

*Some
19th Century furniture-makers in Western Australia*



Pedestal table attributed to Joseph Hamblin c 1848

Dorothy Erickson 2014

Western Australia



*The places that will be mentioned are:
Albany (King George's Sound) 1827,
Perth founded 1829,
Fremantle 1829,
Guildford 1829,
The Swan Valley 1829,
Bunbury (Port Leschenault) 1829,
Augusta 1830,
York (Over the Hills) 1831,
Busselton (The Vasse) 1832,
Toodyay (Over the Hills) 1836,
Geraldton and the Greenough 1850.*

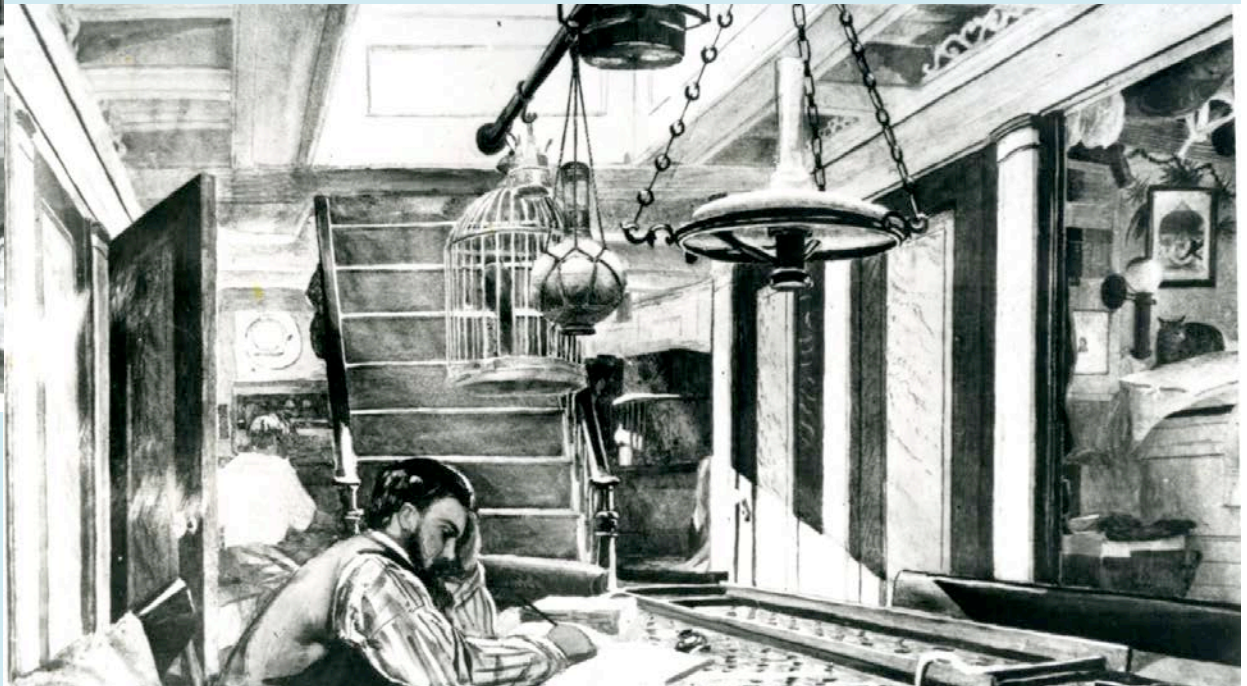


*Make-do
Food safe
South West
1880s.*



The settlers arrived in their own ships or in ones they had chartered. They had notions of creating a Utopia in the southern hemisphere where, within a short time, no one was expected or needed to work— at least no one who was gently born.

John de Mansfield Absolon (1843-1879) sailed out in the Zephyr belonging to his father-in-law in 1870. He painted these pictures of his life on board.





Koombana Bay, Bunbury etching based on a painting by Louisa Clifton 1840s.

For the settlers it was a grand Romantic dream. Settlements were scattered along the periphery of the continent.



Perth from Mt Eliza painted by George Nash in the 1840s.

The colony of Western Australia was founded in 1829 ostensibly as a colony for gentlemen. The British government only gave its assent to the establishment on the condition that the colonists themselves met all costs.

*The haste with which the whole project proceeded sowed the seeds of the problems that followed and these were such that the colony was later described by the anonymous author of *The Cinderella of the South* as an '... anomaly in the history of colonisation ... never had a colony been so impoverished, and yet lingered on.'*

Hopes were high at first and the settlers attracted were from an educated and cultured society.

"My House and Garden" and mill 1833. Home of Civil Engineer Henry (1788-1875) and Cleobulina Amelia Reveley (1794-1870). He was educated in Italy and a friend of Percy Bysshe Shelley and she the artistic sister of the artist Copley Fielding.





St George's Terrace Perth with the Colonial Chaplin Reverend Wittenoom driving his buggy. Painted by Charles Dirck Wittenoom in the 1830s. In 1848 a booklet on the Australian colonies described Western Australia thus:

"This colony, which twenty-five years ago was considered to offer such golden hopes to the colonist . . . is now far inferior to the other colonies. . . . We will not dwell longer on the Swan river Colony. No emigrants have gone there for years past, nor would we advise anyone to choose his resting place there."



Colonial chaplain the Reverend Wittenoom's House in Perth drawn by his brother Charles Dirck Wittenoom whilst on a visit in the 1830s. Wittenoom and his sons had made the bricks from soil on the block and employed a bricklayer to build the house.

Sir Richard Spencer (Resident Magistrate at Albany)'s property drawn by his daughter Mary Ann Trimmer c 1836.



