

BOOK REVIEWS

L. F. Bollée and Philippe Nicloux, *Terra Australis*, Paris, Éditions Glénat, 2013, 507 p., rrp 45 €, ISBN: 978-2-7234-7257-9.

The first scholarly history of Australia, Ernest de Blosseville's *Histoire des colonies pénales* (1831), was written by a Frenchman. It seems only fitting that the first historical graphic novel taking for its subject the creation of the British penal settlement at Botany Bay also be the love child of two Frenchmen. Laurent-Frédéric Bollée and Philippe Nicloux's massive 507 pages long black and white *tour de force* is a testament both to the long French tradition with the medium, and to France's growing interest in Australia. At the juncture of history, fiction and art, *Terra Australis* is a compelling page turner that opens up a liminal space questioning the moral ambiguity of the process of colonisation and raises ontological questions about the (post-) colonial gaze of first encounter(s).

London, the insalubrious heart of the British empire, with its overcrowded prisons and rising poverty. *Terra Australis*, but no longer *Incognita*, remains little more than a land of mythical proportions discovered by Captain Cook some years earlier. A certain La Pérouse is rumoured to be on a voyage of discovery in the region for the French government. When Great Britain loses its American possessions, a decision has to be made. Penal colonisation will be the solution to the rise of the prison problem, it will extend the reach of the Empire in the South Seas, and cock a snook at the perennial sweet enemy.

The narration centres around well-known historical characters. The nine-year-old John Hudson, an on-and-off chimney sweeper transported for seven years for theft. 'Black Caesar', a former slave from the American colonies, better known in Australia as the first bushranger. Arthur Phillip, heading the expedition and the first Governor of New South Wales: an ambiguous figure at the crossroads between humanist Enlightenment philosophy and the harsh material reality of transportation and the violence of first contact. In the background we see a myriad of supporting characters: the six hundred men and one hundred and eighty women transported like livestock to the far reaches of the earth; the soldiers and clerks accompanying them; and of course the mysterious 'ab origine'.

The novel is in three parts. It starts by setting up the long(er) British history of discovery and the three years of preparation preceding the expedition, it moves on to the voyage itself, with its toll of deaths and births, mutiny and sea dangers, and finally dwells on the phase of first contact once the fleet reaches its destination. It is an epic story whose historical but also human complexity could only have seduced the talented writer of *Apocalypse Mania* (Bollée). Nicloux's incisive black and white wash drawings serve both to render the brutality of the experience and highlight in contrasting shadows the moral ambiguity of the imperial venture and the stories of the men and women whose destinies were shaped by it.

There are to this day still relatively few scholarly works available in French about Australian history. This graphic novel is an important contribution to the dissemination of knowledge about the colonisation of Australia for and beyond France (the English translation appeared in 2015). It is extremely rich in factual details and characters and is very well researched: the bibliography goes far beyond what one would expect for the genre. Such distinguished names as Inga Clendinnen, Cassandra Pybus, Tim Flannery and many others are listed alongside pertinent primary material, pointing to a commendable depth of research that translates into a rich narrative playing on several integrated scales of historical analysis. The book subtly demonstrates the intricate interplay between the global events that shaped the destiny of the island-continent, such as the American independence war, with the minutiae of interpersonal relationships amongst the British elite that sealed the fate of thousands of men and women, white and black.

The first striking feature of *Terra Australis*, after a short prologue depicting an Aboriginal initiation ceremony (not in itself unproblematic for an Australian audience), is that very little time is in fact spent on the island-continent. The French cover art shows the massive red-orange continent sitting in sharp contrast with the deep blue of the Pacific Ocean, itself foregrounding the deep dark of space, as if it was a different planet. An Aboriginal tribal drawing stretches the length of the continent. The depiction captures both the sense of alienness the place must have evoked to eighteenth-century explorers and convicts as well as its long Aboriginal history, but it is deceiving. The bulk of the novel (336 pages out of 507) in fact takes place in Britain, France and on the sea journey to the new colony. The book centres on the genealogy of the birth of the penal settlement, and only engages with first contact to a very limited extent.

