

No. 248 November 2018

The Council of the Historical Society of South Australia wishes the membership everything good for Christmas and the New Year. We look forward to seeing you at meetings in 2019!

**'Blood lemons' by Gilead Amit in  
*New Scientist* 23 June 2018, pp.40-41**

Some years ago Rob Martin and I undertook a series of articles for the National Trust of SA called 'Heritage Icons'. One of the icons was Bickford's lime juice cordial. We discovered that the lime juice for their product is imported from the Caribbean, but we hadn't enough time to discover exactly where or why. And just recently when we were staying in Bali and where we read anything interesting that came to hand, I came across an article by Gilead Amit about the lemon and lime industry.

Well first of all I was quite surprised to find a straightforward history article in the *New Scientist*.

It seems when Sicily came temporarily under British control in 1806 during the Napoleonic Wars, it was the perfect place to grow lemons

in an attempt to overcome scurvy. From the 1700s it had been discovered that scurvy, so rife in the British Navy, and a disease we now know was caused by a lack of vitamin C, could be alleviated by citrus juice. Within 20 years of 1806 the Admiralty had served up 7.3 million litres of lemon juice, much of it from Sicily. By the 1850s some 80 square kilometres of Sicily produced 750,000 cases a year for export. This amount tripled within the next 30 years, amid turbulent times. 'Essentially what happened is the idealist gentlemen who wanted to make a new [unified] Italy enlisted thugs to help', claimed John Dickie, author of *Cosa Nostra: A history of the Sicilian Mafia* (2004).

Yes, you guessed it, these thugs became the Mafia who reaped from the high profit margins for investing in citrus, enabling the criminal societies to grow particularly rich: 'lemons were ideal for the budding Mafiosi'.

An 1880s analysis by the Italian parliament discovered 'that areas that produced a lot of lemons were more likely to have a strong Mafia presence'. Dickie says 'it's undoubtedly true that citrus fruit was the business the Mafia grew up around'. He continues that 'all of the early Mafia bosses of the Palermo area ... were lemon traders, owners of lemon groves, guards of lemon groves'.

Amit adds 'the one thing that Sicilian lemons did not do was eradicate scurvy from the British

Navy, at least not for a while. With the Americans importing an ever larger share of the island's crop, market forces eventually drove the British towards the cheaper [but not so effective] Caribbean limes, a preference that earned British sailors the epithet "limeys". So maybe this explains something of a prehistory as to why Bickford limes had been coming to Adelaide from the island of Montserrat in the West Indies since the early 1870s up until about the Second World War, after which limes were sourced from Mexico. In the 20th century limes also came from Brazil and Chile.

*Patricia Sumerling*

### **DARDANELLES CENOTAPH**

The removal of the Dardanelles Cenotaph from Park 21 West to Anzac Walk is a fait accompli. The resiting is less problematic than the way it was done. A 'consultation' process involving selected stakeholders ignored for years others, for example the residents of the South West City and the City of Unley. The Burra Charter provisions concerning the local heritage dimensions of public monuments were unnecessarily violated, a worrying precedent. Moreover the historical community was ignored. Indeed in the Environment, Resources & Development Court it was insinuated by the State bureaucracy, with the acquiescence of the Weatherill Government, that historians had no expertise in heritage matters, not even an Emeritus Professor and an art historian with lineal links to the monument, both of them National Trust exponents, nor the historian of the Cenotaph itself, whose findings had been endorsed by the RLSA. The fabric of community consensus needs to be repaired on these matters. Respect for the Cenotaph requires no less.

### **Vale ERIC RICHARDS**

The Historical Society of South Australia notes with sadness the death of Emeritus Professor Eric Richards, which occurred suddenly in London on 21 September. During a long and internationally distinguished career, based mostly at Flinders University, Eric produced a huge array of books and articles, with international migration being the most notable of his many interests. His publications included a number with a South Australian focus, and he edited the *Social History* volume of *The Flinders History of South Australia* (1986).

