historical geography. His remarks above were written down some forty-five years after the event. He is, however, accurate in recalling that the offending immigrants, mainly Italian, were re-located to the Northern Rivers, not far from Lismore. For the Sydney establishment, Anglo-Saxon and Protestant, that was far enough away for suspect crypto-revolutionaries and the incursion of yet another Catholic stream.

Collingridge had much on his mind at this time. With his brother Arthur he had made an excursion to Jenolan Caves and was present when the

underground section of the Fish River was discovered. Arthur made a rapid sketch, and the painting was then engraved by George for, once again, the *Sydney Illustrated News*. A mere matter of weeks after the destruction of the Garden Palace George married the daughter of Rev. Thomas Makinson, originally Anglican rector at Mulgoa but, consequent on his Puseyite conversion to Catholicism, secretary to the Catholic Archbishop of Sydney. The Makinsons, mostly living at Gladesville, and close to the French-based Marist centre of activity at Stella Maris, became a very significant Catholic family. George and his new bride stayed in the family’s rather grand sandstone house for the first few months of their marriage. Within just three or four years, after Collingridge senior had died in Paris, George and Arthur arranged for their mother and sister to migrate to Sydney, living in a solid little stone cottage that still stands on Victoria Road, Gladesville, and not far from the Makinsons. From there the sister, Mary, ‘Mlle Collingridge’, established a small school in Hunters Hill, the ‘French village’, preparing young ladies for Junior, Senior, and University Entrance examinations, especially in French; and giving lessons in conversational French. George assisted his sister with providing drawing lessons at a discount and no doubt—given his compulsive nature—also assisting with the conversational French, if not the language classes. He maintained an interest in this, and at about the time of the First World War he was vice-president of the Institut de Conversation Française.<sup>18</sup>

And all at the same time George and Arthur and two of the Makinson brothers made an excursion down Berowra Creek, and fantasised about starting a little colony given over to the artistic life. Utopian communities had been proposed among the Romantics of the preceding generations (famously, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and his brother-in-law Robert Southey proposing a New World commune on the banks of the Susquehanna). In France, some of the groups of painters had settled in congenial relation to each other, if not in actual shared quarters—at least, temporarily. This fashion was taken up in Australia in the late 1880s and early 1890s, at the Heidelberg School out from Melbourne and at Curlew Camp in Little Sirius Cove in Sydney. Once the painting community, in the wake of the Collingridge brothers, discovered the Hawkesbury, they made joint forays to Richmond and elsewhere, for painting trips at Griffiths Farm and along the river. The Collingridges, however, were entertaining the thought of a more permanent commitment, and when in late 1881 George found a site he admired he hastened to lodge an application

with the Lands Department. Within a week, all the other favoured sites along Berowra Waters had been gazetted as government reserve, and George was left isolated on a pocket of 88 acres, where he built a stone cottage on a sharp little ridge coming down to the river and still known today as Collingridge Point. He named his cottage *Capo di Monte* in remembrance, a kind of habitable souvenir, of his days with the Zouaves in Italy.

Here he brought his new wife, and began his family. From here too he rambled about the countryside, acquainting himself with the plants and wildlife in the area, stumbling across Aboriginal rock carvings and cave paintings, discovering vantage points from which to paint the area he grew to love so strongly. He was passionate about the range of colour, and the change of colour, along the waterway and across the banks of ridges. He was discovering for himself the truth of what Corot had tried to show him in France; a truth not transposed from France to Australia, but learned as it were on the new home ground. And it is in this process that we can follow Collingridge's re-making of himself, from a European—specifically French—cultural orientation to whatever this new manifestation was, an Australian. That was the great enigma for Marcus Clarke (*The Future Australian Race*, 1877) and Francis Adams (*The Australians: A Social Sketch*, 1893) but for the new nationalists—Paterson and Lawson in writing, Roberts and Streeton in art—the values and attitudes were accomplished matter of fact. Presiding over much of the transition was the eminent and eccentric Francophile, Jules François Archibald, patron of writers and begetter of a public fountain and a fiercely contested art prize.

