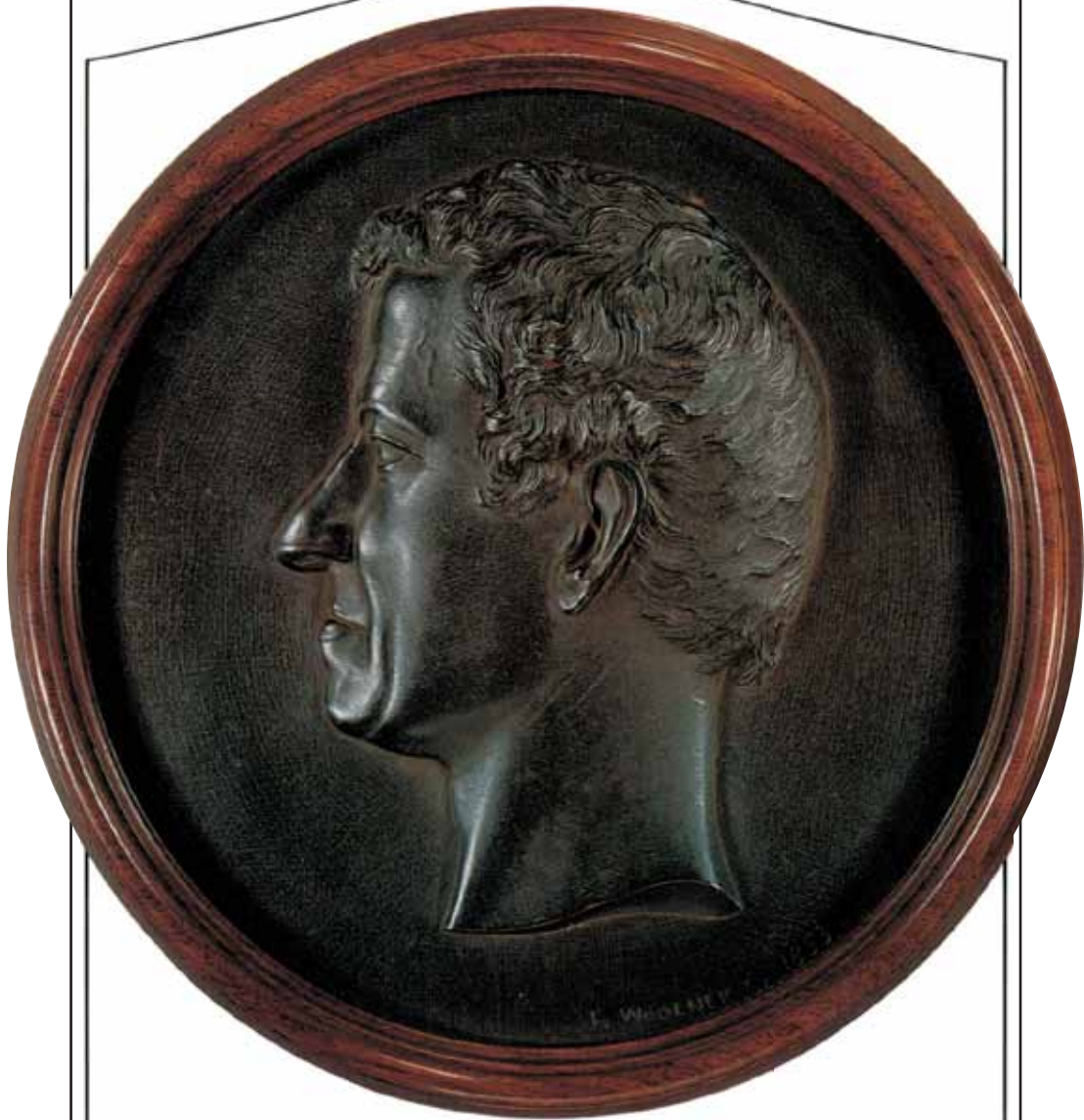


# LA TROBEANA



**Journal of the C. J. La Trobe Society Inc.**

**Vol 12, No 1, March 2013**

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The C J La Trobe Society Inc was formed in 2001 to promote understanding and appreciation of the life, work and times of Charles Joseph La Trobe, Victoria's first Lieutenant-Governor.  
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## La Trobeana

Journal of the C J La Trobe Society Inc  
Vol 12, No 1, March 2013

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### FRONT COVER

Thomas Woolner, 1825-1892, sculptor  
Charles Joseph La Trobe  
1853, diam, 24cm. Bronze portrait medallion showing the left profile of Charles Joseph La Trobe.  
Signature and date incised in bronze 1.1.: T. Woolner. Sc. 1853;/M  
La Trobe, Charles Joseph, 1801-1875. Accessioned 1894  
La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria.

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## A Word from the President

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We are only a short way into the year and already we have much to report. Last November, members visited Geelong and ‘places in the footsteps of La Trobe’, and in this first issue of the year, Dianne Reilly reports on this memorable weekend which included historic homes, such as Barwon Grange and Coriyule, as well as churches, the Botanic Gardens and dinner at the Geelong Club. In December, we were privileged to attend the ‘Early Melbourne Paintings’ exhibition held at Morgans at 401, which was opened by our Patron, His Excellency the Honourable Alex Chernov AC QC, Governor of Victoria. A reminder of this fascinating exhibition, which showcased many images of early Melbourne, is the splendid catalogue that was produced by Gary Morgan. At this important event, we heard Dr Helen MacDonald, who was the recipient of the La Trobe Society Fellowship at the State Library of Victoria, speak on the topic: ‘Inhabiting Melbourne, 1835–45: Henry Condell and other Early Settlers’.

The remainder of this issue takes us from the Port Phillip District/Victoria to England. Tim Gatehouse, a descendant of the extended La Trobe family has been researching Benjamin Henry Latrobe’s early career in England which will be of interest to many who may be more familiar with his second career in the United States of America. Susan Priestley reports on a line of research she began some years ago

when she came across an intriguing letter in the RHSV manuscripts collection which mentioned 96 Victorian school boys who formed a guard of honour at St Michael the Archangel, the Litlington parish church in Sussex where Charles Joseph La Trobe was buried in 1875. Two of our La Trobe Society members, Helen Botham and Loreen Chambers, have been to St Michael the Archangel recently. Both have written about important outcomes of these visits: Helen has established valuable links for the La Trobe Society with St Michael’s and with its present incumbent, Rev. James Howson; Loreen has researched the period when La Trobe worshipped there and has given us some interesting insights into parish life and its rector in Litlington of the past.

We have begun 2013 in a most celebratory manner with the Inauguration of the elegant Charles La Trobe Lounge at La Trobe University, Bundoora, and we will report on this in our June issue. The Forthcoming Events for 2013 calendar certainly promises wonderful ways for our Society members to socialise and to learn more about C J La Trobe and his times.

**Diane Gardiner**  
**Hon. President C J La Trobe Society**

## La Trobe Society Christmas Reception and Opening of the Exhibition ‘Early Melbourne Paintings’

Friday 7 December, 2012

---

**Mr John Landy**  
Former Governor of Victoria  
and **Mrs Lynne Landy**

**Professor David de Kretser**, Former  
Governor of Victoria and **Mrs Jan de Kretser**

**The Most Reverend Dr Phillip Freier**  
Archbishop of Melbourne

**Ms Dianne Gardiner**  
President, The La Trobe Society

**Ms Adrienne Clarke**  
former Lieutenant-Governor and Chancellor of  
The La Trobe University

**Mr Gary Morgan**  
Executive Chairman, Roy Morgan Research

**And many distinguished guests,  
ladies and gentlemen**

It is with great pleasure that Elizabeth and I join you this evening to share in this wonderful exhibition of ‘Early Melbourne Paintings’, and it will be my pleasure to open it officially.

The Honorary Treasurer of the Society, who wrote to me as long ago as May last in the context of foreshadowing this event and inviting me to open it officially, told me that the evening will be jointly hosted by ‘Mr Gary Morgan and the C J La Trobe Society’, and that an exhibition of ‘Early Melbourne Colonial Paintings’ will be displayed at this function, as indeed it is. Later Mr Morgan explained to me, in his usual quiet and self-effacing way, of the role that he played in putting together this exhibition.

As you might know there are no half measures about Gary Morgan. He is, for example, an authority on a range of matters, including Australian early wood carvings and

ceramics and early Victorian paintings. Another feature of Gary is his generosity. For example, he has loaned to the Australia Club some wonderful early Australian ceramics; he has made available his collection of the works that are here and persuaded others like ANZ – no mean feat – to make their works of this era available for this exhibition. He has also made these premises available for that purpose. He has also offered to make the exhibition available to Government House for the Australia Day Reception and Open Day early next year.

All in all, I think, Melbourne and this Society would be the poorer without Gary's energetic involvement.

of the new community. This attitude may be contrasted with the more material aspirations of the young colonists at that time.

Also, contrary to the expectations of the great proportion of the colonists he was unable to procure quickly enough separation from the colony of New South Wales. I believe, however, that he was at all times committed to Separation, which was not a straight forward process, and which finally came in 1851 as a great achievement to him.

Furthermore, La Trobe seemed to have been inept in his handling of the grievances of the miners principally in relation to the



**J W Atwood, artist**  
**St Francis Cathedral, Melbourne, c.1854**  
 Oil on board  
 Roy Morgan Research Collection

Can I pay tribute to the La Trobe Society and its members for the work they do in promoting a greater recognition and understanding in our community of La Trobe and our very early colonial history.

Without Charles Joseph La Trobe, there would obviously be no La Trobe Society. This is not the time to analyse his administration of what became our State. But it is appropriate to mention that, as many say, he was a complex man and one who was often misunderstood. More often than not he was at odds with the bulk of the colonists in many respects.

For example, La Trobe's approach to his public duties was based essentially on his personal views on religion and morality, which he considered should be a central pillar

unpopular licence fee which he had imposed and, consequently, he became the subject of loud criticism and became increasingly unpopular. Ultimately, these difficulties manifested themselves in the tragedy of Eureka.

But it should also be borne in mind that La Trobe had no relevant training that would have equipped him to deal with the population explosion and other complexities that followed from this and the discovery of gold here. As Dr Reilly says, when La Trobe arrived here in 1839 Port Philip was 'a primitive, underdeveloped and underpopulated colony, (but when he) left it in 1854 (it was) the most affluent city in the world ...'

The harassment and stress that La Trobe had to endure over many years caused him to

submit his resignation on 31 December 1852. Although his resignation was accepted, his successor, Governor Sir Charles Hotham, did not arrive here until May 1854. So La Trobe left Melbourne almost 15 years after arriving here, almost a broken man. Sadly, it took some years before the seemingly ungrateful British Government granted him a meagre pension.

But one very important area in which La Trobe did make a lasting contribution was to facilitate the establishment of Melbourne's cultural base. Remember that it was during his period in office, when the population of Melbourne was barely 100,000, that La Trobe lent his assistance to the establishment of the

House has a beautiful book titled 'Charles Joseph La Trobe – Landscapes and Sketches' that includes an informative introduction by Dr Reilly. The book truly displays La Trobe's remarkable talent in that regard and should be more widely appreciated.

There is a connection between the works on display this evening and La Trobe in the sense that he was a landscape artist and the works here are also landscapes of early Melbourne, including the city as it looked during his period.

The Society and Gary Morgan are to be commended for bringing together for the first time, this unique and fine collection of works



**Georgiana McCrae, 1804-1890, artist**  
**Queen Street, Annand's Corner, c.1853**  
 Pen and ink wash on paper  
 National Trust of Australia (Victoria) McCrae Homestead Collection

University of Melbourne, the Museum, the Public Library, the Houses of Parliament and other like icons which are still used and admired in the context of the day to day life of our city.

Universal education was a particular concern of La Trobe, and it was under his aegis that the foundation stones for the University of Melbourne and the Public Library of Victoria were laid in 1853. La Trobe was himself a patron and often the instigator of such cultural and learned bodies as the Philosophical Society, now the Royal Society of Victoria, the Mechanics' Institute, now the Melbourne Athenaeum, the Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Society, still in existence, and the Royal Botanic Gardens.

Also, what I am sure many of you know, but is less known to the broader community, is that La Trobe was also an artist. He was a well-travelled and educated man who spent much time producing many fine landscapes and stretches. His artistic talent was obvious to many around him and he spent time reflecting and taking in the various landscapes that surrounded him in his life and through his travels. Government

depicting images of early Melbourne – some of which I understand, have never been publicly displayed before.

The collection provides a most remarkable insight into the beginnings of the colony, particularly during La Trobe's time and gives us all a greater insight into what life was like in that period. What is wonderful about these works is the familiarity of the landscapes yet at the same time, a contrast between today's city and the extent of city 'life' portrayed as it then was.

This collection is important to understanding and appreciating more intimately, the history and story of both this great city and State of Victoria.

And so, as Governor of Victoria and Patron of the La Trobe Society, it gives me great pleasure to declare officially open the exhibition of 'Early Melbourne Paintings'.

Thank you.

**Alex Chernov**



**George Alexander Gilbert, 1815-1877, artist**  
**River Yarra, Melbourne, 1846**  
 Watercolour and gouache  
 Roy Morgan Research Collection

# Exhibition: Early Melbourne Paintings

By Dr Dianne Reilly

The La Trobe Society was privileged to hold the annual Christmas Cocktails event for 2012 at the Roy Morgan Research Centre in Collins Street, Melbourne, thanks to the generosity of member Gary Morgan.

The exhibition of 61 images of Melbourne dating from the time of La Trobe's residence in Victoria was curated for this special occasion by Pauline Underwood, Manager of the Collins Street Gallery. Gary Morgan produced a superb catalogue which was illustrated with all the works as a lasting record of the exhibition.

The paintings on show were views, rarely on public display, of the colony in the early stages of its development. They effectively evoked the streetscapes and landscapes of Melbourne and environs in the colonial period. There were watercolours including George Alexander Gilbert's *River Yarra, Melbourne* (1846), *Evening on the Yarra* by Henry Easom Davies (c.1856), and *Melbourne from St Kilda Road* (c.1865), and numerous paintings of public buildings and

landmarks, such as the *St Francis' Cathedral* (c.1854), and the delicate *View down Collins Street, Melbourne* (c.1845).

Most of the works on show came from the fine collection of the Roy Morgan Research Centre, other generous lenders to the exhibition being the ANZ Bank, National Trust of Australia (Victoria), The Australian Club and a number of private collectors.

After two weeks in the Collins Street Galley, Gary Morgan was invited by the Governor to display the exhibition in the beautiful surroundings of Government House for the Australia Day 2013 Open House on 26 January.

For our interest and delight, some of the choice paintings from the exhibition are illustrated here.

**Dianne Reilly**  
**Hon Secretary**



**Artist unknown**  
**Melbourne from St Kilda Road, 1865**  
 Watercolour  
 Roy Morgan Research Collection



**Henry Easom Davies, 1831-1868, artist**  
**Evening on the Yarra, Melbourne, c.1856**  
 Watercolour  
 Roy Morgan Research Collection



**Thomas Ham, 1821-1870, engraver**  
**Bridge over the Yarra, c.1850**  
 Hand-coloured lithograph  
 Roy Morgan Research Collection

# Inhabiting Melbourne, 1835-45: Henry Condell and other Early Settlers

By Dr Helen MacDonald

Dr Helen MacDonald, a member of the La Trobe Society, is an award-winning historian and Senior Research Fellow at the University of Melbourne. Her book, *Human Remains*, won the Victorian Premier's Literary Award in 2006 for a First Book of History; and in 2010 she published the critically-acclaimed *Possessing the Dead: The Artful Science of Anatomy*. She currently holds an Australian Research Council Future Fellowship and is examining the cultural history of organ transplantation in Britain and Australasia.

In 2010 Helen was the recipient of the La Trobe Society Fellowship under a research program managed by the State Library of Victoria, for a book manuscript about Henry Condell, Melbourne's first Mayor.

In 1839, brewer Henry Condell sits in Hobart Town reading reports of a place that has begun to sound like paradise. The town's newspapers have been filled with enticing stories about the Port Phillip District of New South Wales. Some are calling it the 'El Dorado' of the Australian colonies.<sup>1</sup> Condell decides to join the many people who are flocking across Bass Strait. He puts his successful brewery up for sale and, when there are no immediate takers, advertises that he will let it together with his garden, paddocks and dwelling house.<sup>2</sup> Then Condell gathers his personal possessions and with his wife Marion and their 12-year-old son sets sail to begin again, in the new town of Melbourne. It is a place in which he will remake himself, constructing a brewery, buying up properties, and much less successfully becoming swept up in other men's political passions.

When I became the La Trobe Society Fellow, I knew a great deal about this man, who had tried and failed to settle elsewhere in the British colonial world – first briefly in India, then in British North America, before arriving in the convict colony of Van Diemen's Land in 1822. There, Condell had held clerical posts in the Commissariat Department, before being dismissed in 1830 for gross insubordination to his superiors. Worse followed. In 1836 Condell was convicted of assault, having beaten a convict woman who named him as her assailant in a Dying Declaration.

The Fellowship enabled me to explore Condell's subsequent time in Melbourne. I was curious about how this unsuitable man came to be considered, in the phrase of the day, a 'fit and worthy' candidate to become a councillor

and mayor, then to represent Melbourne in the Legislative Council of New South Wales, positions for which he was peculiarly ill-suited by many measures.