The Historical Society of South Australia was founded in 1974, and at its inaugural meeting, Eric Richards was the guest speaker, his topic being 'History from Below'.

The original intent of the designer of the Cenotaph, master builder Walter Torode, was that there be a memorial garden of wattle as a place of resort and reflection for these neighbouring civic communities, with the Cenotaph as its centrepiece. There is documentation in the Adelaide City Council Archives that in 1915 and again in 1922 the Council accepted a shared custodianship with the Wattle Day League, such that the Council undertook maintenance of the site. The Corporation should honour that understanding without quibbling, and restore the Gallipoli Memorial Wattle Grove to its former glory and function, not only because it is the right thing to do by the communities deprived of a memorial which reposed in their care for over a century, but also because it makes good pragmatic sense in heritage tourism terms.

But such a Grove would need a centrepiece, and here the incoming Council can retrieve matters by salving tradition and community sentiment on the one hand whilst being innovative on the other. The city lacks a dedicated monument to the Armistice which mercifully terminated the Great War, and thus to the peace for which the Anzacs fought, suffered and died. Council could readily hold a competition for a modern design, involving say the Adelaide College of the Arts, for a monument to the Armistice which came into force on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month of 1918, to be erected by the centenary of the Treaty of Versailles, christened by the soldier scholar Wavell 'the Peace to End All Peace', whose legacy is with us, like the Great War itself, to this very day. A new community consensus could be constructed around the inauguration of that monument.

*David Faber*

***Leane Times: One Family's Transformation from Cornish Farmers to Australian Fighters, by Wendy Frew, Broadcast Books, 2018***

The Fighting Leanes of Prospect have been familiar to South Australians since they were first lionised in the Australian Press in 1915. Thomas and Alice Leane saw five sons and six grandsons enlist in the Australian forces and fight from Gallipoli to France. Two sons and two grandsons were killed in action.

But this book is much more than an account of their contribution to the war effort - it is a saga of a family which migrated from Cornwall in the mid-nineteenth century seeking religious freedom and greater opportunities in a new land. The Leanes were devout Methodists and became active in both the Woman's Christian Temperance Movement and the suffrage movement of the 1890s.

Frew turns her spotlight on the realities of life in Victorian Cornwall before exploring the challenges and openings which presented themselves to the growing family of Thomas and Alice as they settled first in the Adelaide Hills and later near Gawler. By 1883 they had moved into Rose St in Prospect, a settlement known for its non-conformist roots. In South Australia the family were also active in business, the church and civic affairs. Frew does an excellent job of exploring the lives of the female Leanes as well as the men.

When the Boer War broke out, Ted Leane enlisted and fought with the Australian contingent, staying on after the war to work in South Africa for some time.

Frew has drawn extensively on family research into their ancestors including war diaries kept by some of the soldiers, as well as deepening the research herself. Her accounts of the Gallipoli and French campaigns are riveting.

This is a balanced account of an important family and Frew does not shy away from troubles that beset them, including divorce. She is also frank about her great-grandfather Ted and his difficult time as Administrator of Norfolk Island. She is similarly open about her great-grand uncle Sir Raymond Leane and his controversial role as SA Police Commissioner.

*David Kilner, Convenor, Prospect Local History Group*

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Which South Australian history book will you recommend for the Keain Medal as the best for 2018? Forms in the next Newsletter or online.

Contributions to this Newsletter are always welcome. The deadline for the next edition is Sunday 6 January.

## HISTORIC 'VALE HOUSE' by Lyn O'Grady



Vale House (left) and outbuilding (right) 2018.

Photograph by the author.

Many people, including local residents, are not aware of its existence, tucked away amidst trees, vans and cabins in the grounds of the Levi Tourist Park. **State Heritage-listed VALE HOUSE** is 'Adelaide's earliest surviving, substantial residence'. Its design was once described as 'a quaint mixture of old English country mingled with purely colonial'.<sup>1</sup> It demonstrates a clever adaption to the Australian climate, with verandahs on all sides and a half basement.