*Strawberry Hill.
W^o Albany.
King George's Sound. Australia.*



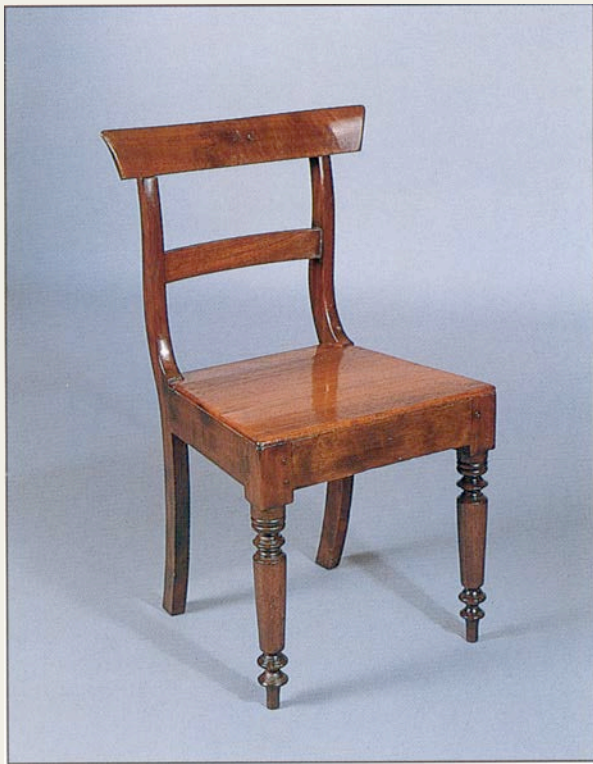
Wood turning and furniture making was a hobby of the gentry class in the 1830s and later and many brought lathes with them. Sir Richard Spencer Government Resident at Albany brought one with him. This was used by his son Robert (1830-1884) to construct a jarrah settle (the small image) which is now in the National Trust property Old Farm – Strawberry Hill, Albany. The other settle pictured came from a nearby property in the Great Southern region and was recently sold at auction for \$33,785. Settles were a favourite piece of furniture being portable and long enough to double as a bed for overnight guests. There are at least two examples of this design and many similar.

Other settlers brought cabinet makers as indentured servants and settlers wrote home that it it was better to commission furniture to be made unless you already possessed 'good' furniture. Lower left offered for auction in September 2014 - estimated at \$40,000



Another settler who brought a lathe was Thomas Jecks (1814-1856) who took up land at Guildford and later became the proprietor of the Rose and Crown in Guildford. Jecks' settle c 1842 is now in the old Harper home Woodbridge a National Trust property nearby.

Despite the rigours of settler life, crafts— both professional and amateur — were undertaken with enthusiasm at most levels of society with varying degrees of success. Fine furniture in traditional styles was produced using local materials and boat building was a major craft.



*While we have the names of cabinet makers and carpenters who came to the colony in the early days very few pieces can be ascribed to individual makers. Early cabinet makers included James Edwards Inkpen (1799–1871) arrived in 1829 and mostly worked as a comb-maker. entrepreneurial **George Lazenby** (1808–95) arrived in 1833, successful **Thomas Smith** (1812–87) in 1834, **James Baines** (1814-1902) and **David Benjamin** (1817-88) in 1840, to be followed by woodcarver **Thomas Bates** (1815–77) and very well-qualified cabinetmaker **Joseph Hamblin** (1820–99) in 1842. The entrepreneurial George Lazenby and his workmen made quite a substantial amount as well as building many houses. It is known he fitted out the Methodist Chapel and Government House. The 2 pieces on the left are now in the collection of the National Gallery Canberra. The table is reputed to be by **George Wansbrough** (1834–1920) of York who was an apprentice of Lazenby and is of a later date. Smith had premises in Perth and employed forty five ticket-of-leave men 1852-1886. He made work exhibited in the Colonial and Indian Exhibition in London in 1886.*

Ship's carpenters were also makers of furniture while amateurs could also be boat builders. For instance the Turner's at Augusta and one of their servants built a craft the Alpha to be able to ship out the produce from their isolated settlement on the south west tip of the continent.



The Rev. Mitchell's Middle Swan Church as depicted in the 1840s by William Locke Brockman (1802–72).

The octagonal church stood in park like surroundings typical of the area along the reaches of the Upper Swan. The wealthy Brockmans and Hamersleys who worshipped here had Royal ancestors and brought their own furniture but neighbours, the Tanners, wrote 'The mahogany here is very good and pretty and it would be more advisable to bring a cabinet-maker out than furniture, unless it be very good and you have it by you.' their sitting room was "... 24 ft. long, is panelled some thing after the manner of old fashioned rooms in England ... The room is adorned with oil paintings ... some good engravings, pair of globes, ash loo table, two mahogany dining tables, sofa chairs, and a very large oak medicine chest."



The Bussell family shortly before leaving England in 1830 and their property Cattle Chosen at the Vasse (now Busselton) drawn by Thomas Turner of Augusta.



The although friends of the Royal Family the Bussell's were in straightened circumstances when they decided to emigrate. The Reverend Bussell had died. Only John had finished university. They wrote copious diaries and letters so we know the boys' first priorities were to build houses and till the land. Though John quickly constructed bookshelves for his books, things such as the water wheels that fed the irrigation system of the gardens were of more importance. His sister Fanny however wrote of other things - "The river was broad and beautiful and the country more richly wooded than the English imagination can conceive. It is here that one sees the magnificence of migration."



Make-do on rural properties

William Syred (1831-1903) at Wattening in the Toodyay Valley (one of the first inland settlements) usually described as "Over the Hills" constructed this nursing chair for his wife in 1853. A naturally curving York Gum branch is set into Jarrah spindles and seat. This is now in the Newcastle (Toodyay) Gaol Museum .



Seat made by John Withnell in 1865 at Mount Welcome Station, Roebourne. Whalebone, 128cm wide. This is now in the WA Museum.



George Stedman Watts (1804–89), watercolour painting of his sons George and Frederick at their property on the Canning River – now part of a suburb of Perth.



Over the Hills in the Toodyay Valley is "Culham" the property settled by 'Squire' Samuel Pole Phillips. The building on the left is the first house with the third on the right. A fourth home was built later. The interior of one of the later house with 'Squire' Phillips and his wife the former Sophia Roe daughter of the Surveyor General Capt. John Septimus Roe and first white child born in the colony.

Table similar to one commissioned by Roe in the 1840s from Joseph Hamblin who made furniture for Government House.



Cleobulina Amelia Reveley's painting of Government House Perth 1835.