In this brief article I'll use Henry Condell's time in Melbourne as a prism through which to examine one of the big debates of his day: how this town should be inhabited. Before the discovery of gold, which resulted in chaotic and uncontrollable population flows, people arrived here in three ways, and Henry Condell and his family were represented in each. Some came under their own steam; others through immigration schemes; and a third group arrived as convicts or ex-convicts. More specifically, I'm interested in what brought people to settle in Melbourne, rather than in the Port Phillip District more generally – where men squatted on vast tracts of land they turned into sheep runs soon after John Batman had signed

settler commented on 'the total absence of women from the streets, as well as the paucity of old men', to such an extent that 'anyone over thirty was spoken of as, old So-and-So'.<sup>9</sup> As historian Richard Broome has noted 'the usual restraints on behaviour such as families, police, magistrates, churches, schools and all the other trappings of an ordered life were in short supply, while inns, greed and personal freedom abounded'.<sup>10</sup>

Henry Condell purchased a block of land that ran between Little Bourke street and Great Lonsdale street and there erected a brewery on its Lonsdale Street frontage, beyond which wilderness lay. His house faced Little Bourke Street and accommodated the family of three plus one domestic servant and three men who worked in the brewery. Thus, Marion Condell's life in Melbourne was significantly different to how she had lived in Hobart Town. Here, she had no free

W. F. E. Liardet (Wilbraham Frederick Evelyn), 1799-1878, artist  
View of Melbourne, Port Phillip 1843, [1845]  
Watercolour, pencil, pen and ink  
ANZ Bank Collection

The three men on horseback represent three levels of authority in Melbourne at the time: Captain William Lonsdale, Mayor Henry Condell and Superintendent Charles La Trobe.



that well-known treaty in 1835, thinking he had thus obtained 100,000 acres of Aboriginal land in exchange for the usual things such treaties offered native people: blankets, clothing, mirrors, and bags of flour.<sup>3</sup>

The town in which the Condells arrived in November 1839 was a topsy-turvy place that, four years earlier, had comprised no more than a few tents. Now it boasted seventy-seven warehouses, shops and offices, most of them made of wood.<sup>4</sup> Melbourne was a frontier town. Long teams of bullocks traversed the streets, driven by 'wild-looking' men.<sup>5</sup> For six months from April 1840 hundreds of Aboriginal people camped on their used-to-be land, refusing to leave when Superintendent La Trobe ordered them to do so.<sup>6</sup> Dogs roamed everywhere through the streets, pigs rooted around including in the unfenced burial ground. People rode their horses wildly through the streets and, at night, fired guns into the air.<sup>7</sup>

New arrivals immediately noticed that this place was populated in the main by young men. Scottish settler James Graham wrote home to his father that 'the greatest dissipation' was carried out by youths living in primitive conditions, without religion or family ties.<sup>8</sup> Another new

convict servants and so now shared all the work of feeding and cleaning for this household, with the assistance of one free servant; for if there was one thing upon which most Melburnians agreed it was that convicts must be kept out of this place.

Melbourne's privately-funded settlers had much to say at this time about who should be allowed to inhabit the town. Many approved of the immigration schemes that brought shiploads of bounty passengers from Ireland, Scotland and England, as domestic and agricultural servants were in short supply and their wages consequently high. The *Port Phillip Herald* complained that 'Not a vessel comes into this port but her crew are enticed away by individuals offering them a high rate of wages' to go into the bush, which left ships languishing while new hands to crew them were found.<sup>11</sup>

So when the ship the *Isabella Watson* arrived in August 1840 the bounty passengers on board were joyfully greeted, having contracted to serve a period of labour as servants to free settlers.<sup>12</sup> At least that is what was supposed to happen, but did not in the case of one of these passengers, 18 year old Jane Cundell.<sup>13</sup> She had been born to Marion Condell in Edinburgh in 1822 soon

after her marriage and Condell's quick departure for Van Diemen's Land. When Marion joined her husband in 1824 she had left her daughter behind in Edinburgh. Now Jane had arrived in Melbourne, cast in the shipping records as being a nursery maid who should work off her bounty in servitude, though Henry Condell could well have afforded to pay for her passage out. It may be that signing Jane up to the bounty scheme had been a money-saving ruse on his part, for this system was easily corrupted. Be that as it may, Jane stayed in Port Phillip for only two months before she departed in October 1840, for Van Diemen's Land.<sup>14</sup>

There's something of a mystery here. I've scoured Melbourne's newspapers in an effort to learn what might have occurred during Jane Cundell's brief time in Melbourne to effect that sudden departure from her family, but have found nothing. The search made me think about how many of the people who settled in early Melbourne have left no trace of their time here in records that have been archived. Unlike well-to-do settlers, whose diaries and letters might have been preserved – and also unlike convicts, aspects of whose lives were well documented in official sources – it's rare to find material left by bounty passengers. We catch mere glimpses of them, when others noticed and recorded something about them such as a suicide, or when a vivid group portrait of the newcomers was published, like this one:

It is easy to discern [sic] in the vacant gaze ... their ignorance of the locale of the place, its manners and habits, into which they seem to have been dropped, as it were, from another world ... the smock frocks of the labouring English have not as yet been doffed for colonial raiment, [and] the brogue of Erin's sons is heard in all its primitive melody mixed with the almost unintelligible lingo of the Cornish and Lancashire peasantry.<sup>15</sup>

This is the Melbourne, now populated by more than 10,000 people, in which municipal government was first established. In December 1842 elections were held to select the propertied men who would sit on the first Town Corporation. I've written of this in an earlier edition of *La Trobeana* so I won't revisit it here.<sup>16</sup> Suffice to say that the election resulted in Henry Condell becoming a councillor and alderman then, behind closed doors, Melbourne's first mayor. During his two years in that role the Town Corporation was the subject of continuous accusations of

corruption and ineptitude; and Henry Condell was a peculiarly mute mayor. A few months later, another election resulted in him being chosen to represent Melbourne in the first partially-elected Legislative Council of New South Wales. Condell travelled to Sydney, where he made no speeches on the pressing issues of the day. In fact, the only time he rose to his feet in the Legislative Council was to request permission to retire from it and return home to Melbourne, having learned of plots to replace him as mayor.

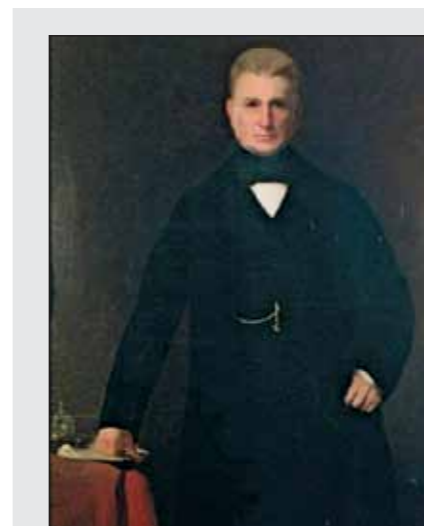


Artist unknown  
Henry Condell, c.1820  
Watercolour on ivory miniature  
Reproduced with kind permission  
of Mr Bryan Stertert-Gill

But one aspect of these early elections is relevant to the subject of this paper. Henry Condell had been put forward as a candidate for the Legislative Council at the behest of Sydney-based Presbyterian firebrand Reverend John Dunmore Lang, a man who, with his supporters, had particularly strong views on how Australia should be settled. They argued that in Port Phillip great effort must be made 'to prevent our being inundated and swamped with an Irish and Romish population'.<sup>17</sup> Election placards put the matter succinctly: 'Protestant Electors of Melbourne! Remember what your forefathers have suffered from popery ... You are three to one in number; so down with the rabble, and no surrender'.<sup>18</sup> Predictably in this context, when Henry Condell was elected, emotions spilled into the streets. Men raged through town hurling stones and brickbats, guns were fired, people wounded and property smashed.<sup>19</sup>

From the mid-1840s there was also something like a moral panic in Melbourne about the number of convicts and ex-convicts arriving to settle. Newspapers charged that these incomers threatened the community's welfare

and its morals, arguing that no strong desire for imported labour should result in principles being 'sacrificed "on the shrine of Mammon"'.<sup>20</sup> Two groups especially preoccupied Melburnians. The first arrived directly from England, having served a brief part of their sentences in a London prison, notably Pentonville, then being exiled to live as free men in Australia. They were dubbed 'the Pentonvillains'. The second main group



Artist unknown  
Henry Condell, 1867.  
Oil  
Courtesy of the City of Melbourne  
Art and Heritage Collection

In 1874, William Villange Condell gifted this portrait and the Tower Clock to the City of Melbourne. The artist has taken liberties with Condell's age in this portrait, which post-dates by seven years the carte-de-visite photographs held at the State Library of Victoria revealing Condell to be an elderly, grey-haired man.

comprised ex-convicts from Van Diemen's Land, considered to be a 'tainted tide' of immigration.<sup>21</sup> These incomers were designated the 'Van Diemen's Land boys', men who flocked north to the District from the 'Sicily of the Pacific' and let loose 'a mass of villainy upon the face of the earth, in reckless lack of consideration for the well-being of society'.<sup>22</sup>

At this point Jane Cundell re-enters this story, for in Van Diemen's Land she had married a British convict, Thomas Brooks, who had been transported there for life. Having obtained a conditional pardon, in 1845 Brooks arrived in Melbourne. Fortunately for Henry Condell's reputation at the time, rather than stay here Brooks went to work in Mortlake where Jane would later join him. The *Port Phillip Herald* greeted the arrival of vessels bringing Van Diemen's Land boys like Brooks to Melbourne by asking how it had come to this, in the 'virgin colony' of Port Phillip, erroneously claiming that the District had never been 'and never shall be polluted with the presence of English offenders'. This newspaper considered that 'some Vandemonian runaway or expirée' was connected with most criminal activities in Melbourne.<sup>23</sup>

That claim can be tested by reading the reports of court proceedings at this time. I'll focus on the crimes that brought people before the magistrate's court, for Henry Condell had sat there in judgement on his fellow settlers since

1842 when he had become mayor despite his own conviction for assault in Hobart Town.<sup>24</sup>

The cases brought before Condell and his fellow magistrates do not often nominate ex-convicts as being the culprits, but they do provide us with a snapshot of the kind of behaviour that brought Melbourne's early settlers before this court. John Brown, who kept a lodging-house

in Flinders Lane, was accused of grossly abusing Constable King, as a 'dog killer'.<sup>25</sup> Which Constable King certainly was, constables being men who roamed Melbourne's streets armed with clubs which they used to bash dogs over the head before cutting off their tails, for each of which they received a fee. Condell and his co-magistrates ordered a man named William Horton to pay maintenance for an illegitimate infant, in a decision subsequently overturned by a higher court and before 'a proper judge'.<sup>26</sup> John Price, Melbourne's pound keeper, came before the court charged with neglecting the animals in his care. Condell dismissed that charge, on the grounds that neglecting animals was no offence.<sup>27</sup> Charlotte Robinson, whom newspapers dubbed the 'dashing Cyprian', appeared before Condell for furiously riding her horse through the public streets. He fined her the hefty sum of five guineas.<sup>28</sup> But he treated men who committed crimes against the person – as had he – more leniently. Mr Boyd, who had stabbed a man during an argument, was merely bound over to keep the peace;<sup>29</sup> and Isaac Wood, taken into custody for repeatedly beating his wife and threatening to kill her, escaped with a fine of just eighty shillings when he complained that Melbourne's weather made him do it.<sup>30</sup>

In 1853 Henry Condell suddenly departed from the District for England. Five years earlier Melbourne had been proclaimed a city; three years later, in 1851, Port Phillip became Victoria, having separated from New South Wales.

Condell was one of many old colonists who were leaving Victoria at this time, unsettled by the huge influx of people seeking gold.<sup>31</sup> A report of the *Bombay's* departure, titled 'The Victorian Exodus', noted the old residents on board who had occupied a 'position worthy of remark', men who had made a political impact in Melbourne and were patrons of its public institutions.<sup>32</sup> Henry Condell was merely mentioned as having been the town's first mayor. He was already becoming a forgotten man and today is barely a footnote in accounts of Melbourne's pre-gold rush past. For this, Condell surely had himself to blame, having been an unimpressive mayor and legislative councillor. Critics had always

complained of his invisibility, sneering when he ran for the Legislative Council that he was 'The Great Unknown'.<sup>33</sup>

Knowing this, in England Condell had an eye to recasting his colonial reputation. He commissioned a large portrait which he sent to Melbourne as a gift to be hung in the Council chamber of the grand new gold-built Town Hall. And how pleased he would be to find it hanging today in the Lord Mayor's office, at last giving Condell an authoritative identity – at least inside Melbourne's Town Hall, and to those who are unaware of his complicated past.

1 *Sydney Monitor*, 17 January 1838.

2 *Colonial Times*, 27 August 1839.

3 Batman's Treaty with the Aborigines, 1835, in C.M.H. Clark (ed.), *Select Documents in Australian History 1788-1850*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1950, pp. 90-92. For a full discussion of the treaty and its historical salience see Bain Atwood, *Possession: Batman's Treaty and the Matter of History*, The Miegunyah Press, Melbourne University Publishing, 2009.

4 A.G.L. Shaw, *A History of the Port Phillip District: Victoria before Separation*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1996, p. 75.

5 Charles Griffiths, cited in James Boyce, *1835: The Founding of Melbourne and the Conquest of Australia*, Black Inc., Collingwood, 2011, p. 161.

6 Boyce, *1835*, pp. 185-6. In October the camp was broken up.

7 For a vivid account of early Melbourne, see Robyn Annear, *Bearbrass: Imagining Early Melbourne*, Mandarin, Melbourne, 1995.

8 James Graham, letter from Yarra Yarra River, Melbourne, Port Phillip, 12 July 1939, in Sally Graham, *Pioneer Merchant: The Letters of James Graham, 1839-54*, Hyland House, South Yarra.

9 E.M. Curr, in 1842 (cited in Shaw, *A History*, p. 78).

10 Richard Broome, *The Victorians: Arriving*, Fairfax, Syme & Weldon Associates, Sydney, 1984, p. 27.

11 8 June 1840.

12 *Port Phillip Herald*, 11 August 1840.

13 Jane spelled her surname 'Cundell', as did the Scottish family of Henry 'Condell'.

14 *Colonial Times*, 13 October 1840.

15 *Port Phillip Herald*, 7 September 1841.

16 Helen MacDonald, 'Henry Condell: Melbourne's First Mayor', *La Trobeana*, Vol. 9, No. 1, February 2010, pp.14-17.

17 Alexander Thomson to Mr Dredge, 1846. Alexander Thomson Papers, Box 1033, Letters of Alexander Thomson, 1836-1860, MS 9345, State Library of Victoria.

18 Letter from Edward Curr, complaining of the placard, *Port Phillip Herald*, 26 August 1843.

19 Jennifer Gerrand, 'The Multicultural Values of the Melbourne 1843 Rioting Irish Catholic Australians', *Journal of Historical and European Studies*, Vol. 1, December 2007, pp. 59-70.

20 *Port Phillip Herald*, 12 September 1845.

21 *Port Phillip Herald*, 12 September 1845.

22 *Port Phillip Patriot*, 19 August 1845.

23 *Port Phillip Herald*, 20 May 1845.

24 It may be that the crimes to which newspapers referred to were instead tried in a higher court.

25 *Port Phillip Patriot*, 19 July 1845.

26 *Argus*, 19 March 1847.

27 *Argus*, 22 September 1848.

28 *Argus*, 21 May 1847.

29 *Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser*, 9 August 1845.

30 *Argus*, 1 December 1846.

31 See David Goodman, *Gold Seeking: Victoria and California in the 1850s*, Stanford University Press, Palo Alto, California, 1994.

32 *Launceston Examiner*, 1 March 1853, reprinted from the *Argus*.

33 *Port Phillip Patriot*, 24 April 1843.

# Geelong – Places in the Footsteps of La Trobe

By Dr Dianne Reilly

Society members enjoyed a superb tour of Geelong – Places in the Footsteps of La Trobe, from Friday 9 November to Sunday 11 November 2012.

Jennifer Bantow, with the assistance of Ros Lewis, both La Trobe Society members, planned this enjoyable and educational tour so that participants were able to visit numerous sites which would have been familiar to La Trobe, a regular visitor to Geelong and district during his fifteen years as administrator of the colony. In addition, the group toured three important residences of early settlers in the area which are not normally open to the public.

The weekend began with welcoming cocktails at the **Beach House Kiosk, Eastern Beach**, where Dr David Rowe addressed the group on *Eastern Beach, Geelong's Aquatic Playground – its history, its context and its conservation*. The Eastern Beach area is considered of national significance, and an application has recently been made to the National Heritage Register.

Jennifer Bantow led the Saturday morning viewing of the exterior of *Kardinia*, the former residence of legendary pioneer colonist Dr Alexander Thomson (1800-1866). *Kardinia*, a two-storey brick and stone structure situated

on the southern bank of the Barwon River, was the home of this legendary pioneer colonist, politician, churchman and patriarch. The career of this remarkable and altruistic man is interwoven with the history of Geelong and the infant Port Phillip colony. The present homestead, of uncertain date, contains within the fabric the stone house of 1850-55, later extended beyond recognition about 1890 by H F Richardson, a Geelong businessman. It is currently used by a government department.

Next visit on the itinerary was **Barwon Grange** with Jennifer Bantow, former Property Manager of this homestead of State significance. Guided tours were provided by Ros Lewis and another volunteer guide at the property. *Barwon Grange*, the single-storey gothic style villa situated on the northern bank of the Barwon River, was erected in 1856 for Jonathan Porter O'Brien, a merchant ship owner. This brick house of six rooms and attic was occupied by a succession of distinguished tenants from 1858 to 1867 when John Haines, formerly of *Mamre* Station, near Colac, was owner/occupier. A detached kitchen building was added in 1871. *Barwon Grange* is a notable early Victorian villa designed in the appropriate and characteristic picturesque gothic mode of the 1850s. The house is important for its decorative roofline with fretted gable



bargeboards, wooden finials and attic dormers. Elegant fenestration and joinery, and a most unusual timber verandah, which incorporates a decorative balustrade above the roofline over an ornamental valence and coupled posts, establish the original and distinguished nature of this design. The architect for this villa is unknown. *Barwon Grange* has been meticulously restored by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria), and is maintained in an excellent, near original condition. The detached kitchen building and other outbuildings have been demolished.