There are 10 rooms. The four rooms upstairs were for entertaining and include a ballroom which once had a marble fireplace. Although the main part of the house has been converted into four self-contained double bedrooms with ensuite, the house is still intact. French windows on the main floor open onto the verandah on three sides. Each set of windows has cedar shutters that fold into recesses in the wall. The sub-basement was for the family, with a living room and five small bedrooms. The casement windows are sheltered under the verandah but still let in sufficient light.



The walls are constructed of stone and brick, identical to the outbuilding to the side, but were rendered at some later date. (The outbuilding was the kitchen and servants' quarters, which today has no signs of its past life, as it is now two holiday apartments.) The ceilings are about 12 feet high on the main floor and about 10 feet in the basement. At the top of stone steps are the south-facing front doors, about 8 feet high with a light at the top.

<sup>1</sup> From 'Stately Homes of Adelaide – Vale House' *The Mail* 1929 Jan. 26.

Another door, on the western side, is at ground level, sheltered by the roof overhang and near the kitchen. This door leads to the landing, with stairs to the right leading up to the main floor, stairs straight ahead leading down to the basement where the family lived.

There was also a secret access to the house, via a tunnel leading to and from the kitchen, underground to a cellar constructed below the stair landing and accessed by stairs leading down from the basement. Other houses in Walkerville had tunnels, thought to provide the occupants some peace of mind by providing a means of escape from Aboriginal attack. Although this tunnel hasn't survived, you can imagine how easy it could be accessed from the basement through the cellar.

### So, when was it built you might ask?

The date of construction is officially noted as 1841. The date is derived from a painting dated April 1841, a watercolour by J M Skipper held by the Art Gallery of SA. Excavation and construction would have commenced the year before.

### Who was responsible for the building?

John Morphett in 1839 acquired Section 478 on which Vale House sits. He transferred 20 acres of land with a residence to a widow **Sarah August**<sup>2</sup> in 1841. Sarah's son-in-law **William Robert Smith Cooke** arrived in Adelaide in March 1839 aboard the *Buckinghamshire*. He and his wife Mary were preparing the way for the rest of the family who were relocating from British Honduras (which was about to change drastically after the abolition of slavery).<sup>3</sup>

Sarah and her four surviving children arrived in Adelaide aboard the *City of London* in March 1840. Meanwhile William Cooke set up a business – August, Cooke & Co, shipping agents and merchants. This business lasted only five years before insolvency in 1844. William Cooke went on to found other successful businesses in Adelaide including milling and brewing.

William Cooke, in my humble opinion, influenced the house design. A search of architecture of British Honduras (see below) gives an idea of where the design may have come from.



<sup>2</sup> Sarah's husband John Samuel August was a mahogany cutter and magistrate in British Honduras but died in England before he could continue to Australia.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/11646> British Honduras had abolished slavery in 1838.



William Cooke rented the house to **Edward Frome**, Surveyor General, prior to his return to England in 1849. In 1850 Cooke sold to brewer, **William Henry Clark**, founder of West End Brewery. He later skipped across the border, just before his insolvency hearing and thus out-of-reach of his creditors. A few years later, Vale House was mortgaged when Clark borrowed the substantial sum of £1,500 and negotiated with **Philip Levi** to buy the property. In 1856 Levi came into complete possession by clearing the mortgage but let Clark stay on until 1858. Philip Levi took up residence with his common law wife **Elizabeth Parry Symes**. He was to have eleven children with Elizabeth, the last in 1865 and a child with Mary Martin in 1867. The Levis were to live in Vale House for over 90 years.