More than traditional historical work, or even trade history, the authors of historical graphic novels need to make big decisions about what is said, as the number of speech bubbles and narrative vignettes is limited. But they must even more so make choices in what is shown, and how it is shown. Beyond its historical accuracy, then, a graphic novel should be considered in relation to the intellectual and emotive space it opens up for questioning and reflection. One of the strengths of the medium and the use of fiction is precisely to tread where history cannot. For example, though it is not reflected in the historical record, the authors decided to create a friendship between the sickly orphan John Hudson and the colossal Black Caesar. The fictitious on-going contact between these two characters serves to underline the loneliness and alienation (social, emotional) of transportation and life in the penal settlement. The character of Black Caesar himself, better known in Australia as the first bushranger but largely portrayed as a former slave in the novel, is used to question the fluid racial hierarchies on which the slave trade and aboriginal land dispossession hinged. In London, Caesar's new status as a free man does not help him overcome the discrimination encountered because of the colour of his skin, whilst in *Terra Australis* he finds himself rejected by the local 'blacks'. Transportation and colonisation are presented as a shifting moral scale of human dimensions represented by the contrasting characters of the brutal Major Robert Ross, the first governor of Norfolk Island, and the sentimental Lieutenant Ralph Clark. Moral ambiguity is also produced by the semiotic dialogue between text and drawing. Nicloux's subtle hand brings out, or rather draws out, in intense greys and shadow contrasts, the ambivalence of the characters and of the choices they made. When Arthur Phillip decides to capture a native (Bennelong) to forcefully teach him English to act as an intermediary between cultures, the heaviness of his decision and the inherent contradictions it carries with enlightenment thought is shown in a single wordless drawing where Phillip's silhouette is drowned in black ink. The drawings are an act of meaning creation that force a profound contemplation for their almost unmediated, direct, emotional impact on the reader. It is a strength of the medium.

Indeed, the graphic novel can (sometimes brutally) raise important ontological questions by literally showing the gulf between cultures, imprinting it raw on the mind of the reader. Two contrasting scenes illustrate this well. When Caesar and John Hudson find themselves hiding in the bush, they witness in silence what looks like an aboriginal burial ritual. They see

a mother's body lying in a pile of leaves, and a father, in tears, bringing their new born to her. As he weeps, we see him violently throw a rock at the child. The action is not explained. Some pages later, Bennelong is witness to his first hanging in the white settlement. The horror of seemingly gratuitous killing leaves him bed ridden for days in a fit of delirium. The narration of the two incidents is almost entirely lacking, leaving the reader with nothing but strong emotions and questions in the unexplained but deeply felt rift between cultures. Further, during his fever induced delirium, Bennelong is overcome with a vision of the future. We see him dwarfed by looming skyscrapers and a blown-out-of-proportions Opera House; around him are a few Aboriginals playing the didgeridoo for money at Circular Quay. The effect is chilling but raises important and problematic questions about the authors' (and readers') act of viewing of the aboriginal characters, past and present.

Although the depiction of Aboriginals is done with an evident respect and humanist approach throughout the novel, it begs questions about the colonial gaze. All Aboriginals in the opening prologue and the last part of the book are drawn as muscular and strong, proud people. But the respect and deference shown to them by the authors is however problematic if we consider that all of them are male. The scene at Circular Quay raises the question of whether the authors, in their bid to represent eighteenth-century Aboriginals with strength and dignity, have not in fact viewed them through a romantic eye? Are we to see in this relative uniformity of strong bodies a representation of the colonial gaze at the time of encounter, seeing a 'typical' First Australian, or perhaps as the respectful but (neo)colonial gaze of European authors? Both invite a deep reflection on the act of viewing of the colonial past and its postcolonial present.

With several prizes now under its belt, including the Amerigo Vespucci geography prize, there is little doubt *Terra Australis* will go down as a turning point in the history of contemporary graphic novels. As a work of history, fiction and art, it beautifully, but not always unproblematically, exploits the possibilities the medium has to offer. It is a powerful and moving book that will greatly contribute to the dissemination of critical knowledge about Australian and world history, particularly in France where there is still a big gap to fill. It further opens up an interesting space for a reflection on the ontological rift between coloniser and colonised, between the process of colonisation and its postcolonial consequences, but also about French views of Australia and its history.

Prue McCausland & Marion Sargent, compilers, *The Tasmanian Exhibition 1891–92, with over 1000 biographies from the Launceston Family Album*, Launceston, Friends of the Library, June 2013, rrp AU\$ 60, viii–312 p., 1 folding plate, ISBN 978-0-97754-623-7. (Limited edition of 200 copies)

There are good reasons for readers of *The French Australian Review* to be interested in the exhibitions held in major Australian cities in the second half of the nineteenth century. Some of them attracted material from France itself, thereby contributing to long-term trade between the two countries. Many of these grandiose events of the Victorian era were managed or assisted by Jules Joubert, one of the great luminaries of the Franco-Australian connection. Both these features applied to the exhibition held in Launceston in 1891–1892. In addition, however, the surviving documentation of the occasion includes an album of the photographs taken of the more than 1000 season-ticket holders. It is this unique archive that gives a special value to the very handsome volume produced in 2013 by the Friends of the Library, Launceston, and that has prompted the present notice.