A bus tour followed, with a visit to **St John's Lutheran Church**, originally St Andrew's Presbyterian Church with Church

War. The original building is architecturally important as a rare example of Colonial Georgian in Victoria, featuring a typically simple hipped roofed rectangular form. The facade (c.1912) is notable as an unusually late example of Renaissance Revival with a distinctive Doric porch. In the 1970s, the site reverted to use as a church for a Lutheran congregation.

The second church visited with Church Warden Ruth Christian was **Christ Church, Geelong**, designed in 1843 by the renowned second colonial architect Edmund Blacket. Christ Church is the first church built for the Anglican Church in Geelong, and was opened in 1847.



**Coriyule**  
Daryl Ross, photographer, 2012



**Christ Church**  
Daryl Ross, photographer, 2012

Archivist Don Townson. The building is historically significant as one of the earliest surviving churches in Victoria (c.1841), and the oldest surviving Presbyterian Church in the State. It is also the oldest surviving masonry structure in the Geelong region and the earliest documented work of Alexander J Skene. The early church structure also has historical associations with a number of Geelong pioneers, particularly Dr Alexander Thomson, Geelong's first mayor, who has been described as Geelong's founder. The building and its additions are historically notable as the home from 1912 of the Comunn Na Feinne Society, popular among Geelong Scots up until the Second World

War. The congregation had already outgrown the church by the following year and this resulted in a proposal to enlarge the building. Together with the commencement of a second Anglican church in Geelong, St Paul's, the extension of Christ Church to the east was undertaken; however, both projects were affected by the discovery of gold in 1851. The enlarged church, designed in a Perpendicular Gothic Revival style with squat crenellated front tower, angled stepped buttresses at all corners and large windows with perpendicular tracery, is constructed of Barrabool sandstone and roofed in slate. It was completed c.1856 and consecrated in 1859. Christ Church, Geelong is of historical



**Barwon Grange**  
Loreen Chambers, photographer, 2012

significance due to its association with the early history of the Anglican Church in Victoria. It is the oldest Anglican Church in the State still occupying its original site. It appears to be the only extant example of Bishop Broughton's involvement in church design in Victoria. It is of aesthetic significance for its remarkable, high quality collection of stained glass windows, in particular the fine examples of the work of Ferguson and Urie. Together these demonstrate the development of stained glass design from the early 1872 examples to the late 20th century work. The mural is also of significance as a rare example of this aspect of the work of important artist, Christian Waller.

Lunch at the historic **Commun Na Feine Hotel**, 'The Commo', was included, with Ros Lewis giving an informal talk on its fascinating history.

The afternoon finished with a wonderful tour of **Coriyule** homestead at Curlewis, the former home of women squatters Miss Anne Drysdale, who arrived in Melbourne in 1840, five months after La Trobe, and Miss Caroline Newcomb. Bryce Raworth, conservation architect, and Isobel Williams gave us a warm reception followed by tours of their historic and carefully restored home. Welcome refreshments were generously offered by our hosts, and the brilliant *Coriyule Choir* entertained our group with a recently composed ballad evoking the

history of this significant house, which was designed by the architect Charles Laing and built in 1849.

Dinner at the **Geelong Club** followed, with Guest Speaker Norman Houghton, Club Historian, entertaining us with stories about the Club's past (an account of which is included in this issue of *La Trobeana*)

Sunday morning began with a short visit to the **Geelong Botanic Gardens**, the fourth oldest botanic gardens in Australia. On 29 June 1851, La Trobe ordered Alexander J. Skene, first architect/surveyor to practice in Geelong, to mark out an area of 192 acres for the Geelong Botanic Gardens. To commemorate La Trobe's influence in the Geelong region, the then State historian Mr Les Blake, unveiled a memorial tablet to La Trobe in the Geelong Botanic Gardens on 14 December 1975. Society members gathered near the original customs house and telegraph office which had been restored and reopened in the Gardens in 1975. This prefabricated hut had been sent from Sydney and has been in Geelong since 1838.<sup>1</sup>

The group then had the privilege of visiting **Windemere** homestead (also known as *Woodlands* and *Lara House*) at Lara. Built for Mr George Fairbairn, the house is currently known as **Pirra Mansion**. It is owned by property developer Mr Lino Bisinella who has meticulously and superbly restored it to its former 1880-1882 glory. Mr Bisinella kindly opened his historic house especially for La Trobe Society members.

An extremely interesting and informative weekend ended with a drive to the **You Yangs**. Despite the fact that, because of maintenance works, we were unable to follow La Trobe's footsteps right up to Flinders Peak (known as *Station Peak* when La Trobe climbed it on 24 November 1840 and 15 September 1846), panoramic views from mid-way of the countryside surrounding this rocky outcrop as far afield as Geelong and Melbourne were well worth the excursion.

Deep appreciation is expressed to Jennifer Bantow and Ros Lewis for their excellent planning and organisation of this historic weekend.

**Dianne Reilly**  
**Hon Secretary**

<sup>1</sup> For an evocative description of La Trobe's connection with early Geelong see a copy of the reprinted address: Blake, L B J. "Unveiling of a commemorative plaque at Geelong." *La Trobeana*, vol 5, no 1 (August 2006): 12-16.

# The Geelong Club: A brief history of its early days

By Norman Houghton, Club Historian

This paper is an edited version of the most interesting address given by Norman Houghton on the occasion of the La Trobe Society's dinner at the Geelong Club on 10 November 2012.

In the late 1850s Geelong was a booming commercial and port centre for the Ballarat goldfields. Its role as the pivot of this part of the colony was signalled by the opening of the railway to Melbourne and the cutting of a deep-water channel through the bar at Point Henry. Geelong was abuzz with economic and social activity and the time was now ripe for the establishment of a club. With the enormous influx of educated immigrants, a club was seen to serve a very practical function in these times by providing meals and accommodation in a superior atmosphere to the then overcrowded and boisterous ordinary run of hotels and boarding houses.

The Geelong Club is an institution that has operated since 1859 as a social club offering a retreat from work pressures in fine surroundings. The Club has experienced two periods of recess, and dates its present stability and continuous operation from 1881 when a group of gentlemen made a commitment to the concept of an ongoing Club that would meet the

special needs of its constituency. Originally, it was to be called the Western Club as a majority of its putative members lived outside of Geelong in Western Victoria, but by 1860 it had become known by its current name. The promoters proposed to rent premises as a club house and provide reading, dining, billiard, smoking and sleeping rooms.

The recruitment policy was to secure 100 members at an annual subscription of £8 (\$16) with a joining fee of £12. Minimum weekly wages were then £1.9.0 (\$2.90); so, the subscription fee approximated 5½ weeks ordinary pay or something in the order of \$5,500 in today's values. Members were to be elected by ballot. The Western Club promoters comprised an original nucleus of 50 members, which association was formed through word of mouth. The promoters placed an advertisement in the local press advising of a public meeting on 7 January 1859 to form a club, adopt a constitution and recruit new members. This aim was achieved on that day.

The Club's original profile was one whose membership comprised two thirds pastoralists and wool brokers and one third lawyers and merchants. There are a number of families who have supported the Club at its inception, and these include the Armytage, Austin, Strachan, Bell, Calvert, Murray, Fairbairn, Hope, Whyte and Russell families. Over the years since then, there have generally been one or more representatives of several of these families as members at any one time.

The first Club president was James Strachan, a pioneer wool broker and early Geelong settler, who built *Lunan House* on the Drumcondra shores of Corio Bay in 1849-50. Charles Laing, architect and surveyor, designed this spacious two-storey colonial Georgian style residence, notable for its very early use of Barrabool freestone for ashlar<sup>1</sup> construction. He was a member of Victoria's first Legislative Council in 1851 and prominent in public issues until his death in 1875. The iron gates which



Mack's Hotel  
Photograph, undated  
Courtesy Norman Houghton,  
The Geelong Club Archives

The majority of members were aged 29 years and the oldest 53 years and this demographic reflected the gold rush period as a young man's decade.

Despite the favourable start to the Club in 1859 it took a little more time to gain sufficient members to fund the Club's proposed activities. The fees were reduced a little to aid recruiting. It is likely that the Club met informally at one of the local hotels, probably Mack's, which was the wool industry meeting place, until such time as it was able to open its own premises.

## First Club House

In May 1860 the Club rented a two-storey stone and brick building at 58 Yarra Street, west side, about 40 metres north from the Ryrie Street corner which had formerly been used as a gentleman's residence (the building survived until the 1950s). The Club's founding membership totalled 70, with member interests principally in dining, billiards and Tuesday evening cards.

originally adorned the driveway are now located at Geelong Grammar School.

It will be of interest to members that 'Lunan House was for many years used as a teachers' college by the Education Department of Victoria. The interior has been completely rearranged, the original details altered and the exterior freestone fabric inappropriately painted. The essential detail is intact'.<sup>2</sup>

The Club House was furnished in an adequate and comfortable style. The accommodation section comprised five bedrooms, each furnished with bed, drawers, two chairs and a bath. The dining room had two big cedar tables, twelve chairs, mahogany side board, cedar dinner wagon and two dozen of everything in the crockery, cutlery and glassware line. The glassware inventory reveals a preference for champagne and claret. This room also had a fireplace. The sitting room was furnished with a mahogany table, card table, six chairs and fire fender.

The billiard room had a Thursdon table, cedar cue stand, two seats, eight chairs and two tables. Lighting was provided through a six-burner gas chandelier. The kitchen was at the rear, separate from the main building as was the custom of the times. A cellar was installed by the owner at the request of the Club.

The round of Club activities is not known in full but the social calendar comprised at least a regular Tuesday evening card session and billiards



**Lunan House**  
Photograph, undated  
Courtesy Norman Houghton,  
The Geelong Club Archives

plus an occasional dinner. Overall activities were limited due to the small membership and high weighting of out-of-town members. The Club was managed on a day-to-day basis by a steward who provided housekeeping services, meals and beds in return for a fee, which as his sole source of income. Member fees were required to be paid weekly, subject to a 10% interest penalty.

The Club eventually ran out of cash owing to high overheads, a stagnant membership and rising rents and moved into Mack's Hotel in Brougham Street, Geelong in April 1864, in the process selling all its furniture, fittings, bedding, cutlery, etc – it had a somewhat unorthodox arrangement whereby annual operating expenditure was secured by a mortgage to the members of the Club's furniture and fittings. Here, they were provided with a billiard room, reading room, dining room and had access to the bar and accommodation. Initially, the Club flourished but soon members began to complain about high charges, noise, the food (e.g. oysters were tinned rather than fresh), and writing paper and envelopes were not always available. By 1866

the Club closed probably when the existing rental agreement expired.

The first Geelong Club was too narrowly based and had two thirds of its 70 members residing out of town; so, the overall use of the Club's facilities would have been limited. In retrospect, it can be argued that the formation of the Geelong Club when it occurred in 1859 was not a favourable response to the changing gold rush climate of the 1850s. Rather it was

a regression to old values that pre-dated the gold rush. It was a reaffirmation of conservative gentility in a boisterous and raw commercial world. The Club was seen by all as a landed gentry club. With its strong connection to the Melbourne Club through multiple memberships that involved one quarter of Geelong members, the Geelong Club admitted very few who stood outside the criteria of this august Melbourne institution. In addition, by the mid-1860s the Club had little control of its economic position and had insufficient members to absorb rising costs. The Club had run its course for the time being, but Mack's Hotel continued to be one of the main social venues for the wool brokers and their clients. The link was not broken and was taken up in later years.

### **The Second Club**

The Club revived in 1874 in premises known as Fassert's Patisserie at 109 Ryrie Street. The inaugural President of the second Geelong Club was Graham Berry MLA, who went on to become three times radical Victorian

Premier in 1875, 1877 and 1880/81. Berry was the local member and newspaper owner. The Club under him was a merchants' club rather than a squatters' club, as was the first Geelong Club. After this second incarnation, the Club disbanded when Fassert's café closed in 1875 because of financial difficulties.

### **The Geelong Club of the 1880s**

The present Geelong Club was initiated at a public meeting on 3 August, 1881. Edward Lascelles is regarded as the founder of the 1881 Geelong Club. He inspired and pushed a group of Geelong and District businessmen and wool industry leaders, professionals and wool growers to commit their time and money to the new social Club. It was a young man's club, with the average member age being 41 years of age.



**The Geelong Club**  
Photograph, 1881  
Courtesy Norman Houghton,  
The Geelong Club Archives

The inaugural Club President was William Robertson, a lawyer, grazier, stud master, Colac Shire Councillor and Victorian parliamentarian from the famous *Kerangemorrah* run at Colac.

The Club purchased the freehold of Mack's Hotel which was Geelong's leading hotel, favourably situated opposite Steampacket Wharf to capture maritime travellers. The Club occupied half the building, its rooms comprising a bar, billiard room, card room, smoking room, reading room, dining room and accommodation rooms, and also erected a new billiard room to the rear for Club purposes. The other half of the premises was being worked as a hotel.

Member interests were dining, social drinking, billiards, cigars and turf betting, plus hosting visitors from other clubs. During the wool selling season country members brought their families along, and the Club was able to remain open day and night. In order to manage labour and lighting costs, the Club imposed a

fine on billiards players after midnight, and the monies accrued were distributed to the billiard marker and steward.

### **The Present Club House**

The hotel arrangements proved unsatisfactory and so the Club sold out in 1888 and purchased the freehold to the two blocks immediately east of Mack's Hotel for the new club house. This block of land ran from Brougham Street through to Corio Street.

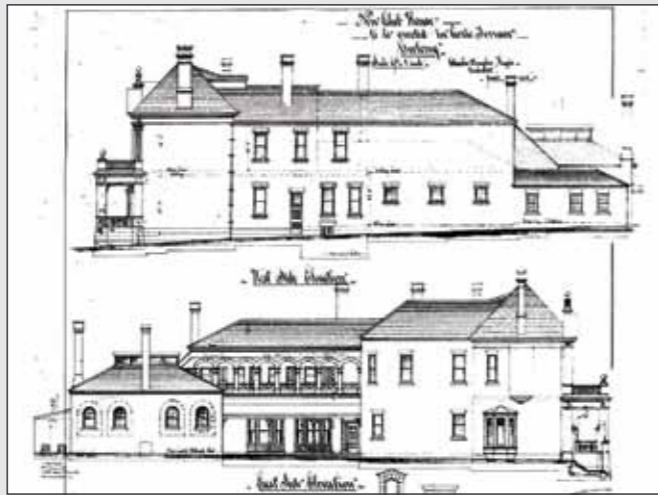
The new Club House was designed by architect Charles Figgis in the Transitional Queen Anne style and built by local contractor J. C. Taylor. It comprised a foyer, reading room, bar, card room, smoke room, committee room and steward's bedroom. The billiard room was

then separate from the main building. There was no accommodation provided here, and many country members dropped off as a consequence.

This new building was first occupied on 19 October 1889. A local nuisance at the premises was wandering dogs, and this matter was attended to in 1895 by installing a small set of iron gates at the top of the front steps. They remain to this day.

Interests at this new Club, where there were more town than country members, revolved around social drinking, cards, billiards, sport talk, entertaining visitors and casual reading of the many local and British Empire journals in the reading room.

The general behaviour code has not varied much over the decades and currently has strong echoes with the 1859 foundation ethos that the Club exists for the free social interchange of members and their guests. Rules in the first Club



Charles Douglas Figgis  
New Club House  
Ink on paper, 1889  
Courtesy Norman Houghton,  
The Geelong Club Archives

detailed that a member engaging in conduct 'derogatory to his station in life' would be expelled.

One tradition which commenced under the leadership of E. Lascelles is that members take a sense of ownership of the Club, and if they see any works and services and/or cultural improvements that need doing and the Club is not in a position to oblige financially, then members freely make up the difference.

As the leading social club for Geelong and District, the Geelong Club has always enjoyed high profile and high achiever members. The Club has enjoyed having three Victorian premiers as members: Sir Charles Sladen, Sir Graham Berry and Sir Henry Bolte, one Governor-General (Lord Casey), 13 Knights of the Realm, several Order of Australia recipients, a Victoria Cross winner, numerous members of parliament and cabinet ministers, many municipal councillors and mayors, the three founders of

the Apex Club national movement, and those senior and experienced in the professions of law, medicine, architecture, accounting, retailing and merchandising, engineering, education and public administration.

The Geelong Club remains one of the foundation blocks of the Geelong community, and ranks with institutions such as the hospital, municipal government, the traditional churches, the grammar school, the football club and a handful of businesses and practices that have served Geelong since the gold rush period. Not many can claim this proud status.

<sup>1</sup> Ashlar is thin rectangle or square of dressed stone for facing a wall.

<sup>2</sup> Sourced from the Victorian Historic Buildings Council web site, 8 February 2013.