### Who were the Levis?



Philip Levi,<sup>4</sup> grandson of a London banking magnate, was 16 when he arrived in SA in 1838 with an uncle, **Montague Phillipson**. Philip's father **Nathaniel Levi** and younger brothers, **Edmund and Frederick**, followed soon after and went into overlanding sheep and cattle from NSW. They acquired a licence to graze at Dustholes near Truro. When Nathaniel died suddenly in 1843, his was the first Jewish funeral in SA and, at Philip's request, ground was set aside by the Governor for Jewish burials in West Terrace. Nathaniel's wife, **Sarah**, and daughters had already left London and arrived to the news of his passing. Sarah was from the wealthy **Goldsmid** family and came with a dowry of £2,000.

Philip inherited his father's sheep run and expanded the boundaries of pastoral settlement. It was said that his sheep and cattle numbered 172,000 and he could count this stock on a thousand hills. He also ventured into mining. He established Philip Levi & Co, shipping agents, with his brothers, and his sons later joined the firm. He was described as a **merchant prince of South Australia**. When most were concerned with export, he fostered the import business of the colony. Philip was a founder of St Peter's College and of the Adelaide Club.

The Levis made Vale House a popular centre of social activity for the Adelaide gentry with great social gatherings with garden parties, hunts and grand balls. The Levis entertained royally.

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<sup>4</sup> Jews came to Australia with the prospect that they were able to purchase land, forbidden in England.

While his brothers returned to England to marry and live off their investments, Philip never left SA. He remained the entrepreneur and boldly extended his business to London, Liverpool and the Orient. His fortune was not to last, however. With the dramatic drop in the price of tobacco and cotton due to the American Civil War, and the SA drought of 1861, Philip Levi & Co was forced into insolvency. Liabilities amounted to £217,000. The debt was eventually cleared by 1881 with the sale of assets that realised just over half a million pounds. Because he stayed and repaid his debts, he gained the respect of Adelaide's businessmen. Philip died in 1898.

Even though the grand old days of lavish parties and social functions were gone forever, Vale House and its occupants remained a source of continuing interest. The red-coated huntsmen assembled at Vale House, sheltered under the great Moreton Bay fig. The Adelaide Hunt would meet here around the turn of the last century. The heritage listed Moreton Bay fig was possibly planted soon after the house was built, making it nearly 180 years old. Its vast canopy was once the largest in Australia but is now in its decline.

Edmund Levi's three daughters **Olive, Constance and Violet**, continued to live at Vale House. Constance, or Corrie as she was known, married **Edward** son of solicitor **WC Belt** in 1904 and went to live at *The Almonds* in Walkerville. After Corrie was widowed in 1914, she spent a lot of time with her sisters. Olive always wore green and Violet wore shades of mauve, and they were often the source of gossip and amusement in the village of Walkerville, whether it be when they gave instructions in their bloomers to two men painting Vale House or swam naked in the Torrens. They liked to sit each in a different corner of the tram, and carry on a conversation regardless of the other passengers. They became known around Walkerville as the three ducks because they tended to walk in single file whilst still talking loudly to each other. They certainly kept tongues wagging.

The last sister at Vale House died in 1947 naming Corrie as her beneficiary. Corrie, a wealthy widow, was the last of the Levis and now in possession of two large properties. She offered the 10 acres of land and Vale House, together with the sum of £5,000 to the Walkerville Council, to be developed as a public park. It was what her sister wished. An Act was passed in 1948 to provide for the management of Levi Park by a Trust. Corrie died that same year.