The first part of the book (pp. 1–64) provides a general account of the exhibition, which attracted over a quarter of a million entries through its turnstiles during its more than four months of business from 25 November 1891. Since, as the compilers point out, the population of Launceston itself was a little over 17,000, this is a fair measure of considerable success. A permanent memorial remains in the form of the Albert Hall, which served as the Exhibition's Concert Hall and behind which the temporary pavilions for local and overseas displays were ranged. Abundant illustrations of people, buildings and events are included in this presentation along with a 'Select Bibliography' and a list of 'Resources used in compiling biographies'.

The second and more substantial part of the volume (pp. 65–310) reproduces in alphabetical order and with identification where known and biographical notes the remarkable photographs due to the skill of Richard John Nicholas and happily now preserved in the Launceston Library (at present called Launceston LINC). This published version is the latest, but by no means the last, stage of a project begun a decade ago and long since available for public consultation and enrichment on a website. The task is entirely appropriate for an exercise in crowd-sourcing, and the compilers' hopes for its indefinite extension must be endorsed. At least, unlike many

totally frustrating portrait albums, most of the photographs had some sort of name attached to them.

The major published sources for the general narrative were mentions in the *Launceston Examiner* and the volume edited by Ronald W. Smith in 1893 with the title *Official Record of the Tasmanian International Exhibition held at Launceston, 1891–92*. In 1891 there had been an *Official catalogue of the exhibits: Tasmanian Exhibition, Launceston, 1891–92: opened November 25th, 1891*, but I have not been able to consult this. The *Official Record* notes ‘M. Victor Laruelle [occasionally Laurelle]’ as the official French representative, but it states that ‘The French Court did not make any elaborate display, though M. V. Laurelle had a fair stock of exhibits’. The McCausland and Sargent volume reports (p. 30) that the French contribution was one of those that had not arrived in time for the opening. Its contents can be learnt in part from the decisions made by the various juries almost invariably chaired by Joubert. France obtained 4 ‘Special First’ and 13 ‘First’ awards as well as two honourable mentions. These included categories such as pharmaceutical and medical products, cigarette papers, crystal and stained glass, wire cutters, champagne and brandy.

In the second chapter of *The Tasmanian Exhibition 1891–92* the compilers explain (p. 12) the basis of the season tickets that gave rise to the photographic record. An advertisement at the beginning of November 1891 specified that for two guineas (gentlemen), one guinea (ladies) and 10/6 (children under 14) the holders would have ‘free admission to the opening ceremonies, concerts and oratorios’. In the previous July it had been decided to issue free passes to players in the orchestra (22) and members of the choir (213), thereby ensuring that these people would constitute almost a quarter of the photographed population. Bearing this in mind it is none the less interesting to attempt a rough characterisation of those represented in the album.

Tasmanians, and especially people from Launceston and the North, predominate. Apart from the singers and musicians, the emphasis is on persons of means, in business or in the professions. Whole families, men, women and children, are quite frequently represented. This is true even of Joubert, whose second wife and youngest daughter accompanied him to Launceston for a year. Leading Tasmanian names like Boag, Gunn, Meredith, Rout, Sorell, Wilmot and Youl are well in evidence. Some outsiders, mainly exhibitors, appear, and most of these are from and return to other Australian

colonies. Given the history of Van Diemen's Land itself, there are relatively few people whose origins lie outside the British Isles. However, there are several Germans or descendants of Germans, some of them previously from South Australia. The confectioner George Malouf had settled in Launceston from Lebanon (more precisely from the Ottoman Empire) in 1886. Along with English names like Beaufoy, Beaumont, Jourdain and Savigny with a French consonance, there is Victor Roinel, 'originally from France', who taught 'elocution and vocal music' at the Launceston Training College before moving to Sydney, where he died at 92 in 1959 after a long and varied career.