Joseph Hamblin (1820–1899)

Joseph Hamblin was one of the most accomplished cabinetmakers to work in Western Australia. He included undertaking, teaching violin and singing, and piano tuning among his activities. Hamblin was born in Berkshire and was the son of the Reverend Hamblin. He undertook a nine year apprenticeship with John Broadwood & Sons, who had been pianoforte makers by Royal Appointment to the crown since George II. Towards the end of his apprenticeship he is reputed to have made an inlaid table for Queen Victoria, which is thought to have been a wedding present for her when she married in 1840.

*Hamblin must have wanted to better himself. He married Rebecca Comley in 1842, and they emigrated a week later sailing as steerage passengers on the *Trusty*, which arrived in Koombana Bay - Australind in December. A year later, when their first child was born, they had moved to Perth where Joseph worked for the entrepreneurial George Lazenby who trusted him to run his business when the latter left for England with samples made by Hamblin, for the London market.*

He was also in charge of preparing samples of Western Australian timber that were exhibited in the Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations held in the Crystal Palace in London in 1851.

Surveyor General Capt. J. S. Roe exhibited a table, made by Hamblin, in the 1870 Loan Exhibition of Works of Art and Industry held in the Mechanics' Institute, which was described as 'after a wear and tear of thirty two years, only required re polishing to be equal to any newly out of the workshop, testimony sufficient not only to the quality of the workmanship but also of the wood.'



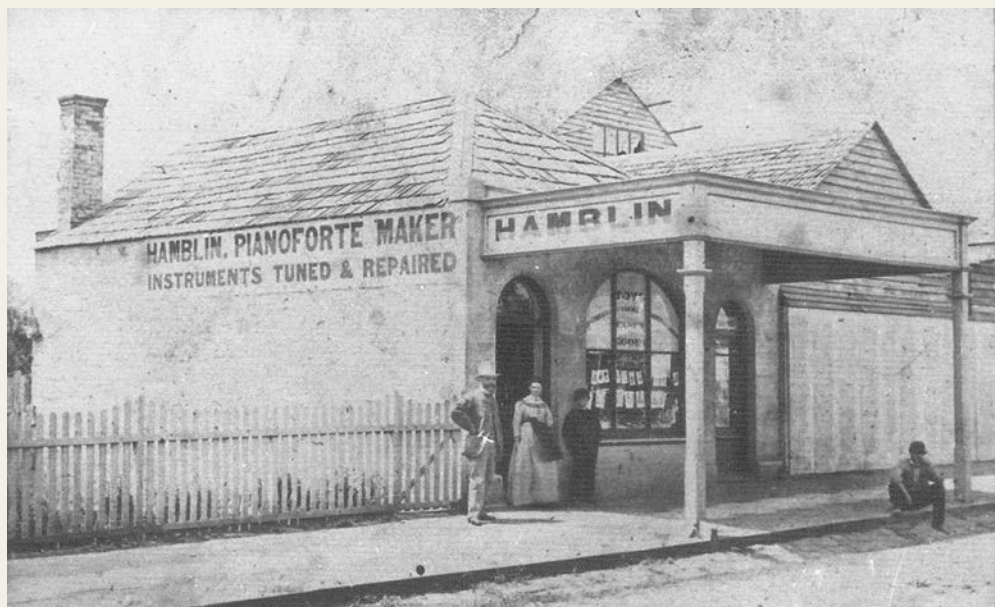
One of a pair of jarrah cellarets made for Government House Perth, c.1848, when George Lazenby had the contract for its refurbishment, 100 wide x 90cm deep. The piece is attributed to his employee Joseph Hamblin. Government House Western Australia.

Pedestal table reputedly made for Government House in Perth, attributed to Joseph Hamblin, c.1848. Jarrah, 136.5 diameter x 74cm high. Wordsworth Collection, NGA. Similar pedestal tables were made for Captain John Molloy and Captain J. S. Roe.

In January 1847 Joseph Hamblin sailed on the Dispatch for England returning later that year with his sister Eliza who married an apprentice carpenter of Lazenby's. This young man, Benjamin Mason (1828–93) became a wealthy and influential timber merchant.

Hamblin is reputed to have made a chair for the Queen of Spain during his time in Perth, which is probably true as Dom Salvado of the Benedictine Monastery at New Norcia returned to Spain in 1849 at a time when his brother, Reverend Father Santos Salvado, was Chaplain to the Spanish Queen.





In 1854 the Hamblins left Western Australia and sailed for South Australia, and by 1857 the family were in Kyneton, Victoria, where he set up in business. A branded piano, still in playing order, is in the Kyneton Museum.



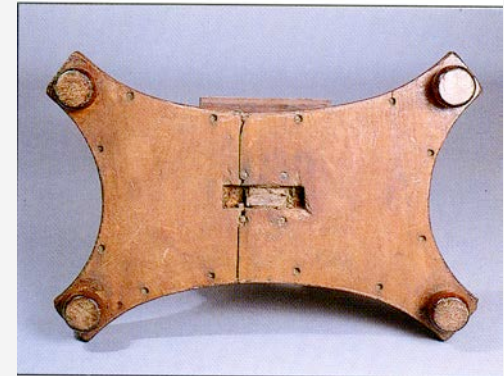


Georgian and Regency styled furniture c 1840s

Jarrah Pedestal table

Jarrah Tilt-top breakfast table made in Fremantle

Oval tilt top table in jarrah





The oldest piece of furniture which has currently been identified as Western Australian is this cupboard of pit-sawn timber, c.1830s. It came from the Heppingstone family of Cundinup homestead some 30 kms east of Busselton. Jarrah, 134 x 64 x 110cm. Wordsworth Collection, National Gallery of Australia. It is thought to have been made at the Vasse by ex-soldier Robert Heppingstone (1789-1835) who arrived at Augusta as an employee of Captain Molloy in 1830. His daughter married Alfred Bussell who pioneered Ellenbrook and Wallcliffe at Margaret River.

Cundinup in the 1890s. Arthur and Frances Heppingstone and their family are in the foreground.