## A Research Note: Mr La Trobe and Miss Drysdale

By Helen Armstrong , Editorial Committee

**Helen Armstrong is a Volunteer Guide at La Trobe's Cottage and a committee member of the C J La Trobe Society and of the Friends of La Trobe's Cottage, coordinating publicity and website content. Since her retirement from the University of Melbourne Library, where she worked as a selection librarian in Collection Management and subsequently as the Economics and Commerce Librarian, she has been guiding at a number of significant heritage properties and serving as an office bearer in the Australian Decorative and Fine Arts Societies of Mornington Peninsula and Yarra. Helen joined the Editorial Committee of La Trobeana at the end of 2012.**

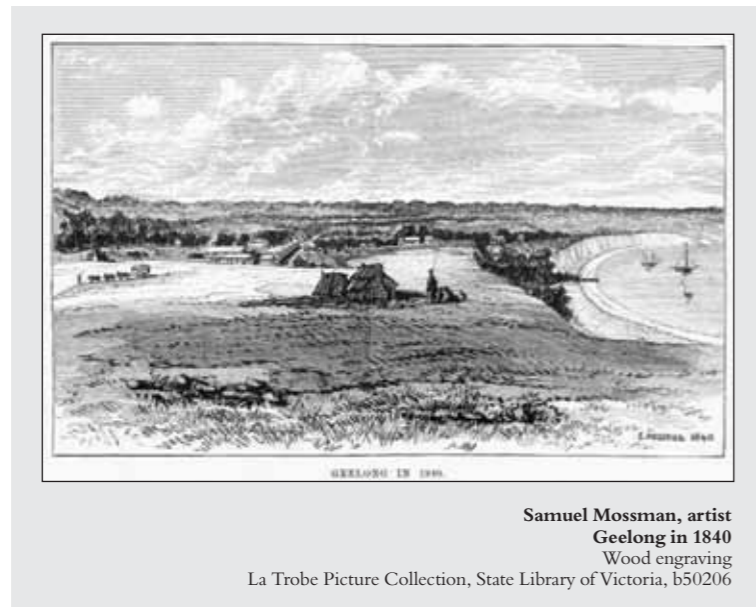
Anne Drysdale's diary records that, soon after arriving in Port Phillip, she received a call from 'Mr Latrobe the governor and his Lady. He is an excellent & pious man, he does all the good to the Colony which is in his power, but that is very limited', Melbourne, March 1840.<sup>1</sup>

She then writes that: 'Dr and Mrs Thomson came from Geelong & stayed for a fortnight. Dr Thomson on hearing of my anxiety about getting a station most kindly offered to give me one of his own 3 miles from his own house [*Cardinia*]', April 1840.<sup>2</sup>

'Last week Dr T received an official letter from Capt Fyans the Commissioner for Crown

Lands desiring Dr Thomson to remove his sheep from the station given to me, as it is to be reserved for the town herd. This is evidently spite ... as there is as yet no town herd at Coria<sup>3</sup>. Dr T has gone yesterday to Melbourne & I have written by him to Mr Latrobe to beg him to interfere', 9 June 1840.

'On Saturday last I received a kind letter from Mr Latrobe enclosing one for Capt Fyans, who called upon me the same day. He made many objections to allowing any one to run sheep below Coria. On Tuesday Dr & Mrs Thomson went down with me to fix on a place... On walking home we found out a probable reason why Capt Fyans did not wish sheep to run in that direction. We met one of



Samuel Mossman, artist  
Geelong in 1840  
Wood engraving  
La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria, b50206

the government men driving a cart with wood which he said was to build a log hut for Mr Fenwick the Police Magistrate, who is known to have a dairy or cattle station on the very best part of the land beside fresh water', 26 June 1840.

Miss Drysdale later writes from her station *Borongoop* on the Barwon River that: 'Mr Latrobe called before breakfast on his way to Indented Head', 17 January 1842; 'after breakfast Mr La Trobe and Mr Fenwick called', 24 November 1843; she 'breakfasted early & went to call upon Mrs Latrobe & Miss Fenwick', 7 March 1844; and 'drove to the Heads to visit Mrs Latrobe & Mrs Bell', March 1846.

Sadly, the volume of her diary from late 1847 to mid 1851 has disappeared, but later that year she and Miss Newcomb visited Melbourne by steamer and stayed in Richmond for a week: 'Caroline & I went after breakfast [from Richmond] to Melbourne & arrived at the office in time to see Capt Lonsdale & also Mr Latrobe, who after reading our letter wrote an order that the land we wish to have at Leep Leep may be withdrawn from the next sale', 16 October 1851; 'Caroline & I called upon Mrs Latrobe', 20 October 1851; 'home by sunset' to *Coriyule*, 23 October 1851.

#### References

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- Roberts, Bev. "A black apron view of history? Anne Drysdale & Caroline Newcomb, Victoria's 'lady squatters'". *La Trobeana*, vol 9, no 3 (November 2010): 2-16

#### Endnotes

- 1 This was written 30 March 1840, but obviously occurred earlier, sometime between 15-30 March.
- 2 This was written 28 April 1840, referring to what happened earlier.
- 3 Miss Drysdale spells this 'Coria' in the early part of the Diary, then adopts Corio.

## Boys and History: Litlington visit 1951

By Susan Priestley

Susan Priestley has been an independent historian for nearly half a century after being initiated into the wonders of history through an archival position at the University of Melbourne and a subsequent Master of Arts. She has produced eleven commissioned histories and contributed entries for the Australian Dictionary of Biography and the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. Since being encouraged to join the Royal Historical Society of Victoria by Emeritus Professor A. G. L. Shaw, she became a library volunteer, then Councillor for 20 years including five as President. In addition, she was a founding member of the C. J. La Trobe Society and one of its Vice-presidents until 2010, and she has contributed a number of articles to *La Trobeana*. Her recent biography of Henrietta Augusta Dugdale offers insight into the rising middle classes in England and Australia, and the freethought movement including initial moves towards women's suffrage.

The State centenary of Victoria on 1 July 1951 was the occasion for a ceremonial visit to C J La Trobe's grave in the churchyard at Litlington Sussex, a tiny village near Polegate in the south eastern corner of England. It had been arranged by Victoria's new Agent-General in London, John Lienhop, who resigned from the Victorian parliament in December 1950 after 13 years as MLC for Bendigo Province.<sup>1</sup> Ten years ago in a *La Trobeana* article<sup>2</sup> I transcribed a letter from the RHSV manuscripts collection, which describes the day in great detail. Written by L.J. Wilmoth [not Lienhop as I mistakenly said] it made mention of 'the 96 Victorian schoolboys' who came by coach and formed a guard of honour between the rectory and the church for the official procession.<sup>3</sup> One person named among 'many Victorians' present was Councillor Gutteridge of Kensington. My article concluded with an appeal to members to further identify any of the boys, as well as the Kensington councillor.

I had presumed that the latter referred to the Melbourne suburb of Kensington, but have since found the reference was to Alderman Hal Gutteridge, an old boy of Melbourne Grammar School, who lived in Kensington London and was Mayor of Westminster from 1947 to 1949.<sup>4</sup>

Last year, courtesy of Helen Armstrong and her alertness at a chance meeting, we were put in touch with Barry Rule, secretary of the Sun Advertiser Youth Travel Association, formed among those who had gone on one of four schoolboy trips to England during the 1950s, beginning in 1951. Sponsored by Melbourne's *Sun* newspaper and the *Adelaide Advertiser* and organized through the Overseas League, the boys' four months away included six weeks touring England and Scotland. In 2002 the Association published a full account of the tours, *Australia's Schoolboy Ambassadors* by Errol Chinner and Don David, with editor Richard Telfer. In response to our appeal, Barry Rule



**St Michael the Archangel, Litlington.**  
Photographer, Geoffrey Goode  
2004



**C J La Trobe's Inscription on Gravestone,**  
**St Michael the Archangel**  
Photographer, Geoffrey Goode  
2004

circularized his members by email, asking for accounts of 1 July 1951 taken from their diary entries. Responses came from Alan Baker, John Biggs, John Brownbill, Neil Chapple, Geoffrey Goode, Graeme Legge and Marshal Schaeshe.

The boys were left with somewhat muddled impressions of history, several reporting that La Trobe was born, raised and died at Litlington or Polegate. John Biggs of Box Hill gave the most positive account:

Victoria's first Governor, C J Latrobe, has been honoured in some unusual ways, for example in the engine which often hauls the Spirit of Progress – 302 – *CJ Latrobe*. However, I don't think he expected to be honoured by the presence of 100 Victorian schoolboys at a centenary of his entering into office as Governor of Victoria.

Anyway, today we all went down to Polegate (*sic*) for the afore mentioned anniversary, and as well, such people as the Agent General for Victoria, Mr Leinhop (*sic*), the Lord Mayor of London and the Lady Mayoress were present.

In the morning there was a church service at Polegate (*sic*) and then a benediction at La Trobe's grave in the church

yard. After the planting of a special tree by Mr Leinhop (*sic*), we had refreshments. Then there were speeches, etc., and after a day that was rich in historical associations we returned by coach to Croydon. On the way we saw the great figures cut out of the chalk hills and visible for many miles around.

John Brownbill, who went on to a distinguished dental career, was candidly unimpressed and embarrassed for the invited sons of their host families:

We were all bored stiff. The Croydon boys must not have thought much of a day trip that was supposed to be good instead of boring. The Lord Mayor and his gang were 45 minutes late. When we got home I wrote home and went to bed at 10:30.

Marshal Schaeche, who at 13 was the youngest in the group, wrote a dutiful account in his diary but has since admitted to boredom like most of the boys. It was a hot day for England, almost 30 degrees, and the boys had to stand in their uniform blazers, long trousers, ties and wool berets lining the road awaiting the official party, which was delayed because the chauffeurs lost their way among the narrow winding lanes. A saving grace was the close look the boys had

of the Rolls Royce cars carrying London's Lord Mayor Sir Denis Lowson, his wife and other officials.

Graeme Legge at least found the three hour bus ride from Croydon and back 'a very pleasant trip through the beautiful English countryside' and sixty years later could 'still visualize the setting and the occasion so clearly it made an impact on me'. Alan Baker was impressed by the ceremonial regalia of the official party, and by the church service which 'was short but very impressive'. Lunch of sandwiches and cakes 'was eaten in the sunlight in a garden nearby' but the line-up of after lunch speeches was dismissed in a few words, 'they all had their say'.

back about 7pm in our billets. We were stopped by a motor bike "cop" for the first time in England when going about 50mph, but the driver only received a warning to slow down. He was dressed as a dirt track rider. There was a considerable amount of traffic as it was a Sunday – cars, motor bikes and cyclists. Alan and I were tired and hungry when we arrived home. Alan did a little study for his exams tomorrow – not much – I was surprised.



**Clapham House**  
Photographer, Geoffrey Goode  
2004

Neil Chapple named each member of the official party with their correct titles. He enjoyed the 'refreshments in a very nice tea garden' and mentioned that one of the boys 'Jesse Martin presented a letter from Melbourne to the Lord Mayor' adding a query 'for the second time?' The day ended with a little drama.

Our bus got lost on the way "home" and we ended 2½ hours late by going in the wrong direction, so we arrived

Geoffrey Goode could not retrieve his diary but quoted from a letter he had sent to his father on the following day. The occasion, however, was sufficiently impressed on his memory for him to revisit Litlington in 2004, where he took photos of the church, the grave and the house where La Trobe died. We are grateful for his permission to use them. Our thanks go to all seven respondees for sharing their glimpses of 1 July 1951.

- 1 Charles Fahey, 'Lienhop, Sir John Herman (Henry) 1886-1967', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol 15, pp 95-6. Knighthood bestowed in January 1952.
- 2 Priestley, Susan. "Seeking 96 Victorian School Boys of 1951". *La Trobeana*, vol 1, no 2, August 2002, pp 2-3.
- 3 Part of the procession included 'a little cross-bearer preceded the Archdeacon of Hastings who led his clergy. Then came the Lord Mayor of London and the Lady Mayoress, attended by the sheriffs brilliant in their ceremonial dress. In front of this group walked the sword-bearer carrying the Sword of State in its resplendent scarlet and gold scabbard. Behind them followed the Australians. The ceremony over, a grandson and the Agent-General laid wreaths on the grave, and the owners of Clapham House entertained the party in the La Trobe's old home.' From a letter by L. J. Wilmoth, quoted in Alan Gross. *Charles La Trobe*. Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1956. p 145 (Ed.)
- 4 *Argus*, 18 April 1950, p 6.

# Remembering Charles Joseph La Trobe at St Michael the Archangel, Litlington

By Helen Botham

Helen Botham is a member of the La Trobe Society and a guide at La Trobe's Cottage. She was foundation chair of the Friends of La Trobe's Cottage and is the author of *La Trobe's Jolimont: A walk round my garden* published in 2006. Since then she has maintained a deep interest in the life of C J La Trobe, which has included two visits to Litlington in Sussex in recent years.

HERE RESTS IN THE LORD  
THE BODY OF  
CHARLES JOSEPH La Trobe ESQ<sup>RE</sup>, C.B.  
FIRST LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR  
OF THE COLONY OF VICTORIA,  
AUSTRALIA  
WHO DIED AT CLAPHAM HOUSE IN  
THIS PARISH,  
4<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 1875, AGED 74.  
THINE EYES SHALL SEE THE KING IN  
HIS BEAUTY.  
ISAIAH XXXIII.17

(inscription on the headstone of Charles Joseph La Trobe's grave at Litlington Church)

Charles La Trobe died at his home, Clapham House, Litlington, Sussex, on 4 December 1875. He had lived there with his second wife, Rose, their two daughters and his older children from 1866-1875. He was buried in the churchyard of the parish church, St Michael the Archangel.

During September 2012, I visited the church of St Michael the Archangel, and spent a pleasant morning with the Vicar, Rev. James Howson, Church Wardens Mr Richard Hayward and Mr Richard Cox, and Mr Ron Levett from the Alfriston and Cuckmere Valley Historical Society. I had arranged to go on behalf of the C J La Trobe Society to see the grave of Lieutenant-Governor Charles Joseph

La Trobe. The Society is keen to maintain La Trobe's grave and to further our links with the parish. Rev. Howson was offered honorary membership of the C J La Trobe Society, and was happy to accept.

The grave is sited adjacent to the church in the churchyard which at that time, towards the end of the summer, was a grassy meadow. The grass was quite long at the time of the meeting – it looked pretty with meadow flowers – but would be mowed when the flowers died off.

The gravestone was a little pock-marked, with lichen growing on it. All agreed that this was in keeping with the age of the grave, and it would not be appropriate to restore it to its

Stooke family, descendants of Charlotte Louisa Stooke, née La Trobe (great, great granddaughter of James Boneval La Trobe 1702-1752), attend this service.

Australian native flowers were sent by our society to St Michael's for the service on 2 December 2012.

The Church Warden Mr Richard Hayward reported afterwards that the La Trobe family members:

'... laid the flowers at the grave and James led us with some prayers and a short silence. A wonderful Winter's day,



C J La Trobe's Gravestone, St Michael the Archangel  
Photographer, Helen Botham 2012

original condition. However, the lettering was difficult to read and the La Trobe Society offered to fund the restoration of the lettering. Rev. Howson knew of a local craftsman who could carry out this work. This stonemason has since been contacted and has offered to carry out the work at no charge.

Rev. Howson continues the tradition set up some years ago of holding a service every year in La Trobe's honour, on the Sunday closest to the anniversary of his death. The Victorian Agent-General in London is always invited, but in recent years has not attended. Members of the

with a good frost and coffee in church afterwards to warm up, and the Victoria flag flapping nicely in a gentle Northerly. We have put the flowers and your card back in the church by the pulpit as they will not last the night out of doors.'

Whilst at St Michael's in September 2012, I proposed that a service could be held in Melbourne on the same Sunday as the Litlington service. Following discussion with members of the La Trobe Society Committee,



The Rev. James Howson,  
Vicar of St Michael the Archangel  
Courtesy Parish Church, St Michael  
the Archangel, 2012



Flowers at St Michael  
the Archangel  
2 December 2012  
Courtesy Parish Church,  
St Michael the Archangel.

I contacted the Vicar of St Peter's Eastern Hill, Rev. Dr Hugh Kempster. La Trobe worshipped at St Peter's, having laid its foundation stone in June 1846. Father Hugh was happy to remember La Trobe in his Advent Sunday High Mass, and to include some information about La Trobe in the Pew Notes for that day. Ten members of the La Trobe Society attended the service, and were welcomed to the parish by Father Hugh at the refreshments provided after the service. Father Hugh indicated that he is keen to make this an annual remembrance and to increase the links between his parish and the Society.

The work to restore the lettering on La Trobe's grave will be carried out early this year, and the Society will continue to monitor the condition of the grave.

## Litlington's Church of St Michael the Archangel and its Rector in La Trobe's time

By Loreen Chambers

Loreen is a retired teacher who taught History, English and Geography during a career of over 30 years. She taught at Scotch College and Camberwell Girls Grammar, but chiefly at Lauriston Girls School where she was Head of History, amongst other senior roles. Her main interests are British and Australian History, with particular focus on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century period, as well as family history. She is a committee member of both the C J La Trobe Society and the Friends of La Trobe's Cottage. She is also a member of the ADFAS (Yarra) Church Recorders who have recently been recording the objects and decorations of St John's Chapel at Bishops court, Melbourne. She and her husband, John, also a member of the La Trobe Society, visited Litlington in 2010 and 2012. Loreen is indebted to Helen Botham for visiting Eastbourne Library in September 2012 to access sources for this article, particularly the journal for the Eastbourne Local History Society.

There are two significant buildings in the small village of Litlington, East Sussex, both of which having an intimate connection with Charles Joseph La Trobe: one is the manor house which he leased and lived in with his family between 1866 and 1875, and the other being the nearby 12<sup>th</sup> century church where he worshipped and where he is buried. We know that Charles Joseph La Trobe had been nurtured and educated in the deeply pious life of the Moravian church, a faith to which he adhered to the close of his days. We know, also, that Moravians had close links with evangelical Anglicans<sup>1</sup>, although they were free to worship in the Church of England, and Charles La Trobe therefore worshipped regularly at the local church wherever he was. Some incumbents in England may, however, have presented a troubling challenge to La Trobe

given the abuses apparent in some livings that had emerged during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In Melbourne, La Trobe had found a congenial man in Bishop Charles Perry with whose evangelical leanings he had much in common and whose friendship he valued.<sup>2</sup> We know little of what La Trobe thought about the established Church he returned to in England generally, or on more specific matters then absorbing the interests of the clergy, such as the Oxford Movement<sup>3</sup>, the Reform Bills, the Education Bill, the Poor Law, marriage of divorced people and so on, although we know what his view was of one of the hotly debated issues of the day i.e. Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister.