In many ways the fascinating substance of the album lies in those items where the family histories of persons securely identified are set out. One grasps immediately the extent to which Tasmania, perhaps the most British of the Australian colonies, was like all the others a melting pot. Mobility—within the Australian continent and outside it in the Empire or even in the world at large—is a constant theme. The Scots and the Irish maintained, often for religious reasons, their separate identities rather more strictly, but they were not proof against foreign influences, the odd Mexican say, from Deloraine. One sees Anglo-Indian admixtures in gubernatorial dynasties, as well as unexpected contacts with other countries. Then, too, there is the omnipresent readiness, especially in younger generations, to move elsewhere to seek economic opportunities. This again is balanced by the great pastoral families like the Archers, present in Northern Tasmania since early in the nineteenth century. The chance to meditate on these contrasts is one of the chief benefits of this rich compilation.

The Launceston Training College was run by Mrs Euphemia Scott Nicholson, née Gibb, the mother of George Gibb Nicholson (1875–1948), the first Professor of French at the University of Sydney. G. G. appears in the album along with his mother and father, his elder brother Charles and his younger sister Eveline. George even figures in the *Official Record*: 'Nicholson, G. G., Launceston, Map of Tasmania – Special first award'. For someone brought up long ago in the Nicholsonian tradition there is more than a certain piquancy in this glimpse of adolescent promise in a field far removed from Romance philology.

Adrian Mitchell, *Plein Airs and Graces: The life and times of George Collingridge, Kent Town, South Australia*, Wakefield Press, 2012, viii–232 p., 24 plates, rrp \$34.95, ISBN-978-1-74305-095-8.

Readers of *Explorations* will have seen Adrian Mitchell’s article “‘A Bit of a Froggy’: George Collingridge de Tourcey in a Different Light’ (n° 45, 2008, pp. 3–29), which provides a summary of the career of the English-born and French-educated artist and writer, with European adventures preceding more than half a century of fruitful but not always properly recognised labours in New South Wales. Four years later a substantial and generously illustrated monograph brought the Collingridge story to a wider audience with the space to develop the many themes of a rich and colourful life. Specialists in the French dimension of the Australian experience should seek out what is a careful and sophisticated study of one of its many and varied facets.

A great strength of Adrian Mitchell’s book is its attention to place, so important for the landscape painter in both oil and watercolour that Collingridge was for a large part of his professional existence. From Godington in Oxfordshire, where the Collingridge de Tourcey family had lived for centuries as substantial tenant farmers with some pretensions to gentry status, to Hornsby in New South Wales, we have evocations in detail of the scenes George had observed and often recorded. As Catholic recusants the Collingridges were on the margin in their native land and had longstanding connections with France, not least with Douai, where their kinsman Bishop Peter Collingridge (1757–1829) was trained. It was not altogether surprising, therefore, that after selling up in Godington in 1850 and spending three years in Kentish Town on the fringes of London, the Collingridge parents should move to Paris. Once again they chose a suburban location—Fontenay-aux-Roses—thus establishing a pattern for the son’s various moves—around Sydney after his arrival there in 1879. We sometimes forget that living outside a city, even major ones like Paris and Sydney, is not necessarily deprivation of metropolitan advantages and involvement. Collingridge’s schooling with the Jesuits at Vaugirard and his enrolment at the *École des Beaux-Arts* brought him to the centre in the years of the Second Empire. There is a certain fluidity in George’s reported reminiscences of that period and of the following decade with his service in the Papal Zouaves between 1867 and 1869, the family’s retreat to London during the Franco-Prussian War, his sketching trips in Scotland and Italy, his principal employment as a wood-engraver for illustrated journals, his trip to Spain in 1878 and, overall, his relations with

Corot and Harpignies. Later testimony can be treacherous for the biographer, but Adrian Mitchell is cautious and critical in dealing with the claims Collingridge made in interviews and in his own writings. It may eventually be possible to discover some fragments of independent documentation of these events and contacts, but it is wise to recognise that most lives in the past, even of people much better known than George Collingridge, leave exasperatingly few traces.

It is easier to grasp the details of the long years in Australia, not least because Collingridge threw himself into all sorts of activities that brought him into public view. The artist, the committee member of the Art Society of New South Wales, the wood-engraver working for the *Illustrated Sydney News* and the *Picturesque Atlas of Australasia*, the teacher of languages as well as his professional skills, the Esperantist, the historian of European discovery of the Great South Land, the publisher on a small scale, the promoter of progress in the Hornsby district, all these roles and others are treated in Adrian Mitchell's account. Throughout Collingridge remained a committed dweller in outer suburbs or in attractive areas well beyond late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Sydney: Ryde, Berowra Creek, Hornsby and Narara Creek off Brisbane Water. It is in a sense the Barbizon impulse that is a constant feature of this painter's vocation and that figures rightly in the book's title. Yet, as we are reminded, *plein air* à la Corot never progresses to Impressionism, the school that was beginning its forward march in Collingridge's youth in Paris and that was emerging in the artists' camps round Sydney and Melbourne in the later part of the century.