Collingridge lived outside such literary and artistic circles as existed. He was of course active in the Art Society of New South Wales, but by the mid-nineties Tom Roberts recently up from Melbourne, and Julian Ashton as his henchman, attacked what they saw as the Art Society's misdirection in activity and incompetence in accomplishment, and just as in Melbourne, established a counter-movement, the Society of Artists. That kind of unruliness was in part a carry-over of how it had been in France; Collingridge had seen these rebellious formations at close hand when he was a student at the *École des Beaux-Arts* in the 1860s, and later when he returned to republican Paris. By the activities of these ambitious young men intent on establishing a new artistic agenda, Collingridge found himself left on the outside of those heady nationalist debates. By his experience in France, he was more attached to the gentler landscape tradition that had been welcomed in the Salon. His lack of sympathy for what

were later recognised to be momentous innovations in art, has already been remarked. He shared neither the radical enthusiasms nor the socialist agenda of the younger artists of his generation and those who immediately followed him. In fact, in historical terms he belongs to a curiously awkward moment. His was the generation that was slightly too young to have benefited from the middle class consolidation of the Second Empire, and not quite established enough to survive the economic downturn of the 1870s. In Australia, he was neither of the settler generations, nor of the young nationalists. And yet in his own way he showed how to build a new society; he had a vision of what Australia could and should become. This is expressed in a variety of ways, as divergent as Collingridge's own multiple enthusiasms.

His primary passion was as a painter, a landscape painter like his master, Corot; and his attachment to Australia evolved through his own reflections, at his own pace, and in his own stubbornly independent manner. He painted the scene before him, the natural scene. He had learned that from Corot, that the focus of his art should be to express an understanding gained through his contemplation of what he was looking at, and that where he should be looking was into nature. There is not a lot of indicative evidence that Collingridge had the temperament to muse, to mull over feelings and sensations. He was very perceptive, and took in much at a glance; but if he is to be thought of as bathing himself in nature as Corot recommended, it was a plunge bath.

All along his technique was in terms of French landscape. Bernard Smith remarks in his survey of Australian painting that until about 1885, at which time he identifies the impact of a new wave of young immigrant artists, painting in Australia (and he refers mainly to landscape paintings) was generally speaking in low tones,

and rather like those European scenes to which they [the painters] were still accustomed. Like the Barbizon painters they preferred the evocative hours: early morning, evening, sunset, twilight. But like Buvelot, they continued to analyse the true values of colour as seen through an envelope of atmosphere. In consequence they came, despite the lowness of the tones in which they customarily painted, to a more faithful depiction of the colours of the Australian landscape than any of the painters before them.<sup>19</sup>

Which is to say, Collingridge was not entirely alone in aspiring to paint like Corot. He too was attracted to the evocative hours, though he did not make a signature motif of the moon, like Davies or Withers in Victoria; on the other hand, he was not about to paint the blazing stillness of summer noon, like Streeton and Roberts. One sympathetic art critic, writing in the *Sydney Star*, remarked of the paintings Collingridge exhibited in 1897 that

George Collingridge, years ago, painted marvellously well, and doubtless does so still; he was the first, and it is possible the only, artist still to perceive and to pourtray that marvellous, delicate, lace-like fringe which the eucalyptus clothed mountain ridge makes across the dying light of the sky, when all below is black and all above grey, yet just on the world's rim lurks a colour and a light, where clear eyes may see, and quick imagination mirror many things.<sup>20</sup>

While Collingridge looked for and found in the Berowra valley and around Gosford and elsewhere the softened or lower tones familiar to him from Ville-d'Avray and Fontainebleau, he could see, and represent quite accurately, the colours in the landscape before him. He was not much interested in interpreting the landscape but he did select those details and those scenes which spoke to him, and in his case that meant scenes and colours and spaces in some way consonant with his training. He did not pursue the radically different, and while he acknowledged that Australia was quite another country, imaginatively it was not a world away from where he had been.

Which is not to argue that he was unable to move on from his European background when he migrated. He delighted in the Australian bush, and he expressed no hankering to return, even for a visit, to his origins. He was not nostalgic or sentimental, like the Irish.<sup>21</sup> But the region he chose to live in, and paint in, was a different kind of bush from that which came to be celebrated by the Heidelberg School or by the *Bulletin* writers. His was quite another experience, of a green world with shadows shifting across it, more like the poetic world of Henry Kendall. It is no coincidence that he went to live at Narara for several years, upstream from Kendall's cottage. Where Kendall glimpsed spiritual redemption in radiant spaces further up the fern-fronded streams, however, Collingridge at least in his paintings did not enter into that enticing country. He stayed outside the filtered light of the forests, taking his

line of vision from the leading edges of ridges, from outlooks across streams and down on to rivers and valleys, from the banks of creeks looking up to outcrops and headlands. In part, he picked out the vantage points best suited to the picturesque, though his paintings are not usually in that mode or arranged within those conventions. He rarely surprises the viewer. Truthful beauty, not novelty, was what he set himself to convey.