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### ***Etched in Bone* (a film by Martin Thomas and Béatrice Bijon), Red Lily Productions, 2018**

Eight years in the making, *Etched in Bone* is a feature-length documentary that gives extraordinary insight into the deep and enduring conflict between scientific and traditional forms of knowledge. It tells the story of Jacob Nayinggul, a charismatic elder from Arnhem Land who is dealing with the theft of his ancestors' bones by an anthropologist from the Smithsonian Institution in 1948. After years of obstruction from the Smithsonian, the bones were finally repatriated in 2010. At that juncture, Jacob Nayinggul needed to create a

new form of ceremony that would restore the bones and the spirits of the stolen ancestors to their homeland. In the *Guardian Online*, Paul Daley writes that 'in inviting the film's narrator and writer... to film the repatriation of the bones and the traditional funerary practices associated with their burial, the elders of Gunbalunya have bequeathed a remarkable transcultural insight into the spiritual imperative of reconnecting ancestral remains with their country'. The filmmakers are academics at the Australian National University in Canberra. Distributed by Ronin Films: <https://www.roninfilms.com.au/feature/15602/etched-in-bone.html>

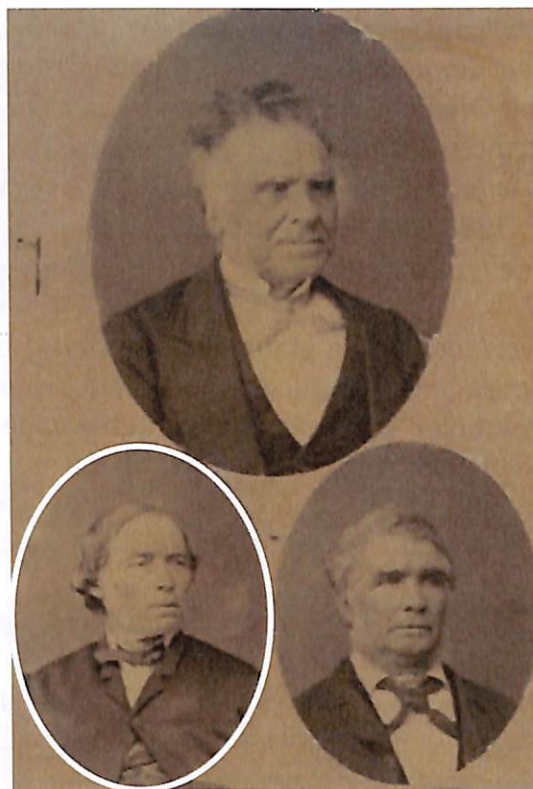
## Meet the Old Colonists: Sealers and Whalers – Part 2

*The State Library is nearing the end of a ten-year project to preserve and digitise a unique collection of photographic mosaics, and to identify the 1700 men and women depicted. The images are now online - most for the first time.<sup>1</sup>*

*This is the fourth of a series of articles that will introduce some of the men and women who came forward in the early 1870s to identify themselves as Old Colonists and have their portraits taken by photographers Henry Jones and Townsend Duryea.*

The previous article introduced four Old Colonists – John Hart, William Walker, William Thompson and David Kerr – who had come to South Australia in the early 1830s as mariners, sealers and whalers. Their peregrinations were unrelated to formal colonisation in 1836. Part 2 investigates the likelihood of a fifth Old Colonist being a pre-colonial.

**John Harris** appears to fit this category due to his portrait's prominence in Jones's Banquet Group mosaic. He is featured with William Thompson as an 1835 arrival. The mosaic's original index lists Harris arriving on the 'Adelaide' in June 1835. However in Duryea's works Harris is identified as travelling overland to South Australia in 1840.<sup>2</sup>



Detail from The Old Colonists Banquet Group, showing benefactor Emanuel Solomon at the top of the mosaic, and John Harris (left) and William Thompson alone on the second row for 1835 arrivals. By Henry Jones, 1872, SLSA, B 47769

Research about sealers and whalers is complicated; 'For many of the players, anonymity was the price of freedom'. Moreover, 'John Harris' is a common name. I was only able to piece together this narrative after discovering via Trove that he went by the alias Foster or Forster.<sup>3</sup>

John Harris was born about 1811. The first 25 years of his life remain obscure. It is possible that he was transported to Australia as a young convict. Several have his name, but to date none can be tied to his alias or his mother's name, which he reckoned was one and the same.<sup>4</sup>

The first clear reference found to date about the subject of this article is in an April 1837 'Hobart Town Police Report':