The focus of this article will be, however, to attempt to reconstruct the life of the parish church to which La Trobe came in this quiet part



of Sussex and more particularly to paint a portrait of its incumbent whom La Trobe must have met frequently at worship; a man who, for most modern visitors to the church, is just a name on the List of Rectors (1374-1993) hanging on the church wall. What, indeed, were the duties of a rural clergyman? What was the social context in which he performed his role as rector? To what extent can we know its incumbent?

### ***The Church of St Michael the Archangel***

Litlington church looks over the Cuckmere River valley which cuts a wide path through the Sussex Downs on its way to the sea. The tree-lined road that passes the church and

south porch, [and] bell tower containing 3 bells, surmounted by a small spire: the church has recently undergone restoration at an expense of £600. The living is a rectory, value £105 per annum, with residence<sup>7</sup>, in the gift of the trustees of the late Rev. Thomas Scutt, and held by the Rev. Richard White, B.A., of Durham University<sup>8</sup>.

Built of flint with stone facings and with a 'broached' wooden spirelet atop a square weatherboard tower<sup>9</sup>, this simple but charming



**St Michael the Archangel, Litlington Church**  
Charles La Trobe's headstone with cross is to be seen to the right of the porch.  
John Chambers, photographer. 2012

runs through the village would, in La Trobe's time, have been a narrow track along which straggled the mostly thatched and flint-faced rubble cottages<sup>4</sup> of the 120 or so villagers. The surrounding hills and water meadows with their hardy Sussex sheep were largely owned by the Scutt family estate, though some were part of the glebe<sup>5</sup> and an even smaller number of small holdings were owned by farmers. Most villagers, however, were landless labourers: farm workers, shepherds and domestic servants. And then there was also the Russell family who owned the celebrated Pleasure Gardens and hotel which were to be the forerunners of change to this secluded, traditional agrarian community.

In 1867, the church was described as:

'a neat edifice, and consists of nave, chancel<sup>6</sup>, vestry room,

church of St Michael the Archangel was begun in 1150. The church's round-headed north windows in the nave and chancel are survivors from the Norman period, but there was some remodelling beginning in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. It was probably some of these features that attracted the attention of the Rev. Richard White, the new rector in 1862; White was to travel from nearby Alfriston<sup>10</sup> for services at St Michael's for the next 30 years.<sup>11</sup> He had been acting as curate for the old and sickly William Beauclerk Robinson but, in 1863, he was able to set about 'modernising' some aspects of the church; his wife's uncle, Stephen Phillips, who lived at Hastings and who had died the previous year, having left money presumably for the purpose. The original carved oak screen and other interesting features, such as the chancel arch, were removed or remodelled, and some general refurbishing was done. The grateful rector also had some fine and

surprisingly extravagant stained glass windows commissioned in memory of Stephen Phillips from William Wailes who was known for his bright colours and elegant, painterly work in the Gothic Revival style.<sup>12</sup> However, a small trefoil ogee-headed window, very high up, with stained glass c.1830 in memory of three children, was left untouched. Poignant, also, is the marble memorial to a Richard Gilbert White, fifth son to the rector and his wife, who died 6 August 1875 aged 18 months, a reminder of the many children who died in those days.

Untouched, also on the inside, are a piscina<sup>13</sup> from about 1220, the 15<sup>th</sup> century Easter sepulchre<sup>14</sup> and double sedilia<sup>15</sup>, as well as Norman and Early English windows. There are also three bells, the most ancient being cast about 1450 at the Whitechapel Bell Foundry.<sup>16</sup> Outside there is still a 13<sup>th</sup> century 'mass' sundial<sup>17</sup> on the porch, and two more on the buttresses. There are also the remains of two Norman windows on the North wall and at the East end of the Chancel traces of the original lancet windows. The font is early 16<sup>th</sup> century. The West door is low and has a decorated arch. The student of medieval history, therefore, will still find many features of interest in St Michael's church. Of course, of great import to many of us is the addition of Charles Joseph La Trobe's headstone close by the church wall which was dedicated within only ten years or so of the rector's refurbishment.<sup>18</sup>

### ***Charles Joseph La Trobe of Clapham House 1866-1875***

This, then, was the parish church to which the new resident of Clapham House, a fine Georgian mansion came. One can imagine the 70 year old Charles Joseph La Trobe coming down Clapham Lane hill that led to the church in 1871 (the year of the Census) from his home in company with his wife Rose and family then living with him. This included his unmarried sister, Charlotte, aged 78, who had been living with the La Trobes for some years, and four of his daughters, Agnes, Eleanor, Cecile and Isabelle aged from 34 to 12. At this time one daughter, Daisy, was studying in Switzerland and his son, Charles Albert, was an adult and living elsewhere. Possibly, too, some of his six household servants<sup>19</sup> came to attend Sunday service. At other times, some of the many visitors who stayed with the La Trobes may have come. Did the blind La Trobe walk on fine days or was he driven by Henry Tuppen, his groom? In time, too, La Trobe was to experience the joy of the marriage of his eldest daughter Agnes who, one feels, kept faithful watch, along with his wife, of the incapacitated but mentally active La Trobe. Agnes was married here at Litlington to the



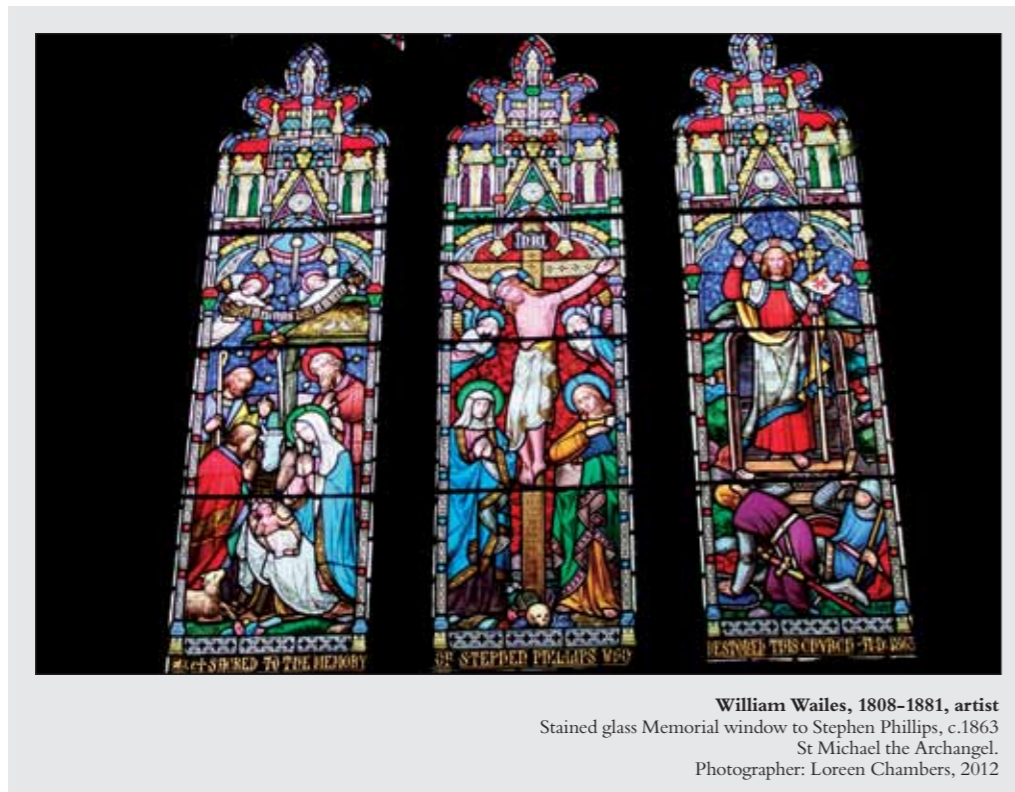
**Interior St Michael the Archangel**  
Loreen Chambers, photographer. 2012

Swiss-born Pierre de Salis-Soglio in 1874, when she was 37 years old, his only child to marry in his life time.<sup>20</sup>

### ***The Rector of St Michael the Archangel, Richard White 1862-1891***

The Rev. White followed the Rev. Robinson and remained rector for the remainder of his life<sup>21</sup>. The living, including of course glebe land, had been held as an advowson<sup>22</sup> by the wealthy Scutt family, owners of the Clapham House estate since 1830.<sup>23</sup> The great grandson of the founder of the family fortune, the Rev. Thomas Scutt, BA, MA (1769-1852), had been educated at Oxford University and taken holy orders but was able to pursue the leisured existence of the country gentleman.

Richard White had been born in Cheshire c.1827 and by 1871, when La Trobe knew him, was aged 44. He never lived at the Litlington Rectory, a handsome, stone-faced flint building, almost opposite the church, but at nearby Alfriston which he preferred, as did most 19<sup>th</sup> century rectors who considered it in too unhealthy a position. He had a wife Emma, aged 34, and a young family consisting of Godfrey (5), Mabel (4) and Gertrude aged (2). There were probably other children who must have been at school elsewhere or had died because we know there were at least five sons. Considering Emma was still of child-bearing age, it was likely that the family, as often was the case with vicarage families, consisted of, perhaps, a dozen children. To help her, Emma White had a general servant, Jane Burgess, and a young girl called Fanny aged 11 who worked as nursemaid. The scale of the domestic arrangements by comparison with that



William Wailes, 1808–1881, artist  
 Stained glass Memorial window to Stephen Phillips, c.1863  
 St Michael the Archangel.  
 Photographer: Loreen Chambers, 2012

of Clapham House reflects the different levels of status and income even among the gentry, and incidentally reminds us that La Trobe had the income, notwithstanding his constant concern about money, and the inclination to live in a style befitting a retired colonial governor. By 1881, the White children had mostly all left home, apart from Cyril aged 4 and two domestic servants. The rector was now taking in two scholar boarders aged 20 and 19,<sup>24</sup> as was usual for clergymen in order to boost their incomes, especially as the agricultural depression of the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century reduced income from tithes.

Rev. Richard White, if he did his duty by his congregation,<sup>25</sup> would have been a busy man in the thirty years or so that he was Litlington's rector. He would have, of course, taken church services for his congregation consisting of the village farm workers (by far the majority), but also the shepherds, carters, gardeners and domestic servants. He would have been expected to visit them when they were dying or ill, and he would have been expected to relieve those in extreme poverty by distributing alms contributed at the communion service, or from parish charities or from his own pocket. Relief in kind, often taken by his wife or grown-up daughters, such as soup, might also have been brought to the cottage. On the birth of a baby, clothes may have been brought, and also food for the often malnourished mother. The clergyman would have instructed the young in catechetical

faith either at the local school or church and often sat on the boards of the local magistrate or Poor Law board. 'His parishioners would look to him to fulfil these duties, and would criticize the way he did them, even perhaps the quality of his soup, as in the case of one incumbent whose soup was thought to contain maggots because his cook had put rice into it.'<sup>26</sup>

Not all villagers would have sought the attention of the local vicar. Some villages and towns had seen the emergence of the Non-conformist movement, such as the Wesleyans, a reaction to the Church's perceived indifference to the poor and neglect of its proper teachings. In Sussex, there had always been a strong movement and chapels were being built, but these were few and far between. There was a Congregational chapel at Alfriston but this would have been unlikely to have tempted Litlington farm workers on a Sunday as it was over a mile away.<sup>27</sup> The Church in most cases retained its central role in village life; much depended on the clergyman.

Quite intriguingly, a recent internet search for Rev. Richard White has brought up a poem dedicated to him by a virtually unknown poet, John Hutton, whose widow had his poems published privately in 1900. Carrying much of the flavour of sentimental Victorian poetry, it nonetheless gives a somewhat poignant glimpse of the minister La Trobe had known some 13 years before. The first part of the poem reads:

*Poem to the Rev. Richard White,  
 Vicar of Litlington, Sussex. By John Hutton, 1888*

I waited in a village church one day,  
 For morning service – 'twas amongst the Downs  
 Of lonely Sussex – far from men and towns,  
 And any scene more perfect, one might say  
 England had none. Rich meadows stretched afar,  
 Golden with buttercups, alive with herds  
 Of gentle cattle; and Spring's joyous birds  
 Sang in the giant elms.  
 Through the south door  
 I saw the hills, steep as a Yorkshire fell,  
 Shut in the vale; the river laved their feet;  
 The wooded uplands rose and fell to meet  
 The rolling Downs. But, hark, the tinkling bell  
 Has ceased its modest call, the vestry door  
 Opens, a gentle, white-haired man comes forth.  
 Life's truest value and religious worth  
 Are known to him, if I may judge before  
 I hear his voice. The morning prayers begin;  
 Thoughtful refinement, loving sympathy,  
 And cheerful resignation, speak to me  
 In his low, gentle tones, and quickly win  
 My veneration. Why do his worn looks  
 Make me so sad? He seems so lonely here;  
 So few his hearers, and e'en those few mere  
 Unlettered minds. Surely in his loved books  
 Alone he finds companionship to dwell.  
 No ritual, no choir, no organ, naught  
 That has from north to south in England wrought  
 The teaching of the Church to aid so well.  
 No lofty pillars in majestic rows,  
 No fretted roof, nor azure ceiling bright;  
 Save for the rich solemnity of light,  
 No adventitious aid its presence shows.  
 My heart was filled with sorrow, deep and rare.  
 This man of thought, refinement, culture, power  
 Without an equal! Truly here a flower  
 "Wasting its sweetness on the desert air."<sup>28</sup>

Here is a hint of a type of clergyman who is conscientious and well-educated, and who seems to bring a sense of his own spirituality

to his service in this remote village church. But there is also an almost elegiac feeling expressed here, too, not only for an ageing pastor but also for traditional Sussex life. It is probably an unacknowledged sentiment but John Hutton seems to have travelled through many places, including Wales, Shropshire and Yorkshire, judging by his other poems, and he must have seen the great industrial towns whose growth had by then devoured and despoiled so much of the British countryside. On the other hand, Hutton was not to know the depopulation that was beginning to occur in wretchedly poor places like Litlington within the next decade, when many of its farm workers were to respond to the call of better wages and cheaper food in the towns or to the promise of a better life in the colonies. The great agricultural depression, which had begun in the terrible summer of 1875 that was wet and cold and when the crops failed, was to last for decades.<sup>29</sup> Rev. White, himself, was to be the last of the long-serving rectors at Litlington. When he died in 1891 the century was drawing to a close and with that the whole fabric of rural society – not only in the village and the manor house but in the church and its rectory.

### ***The Rural Clergyman of the Mid-Nineteenth Century***

In the absence of more evidence about Richard White as a clergyman it is useful to look at the parish clergyman more broadly. Is it possible to find him among his peers? In the nineteenth century the clergy as a class had gained economically by the Enclosures and by rising agricultural prices; thus, with this they had joined the gentry, and this had ensured what has been called their 'elevation from the hedgerow<sup>30</sup> to the drawing room', a process which tended to alienate them, in many cases, from their pastoral duty and from the intense study of the Bible that characterised earlier generations of clergyman. The 'agreeable young gentlemen' described by Jane Austen came to reflect the typical nineteenth century clergy.<sup>31</sup> However, the historian G. Kitson Clark argues that it is difficult to generalise too much about the clergy as there is simply not enough evidence to allow us to do so, but he asserts that many clerics, in fact, probably carried out their religious observances and social obligations conscientiously.<sup>32</sup> Nonetheless, a novelist with an acute political sense, a satirical eye but social perceptiveness like Anthony Trollope writing in the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is able to give us a powerful understanding of the lives of such men and their wives in novels such as *Framley Parsonage* which was popular with his readers because, Trollope believed, it contained: 'a little fox-hunting and a little turf-hunting, some Christian virtue and some Christian cant'.<sup>33</sup> Then there are *The Claverings* and, of course, *Barchester Towers*



**The Rectory, Litlington**  
John Chambers, photographer, 2012



**View from Clapham Lane**  
Loreen Chambers, photographer, 2012

although the latter is based in a cathedral town. Novels such as these give extraordinary insights into what was problematic and what was virtuous in the Church.