He painted the pleasant valleys of Narara, sometimes densely wooded, sometimes part cleared, with citrus orchards climbing up the hillsides, not so much a statement of pictorial contrast as an indication of what he meant by progress. He was not attracted to the wilderness per se. He favoured rather indications of settlement, of a new cultural arrival; of prospective growth. In Italy it had been the villages and the singing of the peasants in the fields that lifted his heart. Along the central coast of New South Wales, as also closer to his own eventual home ground at Hornsby, people had been slowly forming themselves into new little communities in what had once been extensively timbered terrain. They were building cottages, and establishing orchards; they were all cultivating their own garden. This was essentially a Virgilian idyll composing itself as landscape. Corot took Virgil with him everywhere. That is something else Collingridge appears to have learned from him.

Like Corot, Collingridge was attached to an older set of values than those being advanced by the young Turks of the artistic community. Like Corot, he was aware of Impressionism, and did not much care for it, even though in several respects they had already accepted some of its key features. He acknowledged the importance of light in the Australian context, though he was less adventurous about taking on the large spaces and brightness of the Australian landscape than were the coming generation of painters. He was more careful about composition and detail, still carrying the formal effects of his training.

Collingridge took exception to both the art and the conduct of the progressives, though he acknowledged their exasperation with hide-bound conservatism, and their vitality. But they had lost their way. They had lost the truthfulness of their vision. He liked to quote the French: 'rien n'est beau que le Vrai, le Vrai seul est aimable'. The Impressionist, he later objected,

proceeds to the slurring business. He will smudge up and smudge over the difficulty. We had once Realism but now we have post-Impressionism, Cubism, anti-Cubism, Picassoism, Futurism,

Primitivism, Pointillism and, sad to say, they all mostly come from de Mussetism, Murgerism, absinthe and alcoholism [sic] of the Quartier latin.<sup>22</sup>

He had no intention of engaging seriously with these subsequent movements.

He wrote of the Australian bush in terms of light, indeed sometimes in a manner more deeply attuned to the visionary than his own paintings attempted. Among his papers he left a detailed description of what he saw, and how he saw the effect on him of gum trees flowering. His eye first sees, then interprets:

Masses of foliage tipped with tender shoots of pink and rosy [...] luminous and sparkling with exuberance of life, they danced in the sun, they caught the ambient light and their forms mingled with hazy contour against the blue canopy above, projecting purple shadows athwart the firm set and darker green foliage which they had outstripped.

[...] Anon, the rich light of evening glided into the long vistas and recesses peculiar to the bush, and caressed with delicate warm rays the pallid boles of the eucalyptus whose ghostly shadows lengthened through the greenery.

[...] And now the matchless beauty of an Australian sunset with its ripening charms was growing apace. Every minute, every second, the pink satin surface of the enormous tree trunks glowed with richer tints; the deep cast purple shadows grew denser and the glow heightened until it became perfectly weird and fairy-like in its intensity.<sup>23</sup>

Blending and witching in harmony. The prose here, for all its slightly overdone poeticisms ('ambient light', 'athwart', 'anon', 'apace') carries a surprising passion. It is clear that for him, something was happening. Collingridge's appreciation of the scene is couched in terms of 'the profound mysteries of the Australian bush'. There is none of the gloomy oppressiveness of Marcus Clarke's weird melancholy here; colour takes over all the senses, in something not far removed from adoration. Written at Christmas, 1901, it is a magnificent, a rich celebration of the beauty and the light in the world; and of the newly federated nation. At a slightly less elevated level, it is extraordinary in its affirmation of greenery, with all the iridescent colours displayed against that, like a peacock's

tail—and perhaps deep inside him Collingridge half remembered Ruskin, that ‘the most beautiful things in the world are the most useless: peacocks and lilies, for instance’.<sup>24</sup> For at this time he turned to the question that underlay all his thinking about art, and his own practice: how to detect real notes from false ones, especially here, in ‘these inner shrines of beauty’. But with a whimsical twist that was to become more and more pronounced in him, he deflects the question into a less serious, more quizzical version of itself. This is lyrebird country, and with its marvellous mimicry it confuses the ‘ordinary bush lore’ of any casual visitor.