A jarrah carver from the Heppingstone family of Cundinup, probably c.1870s, 65 x 65 x 90cm. Marie Louise Wordsworth Collection.



Alfred Bussell, who married Ellen Heppingstone, became a competent amateur architect while building Ellenbrook and then in 1864, Wallcliffe, a twelve-room house was made from local limestone and pit-sawn timbers. Alfred was assisted in its construction by George Knapton (1824--1898), who built the architraves, fire surrounds and other detailing from jarrah, called in those days Swan River mahogany. An unusual feature for a Western Australian house was the trompe l'oeil fresco of classical figures in the music room. Charles Slade Abraham, tutor to the Bussell children, painted this c.1873.

Wallcliffe and contents were destroyed in the Margaret River Bushfires of 2011.

Sheoak washstand by Knapton c.1870





Wonnerup House the Layman family home near Busselton has much built-in and other furniture by the Knapton family. Knapton's sons Alfred (1858-1951) and Albert (1865-1835) were the makers.

Eldest son William Knapton (1848–1910) also made furniture for the Brockman's Warren House as well as a fine sideboard for his own home, The Olives.

George Holland Knapton had arrived in 1854 with his wife, four children and mother-in-law. He came to join his wife's father, John Herring (1780-1866), who had arrived in 1830 as a workman for the Bussells and who, by 1854, was the local postmaster and a yeoman farmer.

In about 1873 Knapton bought American Charles Keyser's (1829-1900) carpentry and cabinet making business and the family made furniture for a number of homes in the district.

Timber exports and other agricultural produce allowed the pioneers around Busselton to keep Knapton and his sons as busy as they wished to be.



Sideboard made by William Knapton in the late 1870s for his own home The Olives at Busselton. Private collection.



The designers of country buildings were the early settlers themselves and they naturally expressed their sense of the right architecture in which to dwell. The common theme was the English country house for many of the settlers who, with no expectation of succeeding their fathers, had come to create their own estates. Most chose to build two-storey houses of a provincial Georgian style with symmetrically placed doors and windows, which bore the same proportions and percentage in relation to the wall space as their English originals. They filled their homes with furniture in Georgian or Regency styles.

Ravenswood Farm was originally part of the grant of the wealthy Thomas Peel and it was purchased in 1859 by Elizabeth Thomas, wife of Captain John Thomas, a shipmaster and hotelier whose father had been one of Peel's indentured servants. They built Ravenswood Hall in 1862. Painting in the collection of the RWAHS.



Captain Thomas' chart box and arm chair. The latter is now in the National Gallery of Australia.





Craftsmanship was assumed as a matter of course in a cleric. When time permitted chapels were built, and the second oldest in the state, St Mark's Picton, is the finest example of an early colonial church still in its original condition. It was built of wattle and daub and pit-sawn timber by the Reverend John Ramsden Wollaston (1791–1856), first Archdeacon in Western Australia, in his and his family's spare time. Pit-sawn timbers were also used to construct the church furniture, and rushes and sedges were used for the thatched roof. Wollaston's diaries describe the work and a sketch of the building at its opening in 1842 by his son William Wollaston confirms the simple charm of the whole concept.



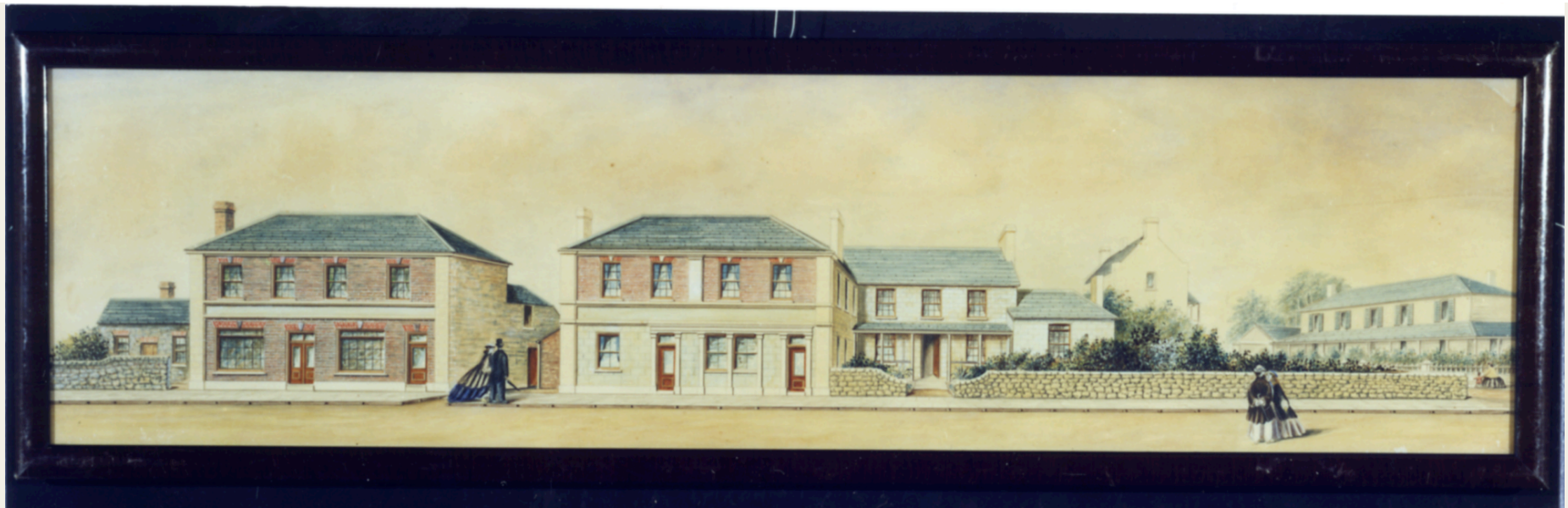


The family chapel at St Werburgh's which was built in 1872 by the Egerton Warburtons on their property near Mount Barker, was fitted out with elegant wrought-iron work by Lt. Edward George Egerton Warburton (1819-1889) himself, a former army officer who had arrived in 1840. His wife Augusta was the daughter of Sir Richard Spencer of Old Farm Strawberry Hill at Albany. St Werburgh's farmhouse and the chapel were built of Devonshire cob, an earth, dung and straw rammed-earth mixture overlaid with another layer of earth render in which openings were then drawn and cut out for doors and windows. Samuel Swift built the walls and the carpenter was expiree David Brown (1829-?).