John Harris, alias Forster, a well-known character at this Office, was charged by District Constable Smith with having obstructed him in the execution of his duty, when apprehending a noted thief, also with being a thief himself. The prisoner contended he worked as hard as any man. "I know you do, in your line of business," said the constable. He was ordered to change his employ, and exercise his limbs at Mr. Gunn's for a month.<sup>5</sup>

William Gunn was superintendent of the Hobart Town Prisoners' Barracks. In January 1840 'John Harris, alias Foster' was again in Hobart when he was found not guilty of house-breaking.<sup>6</sup>

The next public coupling of these names occurred in the Adelaide press in January 1847 when 'John Harris, alias Jack Forster' was in the Police Commissioner's Court to testify about receiving a forged cheque.<sup>7</sup>

Harris became well-known to the Adelaide police, culminating in an 1853 indictment as 'John Harris, alias Peg Leg Forster'. He was found guilty of stealing £115 from William Hall, landlord of the Castle Inn in Hindley Street. William Johnstone deposed he,

Had known [Harris] for many years, and employed him in a position of trust at the whale fishery till he broke his leg there in 1844.<sup>8</sup>

This was the 'New Fishery' at Encounter Bay, established in 1843. Two other on-shore whaling stations had been operating there since 1837; the South Australian Company's at Rosetta Cove and Captain Blenkinsop's near Police Point.<sup>9</sup>

By 1843 the Police Point fishery had relocated to Granite Island and both the older fisheries were owned by a partnership of Captain John Hart, Jacob Hagen and John Baker.<sup>10</sup> 'John Foster' was employed by the New Fishery as a headsman for the 1844 whaling season. His livelihood came to an end when on 8 June four boats harpooned two whales and 'their lines got warped':

The boats being drawn together, the oars were rendered useless from want of room to play; while the infuriated animals lashed out in every direction. ... Headsman Foster, in throwing himself out of the boat to avoid a coming roll of the whale, received a severe blow from her flukes on his leg against the gunnel, which literally shattered it.<sup>11</sup>

Harris and Jack Beddow, who also suffered a fractured leg, were attended by Dr David Wark, a resident of Encounter Bay. On 27 July both were

admitted to the Adelaide Hospital, where Harris's leg was amputated.<sup>12</sup>

Harris was now on crutches and 'driven ... from distress' to a new line of work. As a witness in an 1848 assault case he explained that he:

Had been a whaler until he lost his leg; after that he kept a boarding-house... His establishment was in Light-square, and was in fact a disorderly house, as they called it, or a house of ill-fame, if the Advocate-General chose to call it such.<sup>13</sup>

Harris had also married since the accident – to Mary Bellman in September 1845, six months after their first child was born. They lived in Rosina Street, close to Light Square – 'the moral cesspool of the city of Adelaide'. There they raised five of eight children to adulthood.<sup>14</sup>

By 1853, when Harris was sentenced to 15 months' hard labour for the theft of Hall's money, he had left the boarding house. Several witnesses attested to his honesty in the timber trade. The magistrate, however, 'could not dismiss from his mind' that Harris's previous occupation 'was the most disgraceful possible'.<sup>15</sup>

Thereafter Harris earned his living as a general (second-hand) dealer. In 1857 he was accused of being in possession of a £50 note 'missing from another man's hand' but it was determined that he got it in the course

of business. Emanuel Solomon spoke on his behalf as a fellow-auctioneer. By 1866 Harris had left his past far enough behind to testify with impunity that a house of ill-repute in Rosina Street 'was conducted in a disgraceful manner'. He died in 1885, 'A colonist of 44 years'.<sup>16</sup>



(Left) John Harris, c. 1811-1885.

By Henry Jones, 1872, SLA, B 47769/26A

(Right) William Mason, 1880-1956.