In a sense, the clergy because of their education generally formed a not inconsiderable intelligentsia. They were, in many cases, university-educated and intelligent men, often deeply interested in politics, local and national, or had intellectual pursuits that led them to research archaeology, botany, collect books and so on. This saw many engage in the pursuit of philosophical writings or translations, such as the Rev. Charles Bohun Smyth of St Andrew's Church, Alfriston, a scholarly if eccentric man who had translated some tracts as well as authored a book on Christian metaphysics.<sup>34</sup>

The Rev. Henry Cresswell of Creech St Michael, Somerset, on the other hand, was the son of a wealthy squire who had seven sons and held the advowson for Bibury and Creech, was able to arrange livings for two of his sons and a curacy for a third. Henry Cresswell was clearly fascinated by politics and campaigned for his eldest brother who was a Whig candidate for Taunton. He was an intelligent, forceful, argumentative, even riotous man, and spoke out on issues that interested him, such as rural poverty, the Corn Laws and the 'one man one vote' campaigns that eventually led to the 1832 Reform Act. He was also a hunting man who liked to gamble, but he kept good account of his own parish records noting, for example, that 17 people died in Creech St Michael in the two

years 1819 and 1820: their united ages amounted, according to him, to 1,077. In 1821, Henry noted the following death: 'Hugh Fowler aged 30. This man dropped dead in the field. This is curious' he said.<sup>35</sup> When Henry died in 1849 his youngest brother, John, 'inherited' the living Creech St Michael.<sup>36</sup>

The Rev. Edward Boys Ellman (1815-1906) who was curate then rector at Berwick, a small and dilapidated church a few miles away from Litlington, has left us a fascinating set of recollections. He seems to have been an exemplar of a good vicar: Ellman established a school with his devoted wife Georgina; restored the crumbling church; visited his flock regularly as he believed 'a house-going parson made a church-going people'; and was compassionate towards the poor, noting their poverty not only because of their large families often of 12 children and many up to 15, as well as their low wages. He gave two services on a Sunday which was unusual and often took services for other clergymen if required. At Alciston, by comparison, there was only one service a fortnight, except when it was wet and then it was usually cancelled. In winter there might be only one service in a six week period. The church bell would be rung to summon the village when the clergyman appeared on his horse if he was coming from a distant rectory or vicarage.<sup>37</sup>

Edward Ellman, in a delightful chapter in his *Recollections* called 'Clerical Neighbours', describes some of the more interesting and eccentric of his neighbouring clergymen whom



**View from church looking towards Litlington village**  
Loreen Chambers, photographer, 2012

he visited in places such as Litlington, Alfriston and Alciston, but unfortunately Richard White is not mentioned. Instead, Ellman tells a story of the Rev. William Beauclerk Robinson of Litlington the rector before White, who had so many children that he baptised them 'in batches' and who, on one occasion, dropped his wife off at Clapham House with only a 'small handbox containing her cap', but then went to Brighton and left her there with Mrs Scutt for a week.<sup>38</sup>

A harsher judgment has been offered by others: 'some of the parish clergy were more interested in farming, or hunting or the bottle, than in their pastoral duties: very many were shockingly ill-paid; and nearly all seem to have failed to inspire their parishioners with any lively faith or enthusiasm. Perhaps the most serious social criticism of the Church was that great numbers of the very poor were almost neglected by it; with these people the ordinary parish clergyman was entirely out of touch.'<sup>39</sup>

Where do we find the Rev. Richard White among these few examples of Victorian clergymen? Richard White, it would seem, was as conscientious as most rectors who were neither evangelical nor negligent in their conduct. Put simply, he belonged to that rural gentry class of men, mostly younger sons or sons of the clergy who saw the church as the only suitable profession at a time when law was almost akin to a trade. Indeed, they formed a formidable class in the lower level of the gentry, bound by marriage and kinship, friendship and common interests. For example, the Rev. Henry Cresswell's son married the Rev. John Cresswell's daughter. Some like the rector at Berwick, though living modestly and frugally, nonetheless, had a sister, Catherine, who married into the Scutt family<sup>40</sup> and lived at Clapham House in 1850s. Ellman's daughter, Maude, married the Rev. John Walker who was to follow Richard White as vicar at Litlington in 1893 until his early death in 1899.

Charles Joseph La Trobe came to Litlington to seek a home for his family<sup>41</sup> and he sought peace for himself in his final years. In many ways, his characteristic aloofness came from that hard-won but perfect assurance he had in the God of his childhood teachings. As an adult he had been alone with his faith through many lonely rides in the colonies and in the midst of a turbulent frontier society; and he still clearly drew spiritual comfort from within, as this letter to Rose Amiet<sup>42</sup> in 1864 attests: 'May God be your comfort and a father to your fatherless children and enable you to bring them up in His Fear: so prays your old friend!'<sup>43</sup> The church and its rector Richard White may have, in the end, served to provide the spiritual comfort of religious observance and rituals to augment his core beliefs. There was nothing to affront him here, as it might have been in some parishes, only the tranquillity of an ancient church in all the glory of its simplicity, and the refinement and learning of a minister whom he could not see but who he could hear – and who read his sermon, as the poet said, with the 'thoughtful earnest voice of lowly grace'<sup>44</sup>.

1 Dianne Reilly Drury. *La Trobe: The Making of a Governor*. Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 2006.17

2 James Grant. "Soul mates: C. J. La Trobe and Charles Perry." *La Trobeana*. No 10 (February 2011): 10

3 G. Kitson, Clark. *Churchmen and the Condition of England 1832-1885: A study in the development of social ideas and practice from the Old Regime to the Modern State*. London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1973. 82-84.

4 Probably of an even older style are the typical Sussex 'tile -hung' houses if they were of wood and plaster construction. These may have also been a feature of Litlington.

5 Glebe lands are cultivable lands owned by the parish church or as an ecclesiastical benefice and worked by villagers.

6 The part of a church containing the altar, sanctuary and choir, usually separated from the nave and transepts by a screen.

7 The Litlington church living of £105 per annum was not as large, however, as that of the church of St John the Baptist at Whitbourne (Herefordshire), where La Trobe had worshipped when he lived at Whitbourne Court between c.1859-c.1866. Its value was £535 yearly, with residence and 30 acres of glebe land.

8 Kelly's, Post Office and Harrod & Co Directory for Essex, Herts, Middlesex, Kent, Surrey and Sussex. 1867.

9 A 'broach' refers to the facets or faces, usually eight required to join the top of the spire to its base on the tower. St Andrew's Church at nearby Alfriston, a larger and later church also has this feature.

- 10 1 mile or 1.6 km by car in today's terms.
- 11 The pamphlet at the church notes that the clergy responsible for the parish have not always lived in the village and 'there are records of Rectors who lived in Alfriston, Eastbourne and Lewes who rode out to take the service on Sunday'. *Litlington*. Text revised 1997 with new pictures by Penny Ellis. 8.
- 12 William Wailes 1808-1881. [www.sussexparishchurches.org/content/view/261/34/](http://www.sussexparishchurches.org/content/view/261/34/) Wailes trained at Mayers in Germany before setting up in business in Newcastle, producing windows for churches from the 1830s. For a short time he worked with Pugin. There is a two light window of his in Australia – at St James and St John, All Saints Anglican Church, South Hobart. 1871. L.C.
- 13 The basin used for washing communion vessels.
- 14 A separate alcove in some medieval churches in which the Eucharistic vessels and other metalwork are kept from Good Friday until the Easter ceremonies.
- 15 Stone seats for officiating clergy.
- 16 Church of England website: [www.achurchnearyou.com/litlington-st-michael-the-archangel/](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/litlington-st-michael-the-archangel/) accessed 14/1/2013. Also, see [www.roughwood.net/ChurchAlbum/EastSussex/Litlington/LitlingtonStMichael2004.htm](http://www.roughwood.net/ChurchAlbum/EastSussex/Litlington/LitlingtonStMichael2004.htm) accessed 25/1/2013.
- 17 Mass dials or Scratch Dials are medieval time indicators found scratched onto surviving medieval churches. It is thought that their main purpose was indicating the time for celebrating the daily Mass.
- 18 For a more detailed account of the recording of the church's architecture, memorials, stonework, metalwork and windows: *Litlington*. Text revised 1997 with new pictures by Penny Ellis. 2-5.
- 19 1871 U.K. Census.
- 20 Charles Albert was to marry within a year of his father's death and apart from Agnes was the only one of La Trobe's six children to have surviving children.
- 21 Edward Boys Ellman *Recollections of a Sussex Parson*. With a Memoir by his Daughter Maude Walker. Hove: Combridges, 1925. Originally published by Messrs. Skeffington, 1912. 127.
- 22 Advowson is the right to nominate a person to be parish priest (subject to episcopal approval).
- 23 The Scutts had owned the Wick estate since 1701 so that the Clapham estate was comparatively recent. The Scutts also owned other land. See Vera Hodson. "More on the Reverend Thomas Scutt." *Eastbourne Local Historian*, 86 (1992): 10-12.
- 24 1881 Census.
- 25 Clark xvii. Since the Church was the 'established Church' a parochial clergyman had a responsibility for everyone resident in his parish, and not just the devout.
- 26 Clark. 166-7.
- 27 1.6km
- 28 John Hutton. 'Poems by John Hutton Dedicated to his children in loving memory of their father by His Wife.' London: Printed for private circulation. Published 1900. Printed by Wyman & Sons London. 72-5. [www.archive.org/stream/poemshutt00hutt/poemshutt00hutt\\_djvu](http://www.archive.org/stream/poemshutt00hutt/poemshutt00hutt_djvu). [openlibrary.org/books/OL24485862M/Poems](http://openlibrary.org/books/OL24485862M/Poems) internet archive: poemshutt00hutt
- 29 G.E. Mingay, G.E. *Rural Life in Victorian England*. London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1977. (Futura Publication edition 1979) 75.
- 30 The early church men were often known as 'hedgerow' preachers because they travelled from village to village to hold services, sometimes in the fields and hedgerows.
- 31 Clark. 32.
- 32 Ibid. 35.
- 33 Quoted in P. D. Edwards. *Anthony Trollope: His Art and Scope*. St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1977. 37.
- 34 Christian metaphysics; or, Plato, Malebranche and Gioberti, the old and new ontologists compared with the modern schools of psychology'. 1851.
- 35 Adrian J. Webb. *Creech St. Michael Parish Registers and Bishops' Transcripts, 1606-1837*. Weymouth: Somerset & Dorset Family History Society, 1997.
- 36 Loreen Chambers. *A short biography of Henry Cresswell*. 2012. Private family papers, 2012.
- 37 Ellman. xv-xvii, 108.
- 38 ibid. 128.
- 39 C P Hill. *British Economic and Social History 1700-1975*. London: Edward Arnold, 1977. 214.
- 40 Thomas Scutt, son of Rev. Thomas Scutt. They had a son called Thomas who died aged 16 and a daughter, Mary Cordelia, who became the sole heir of the Scutt estate. She married into the Irish peerage.
- 41 Letter to Powlett May 25 1865 (Blake, L. J. (ed). *Letters of Charles Joseph La Trobe*. Melbourne: Government Printer, 1975. 61-62.
- 42 Rose was the widowed daughter of Charlotte Pellet, the La Trobe housekeeper at Jolimont.
- 43 Letter to Rose Amiet. 19 December 1864, Whitbourne.
- 44 Hutton.72-75.

# The English Career of the Architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe

By Tim Gatehouse

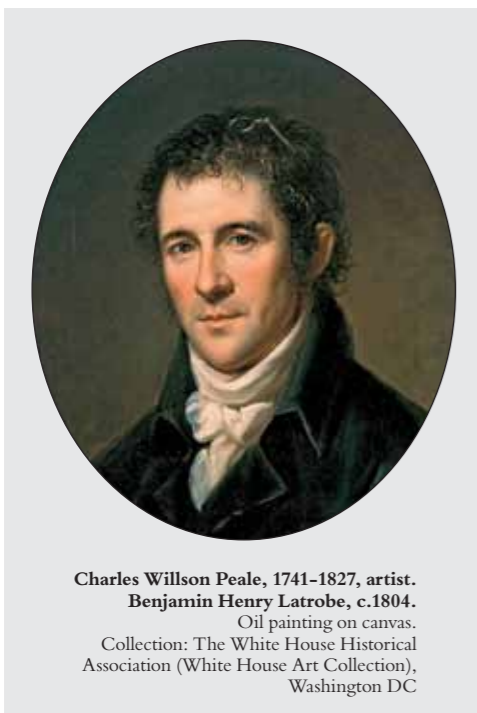
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**Tim Gatehouse is an eighth generation descendant of Henry Antes, the leader of the Moravian community in Pennsylvania in the mid-eighteenth century, and the great grandfather of Charles Joseph La Trobe. He is a retired Melbourne solicitor, with an interest in historical research and archaeology, and has worked on archaeological sites in Australia, Scotland, Italy and The Philippines. Tim has been a frequent contributor to *La Trobeana*.**

Benjamin Henry Latrobe was born on 1 May 1764 at Fulneck, the Moravian community in Yorkshire. His father was Rev. Benjamin La Trobe headmaster of the Moravian boys' school at Fulneck and superintendent of the Moravian congregations in England. His mother was Anna Margaretta Antes, headmistress of the Moravian girls' school at Fulneck. She was born in Pennsylvania, where her father Henry Antes was a landowner, master builder and local Moravian leader. At the age of 14 she had accompanied Count Zinzendorf, the leader of the worldwide Moravian Church, to England to be educated at the Moravian schools to the full extent of her exceptional talents. She was renowned for her mathematical abilities. Henry Antes had designed many of the buildings at the new Moravian settlement at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Perhaps it was from him that Benjamin Henry Latrobe inherited not only his middle name, but also some of his architectural acumen.

Benjamin Latrobe's inherent intellectual capacity was developed by the Moravian educational system, which encouraged the development of individual talents. His education commenced at Fulneck at the age of three, after which he progressed to the Moravian schools at Niesky in Silesia and Barby in Saxony, which was the training college for the Moravian clergy. The rigorous and cosmopolitan Moravian education also developed Latrobe's linguistic abilities (he spoke English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, Greek and Latin), and advanced his drawing skills, musical ability and clarity of thought and expression. It would appear that he inherited his mother's mathematical abilities.

However, he also suffered from the disadvantages of the Moravian educational system. The communal upbringing from a very young age separated him from the natural affection and influence of his gifted parents. The emphasis of the Moravian system on intellectual



Charles Willson Peale, 1741-1827, artist.  
Benjamin Henry Latrobe, c.1804.  
Oil painting on canvas.  
Collection: The White House Historical  
Association (White House Art Collection),  
Washington DC

development and its contempt for commerce encouraged an elitist attitude that left those who did not enter the church or have independent means badly equipped to earn a living.

The prospect of a clerical career was closed in 1783 when Latrobe was expelled from the Barby Seminary as a result of his doctrinal doubts, which the Moravian authorities feared might spread to other students. Latrobe had also expressed an interest in engineering, and studied briefly with the Prussian engineer Heinrich August Riedel. In the eighteenth century engineering was almost entirely a military occupation and as such was incompatible with the pacifist beliefs of the Moravians.

Latrobe's expulsion from Barby at the age of 19 ended his involvement with the Moravian church but did not estrange him from his family, to whom he returned to live in London. He obtained employment in the Stamps Office and participated in the social and cultural life of his parents, whose friends included Dr. Charles Burney, the organist and musicologist, and his daughter Fanny, the novelist, who referred to Benjamin Henry Latrobe and his brothers in her diary as professional musicians. Music was an essential part of Moravian education and religious observance.

Many of the Latrobe family's friends were also supporters of the anti-slavery movement, which was gathering momentum in the 1780s. Moravians believed in the equality of all races, and their missionary work was directed to evangelising and educating, rather than

subjugating and exploiting the non-Christian populations amongst whom they established their missions. In England the anti-slavery movement was led by the Clapham Sect, a network of influential, intermarried families with shared moral and religious values under the leadership of William Wilberforce. Amongst the Latrobe's friends in the sect were Thomas Grant, Chairman of the British East India Company and father of Lord Glenelg, the future Colonial Secretary, James Stephen, Master in Chancery (and great grandfather of Virginia Woolf), Sir Charles Middleton (later Lord Barham, First Lord of the Admiralty), and Rev. James Ramsay. The friendship and influence of these people had a considerable effect on the architectural career of Benjamin Henry Latrobe, and arguably a generation later, on that of his nephew Charles Joseph La Trobe.

The work at the Stamps Office was not demanding, and while there, Latrobe was able to write two books, one a translation from German of a biography of Frederick II of Prussia, and the other a history of the Danish Revolution of 1772.

He also travelled extensively in Europe, to Paris, Rome and Naples, where he studied ancient and modern buildings and recent engineering projects.

On his return to England, Latrobe entered the employment of the engineer John Smeaton. The source of his introduction to Smeaton is not known. Amongst the projects he worked on were the construction of Rye Harbour and the Basingstoke Canal. He later utilised the knowledge and experience gained from working for Smeaton in his designs for canals and waterworks, and in imaginative solutions to architectural problems.

In 1789 Latrobe commenced employment with the architect Samuel Pepys Cockerell (named after his great-great uncle the seventeenth century diarist), who needed an assistant following the death of his partner Sir Robert Taylor, one of the most influential eighteenth century English architects. Cockerell was Chief Architect to the Admiralty. Latrobe may have been introduced to Cockerell by his father's friend Sir Charles Middleton who at that stage of his career was Comptroller of the Navy. It was in Cockerell's office that Latrobe learned the practical aspects of architectural practice, including the making of site surveys, design methods and the day-to-day management of an office. Latrobe, however, gave little credit to Cockerell for the skills he acquired while working for him, preferring to attribute his skills to his Moravian education, engineering

training and exposure to European architecture during his extensive travelling. He believed his education was complete by the time he arrived in Cockerell's office.

Although he did not acknowledge it, much of Latrobe's planning style was derived from Taylor and Cockerell. Many of Taylor's clients were bankers or East India merchants who wanted country retreats but could not afford country houses of the size built by the aristocracy. For these clients Taylor designed compact villas with boldly projecting bays on each facade and top lit halls and staircases, which facilitated easy movement between rooms. Harleyford Manor in Buckinghamshire and Danson Hall in Kent are examples of this style.

Cockerell's clients were also mainly wealthy East India Company officers and merchants who had retired to country estates in England. In many instances existing houses on the estates needed to be altered or enlarged to meet the requirements of the new owners. Cockerell became adept at these transformations and this experience was utilised by Latrobe, many of whose commissions entailed a new design within the framework of an existing building.

Cockerell's plans, like Sir Robert Taylor's, were designed to facilitate the smooth running of the house. Cockerell's clients tended to be wealthier than Taylor's, and required larger houses with more complex layouts and dignified symmetrical facades. A key element of Cockerell's plans, as with Taylor's, was the arrangement of reception rooms around a compact central space to allow for the easy movement of guests through perimeter doors and servants through the small central hall. An example is Admiralty House in London, designed by Cockerell in 1786 as the official residence for the First Lord of the Admiralty. This became a design feature that was adapted and developed by Latrobe in his own work.