Perth, Western Australia, 1862, by Edmund Yeamans Walcott Henderson, engineer and Comptroller of Convicts in Western Australia from 1850–63. Watercolour, 34.6 x 50.6cm. Wordsworth Collection, National Gallery of Australia.



Fremantle High Street 1850s by expirree architect Thomas 'Satan' Browne. Collection of the Western Australian Museum.

At the end of the 1840s, the colony began to prosper and a desperate shortage of labour ensued. The lucrative export sandalwood trade, which had drawn almost all the free labour, put the agricultural and pastoral industries in jeopardy so a request was sent to the British government to send ticket-of-leave prisoners.

In 1850 the struggling colony accepted the arrival of male convicts the other colonies no longer wanted and who were transported for the next 18 years. They were desperately needed to build the infrastructure and made quite a difference to the face of Perth constructing roads, buildings and furniture both in government service and on their own account.

Some settlers were opposed, however. To compensate for this an equal number of free colonists was to be brought out, and many were women from poorhouses. The enterprise was supported by the British government bringing much needed capital as well as labour to the colony. A number of craftsmen were also brought from Adelaide to instruct the convicts in various trades, for they were required to make everything they needed including their gaols. Many, perforce, learnt useful skills such as ironwork, woodwork, tailoring, shoemaking and the like, which stood them in good stead when granted their ticket-of-leave. George Keane (1816–77), for instance, set up a cabinetmaking business in his own right in 1861.



Manning's Folly, Fremantle, 1858, the home of wealthy merchant C. A. Manning. Architectural drawing attributed to expirée Thomas Henry Johnston 'Satan' Browne. Manning married three times. The first two of his wives were the daughters of Spanish grandee's from Peru and perhaps required such accommodation.



This chiffonier was made under the direction of George Drummond Ralston (1825-1878) Foreman of Works in the convict establishment 1862-1870 for Eliza Blinco the wife of one of the warders. Private collection.

The inlaid work box was made by a convict in the 1860s for a member of the Lockyer family. History House Armadale.



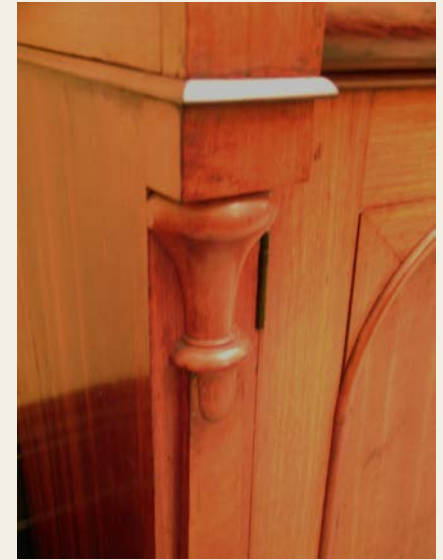
JARRAH
Repolished finish
Height — 3'1½"; 0.950m
Length — 7'0¾"; 2.155m
Depth — 2'0"; 0.610m



JARRAH
Original finish
Height — 3'0½"; 0.925m
Length — 6'9½"; 2.070m
Depth — 2'0½"; 0.625m

*Furniture of the 1860s above and 1870s below.
All are jarrah and the lower more sophisticated settle
was made in Fremantle.*

*No distinction was made between carpenters and
cabinetmakers and often one man performed the various
specialised activities of some furniture makers.*



Edwin Foss Duffield (1846–1922) was a cabinetmaker and undertaker in Fremantle in the 1870s. He was born in Fremantle and was the grandson of early settler John Hole Duffield. He was apprenticed to George Lazenby and married his daughter, and was probably trained by skilled cabinetmaker Joseph Hamblin who, as mentioned before, worked for Lazenby. Duffield became a landowner and a pillar of society in Fremantle. This chiffonier of his making is in National Trust property Samson House in Fremantle.

In the Loan Exhibition of Art and Industry in Perth in 1870 Duffield exhibited a “very pretty and chastely designed” sandalwood ‘whatnot’ and an inlaid cabinet and two boxes he made for Mr Leake.

He was one of four craftsmen singled out for fine woodwork. The others were the consummate craftsman Joseph Hamblin, Isidore Oriol (b.1825 Spain, d.1912) and Hookum Chan (c.1800–1903). Ref. Perth Gazette and West Australian Times Sept. 16 1870.

This whatnot c. 1860 could well have been made by Duffield.





Other pieces by Duffield such as games tables made from various Australian woods, are still held by the family, as well as other pieces held by descendants of the Leake family. There are at least 5 of these games tables. One was exhibited in London at the Colonial and Indian Exhibition by Mrs Leake. The lower one can be seen in an early photograph of Grass Valley near York. It is still owned by Leake descendants.



Country carpenters and cabinetmakers were able to make a respectable living by being engaged partly in agriculture and partly in their trade. Some also served as undertakers. The Toodyay census of 1859 listed thirteen carpenters at Toodyay and twenty-six at York. Among those who were cabinetmakers at York was George Wansbrough (1834–1920), the son of an early farmer who had come out as an indentured servant. Wansbrough was apprenticed to George Lazenby and went on to become a successful builder, wheelwright, coach builder, cabinetmaker and undertaker in York building Bridge House and Wansbrough House. There is a side table seen earlier believed to be made by Wansbrough.



Chair in the style of William IV made by Joseph Ablett Wroth in 1882. He had been an apprentice of Wansbrough 'Over the Hills' at York, the first inland settlement. Newcastle Gaol Museum, Toodyay.