There is more to unpack. That ‘hazy contour’ is not lazy writing. It is true to the spectacle of Australian landscape; it is what Collingridge painted again and again, as the reviewer in the *Sydney Star* had specifically identified. It clinches the case that he was thinking of, and in some sense, like Corot; thinking as Corot would have. At the very moment when we might have decided Collingridge had become thoroughly an Australian, he shows that his identity is continuous with and from his European past. For this haziness is what Collingridge also commented on in his remembrances of Italy, looking down from the high slopes to the valleys beneath, to the ‘weird indistinct tones of the lower plains towards a setting sun’.<sup>25</sup> That poses an artistic challenge of course of how to convey the indistinction, the softening of edges and outlines. Collingridge’s preferred softening haze is consistent with and acknowledges Corot’s quest for the interplay of moving mists against the vast stillness of the landscape itself: ‘I chose a subject to paint that would have suited Corot, a mass of trees overhanging the limpid waters, with diversities in their denseness, the foreground wet with dew and a mysterious mist rolling along the river.’<sup>26</sup>

The other facet of Collingridge’s Christmas manifesto is that he had come to appreciate an important and very strong detail, that the landscape is not static. This is in direct conflict with the emerging view of Australia as a timeless land, the land of the never-never, of formidable monotony or entranced prosperity. Collingridge found in Australia, and especially in the part he had chosen to live in, changeable light, with the painterly problems that represented, against a background that appeared, deceptively, to be unchanging. It took him some little while to appreciate Corot’s preference for painting ‘entre chien et loup’, between the dog and the wolf, meaning ‘the mystic period between the fading light of day and the gloom of evening’.<sup>27</sup> Sydney does not have a gathering dusk; the evening comes on very quickly.

The effect that Corot searched for had to be transposed, discovered in local terms within the local Australian experience. And that is what Collingridge had found out, and articulated in such a key passage as this. He found another version of it in sheet lightning, the electrical flashes associated with summer storms, ‘that peculiar and distant lightning which the French call *éclairs de chaleurs* and which, strangely enough, applies to Australia also’.<sup>28</sup> The great rumblings that go with those *chaleurs* accumulate most particularly about Mt Colah, ‘the place of thunder’, attracted by the higher density of ironstone just along the ridge from Hornsby. Wherever Collingridge looked, he found evidence of the continuity between his early training and experience and his new environment. What he had learned from Corot, and indeed from France, held true.

It was nevertheless the case that his disposition was naturally towards the cooler tones, to the verdant. He responded to the pleasant valleys of Narara, with the contrast between the densely wooded slopes and orchards climbing up the clearings, ‘the early winter crops of oranges and lemons nearly ready for the gathering’.<sup>29</sup> This was a contrast both picturesque and emblematic. Here were encouraging signs of settlement, of husbandry, and roots being put down, and prosperity and contentment made visible. Near here he remembered how in Italy the Trappist monks of Tre Fontane had planted gum trees to help sop up the marshes; and in his hotel room at Newcastle not far away he heard the ‘*Benedicamus Domino*’ summoning him to church, and remembered the reveille in French Catholic Schools. His was an integrated imaginative life; he had lost nothing of importance by his migration from Europe to the Antipodes. He could see from the train window grassy declivities, trees here and there, sloping down to abrupt rock-faces, the whole landscape a series of graduated steps, down into deep gorges and ravines ‘from which mists arise’. This kind of scenery was, for him, ‘beautiful in the extreme’, soul-satisfying. He had seen comparable terrain in France and Italy.

There was now a generation of native-born Australians whose deepest impressions were set within their own country. Collingridge was not one of them: his connection, by his own argument, was most strongly with France, even though his ancestry was originally British. But he was, patently, a patriot of ‘Australia, the beautiful country of my adoption’.<sup>30</sup> He had a more cosmopolitan experience than most, but he chose to ground himself fully in his own immediate locale. That was what Corot had so thoroughly recommended

to him, to engage fully with nature, to form a true, if not to say authentic, impression.