### Early Works

The first design with evidence of Latrobe's involvement while he was still employed by Cockerell was the alterations to Wyndham House in Salisbury. His handwriting appears on some of the plans. This work was carried out in the 1780s, and involved the remodeling of a sixteenth century building and the addition of a new wing. The unobtrusive merging of the original building, with varying floor and ceiling heights, with a new wing, and the creation of a functional floor plan behind a well-proportioned, symmetrical facade, were all hallmarks of design used by Latrobe in later works.

Several other houses designed by Cockerell's office during Latrobe's tenure display design characteristics he later utilised and elaborated in his own designs. Daylesford in Gloucestershire was remodeled and extended for Warren Hastings, the former Governor-General of Bengal, when ruled by the East India Company. The symmetrical facades conceal a complex asymmetrical plan, and what Latrobe later described as 'scenery', the changing vistas from the house to the landscape and from room to room as the house was traversed.

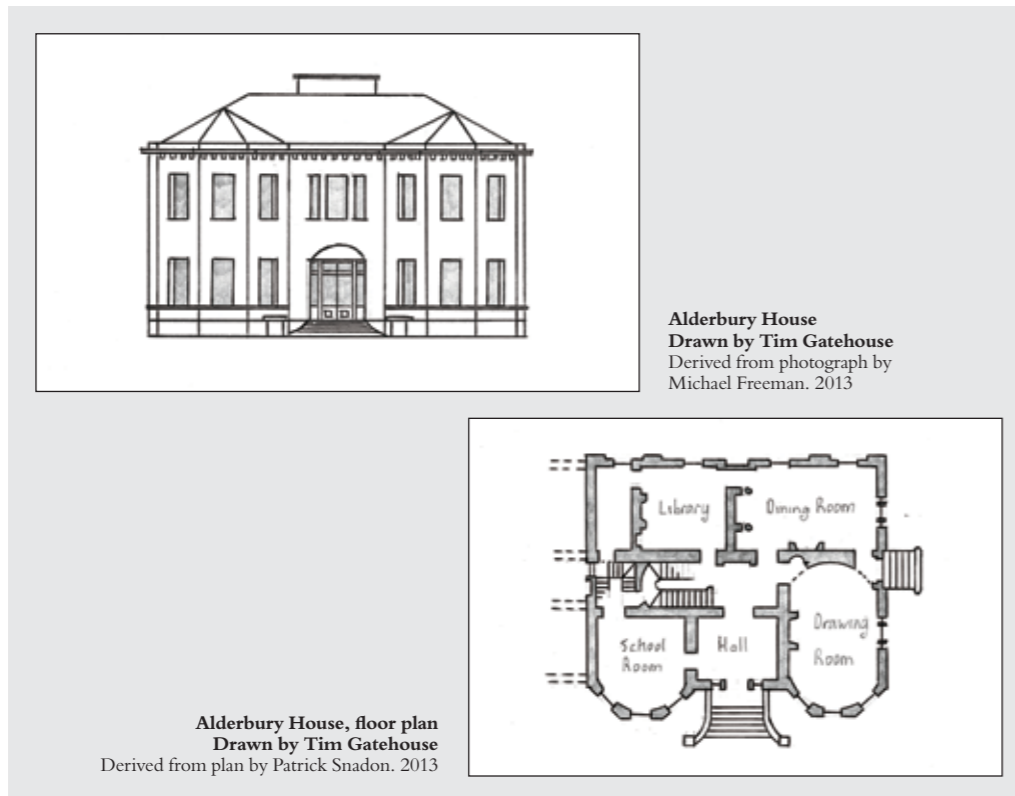
Gore Court in Kent was built for Colonel Gabriel Harper, also of the East India Company. The Greek detailing of the design, which had never been used so extensively in any previous designs from Cockerell's office before the arrival of Latrobe, and the similarity of the central block to Latrobe's later design of Hammerwood, point to Latrobe having played a major role in its design.

At Middleton Hall, Carmarthenshire, Wales, built for Sir William Paxton, another East India client of Cockerell, the similarity of the floor plan to that of the Van Ness house in Washington, designed several years later, lends weight to Latrobe's involvement.

Similarly, at Pierremont Hall in Kent, for yet another East India client of Cockerell, Thomas Forsyth, Latrobe's hand can be seen from the similarity of the floor plan to those of many of his later American town houses.

### Alderbury House

The first house of which Latrobe could be regarded as the principal architect, though still employed in Cockerell's office, is Alderbury House near Salisbury, Wiltshire. The client, George Yalden, was a Salisbury merchant and property speculator. Refreshingly, he had no East India connections. An earlier house was on the site. This became the service wing of the new house. The floor plan of Alderbury House is reminiscent of those of Sir Robert Taylor's villas, with a central stair hall lit by a sky light at the centre of the house. This was surrounded by intercommunicating reception rooms allowing for the circulation of guests between rooms and the access of servants to each room through the central hall. Latrobe always attempted to integrate his houses into the landscape and align them with the best views which at Alderbury are to the south and west. Hence the reception rooms are on these fronts. One facade abuts the original house. Each of the other three facades is symmetrical, but markedly different from each other. All conceal a complex, asymmetrical but functional floor plan. This was achieved by using



a variety of artifices commonly used by Cockerell and adopted by Latrobe, including false doors and windows and variable wall thicknesses. The detailed analysis, by Professors Michael Fazio and Patrick Snadon, of the plans of Alderbury House in Latrobe's notebooks have led them to conclude that Latrobe was the primary designer of this house while still employed by Cockerell.

In 1790 Latrobe married Lydia Sellon, the daughter of William Sellon, a London clergyman. Marriage may have prompted him to set up his own practice. In 1791 he received his first commission. This was from Sir Charles Middleton, and involved the remodeling of Teston Hall in Kent. Sir Charles was a member of the Clapham Sect and the evangelical circle of the La Trobes. It is most likely Sir Charles who had earlier arranged Latrobe's admission to S.P. Cockerell's office.

### Teston Hall

Teston Hall was not owned by Sir Charles and Lady Middleton, but by their friend Elizabeth Bouverie, another anti-slavery ally. The Middletons had made their home with her, and Sir Charles managed the estate in addition to his duties at the Admiralty, eventually inheriting it on Elizabeth Bouverie's death in 1799. By that date Sir Charles had been appointed First Lord of the Admiralty and raised to the peerage as Lord Barham, and the name of the estate changed to Barham Court.

Sir Charles Middleton's opposition to slavery had been aroused earlier in his career when as a naval captain he had intercepted a slave ship. He and his ship's surgeon James Ramsay had been appalled by the conditions of the slaves. As a result of an injury, Ramsay left the navy and became a Church of England clergyman of evangelical views. He was appointed to a parish in the West Indies where his efforts on behalf of the slaves outraged the planters and led to his recall to England. Sir Charles Middleton then had him appointed to the parish at Teston. Rev. Benjamin La Trobe spent the last months of his life at the rectory at Teston. With these family connections in the anti-slavery movement, it is not surprising that Charles Joseph La Trobe's first official appointment was to report on the education of the emancipated slaves in the West Indies.

Teston Hall was a Tudor house to which additions had been made in the eighteenth century. The appearance of the original house is unknown, and the alterations carried out by Latrobe have themselves been subject to considerable modification. However, extensive investigation of the building by Professors Michael Fazio and Patrick Snadon indicate that Latrobe's alterations included the construction of an earth terrace in front of the house to conceal the ground floor (which then became the cellars), thus placing the house on a podium and making the house the main feature of the park. This was in accordance with the landscaping

principles of Humphry Repton, with whom Latrobe was acquainted. A symmetrical south front was then created by the addition of two storeys to the central block and a new wing to the west, containing a drawing room and library. The whole exterior was then stuccoed to conceal the additions. The library bears a close resemblance to that at Wyndham House designed by Cockerell's office during Latrobe's tenure, and also to the library Latrobe later designed at Hammerwood.

The removal of the top storey of the central section of the south front, and the addition of small porticoes, has destroyed Latrobe's design. However, the stable block probably remains as he designed it, being similar to others by him, and the twin lodges at the gates bear a close resemblance to those he later designed for the Van Ness house in Washington. The house is now a suite of offices.

### Frimley Park

Latrobe's next commission was to convert the outdated house at Frimley Park, Frimley in Surrey, built for the Tichborne family in the late seventeenth century into a fashionable neo-classical residence for the new owner James Laurell, financed by his newly made fortune from India. There is no documentary evidence of Latrobe's involvement in the design of Frimley Park, but the circumstantial evidence is strong. Benjamin Latrobe's nephew, Peter La Trobe (elder brother of Charles La Trobe), had advised Latrobe's son John Henry Boneval Latrobe in answer to inquiries he had made about his father's work, that Frimley was one of his designs. This was also the opinion of the American architectural historian Fiske Kimball in his article on Latrobe in the Dictionary of American Biography. The English architectural historian Dorothy Stroud, who carried out the research on Latrobe's English buildings on behalf of Talbot Hamlin when he was writing his biography of Latrobe in the 1950s, stated that Frimley Park had the stylistic characteristics of Latrobe's work.

Considering Laurell's East India Company background, the commission may have come through Cockerell's office, many of whose clients were from this source, or through Latrobe's friends the Burney family, who also had East India Company connections.

The remodeling was achieved with minimal alterations to the floor plan and little cost, considering the radical transformation in the appearance of the house. A large bay window was inserted in the sidewall of the drawing room, and an extra storey, only one room deep,

added to the front. A recessed arch over the front door extending up to the second storey further enhanced the grandeur of the facade. As with Teston Hall, the whole building was stuccoed to conceal the alterations. Latrobe used the devices practised in Cockerell's office to achieve this effect. Two blind windows in the front wall of the drawing room maintain symmetry, and varying wall thicknesses provide a breakfront to the centre of the facade, which is not reflected in the floor plan of the rooms behind. Frimley Park is now a cadet-training centre owned by the Ministry of Defence.

### Hammerwood

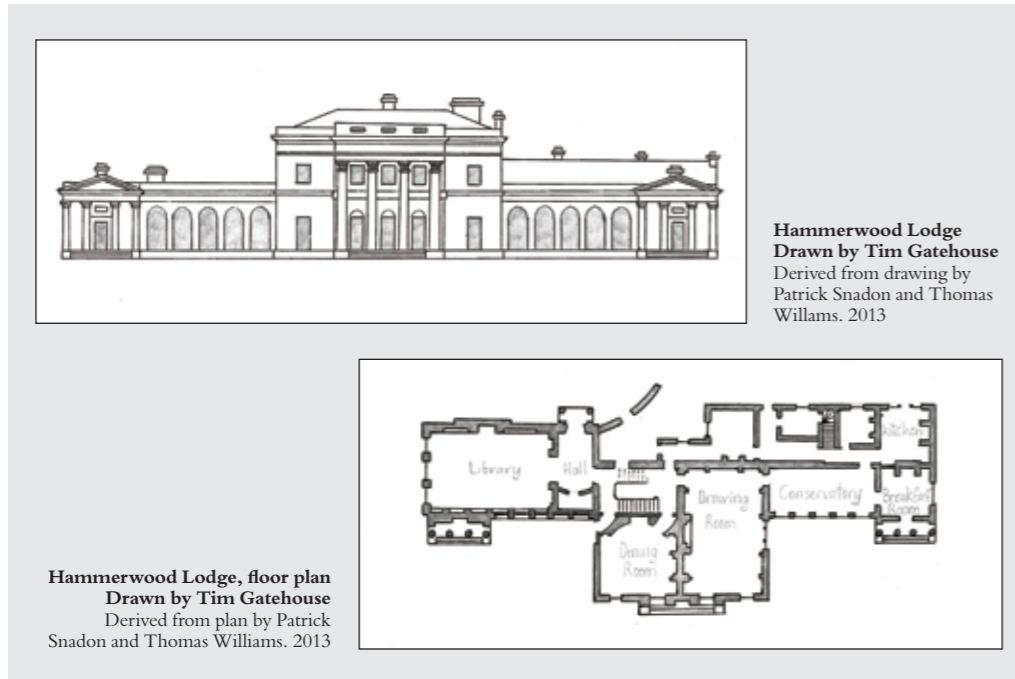
The English houses for which Latrobe is best remembered are Hammerwood Park and Ashdown, which are only three miles apart near East Grinstead, Sussex. Both were commenced in 1792. Hammerwood Park was designed for John and Harriet Sperling. The Sperling family had emigrated to Britain from Sweden in the seventeenth century and was originally engaged in the fur trade. They had prospered and purchased the estate of Dynes Hall in Essex, and also had a house in London. Amongst their investments was a distillery in Dublin, which was later to be their downfall. Sperling's reason for choosing Latrobe as architect is not known, but Harriet Sperling's family the Rochforts were Irish landowners, and several generations of the La Trobe family had lived in Ireland since Jean Latrobe 'the refugee' had fought with William III at the Battle of the Boyne. The Rochfort family had East India Company links.

As with so many of his commissions, Latrobe had to incorporate parts of an existing house into his design. He may also have had to accommodate the particular wishes of his clients as to the general layout. One of the Rochfort family's properties in Ireland was Belvedere House in County Westmeath. A small villa built only for occasional use, it was only one room deep, to take advantage of the views. Its basic plan closely resembles that of Hammerwood. The site faced south across a valley, and the long thin house that Latrobe designed gave views to all the main rooms. As at Teston Hall, the house was given extra prominence by the excavation of the slope at the rear of the existing house and the construction of a terrace at the front. The former ground floor of the old building became the cellars of the new house. From the south, the house appears to be much larger than it really is, which is probably just what the Sperlings intended, and undoubtedly is the reason for the driveway approaching it from this direction. The heavy proportions of the porticoes, in particular the columns, further contributed to the illusion of size.

The composition is Palladian, with a prominent central block, made more imposing by the use of giant order (double storey) pilasters. The central block is flanked on each side by single storey arcaded wings, which are terminated by temple-fronted porticoes. The only other domestic design in which Latrobe used the giant order was for the porticoes of the White House.

'The Antiquities of Athens' published in 1762. Latrobe however did not follow these strict archeological precedents, but used Greek themes creatively in his designs. This was more in accord with French practice than English, and reflected Latrobe's cosmopolitan education and outlook.

The informal uses for which the house was intended were reflected in the floor plan.



The detailing of the house is inspired by Greek architecture of the 6th century BC. The capitals of the columns of the porticoes are derived from the Greek temples at Paestum near Naples, which Latrobe had visited on his European travels. The column shafts, which are only fluted at the top, are derived from the Temple of Apollo at Delos. Latrobe had never visited Delos, but the details of its ruins had been published. The column capitals and other architectural details on the house are moulded in Coade Stone. This stone was a composition similar in appearance to normal stone and, has in many instances, proved to be more durable. It was also cheaper to produce than carved stone ornaments.

Latrobe catered for the Sperlings wish to create the maximum effect for the minimum cost. Hammerwood was only intended for occasional entertaining and hunting, and these purposes were subtly hinted at in the Coade Stone panels depicting Bacchanalian revels above the doorways of the pavilions.

What little Greek Revival architecture there was in England at this period was based on the drawings in Stuart and Revett's book

Although the house was approached from the south, which was its most imposing facade, the drive wound around to the understated entrance hall on the north side. All the reception rooms had access to the terrace through glass doors, which further emphasized the informality of the house and linked the interior with the surrounding park. False doors and windows and varying wall thicknesses were again used to conceal a functional though asymmetrical plan behind an elegant, symmetrical facade. The south windows of the library, and the middle windows on all floors of the main block, are false. These windows are in line with the wall dividing the drawing and dining rooms, which was probably a remnant of the original house on the site.

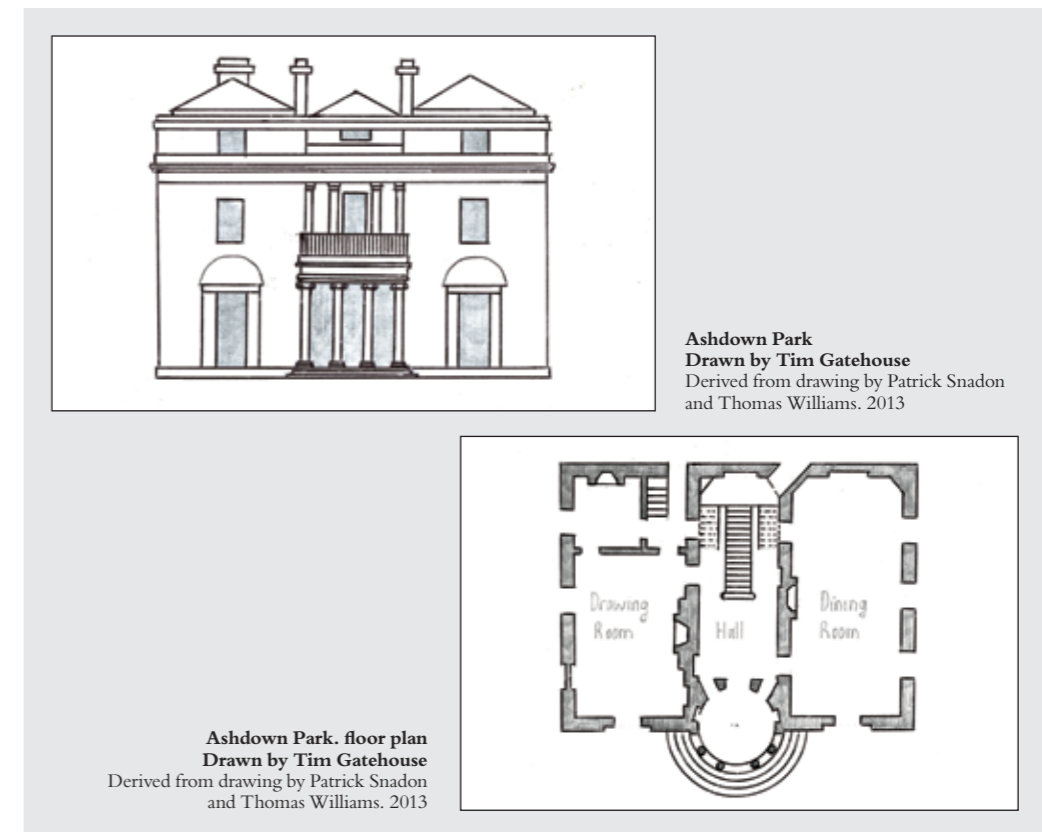
The use of the temple theme does not stop with the pavilions, which terminate the wings. The curved end walls of the hall and dining room recall the cellas (room containing the image of the god) of classical temples, and the mirror-fronted pilasters of the drawing room are a reference to a temple interior, possibly inspired by the Glass Drawing Room at the now demolished Northumberland House in London which was designed by Robert Adam.