Joseph Ablett Wroth (1859–1943), colonial-born carpenter and builder of Toodyay, was both a professional and an amateur. An example of his work is this chair in the Toodyay Gaol Museum made as a wedding present for his wife. The sheoak piece is in the style of William IV, copied either from older pieces in the district or from English pattern books. Wroth had been apprenticed to a York carpenter, presumably Wansbrough, but at seventeen, on the death of his father, he assumed responsibility for his family and returned to Toodyay to take care of the family businesses. He went on to become a successful clerk to the local government bodies and a builder. One example of his buildings was Spion Kop built in Toodyay for the Reverend Holliday. On occasions, such as during typhoid epidemics, Wroth would have to work through the night making coffins.

A country cabinetmaker-cum-undertaker who worked at Greenough near Geraldton from the 1860s into the twentieth century was Canadian-born John Louis Levermann (1838–1927) who, assisted by his son Charles Louis (1871-1936), fitted out the Catholic Church there. The pair also made furniture for the Waldeck family of the district and a travelling medicine chest for his son-in-law Charles Conway. By 1874 he had acquired land and was farming.

Also working at York and Champion Bay was emancipist cabinetmaker Thomas Gable (b.1835), and either Wroth or Levermann could have made the chest of drawers illustrated.

Also working at York, Perth and Champion Bay were cabinetmaker and carver John Ferry (1825–87) and David Marchant (1850s–1954). Ferry worked in the Toodyay district as a cabinetmaker from 1887 to 1884 but no work has so far been identified. Marchant fabricated a presentation casket for Queen Victoria on the occasion of her Golden Jubilee in 1887

Georgian-style chest of drawers made at Champion Bay, Geraldton. Jarrah, 104 x 107 x 51.5cm. Private collection.





Sideboard made in the 1880s for the Reverend David Shearer in Fremantle. Jarrah, 70 x 210 x 159cm. Western Australian Museum. The maker has not been identified.

For the most part furniture made in the second half of the century continued to reflect earlier styles.

Other cabinetmakers who arrived as free settlers included: –

Thomas Ayers (1835-1911), who worked as a gardener and cabinetmaker in the 1850s and 60s and moved to SA;

Joseph Chester (1807–86), who was an upholsterer and carpenter before becoming a publican;

Frederick Collett (1863-1943), who also worked as an inspector of buildings, and

R. Cummins who was a cabinetmaker based in Cantonment Street, Fremantle.

Isidore Oriol (1825 Spain -1912), carpenter, joiner and cabinetmaker arrived with the Benedictine monks in 1853 and worked at their monastery at New Norcia until 1857 before specialising in church carpentry in Perth.



Wardrobe c 1870.

*Chiffonier made for a member
of the Clifton family now in
NTI property Woodbridge.*

*Pedestal sideboard made in
Fremantle*





Chest of drawers in she-oak from Albany.

Barley twist drawers from Perth.

Split pilaster chest of drawers.

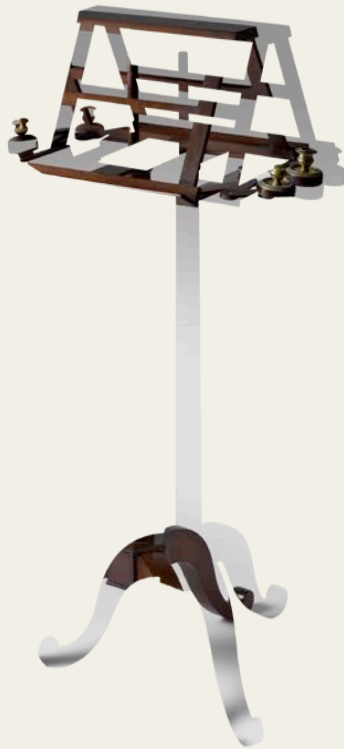
All c 18870s





*One maker who prospered was **Hookum Chan** (Khan, Tchan c.1800–1903) who had arrived on J. L. Morley's Cumberland in 1829. He was born into a high-caste Hindu family probably in the area now known as Uttarakhand in the foothills of the Himalayas, northern India. It was thought that he may have been employed as a carpenter by the East India Company before coming to the Swan River Colony. The wealthy and influential Prinsep family in Bengal, for whom he had worked, assisted his coming to Western Australia.*

Tobacco jar turned by Hookam Chan. Double-sided music stand and sideboard made for Henry Prinsep



*Bureau in the style of George I
made for Henry Prinsep in
1866–68. Jarrah, 88 x 120 x
41cm.*

*Marie Louise Wordsworth
Collection.*



Chan's first year was spent on government works, and there is also a record of him repairing a ship damaged on the Stragglers Rocks for a Captain Back in 1830 at the request of Governor Stirling. He apparently sailed to India and returned in 1835 or 1841. Chan had furniture works in Perth and possibly at Champion Bay (Geraldton). His workshop was behind what was the Shamrock Hotel from 1850–67. He employed twenty-nine ticket-of-leave men between 1852 and 1874. In the 1880s and 1890s his premises were in Murray Street. His son John (1869-1917) was a wood turner, Alfred (1853-1916) a woodcarver and upholsterer and William (1857–1943) a carpenter, woodcarver, turner and upholsterer. Together they had quite a business.

Book cupboard with carved rose motifs in the brackets, 1880s. This is the type of carving in which William Tchan excelled and the piece may be from the Chan family. It could, of course, equally be from Smith & Co. that was importing some hundreds of workers for their furniture business in Perth by this time, or Oriol or any of the other cabinetmakers who were still working in the 1880s. Jarrah and pine, 139 x 229.5 x 52cm. Marie Louise Wordsworth Collection.