\* \* \*

There were other directions of George’s enthusiastic adaptation to Australia. He lived for seven or eight years in his retreat on Berowra Waters, styling himself ‘the hermit of Berowra’, then moved by a series of brief stages to land he had purchased on the boundary of Hornsby and Wahroonga, on the site now occupied by the Hornsby hospital, and built himself another stone cottage—this still stands, and is used as a non-denominational chapel. In Hornsby and the region round about, he busied himself in local matters, particularly in inaugurating local progress associations. In Wahroonga for example, he was particularly active in pressing for tree planting in the streets, somewhat in the manner of Haussmann’s Paris and indeed the Fontenay-aux-Roses of his boyhood, but also of Hunters Hill; Wahroonga’s leafy streets are testimony to his vision of what progress could be.<sup>31</sup> Over a number of years he published infrequently a local newspaper called *Progress*, written and illustrated by himself. And while he acknowledged the benefit of the new railway lines to the fruitgrowers of the upper North Shore, and was suitably impressed by such public works as the railway bridge over the Hawkesbury, he was quick-sighted enough to see the counterproductive side of that kind of progress. He had painted from time to time a particular farm at Mangrove Creek, and admired the self-sufficiency of the few settlers there<sup>32</sup>—they had their chickens and a few fruit trees and there were plenty of fish in the river. The people of Mangrove Creek had subsisted on their own produce before the railway. Now, they were exporting oranges and importing sardines instead of eating mullet.<sup>33</sup> A steady diet of oranges and mullet sounds less than enthralling, but Collingridge’s point was that with the coming of the railway, they exported their produce to Sydney—and began to buy fish sent back from Sydney. Market pressures could be seen instantly distorting an idyllic way of life, and that distressed him. He was critical of the businessman as developer: ‘When he has pronounced the sacred word Business he thinks it rules the world. It never occurs to him that business as he understands it is the ruin of many beautiful things, that it spells ruin in the art realm or even other realms where less mercenary objects obtain than in his.’<sup>34</sup> He was not much impressed by the strike activities of the Newcastle wharfies either, and once questioned, in exasperation, that if we had

to have parliamentary members for labour, why not for agriculture. For him, it was fundamental that the natural state of man, particularly at that stage of Australia's development, was to cultivate the soil.

And while he was busily engaged in cutting woodblocks for the Sydney press, and building and re-locating and building again, and publishing his paper and commenting on as well as participating in matters of local development and government, and submitting paintings to the annual exhibition of the Art Society, and in between times fitting in classes either in schools or in private lessons,<sup>35</sup> he was equally busy informing himself in matters of historical cartography. His interest in geography, and in antiquity, had been awakened by his experience in Italy, where he discovered for himself Etruscan ruins; and indeed, on the occasion of the memorable swim in Lago di Vigo he had seen a magical sunken township deep below the waters. When he arrived in Australia, he undertook to learn what he could of its discovery; and very soon he was corresponding with Dr Ernest Hamy, 'one of the best informed scientists in matters relating to Australasian maritime discovery'.<sup>36</sup> The Sydney Free Public Library had acquired from the British Museum facsimile copies of some of the Dieppe maps, and there was some controversy in the press about the expense when these maps did not show anything that looked significantly like Australia. Collingridge gives various versions of how he became involved in close inspection of these maps. A gifted linguist, he could read at least six European languages, and possibly had a smattering of Arabic too, acquired from a colleague at the Collège Albert-le-Grand in Arcueil when he was for a time a teacher there. He certainly could distinguish between the French nomenclature on the facsimiles and some other names and inscriptions, which he quickly identified as Portuguese, and on this discovery postulated his own hypothesis that the Portuguese had been the original European discoverers of Australia. For ten years or so he patiently acquired as much detailed information as he could about maritime discoveries in the South Pacific, whether through published works, or old maps and globes. He taught himself to master the field of historical cartography and in the early 1890s began publishing in the popular press as well as in more learned journals a series of articles deriving from his researches—not only to stake his claim as an emerging authority, but to earn the means by which to purchase books that the Public Library did not choose to acquire on his behalf. And then in 1895, at the worst of times given the dire straits of the economy, he undertook the publication of *The Discovery*

*of Australia: A Critical, Documentary and Historic Investigation Concerning the Priority of Discovery in Australasia by Europeans before the arrival of Lieut. James Cook, in the 'Endeavour', in the year 1770. With Illustrations, Charts, Maps, Diagrams, &c. Copious Notes, References, Geographical Index and Index to Names.* He was not a wealthy man and he had to cover the costs of the publication; to minimise these he chose an unusual publisher, Hayes Brothers of Sydney, more accustomed to printing technical and quasi-legal material, and he undertook all the illustration himself, drawing on his expertise as a woodblock carver and as an illustrator, making his own facsimile copies of ancient maps, even superimposing some to an adjusted scale to represent a particular proposition. (He made additional copies of the Dieppe maps, hand-tinted them, and sold them from his studio in Hornsby, the cottage called Jave-la-Grande, to both commemorate and advertise his endeavours.) It is an extraordinary publication, a labour of love with its ornamented capitals, and these occasionally reflecting Collingridge's puckish humour, hiding his signature in the most concealed places. His stubbornness about points of detail made for difficulty too. Just on the eve of Federation, with all the appeal to British loyalties from the new daughter of the Empire, Collingridge insisted on reminding the public that Cook was not a captain but a lieutenant at the time of his discovery of the eastern coast; and even more provocatively, that Cook was not the first discoverer.