Hammerwood was probably never completed in accordance with Latrobe's plans. In 1795 he was declared bankrupt, and shortly afterward left for America. Regrettably, Latrobe's business acumen did not match his artistic and intellectual abilities. Possibly his Moravian education, which concentrated on the development of the intellect at the expense of utilitarian matters, contributed to this imbalance of his abilities.

The Sperlings also incurred financial loss from their investment in the Dublin distillery, caused largely by the downturn in the Irish economy following the union with England. They sold Hammerwood in 1801 and returned to the family seat at Dynes Hall in Essex.

removed as possible from Georgian standards of reticence and good behaviour'. Fortunately, in his additions to Hammerwood, Teulon behaved very well, showing great sensitivity to Latrobe's design. By raising the attic of the central block to a full second storey and adding another storey to the east wing, thus balancing it with the west wing, the symmetry of the south front was restored, albeit one storey higher.

After Hammerwood was sold by the Smith family in 1901 it had several unsympathetic owners, amongst whom were the Army, multiple occupiers when converted into apartments, and a rock band, after which it was virtually derelict. The Pinnegar family, by whom it has been restored, purchased it in 1982.



The purchasers of Hammerwood were the Dorrien Magens family, London bankers and bullion brokers. They required a more conventional country house, not a villa for occasional entertaining. More bedrooms were added above the library, giving the south front a rather lopsided appearance, and extra service rooms to the rear wing, which fortunately were not visible from the south front.

In 1864 Hammerwood was purchased by another banker, Oswald Augustus Smith, who engaged the architect Samuel Teulon to extend it. Teulon has been described as 'the enfant terrible of Victorian architecture, about as far

### Ashdown

While Hammerwood was under construction Latrobe was designing Ashdown, only three miles away, for Trayton Fuller and his wife Anne, who were friends of the Sperlings. The Fullers were old Sussex gentry, the best-known member of the family being Trayton's cousin the substantial landowner and Member of Parliament 'Mad Jack' Fuller. Anne Fuller was the daughter of Lord Heathfield, the Governor of Gibraltar who successfully defended it against the siege of the combined French and Spanish fleets from 1780-1783. As younger members of

prominent local families, the Fullers required a modest, elegant house.

There was already an older house on the site. This was converted into the service wing of the new house, which was built in front, to take advantage of the views to the south. As at Hammerwood the position of the house in the park was accentuated by placing it on an earth terrace, beneath which were the cellars. Trees were planted to create a picturesque setting and maximize the views. A ha-ha wall (a ditch with one vertical side) kept livestock away from the house without obstructing the views.

Because there was no existing house to be incorporated into the plans of the new Ashdown design (other than the old house, which was retained as a separate building at the rear), the floor plan of house is quite straight forward, being a rectangle measuring sixty feet by forty. There was no need for the usual contrivances to maintain symmetry. The entrance hall is in the centre with the staircase at the rear, the drawing room to the left, an office behind it and the dining room on the right. A small tower behind the staircase connects the new house with the old.

The house is built of finely cut sandstone except for its main feature, the semi-circular Ionic portico, which is limestone. As at Hammerwood, Latrobe has embedded a temple form into the plan. This originally created the illusion of an outdoor structure now diminished by the glazing of the gaps between the columns. Because a balcony accessible from the first floor is above the portico, it had to be roofed by a shallow dome. Stone would probably have been too heavy, given the shallowness of the dome, so instead Latrobe used Coade stone, moulded into light interlocking sections. This is a rare instance of Coade stone being used for structural rather than decorative purposes, and an example of how Latrobe used his engineering training to solve an architectural problem.

The staircase as designed by Latrobe was an 'Imperial stair' with a single flight to an intermediate landing from which two flights along each side wall led to the floor above. The original house at the rear was accessed from the intermediate landing. In the early twentieth century it was altered to a single flight stair. The upper hall at the top of the stairs lay at right angles to the lower hall. The curved ends were screened by pairs of columns. It resembled a miniature version of the hall at Carlton House in London, designed for the Prince Regent by James Wyatt in the 1780s. This hall opened to the bedrooms, of which there were more on the second floor. Even the minor bedrooms, which

are partly under the roof space, have elegant coved or semi-domed ceilings to allow for their awkward position.

Since the late nineteenth century Ashdown has been a school. Other buildings have been built around it, but apart from the alterations referred to, Latrobe's design remains intact.

### ***Saint Hill & Sheffield Park***

While work was in progress at Hammerwood and Ashdown, Latrobe appears to have carried out alterations to a house called Saint Hill, also in Sussex, owned by a Mr. Crawford. The only evidence of Latrobe's involvement is builders' accounts in his papers. The house still stands, but Latrobe's work, probably fairly minor, cannot be identified.

In 1799 Latrobe designed minor alterations to the house at Sheffield Park, Sussex, for Lord Sheffield. Trayton Fuller had recommended him while the construction of Ashdown was in progress. The work only involved the removal of walls and possibly modifications to the library. The significance of Latrobe's work was manifested during the American phase of his career when he designed Sedgely Villa in Philadelphia in the Gothic style. Latrobe had never studied Gothic architecture and clearly had little affinity with it. Several years before Latrobe's work at Sheffield Park, the house had been 'Gothicized' by the architect James Wyatt. This was possibly Latrobe's only exposure to domestic Gothic architecture, and is reflected in the rather naive and superficial use of the style at Sedgely. Sedgely Villa has been demolished but the tenant's cottage, also Gothic, still stands in Fairmount Park, Philadelphia. Sheffield Park has been converted into apartments, but the gardens designed by Capability Brown are owned by the National Trust and open to the public.

### ***Tanton Hall***

Latrobe's next commission was to carry out alterations to Tanton Hall. Neither the extent of the work nor even the location of the house could be ascertained by Latrobe scholars Talbot Hamlin and Dorothy Stroud, although recently some light may have been shed on these questions.

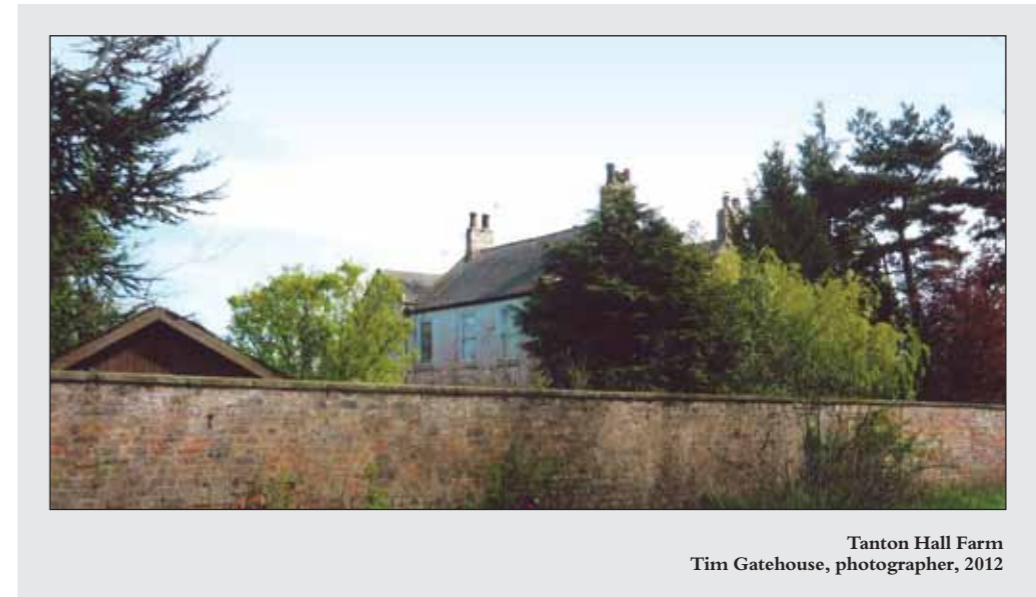
The Latrobe family's solicitor John Silvester commissioned the work. He had married a Mrs Hoissard, the widow of an East India merchant. Her daughters Charlotte and Matilda lived with them until Charlotte eloped with the family's groom. By the time she was found and brought home she was pregnant.

This sort of scandal would have been fatal to the family's reputation; so, the baby when born was adopted out of the family, and the groom dispatched to the colonies. It was then decided to set the sisters up in a house in the country far from the gossip of London. The property purchased was described as including 'a good farm'.

Latrobe recorded an occasion when he accompanied the sisters to Essex to inspect a house, but does not record whether this was the house ultimately selected. There are no records

This is the gate lodge of the Millburn Tower estate, which was owned by Sir Robert Liston, a career diplomat who had been the ambassador to the United States. The lodge comprises two small circular buildings, one larger than the other, with conical roofs, overhanging eaves and central chimneys. A short corridor connects the two buildings.

In 1800, Latrobe, by then settled in America, designed for Sir Robert Liston a most unusual circular house of four storeys, entered through a classical portico on the ground



of a house named Tanton Hall in Essex, nor of any property owned or leased by the Misses Hoissard or John Silvester in that county. Of course, in the intervening period the house could have been demolished and the records lost.

There is however a property called Tanton Hall near Stokesley in Yorkshire. English Heritage records it as having been built in the early eighteenth century and extended in the nineteenth century. One section is pebble dashed, a rustic substitute for stucco, which was frequently used by Latrobe to conceal alterations, and a bay window has been inserted in one wall, which was another device used by Latrobe to increase the size of rooms without major structural alterations. Across the road from the house is Tanton Hall Farm, a substantial complex of a farmhouse and byres built around a courtyard. Further research is needed to determine whether this house is another of Latrobe's minor works

### ***Milburn Tower estate – Gate Lodge***

A small building on the outskirts of Edinburgh may be another Latrobe design.

floor, with the top storey reserved for a library roofed by a dome. There were precedents for such houses in France and England. In 1771 Francois de Monville designed a house in the form of a broken fluted classical column at his estate at the Desert de Retz near Paris. In 1783 the Earl-Bishop of Derry had the circular Mussenden Temple built on the cliff edge at his Down Hill estate in Ireland (to house his library), followed by Ballyscullion, a three storey circular domed house in 1787. This had been inspired by Belle Isle, a house of similar design on Lake Windermere in the English Lakes District. The Earl-Bishop's final adventure in this style was the oval, domed, Ickworth Hall in Suffolk. The house was probably never intended to be built in America, due to the temporary nature of an ambassador's appointment, but in Scotland on Sir Robert's return. As it transpired, the house, that was eventually built, was in a conventional Gothic battlemented style that in no way resembled Latrobe's design. It was the usual practice for the style of gate lodges to reflect that of the houses they served. Perhaps the Listons found Latrobe's design for the house a little too avant garde, but like



the garden of American plants created by Lady Liston, decided to keep Latrobe's lodge as a reminder of their past life. On these grounds, it is arguable that the gate lodge, which still stands at Milburn Tower in Edinburgh, is Latrobe's design.

Benjamin Henry Latrobe's own architectural practice which he established in 1791, however, ended in 1795 with his bankruptcy. His first wife Lydia had died in childbirth in 1793 only three years after their marriage, and this may have contributed, in part, to his increasing inability to manage his financial affairs. It would seem that his artistic sensibilities combined with his Moravian upbringing prevented him from developing the necessary commercial and financial acumen. Latrobe's English career ended when he sailed for America at the end of 1795 to make a fresh start where, with the help of his mother's relatives, the Antes family, and the family of his second wife Mary Elizabeth Hazlehurst, he began the second stage of an illustrious career.

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\* Benjamin Henry Latrobe spelt his name as one word, the original spelling of the name (Ed.)

This article is published without the extensive endnotes provided by the author. Details are available from the Editor, editor@latrobesociety.org.au.

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## La Trobe's Cottage Update

National Trust Volunteer Guides and Friends of the Cottage have been very busy over Summer with the Sunday afternoon openings at the Cottage. The Sunday openings will continue until the end of April. The demand for the combined tours of the Cottage and Government House continues and most Mondays and Thursdays are booked out until the middle of the year.

Most visitors to the Cottage have complimented us on the beautiful display of flowering plants and shrubs in the newly established garden bed within the Cottage grounds. Sandi Pullman, our Volunteer Garden Co-ordinator has worked tirelessly over Summer keeping the garden watered and weeded. Sandi has also collected seeds from various plants in the Cottage garden and they are on sale in the reception area.

Unfortunately, the flag pole suffered damage in mid-January. A combination of rotten wood and high winds split the pole. The

flagpole has been taken away for major repairs but we hope to have it reinstated in the grounds very soon.

The Friends of the Cottage have provided funds for the refurbishment of the bed hangings on Charles and Sophie's bed in the Cottage. The old hangings are stained and faded so this small project should revitalize the bedroom.

If you haven't visited La Trobe's Cottage in the Domain for some time, please come along and check out the improvements.

**Lorraine Finlay  
Manager, La Trobe's Cottage**

## Forthcoming events

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### MARCH

#### Sunday 24

##### La Trobe's Birthday Celebration

**Time:** 5.00-7.00pm

**Venue:** Domain House

Dallas Brooks Drive, Melbourne

Mr Jack Martin, Coordinator –

Collection Management, Public Record Office,

Victoria: *'Digitising La Trobe: the La Trobe Society Digitisation Project'*. Refreshments.

### APRIL

#### Sunday 7

##### 'Speaking at Old Treasury'

**The Forgotten Governor:**

**C J La Trobe**

**Time:** 2.30-3.30pm

**Venue:** Old Treasury Building

**20 Spring Street, Melbourne**

**Bookings:** Direct to Old Treasury  
9651 2233

or [rsvp@oldtreasurybuilding.com](mailto:rsvp@oldtreasurybuilding.com)

**Admission:** \$15 Adults, \$12 Concession

Dr Dianne Reilly AM, Honorary Secretary of the La Trobe Society, will discuss events in the life of Charles Joseph La Trobe and the efforts of the La Trobe Society to restore his reputation.

#### Sunday 21

##### The Governor's Window

**Time:** 2.00-4.00pm

**Venue:** The Briars Historic Homestead,

450 Nepean Highway, Mt Martha

(Melways ref: 146 D12)

**Bookings Essential:** Direct to National Trust Booking Office 8663 7260

**Admission:** \$18 Adults, National Trust Members \$15 (Membership number required), \$15 Concession

Dr Bronwyn Hughes, Stained Glass

Historian and Consultant, will give a

presentation on the La Trobe window in

the Chapelle de l'Ermitage, Neuchâtel,

Switzerland. Followed by High Tea.

A Mornington Peninsula Branch, National Trust of Australia, (Victoria) event.

### JUNE

#### Tuesday 18

##### Joint La Trobe Society/RHSV AGL

**Shaw Lecture**

**Time:** 6.30-8.00pm

**Venue:** Royal Historical Society

of Victoria, Cnr William and

A'Beckett Streets, Melbourne

Member Dr Margaret Bowman

OAM will give the lecture *'Portrait of the Artist as a Young Colonist: George Alexander Gilbert, 1815-1877'*. Refreshments.

### JULY

#### Tuesday 2

##### La Trobe University Annual Lecture

**Venue:** La Trobe University AgriBio

Centre, La Trobe University, Bundoora

**Time:** 6.30-8.30pm

**Guest Speaker:** Dr Peter Sale, Reader and Associate Professor.

#### Tuesday 16

##### Friends of La Trobe's Cottage Lecture

**Venue:** Domain House,

vDallas Brooks Drive, Melbourne

**Time:** 6.00-7.30pm

Mr Martin Purslow, CEO, National

Trust will discuss his experience of

*'Breathing new life into historic properties'*.

Refreshments.

### AUGUST

#### Wednesday 7 (tbc)

##### La Trobe Society Annual General Meeting and Dinner

**Venue:** Lyceum Club,

Ridgway Place, Melbourne

**Guest Speaker:** (tbc)

## La Trobe Memorabilia

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John Botham reported to a recent Society committee meeting that he continues to update the much admired La Trobe Society and Friends of La Trobe Cottage website.

He has made a start on the proposal that the Society should keep an online register of all memorabilia, etc. relating to La Trobe. Some items are: the plaque in Agnes Street, Jolimont; gravestone at Litlington; chapelle at Neuchâtel; plaques in Botanic Gardens, Geelong, and at St George's Church, Queenscliff, etc. Members are asked for their input.

Please contact John at  
[info@latrobesociety.org.au](mailto:info@latrobesociety.org.au)  
or phone 9583 1114.

## Contributions welcome

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The Editorial Committee welcomes contributions to La Trobeana which is published three times a year.

Further information about the Journal may be found at  
[www.latrobesociety.org.au/LaTrobeanaIndex.html](http://www.latrobesociety.org.au/LaTrobeanaIndex.html)

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