Anchored as George was in the beliefs and practices of his youth, he did not cease to be a participant and a facilitator of improvement. Having embraced Australia from the moment he landed in Sydney he remained a contributor. A generation later than the 'cultural evangelists' of post gold-rush Victoria like Redmond Barry, Collingridge was just as intent on 'doing something for Australia', to borrow the expression used by the bookseller and publisher George Robertson, whose New South Wales years coincided almost exactly with his own. The audacious provocation in *Round and Round the World*, issued from Hornsby in his late seventies by the 'Hermit of Berowra', that the people of Montreal spoke 'the language of the two most civilized countries in the world, France and Australia' fits well with that stance.

Adrian Mitchell's book is not just a sensitive and judicious exploration of Collingridge's 'life and times' mapping a whole series of cultural, religious and political contexts. It also engages in detail with George's work as a painter and illustrator on the one hand and as a writer on the other. The many colour reproductions of landscapes, most of them still in private hands, back up Mitchell's analyses. He sets out Collingridge's laborious researches into what he believed to be the Portuguese discovery of Australia, sums up the arguments presented over many years in lectures, articles and the major monograph, and yet recognises the weaknesses of what remained an amateur's attempts to grapple with problems that have now passed into the domain of professional historians. Similarly he concedes that George's penchant for punning in his late pastiches of Lewis Carroll pose difficulties for modern readers. Perhaps one should suggest that such word-play has a special appeal for people who live, as Collingridge did, between languages. It is, I suspect, one of the marks of the perpetual outsider. Is it entirely fanciful to evoke Émile Mercier, who was active in Sydney in Collingridge's last decade, in this connection?

A great deal of reading and of visiting places on both sides of the world has gone into Adrian Mitchell's study. This is reflected in an extensive bibliography, including Collingridge's own writings, and in the endnotes (not footnotes, alas, to please this pedantic reader). Some literals have crept into the text. If a second edition is contemplated, they can be signalled in an appropriate way.

I prefer to end more positively. Collingridge died two years before my birth, but the Sydney I knew in my childhood and in my schooldays in the 1930s and 1940s was different from his only to the extent that the Harbour Bridge had been completed. The effects of the Depression and of the Second World War meant that the great rush of modernity towards the mega-city did not begin before the middle of the 1950s. Living on the North Shore and exploring on foot some of the areas Collingridge helped to develop I can feel a real affinity with as well as a nostalgic pull towards the world Adrian Mitchell recreates. For me it is not the least of the qualities of a book that makes a genuine contribution to Australian cultural history.

Alistair Rolls, John West-Sooby and Jean Fornasiero (eds), *If I Say if: the Poems and Short Stories of Boris Vian*, translations by Maria Freij and Peter Hodges, Adelaide, Adelaide University Press, 2014, 412 p., rrp AU\$ 44, ISBN 978-1-92206-460-8. Free e-book available.

The stated main purpose of this book is to make the amazing figure of Boris Vian known to a wider audience, and in particular to present to the English-speaking world Vian's (mostly) previously untranslated poems and short stories. This is an eminently worthy goal: Boris Vian was at the core of the transformative cultural explosion in France after the Occupation years, and his poetry and short stories—only parts, but important ones, of an artistic output that embraced novels, theatre, songs and jazz—form an excellent introduction to his mind-bending imaginary universe.

Both the translators at work here—Maria Freij for the poems, Peter Hodges for the stories—have succeeded quite remarkably in capturing the vitality of Vian's language: no mean feat given that the original is riddled with plays on words and sounds that transmit the sardonic irony with which the author customarily deals with his main themes, namely the forces of Eros and Thanatos. There's a kind of eternal youthfulness in Vian's work that successive generations of French readers have continued to find energising.

A few lines from the poem *I wouldn't wanna die*:

I wouldn't wanna die
Before I'd consumed
Her mouth with my mouth
Her body with my hands
The rest with my eyes
I'd best say no more
Some respect'd be wise...

And a few from the story *Don't trust the band*:

Of course you have noticed those six guys in white jackets producing the rhythm on stage. At first the music doesn't have any effect on you, but then gradually it enters your body through the pores of your skin, reaches the eighteenth nerve centre of the fourth cerebral convolution at the top of the left which, as everyone knows since the work of Broca and Captain Pamphile, is where the centre of pleasure born from the detection of harmonious sounds is located.