Collingridge's reputation as a controversialist and as an authority on Portuguese and Hispanic exploration in the Pacific need not be part of this commentary. He published numerous articles from 1890 up until the Great War, by which time he was approaching his three score years and ten, yet still sprightly with it. He was acknowledged internationally for his work, being awarded a knighthood from Portugal in 1908, and another from Spain in 1917, in appreciation of his recognition of early Lusitano-Hispanic exploration. Cardinal Moran of Sydney was much exercised in claiming the discovery of Australia for the Catholic faith, but Collingridge would have none of that, and refuted the Cardinal's claims. Given both his expertise and his fluency in French he was sent by the Royal Geographic Society on an expedition to New Caledonia to investigate the sites associated with de Quiros (Moran claimed that the landing had been in Queensland, not the New Hebrides) but was unable to proceed beyond Noumea because of political troubles. Yet just at the height of his fame his claims were attacked by the professor of History at the University

of Sydney, G. Arnold Wood. That too is another story, but comes down to Wood's irritation with Collingridge's amateurism; urbane and incisive, Wood was well able to demolish Collingridge's proposition, yet the plain fact of the matter was that Collingridge was right, and that he was better read than Wood in the many languages of the source materials. He was astounded that work which had been published and accepted for twenty years should suddenly be challenged. With no academic background, his attempt at refutation is poignant in its inability to meet Wood's criticisms.<sup>37</sup>

By this period of his life, Collingridge was widowed, he had lost both his brothers and his eldest son, and the next two sons had gone off to the war. He turned his attention instead to a different kind of writing, small pamphlets which he illustrated and published himself. Some of the pamphlets revisited his researches, elaborating material from individual chapters at the beginning of his *Discovery of Australia*. He advocated the importance of ancient Chaldean views of cosmography, and noted the inversion of north and south in ancient maps, with one particular consequence that ancient Atlantis must have been in the Pacific, somewhere about Easter Island he thought. He took antipodeanism<sup>38</sup> a little further in another work, an adaptation of the Alice in Wonderland Story, in his *Alice in One Dear Land* (1922) and *Through the Joke in Class* (1923)—the titles warn the unwary reader that both books are full of the most unforgivable puns, though it is of interest how often these puns work across languages (for example, between emu and 'très ému'). Collingridge wrote his *Alice* in both languages, though he never published the French version. He also printed a curious little pamphlet called *It*, essentially a display of his skill in carving woodblocks, but also an alphabetical collection of all sorts of whimsical, historical and autobiographical information, sometimes misinformation (thus 'cloves' derives from 'clous' and 'dandelion' from 'dent de lion'; but he is too adventurous in claiming that 'curmudgeon' comes from 'cœur méchant').

The tendency of some of these entries is not only to privilege French sources, but also occasionally to hint at an antipathy to the English, and that becomes more apparent again in the strange serial unpaginated quasi-autobiography called *Round and Round the World* (Hornsby, 1925-27), partly modelled on *The Path to Rome* (by another half-English, half-French figure, Hilaire Belloc). In this last work, Collingridge says what has elsewhere only been indirect. He starts out on a walking and sketching trip from Sydney to

Parramatta and on to Pennant Hills, noting in passing that Australia is the most paradoxical of countries, and that in order to go north he has had to start out by going south—so that the whimsical inversions of his children's books are carried across to another register. He is bluntly disdainful of Britain, 'the little despicable country that rules the waves' (part 1). At this late stage in his life, some fifty years after his arrival in Sydney, an older identity begins to re-state itself, for as he writes of his setting out he remarks, quite surprisingly in its matter-of-factness, 'being a bit of a Froggy, I say, I preferred to count in metres...'; and he lets drop in passing his attachment to coffee, hot café au lait, and to cigarettes at a time when sundowners and shearers would rather boil a billy for tea, and smoke their pipes.