Unknown photographer, c. 1915

[They served with honour...](#) [2015]

There is the tantalising possibility of another aspect to Harris's life. In November 1852 Fanny, a 'Half-caste' girl about seven years old, was admitted to the Annesfield School for Aboriginal children in Albany, Western Australia. Her father was listed as 'Harris (a sealer)'.<sup>17</sup>

The family tradition is that Fanny was 'born at sea near Kangaroo Island'. There is conjecture about the identity of her parents, in which this article's John Harris has played no part to date. One of Fanny's sons bears some

resemblance to John Harris, but given Harris's preference for alias in the 1840s it is likely that he would have been remembered as Foster or Forster in the school register.<sup>18</sup>

The question remains; did Harris come to South Australia by ship in 1835 or overland in 1840? The 'Adelaide' travelled to whale fisheries in the Pacific in early 1835, and South Australia's colonial fisheries relied on experienced hands from Tasmania. While documentary evidence remains elusive, Harris may repeatedly have come to South Australia for whaling seasons in the 1830s and early 1840s.<sup>19</sup>

Part 3 will introduce the last Old Colonist whaler identified to date.

**Beth M Robertson**  
State Library of South Australia

<sup>1</sup> The three largest mosaics are 'The Old Colonists Banquet Group' by Henry Jones, B 47769; 'Group of [women] Old Colonists', Jones, B 19985; and 'Old Colonists 1836-40' by Townsend Duryea, B 8235/1.

<sup>2</sup> Harris' portrait appears at B 7865/11D in Duryea's 'South Australian pioneers 1840'; the instance on B 8235/1 is missing due to historic damage.

<sup>3</sup> **Anonymity** – H. J. Finnis, *Early settlers on islands in Bass Straits*, Adelaide, SA: Pioneers' Association of South Australia, 1950, [p. 1]; [www.familyhistorysa.org/colonists.html](http://www.familyhistorysa.org/colonists.html) erroneously lists **John Robin Harris** arriving on the 'Adelaide' in June 1835 as well as on the 'John' in 1840. John Robin Harris returned to England in 1855 and died there in 1870.

<sup>4</sup> *Adelaide Observer*, 16 September 1848, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Colonial Times*, 11 April 1837, p. 7.

<sup>6</sup> *Tasmanian Weekly Dispatch*, 31 January 1840, p. 7.

<sup>7</sup> *South Australian*, 26 January 1847, p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> *South Australian Register (Register)*, 17 February 1853, p. 3; **the position of trust** is referred to in

*South Australian*, 26 December 1843, p. 2, and *The South Australian Government Gazette*, 28 March 1844, p. 81 where Foster is listed as a headsman.

<sup>9</sup> **New Fishery** – *Southern Australian*, 10 March 1843, p. 2; **locations of fisheries** – William James Hosking, 'Whaling in South Australia, 1837-1872', BA (Hons) thesis, Flinders University of South Australia, 1873, Chapter (Ch.) 1, p. 1 & p. 11.

<sup>10</sup> Hosking, Ch. 1, pp. 23-24, p. 52, Ch. 2, p. 1, p. 4.

<sup>11</sup> *Adelaide Observer*, 22 June 1844, p. 5; the species hunted from on-shore fisheries were the Southern Black Whale or 'right' whale.

<sup>12</sup> State Records of South Australia spreadsheet of Adelaide Hospital admissions 1840-1904, GRG 78.49.

<sup>13</sup> **On crutches** – *Register*, 19 February 1853, p. 3 (Harris later wore a wooden leg); **boarding house** – *Adelaide Observer*, 16 September 1848, p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> Mary Bellman migrated with her parents on the ship the 'Royal Admiral' in 1840, [familyhistorysa.org](http://familyhistorysa.org); **marriage record** – Digger database of South Australian Marriages Registrations 1842-1916; **moral cesspool** – *Register*, 16 September 1850, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup> *Register*, 19 February 1853, p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> **1857 case** – *Register*, 17 March 1857, p. 2; **1866 testimony** – *South Australian Weekly Chronicle*, 17 February 1866, p. 7; **death notice** – *The South Australian Advertiser*, 2 November 1885, p. 4.