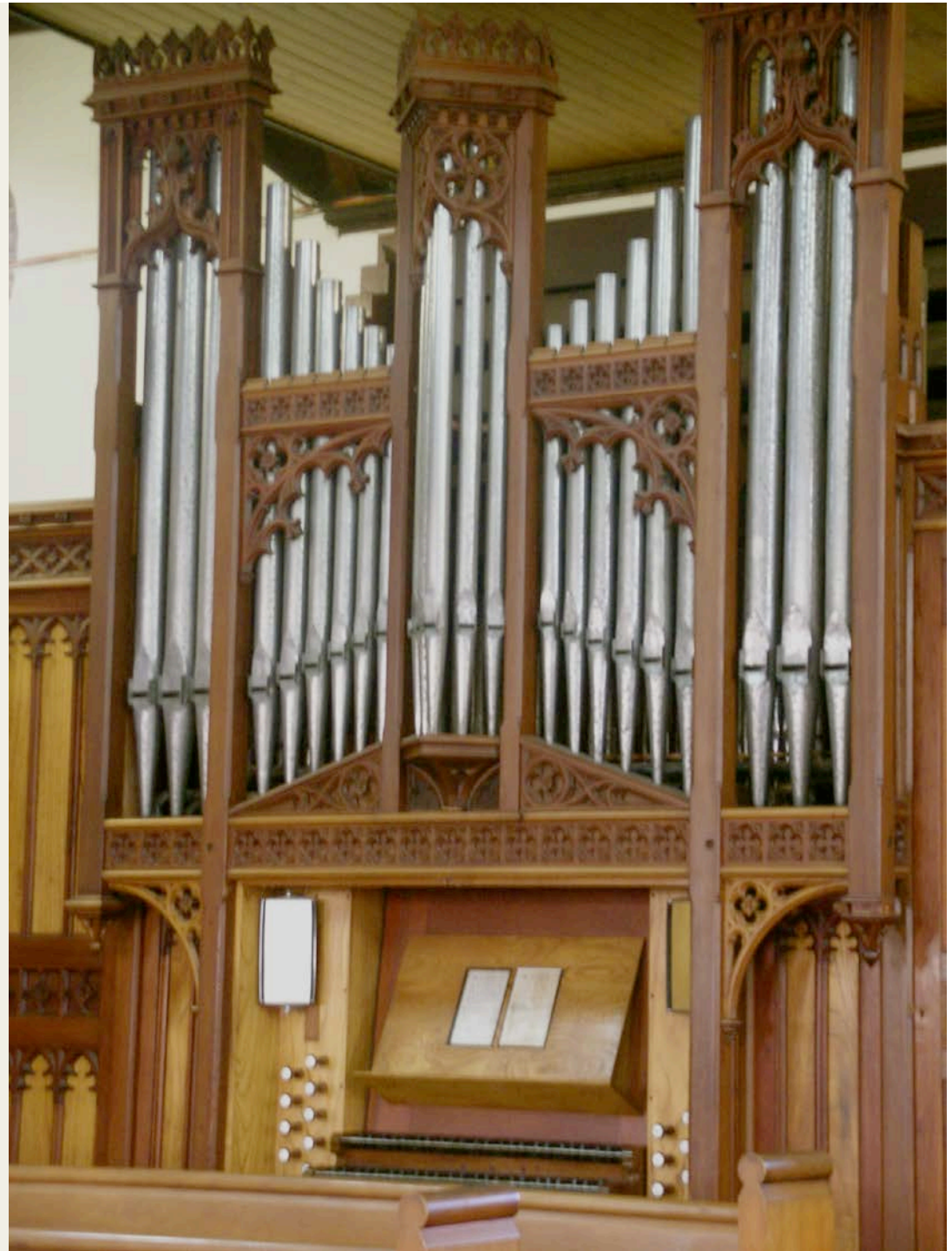


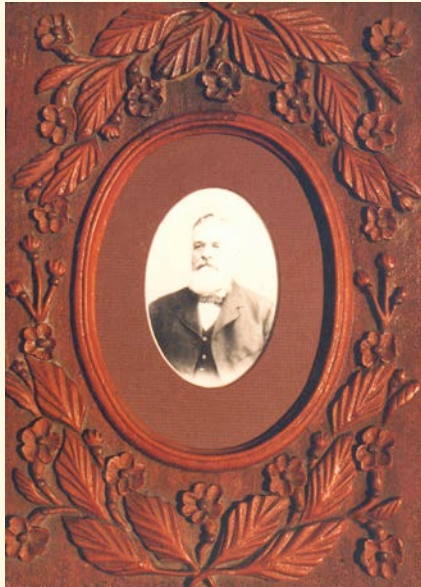
The sons changed their name to Tchan.

William helped R. Cecil Clifton with his organ building but no other work has been positively identified.

Family legend has it that the motif used in their work was a rose, and floral motifs that could be described as roses are unusual and are carved in the brackets of the book cupboard.

William Tchan undertook the woodwork on the organ made by Cecil Clifton for his own house and now in St Alban's Highgate.





*Photo stands awarded medals
1886 Indian and Colonial
Exhibition London.*

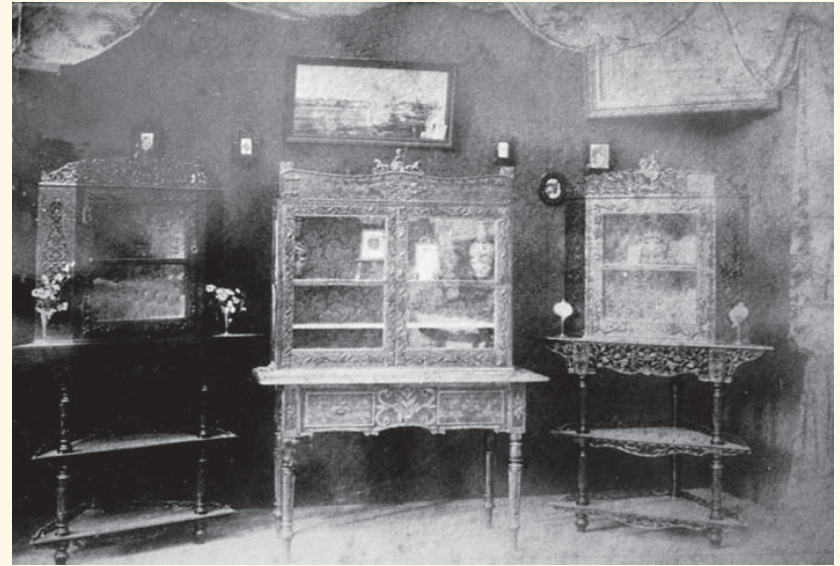


Henry Passmore (1840-1920) a self taught furniture maker and woodcarver was born in Barnstaple, England, son of a lace maker. Henry however became a midshipman in the Royal Navy, serving on HMS Caesar in the Baltic and Crimea from 1854–1862. He then joined the Convict Service at Dartmoor Prison. He arrived in Western Australia on the Racehorse in 1865 as warder in charge of convicts and was later in charge of various convict public works, roads, bridges, river dredging, etc.