Along the way, when he was painting the scene before him, he acquired an interested spectator, a French-speaking American who not only understood that Collingridge was no mere amateur, but happened to speak Esperanto, one of Collingridge's particular passions. And he shared Collingridge's preference for watercolours over photographs. What Collingridge and his chance acquaintance affirmed as their common bond was the importance of taste, of the application of the discerning imagination. A photograph merely provides an image of the place important to the visitor; a painting offers a record that interprets the scene, and expresses the human agency in making the record.

As happened throughout his life, Collingridge became the contact point for all manner of fascinating encounters, some of greater historical significance than others. This chance looker-on claimed that his grandfather, a Baron de la Clampe, had owned property in the old Napoleonic days at Castle Hill. It so happens that there was indeed an early settler, the Chevalier de Clambe, a refugee from the Revolution who had served in India, and who had taken up a grant in that vicinity in 1802 and experimented with growing coffee and cotton. The Chevalier was a member of the small upper class in the colony, one of those invited to entertainments by the Governor.<sup>39</sup> Although statistically the French were not a significant component in the colonial population, a number of them were prominent in local matters, active participants in building the commercial strength and the cultural foundations of New South Wales. Their connections with Europe provided an alternative view to the narrow British focus; they served, as did the comparably interesting American experience, to encourage the growing sense of independence, a resistance to colonial subservience.

Collingridge in his own way was likewise prominent in his contribution to the local culture, to that form of progress. He kept active right up until his last years, his mind as lively as ever, his sight keen. He died in 1931 in what was to become Prince Henry Hospital, just before the completion of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, icon of another stage of local progress. His career is fascinating in its own right for its richness, yet his energetic contribution to the cultural life of New South Wales, through his painting and his encouragement of his fellow artists, through his skill as a woodblock engraver, through his many publications (including persistent volleys of letters to the editor) and active involvement in local affairs, have all been largely under-appreciated, even though in their obituary notices the press acknowledged what a colourful character he had been. Not least of his achievements was that he continued throughout his life to teach and inform, especially in painting and in the language of his own upbringing. For he was ambitious that the new generations here should benefit as he had from the intermixture of the French and the Australian, the ‘two most civilized countries in the world’ as he proudly believed them to be.<sup>40</sup>

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### Notes

- 1 ‘His father bade farewell in an emotional letter: “I hope you find your paradise”.’ Vanessa Collingridge, *Captain Cook: The Life, Death and Legacy of History’s Greatest Explorer*, London, Ebury Press, 2002, p. 2.
- 2 Bertram Stevens, ‘George Collingridge’, *The Lone Hand*, 1 September 1917, p. 487.
- 3 See A. N. Wilson, *The Victorians*, London, Hutchinson, 2002, p. 139.
- 4 Quoted in Vanessa Collingridge, p. 28.
- 5 Patricia Mainardi, *Art and the Politics of the Second Empire*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1987, p. 126.
- 6 George Collingridge, *It: is principally a collection of woodcuts*, Hornsby, the author, [1924]. ‘Corot’: ‘I am his only pupil [...]’
- 7 This is also Oskar Spate’s view: ‘Collingridge had his vanities, and was probably not averse to drawing the long bow at times’, in O. H. K. Spate, ‘George Collingridge 1847–1931: From Papal Zouave to Hermit of Berowra’, *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, vol. 66, part 4, March 1981, p. 268. Spate’s essay appears again in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, and as the introduction to the facsimile reprint of Collingridge’s *The First*

*Discovery of Australia and New Guinea* [1906], Sydney, Pan Books, 1982, pp. ix–xxii; it is the most discerning piece on Collingridge’s life and achievement. Spate acknowledges information supplied by Collingridge’s grand-daughter, Winsome Collingridge.

8 Peter Proudfoot, Roslyn Maguire, Robert Freestone, eds, *Colonial City, Global City: Sydney’s International Exhibition 1879*, Darlinghurst, Crossing Press, 2000, p. 11. Melbourne held its exhibition in 1880. Proudfoot et al. note that Joubert had had significant conversations with Gambetta while in Paris, and no doubt he had strategic input into the evolution of France’s New Caledonian policy.

9 See Joan Webb, *Eccleston Du Faur: Man of Vision*, Berowra Heights, Deerubbin Press, 2004, pp. 1–2.

10 Webb, pp. 45–46.

11 *Illustrated Sydney News*, 4 October 1879, p. 21, 1 November 1879, p. 1.