The book also offers a very informative and insightful presentation of the life and work of Vian, and some helpful explanatory notes on the texts themselves. Together with the laudatory foreword by Marc Lapprand, an international authority on Vian, that would have sufficed to make a well-balanced and thoroughly readable volume.

The editors have decided to include a number of other texts, and opinions will vary as to the appropriateness and wisdom of that decision. My own views are somewhat divided. Commentaries by the two translators on their work are interesting in their own right, although the one by Peter Hodges is highly technical, and probably mainly of interest to a specialised academic audience. This could be off-putting to the general public. Similarly, the essays by Alistair Rolls, Christelle Gonzalo and François Roulmann, and Audrey Camus, all well written and cogent in themselves, are openly scholarly in their tone and presentation, manifestly directed towards an audience of academic peers, rather than a more general one.

It is tempting to think that these inclusions may have resulted from the editors' awareness that current diffident academic and institutional policies towards literary translation do not allow such work to gain the kind of 'research' recognition that universities need for both prestige and funding: only with the addition of adequate 'critical' material can translations begin to qualify for such benefits. If this is the case, one can hardly reproach the editors for their realism. Such policies do exist, and continue to be pervasive, despite such initiatives as the recent decision by the Australian Academy of the Humanities to establish a medal for translation excellence.

Nonetheless, overall, I think that the volume might have been better without those additions. The scholarly studies (from which I except Freij's very engaging comments on her experience of translating Vian) do not really sit comfortably with the freedom of spirit and expression flowing through the Vian texts. Fortunately for the general reader, the two dozen poems and almost thirty stories constitute the major part of the book, and they are very stimulating indeed. Adelaide University Press is to be commended for providing a showcase for this example of the first-rate work in French studies produced in Australia.

BOOK NOTE

Douglas Wilkie, *The Journal of Madame Callegari: The true story behind Alexandre Dumas's book The Journal of Madame Giovanni*, Australia, Historia Incognita, 2015, 422 p., rrp AU\$28.81, ISBN 978-1-32046-831-2. Available at <http://historiaincognita.net/>.

Douglas Wilkie's *Journal of Madame Callegari* is a fascinating book from start to finish—not only because the true identity of Madame Callegari has remained hidden until now, but also due to the intrinsic interest of her incredible life and travels. The journal is bookended by the equally interesting account of the author's own **four year** journey to uncover the truth, and his essay on 'The Voice of Madame Callegari'. As one would expect, the author's choice to write the journal in the first person adds greatly to the pace and personal nature of the narrative and draws the reader in from the very beginning. **William** immediately taken into Madame Callegari's confidence as she starts to narrate her adventures and confides in us that there were several errors in the original journal by Alexandre Dumas. We are subsequently introduced to Madame Callegari as Louise Mirabello in a courtroom. (This will be the first of many variations on her true identity.) The descriptive passages in those early scenes bring the characters to life and we are as equally impressed by Madame Callegari's well-to-do acquaintances (who include Napoléon Bonaparte's niece and journalist and politician Émile de Girardin), as we are by our heroine's improbable adventures which will lead her and her future husband to Australia.

The journal goes on to describe Madame Callegari's sea voyages in great detail. We accompany her on her travels around the world to an array of exotic locations (exotic in the late 1700s to mid-1800s), such as New Zealand, Tahiti, the Marquesas Islands, Mauritius, New Caledonia, Hawaii, Mexico, New York and San Francisco, all brought to life by the various maps and illustrations throughout the book.

As readers of Madame Callegari's personal journal, we are privy to her intimate impressions and reflections on these places, the people she meets (including Alexandre Dumas and the story of the publication by Dumas of her original journal), and her various adventures with and without her husband Pietro along the way. There are far too many of them to list here, but suffice to say, not all of them were on the right side of the law...

Readers of *The French Australian Review* will remember an article by the same author on this topic in issue 54 of *Explorations*, entitled ‘Marie Callegari in Australia: the Identity of Alexandre Dumas’s Narrator in *Le Journal de Madame Giovanni*’; they will no doubt be delighted to now be able to read the full story of Madame Callegari’s incredible life. This complete account is meticulously researched and a valuable and important contribution to the literature of French-Australian Studies, given the time that Madame Callegari spent here and in the surrounding region. Readers everywhere can be very grateful that Douglas Wilkie came across Madame Callegari’s true identity, that he has set the record straight, and that he has shared her story with us.

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