Passmore exhibited his woolwork at the 1881 International Exhibition on the Perth Esplanade. The dome was frescoed inside by Henry Prinsep, while potted palms and a Viennese orchestra provided the ambience of an Austrian kursaal.





Parts of the Passmore Suite carved over ten years of Henry's spare time in the 1880s.





The large furniture manufacturers who began to emerge with the gold rushes of the 1880s and 1890s included the Western Australian Manufacturing Company that was the successor to Smith & Co's Palace Emporium and William Zimpel an Austrian who had lived in Istanbul and had been brought out by Smith & Co. By 1910 Zimpel's was the most important establishment of its type in the State.

On a more individual level the name Madeley crops up but little is known of Chester born Edward Madeley (1862–1947). He was a stone carver, cabinetmaker and woodcarver whose hobby was also his work.

The Western Australian Casket containing an illuminated manuscript that was the gift to Queen Victoria from the parliament of Western Australia on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee in 1897. The manuscript was by A. G. von Stach and the casket was constructed from a variety of local timbers and minerals including copper, silver, tin, pearl shell and 1.1 kilograms of gold. It was designed by E. H. Hamilton advised by Herbert Gibbs and Henry Prinsep with woodwork fabricated by Cohen and Madeley and the metalwork by Jerger assisted by Donovan & Overland.

Chair by Edward Madeley, now in the collection of the Art Gallery of Western Australia, seen on display at the Franco-British Exhibition in London, 1908 with paintings by Annie Dorrington now in the Art Gallery of Western Australia.

W. ZIMPEL,
Furniture Manufacturer and Importer,
Cabinet Maker and Upholsterer,
Venetian Blind Maker.

The Neat and Cheapest Best for Use and Durable Furniture. † One of the Largest and most varied Stocks in the Colony to select from.

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*Reversible tea-cum-card
table made for Margaret
Lady Forrest in the 1890s.
Jarrah with baize on one
surface, c. 85cm diameter.
Formerly in the Hall
Collection.*



William Howitt (1846–1928) woodcarver of distinction

William Howitt was born on 7 July 1846 at Winton near Manchester in the United Kingdom to William Howitt, mechanic, and his Spanish wife Betsy Brahma. The young Howitt studied art in Nottingham, Liverpool and London in the early 1860s. By 1866 he was employed restoring church interiors and carving decorative elements for ship's interiors. He married Isabella Patrick in Glasgow in 1869. Their first son, William, was born in Glasgow that year, then three other children in Liverpool and Birmingham between 1873 and 1877. He must have been ambitious, exhibiting in the Indian and Colonial Exhibition in London in 1886 where he received a Bronze Medal for work exhibited. The family migrated to Melbourne in 1888. Here he worked on Gothic styled furniture for St Paul's Cathedral. The Bishop's throne and pulpit took seven months to carve. In 1896 Howitt moved to Perth and was soon undertaking commissions for the Government to promote local timbers starting with L'Exposition Universelle 1900.



Holy Trinity Kew



Western Australian Pavilion Paris 1900



L'Exposition Universelle, Paris 1900. Howitt's font made from one piece of Jarrah and his table inlaid with various Western Australian timbers.



Marguerite Leaving the Church by William Howitt, exhibited at the Paris L' Exposition Universelle in 1900 where it won a silver medal. Location not known.

Dante and Beatrice panel by William Howitt, purchased for the Panama Canal opening exhibition held in San Francisco in 1915. Jarrah, 56.7 x 84cm. State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia,.

Settle made for the Hardey family – now in Melbourne.





Robertson & Moffat (c.1896–1918) won a silver medal at the Paris L' Exposition Universelle in 1900. This writing desk made by craftsmen employed by Robertson & Moffat in 1904 was a wedding present for Edith, the wife of Dr Charles William Laver. Jarrah, 105 x 50 x 104cm. National Trust of Australia (WA), Woodbridge.

Dresser and detail from part of the Locke brothers' Fremantle Furniture Factory (1895–19?) suite, which won a silver medal in the Paris L' Exposition Universelle of 1900. Queensland walnut, 151 x 137 x 51.5cm. Western Australian Museum.

And what about the women?

Strictly speaking they don't appear till the turn of the century and the Domestic Art Movement.



Cabinet made by William Howitt with carving by Henrietta Strickland (1879-1961), 1906, which was exhibited in the Exhibition of Women's Work in Perth in 1907. Jarrah, 85 x 149 x 44cm. Western Australian Museum



Marion Holmes (1856-1921), pokerwork fire screen, deal, 1890s, 73.5 x 64.9 x 0.8cm, Western Australian Museum

Pansy Francis (1884-1973), settle, 1913. Francis learnt woodcarving at Fremantle Technical School in 1908. Jarrah, 111 x 118.5 x 47cm. Western Australian Museum.





Weld Club dining table 1880s \$2000



Tilt-top table 1860s - \$2000

Western Australian furniture sold McKenzie's Auctioneers 2013-14



Duffield dining table 1880s passed in

1880s jarrah and cedar Card table Est \$5000-8000.

1870s jarrah and cedar Table Est. \$3000-4,500



\$625

Duffield games table \$3600





Est \$4000-6500



\$4000 hammer



Western Australian furniture sold McKenzie's Auctioneers 2013-14.

Duffield chiffonier \$6000, Hampton chest \$12,232, press \$18,600, Press \$, Railway bookcase \$





Secretaire open detail



Jarrah secretaire chest c 1860



Sheoak dining table c 1870s



Jarrah chiffonier c 1870

The End

*Images have for the most part been drawn from
Inspired by Light and Land: Designers and Makers in Western Australia 1829-1969
by myself
and*

*An Introduction to Western Australian Colonial Furniture
by Leslie Lauder and Mark Howard*