<sup>17</sup> Transcript of Annesfield School record in Rebecca Swartz, 'Ignorant and idle': Indigenous education in Natal and Western Australia, 1833-1875', PhD thesis, University of London, September 2015, p. 177.

<sup>18</sup> Personal communication with descendants of Fanny Mason, nee Harris, John Williams and Brendan Bissaker, May 2018; [They served with honour: untold stories of Western Australian Aboriginal servicemen at Gallipoli](#), Government of Western Australia (WA), Department of Aboriginal Affairs, [2015], p. 24; Ciaran Lynch, In Search of Ngurabirding-Part 4(b), [The view from Mount Clarence: a look back at settlement along the South Coast of Western Australia](#); Fanny Mason died at Mortigallup, WA, in 1932; her photograph is on display at the [Old Police Station, Mount Barker, WA](#).

<sup>19</sup> **Movements of the 'Adelaide'** – *The Sydney Herald*, 8 January 1835, p. 2; *The True Colonist ...*, 16 March 1835, p. 2; **scope of recruitment of whalers** – Blenkinsop originally brought 64 men to Encounter Bay in 1837, Hosking, Ch. 1, p. 12; the South Australian Company recruited about 80 whalers from Hobart for the 1838 season, Hosking, Ch. 1, p. 25, and South Australian Company whale fisheries employees' accounts, 1838-1839, SLSA, BRG 42/75/1.

**Peter Monteath *Captured lives: Australia's Wartime Internment Camps* NLA**

Publishing Canberra 2018

This sumptuously produced general overview of the incarceration of civilian internees and prisoners of war in this country during both World Wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century will introduce to wider and younger audiences a subject which has hitherto been the almost exclusive preserve of specialist historians, this reviewer included. There is a proper niche in the historical literature for just such a treatment. The scientific work of establishing the truth about the history of our community is one thing. Communicating it to the wider public is the other half of the historian's vocation. As the country continues to struggle with the issue of refugee asylum, the historical suspension of civil rights involved in wartime internment of 'enemy aliens' is a precedent of actual topical relevance. If mass internment is unlikely in future, the targeting of communities through victimization of key individuals under security legislation and determinations is not beyond government.

This book is richly illustrated with original artwork by the inmates themselves, capturing an engaging insider's eye view of mass detention. The production values of the book are not incidental. They are vital for example to understanding the austerity of camp conditions in our antipodean gulags, albeit gentler than those that scarred the soul of Europe in the 1940s. Boredom was an existential reality in the camps, leading to 'barbed wire disease'. It needs to be understood that photos and other images are not coffee table decorations, but visual information which complement the text and bring it to life. The painted sketches of more than one artist interpret the experience for us.

Cameo sketches define by individual experience the general chapters and periods of preventive detention. It needs to be emphasized that none of these inmates had been convicted of anything. All were interned on the basis of suspicion that they might represent some risk to the Commonwealth. These pen portraits offer

insights ranging from representative cases to limiting ones, like the extreme case of Francesco Giovanni Fantin, who died on 16 November 1942 in a context of tension between Anti-fascist and Fascist Italian internees, having been assaulted with a blunt instrument. My forthcoming *An Anarchist Life: FG Fantin 1901-42* will show that this killing was a political assassination designed by the Fascist minority to decapitate the Anti-fascist minority in the course of their struggle to influence the apolitical majority of internees in Loveday Internment Camp. It is not in the scope of Monteath's study to pronounce on such issues, but his notice of the case confirms that the episode was an historically significant one.

The book will register an appeal, not only with the historical reading public, but also as a first port of call for youth, leading to wider reading of more detailed studies. Its advent is an unalloyed boon to the literature on this subject of national significance in the fraught history of civil rights in Australia.

*David Faber*

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