12 Proudfoot, p. 217.

13 See Ann Stephen, ed., *Visions of a Republic: The Work of Lucien Henry*, Sydney, Powerhouse Publishing, 2001.

14 ‘Lambertia should have been adopted as the emblem of Australia, not the yellow shapeless wattle flower [...]. It has 7 anthers—some call them stamens, which would have represented the Stamina of the seven States. It is tridentiform, symbolical of the Sea-Power that Australia should and must possess.’ *Round and Round the World*, part 1 (see endnote 16).

15 J. Milbourne Marsh and George F. Wise, ‘Italian Immigrants Inquiry Board: Report’, Sydney, Thomas Richards, Government Printer, 1881, p. 4.

16 George Collingridge, *Round and Round the World by the Hermit of Berowra*, 6 parts, Hornsby, Advocate Print, 1925–1927.

17 *Round and Round the World*, part 2, pp. 20–21.

18 Collingridge papers, NLA, MS 9395 15/ folder 18.

19 Bernard Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1990*, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1991, p. 68.

20 Quoted in *Round and Round the World*, part 4.

21 He nevertheless remembered, with appropriate warmth, ‘I love the Irish, my mother, a Maguire, was Irish’. Collingridge papers, NLA, MS 9395 15/ folder 21, ‘What’s wrong with the Irish?’.

22 Collingridge papers, NLA, MS 9395/15/ folder 17, ‘The Sixth Sense and Impressionism: a warning’.

23 Collingridge papers, NLA, MS 9395/15/ folder 5.

24 John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice* I, chapter 2, § 17.

25 *Round and Round the World*, part 5.

26 *Round and Round the World*, part 4.

- 27 M.J. McNally, Collingridge papers, NLA MS 9395/18.
- 28 *Round and Round the World*, part 1.
- 29 *Round and Round the World*, part 2.
- 30 *Round and Round the World*, part 4.
- 31 Ian Ramage, *Progress in Suburbia: A Study of the Nature of Progress within a Sydney Suburb as revealed in the records of the Wahroonga Progress Association*, Waitara, the author, 2000, p. 59.
- 32 ‘quaint people, [...] happy and contented in their quiet, comfortable, secluded homes’, *Round and Round the World*, part 2.
- 33 Collingridge papers, NLA, MS 9395, series 15/ folder 2, ‘At the close: re free-trade’.
- 34 Collingridge papers, NLA, MS 9395, series 15/ folder 2, ‘At the close: re free-trade’.
- 35 George taught wherever the opportunity presented itself. He taught at the newly-founded Barker College for twenty-five years, and at Holy Cross College, Ryde, St Aloysius Ravenhurst, he taught model and free-hand drawing at Sydney Technical College from 1915–1925 and he taught at Hornsby Technical College 1905–1913. See *Pioneers of Hornsby Shire 1788-1906*, Sydney, Hornsby Shire Historical Society, revised edition 1983, p. 234.
- 36 George Collingridge, *The Discovery of Australia*, Sydney, Hayes Brothers, 1895, p. 262. Collingridge traded information about Aborigines, and snapshots of rock carvings along Berowra Creek for return favours from Hamy, an eminent anthropologist. He consulted other expert writings from France too, but does not mention Armand Rainaud’s *Le Continent Austral*, Paris, 1893, too recent a work for him to benefit from in his 1895 *chef d’œuvre*, but which his rival, George Arnold Wood, significantly placed at the very head of his own acknowledgements, in his own *Discovery of Australia* (1922).
- 37 See G. Arnold Wood, ‘Was Australia Known in the Sixteenth Century?’, *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, vol. 4, part 4, 1918, pp. 201–40; and George Collingridge, ‘Was Australia Known in the Sixteenth Century?—a reply’, *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, vol. 4, part 5, 1918, pp. 269–279.
- 38 See Adrian Mitchell, ‘George Collingridge and the Antipathies’, *AUMLA*, n° 110, 2008, pp. 39–52.
- 39 Anny Stuer, *The French in Australia*, Canberra, Department of Demography, Institute of Advanced Studies, Australian National University, 1982, p. 45. Stuer analyses the ebb and flow of the French presence in Australia. On Pierre Lalouette de Vernicourt (de Clambe), see also Edward Duyker, review article in *Explorations* n° 40, June 2006, pp. 22–27.
- 40 *Round and Round the World*, part. 3. And compare his review of Valerie

Desmond's *The Awful Australian* (1911): 'The average Australian is free and easy, polite, not stuck up. He will speak with anybody, something after the fashion of a Frenchman, or an Italian. He possesses urbanity.' Collingridge papers, NLA, MS 9395/ 15/ folder 18.