

A SHORT NOTE ON SOME RECENT AUSTRALIAN BIBLIOGRAPHIES

Since my first endeavours, in 1962¹ to list the printed guides to information on things Australian, interest in Australian bibliography has multiplied many times over; the 1963 edition of *Australian bibliography* listed only just over 160 items, while the third edition (1976)² lists more than 600. The several economic and political upheavals of the past fifteen years do not appear to have had a detrimental effect upon the making of bibliographies in Australia - it may even be suggested that a *fin de siècle* atmosphere has prompted scholars in a great variety of disciplines to take stock of past achievements to preserve a record before total collapse overtakes all of us.

Whatever the reason, literature surveys of all kinds - ranging in quantity from substantial volumes to journal articles of a few pages, and varying quality from inept and amateurish lists to sophisticated and classified arrangements of full catalogue entries - have been produced during the past decade. While I do not assume that my own exhortatory calls for more bibliographies in Australian subject fields have even been noted in the world of scholarship, I for one am pleased that so many of these bibliographic works show a fine standard of competence. They will, as no other printed documents can, help make the world at large aware of the literature on Australia and thus make further scholarly progress in the sciences and the arts possible.

Even since I concluded my labours on the third edition of *Australian bibliography*, towards the end of 1975, several important new bibliographies have appeared. From the beginning of 1976 a register of Australian bibliographies in progress has been kept at La Trobe University Library under the auspices of the Working Party on Bibliography of the Australian Advisory Council on Bibliographical Services. A selection of the entries held in the register has recently been published in the National Library's *ANSOL News*.³

From the several bibliographies that have appeared during the past few months I have chosen four which are likely to be of special interest to members of the BSANZ. Two of the bibliographies selected are recent numbers (No. 22 and 23) in Walter Stone's series *Studies in Australian bibliography*. The first is a list of books and

articles by and about Marcus Clarke, and it is quite a fascinating piece in several ways. Edited by Laurie T. Hergenhan, the editor of the journal *Australian literary studies*, the book is in effect the first published version of Samuel Rowe Simmons's annotated checklist of Marcus Clarke⁴ completed in 1947 and left to moulder until now. Hergenhan writes in the preface: "Simmons's work provides . . . an impressively wide, if not comprehensive, listing of Clarke's works. The fullest listing in existence, it provided the bulk of the present checklist." Hergenhan then goes on to say that Simmons's typescript has been proved by substantial checking to be generally accurate.

Australian scholarship is indebted to Hergenhan for having rediscovered this important contribution to the study of one of Australia's notable early writers who, as only too few know, contributed a great deal more to our social and literary history than the novel for which he is famous.

The main body of this Marcus Clarke bibliography is divided into three groupings of references: books, contributions to journals, newspapers, anthologies, etc., critical and biographical notices, 1867-1972. A short title list of books, with dates of first publication, concludes the volume. Within each section, all entries are arranged chronologically and some quite lengthy comments help us to appreciate the difficulties Marcus Clarke had to face so often in his literary career. Some of these notes refer to publishing history, others to the contents and personal associations, and some to the critical reception of Clarke's writings.

Hergenhan has brought Simmons's checklist up to date. It is regrettable that he did not go a step further and examine personally each of Simmons's entries. There are some inadequacies in the description of the make-up of the editions quoted, and there are some doubtful as well as some unproven assertions regarding priorities of editions. In some instances variant issues appear to have been accepted as different editions without proper reference to the details involved. Those who intend to rely on this Marcus Clarke checklist as a collecting guide should note that it does not meet rigorous standards of bibliographic description - which is of course the reason for calling it a *checklist*.

The other item from Stone's *Studies* is a further

instalment of Harry F. Chaplin's reminiscences based on his collection of Australiana. The *Fanfrolico Press, a survey*⁵ contains lengthy but not always directly relevant notes, chit-chat and recollections on "every title published by the Press" (Chaplin's preface). As a bibliographic work, this index falls somewhat short of those accepted standards of description one would expect to see applied to the products of a press which the collector himself believes to have been very important.

It would have been useful, and not outside the realm of normal bibliographic practice, to transcribe title pages as accurately as possible by showing line endings by a stroke, by having title and imprint follow one behind the other, and by providing descriptions of some critical features e.g. dedications, colophons, etc. etc. Some of these features are wrapped up in descriptive passages immediately following the unarticulated title statements, a practice which Chaplin justified in his preface by explaining that he has "followed that [method of description] adopted in the Press catalogues and prospectuses." This is of course quite defensible, but it does detract somewhat from the scholarly value of the work.

The *Survey* is considerably enriched by the addition of references to, and transcripts from, correspondence between Chaplin, Jack Lindsay, Norman Lindsay, Jack Kirtley and others associated directly and indirectly with the Franfrolico Press. There is also, as a *pièce de resistance*, Jack Lindsay's preface to this book. Lindsay's own estimate of his press - and he does not hesitate to offer "one important point of similarity to the Kelmscott Press" though in the next few lines he plays this down a bit - remains as high as ever. It is now over fifty years since *Lysistrata* appeared under the Franfrolico imprint. There are some who look upon the aesthetic achievements of the Franfrolico Press as major contributions by Australian born printers to the private press movement. Others see in it merely a strange nostalgic stance and point to the strong English strain that pervades the efforts of those associated with the Franfrolico Press. Be that as it may, Chaplin's notes will help in our final assessment of this extraordinary Australian export item.

Very different in subject matter, quality of production and method of presentation is R.V. Tooley's *Printed maps of Tasmania, 1642-1900*.⁶ As far as I can recollect, this is the first and so far only list of Australian maps published as a monograph, though a portion of the entries

has already appeared as No. 5 in the publications of the Map Collectors Circle.

Tooley lists in all 530 maps. Of these, 50 belong to the Dutch period and were published between 1657 and 1776; 27 are grouped together as belonging to the period of French influence when theories of what the earth ought to look like overrode the factual discoveries; the remaining 452 entries refer to all other printed maps Tooley could discover, but among these there is another group of 67 brought together on the grounds that they are inset maps only. There are 49 plates and a frontispiece, all in black and white, of the most important maps; as the plates are, naturally, all of one size, many readers may fail to appreciate the considerable differences in appearance of the originals.

The bibliographic and general description of the individual maps includes all necessary data, including size. However, entries in the Dutch period section for the atlases in which maps of Tasmania occur, could have been greatly improved by the addition of more detail, e.g. size of the atlas, pagination, etc.

These minor criticisms do not detract from a very pleasantly produced volume which combines scholarship with a collector's enthusiasm, and represents a unique contribution to Australian bibliography.

Last, because probably least interesting to most members of BSANZ, I refer to one of the most substantial subject bibliographies produced during the past few years: Henry Mayer's *ARGAP: A research guide to Australian politics and cognate subjects*.⁷ This is scarcely the place to present a detailed review of *ARGAP*, but the sheer size of the undertaking makes it desirable to accord appropriate recognition to this effort. This survey of practically every field of writing that could possibly be of interest to the political scientist is intended to help the research student to distinguish between the numerous research tools now available to the social scientist. To this extent *ARGAP* is a bibliography of bibliographies. Beyond that, however, Mayer has also produced a practical overview and reading list for the study of Australian politics and it is in that context that *ARGAP* will be judged. However, the inclusion of references to literature, music, the fine arts, radio and television broadcasting, philosophy, psychology and the more standard academic

disciplines related to the study of politics should ensure the wide appeal of this work - in spite of its rather stiff price.

II

The study of the literature of science has, in the past, received only scant attention in the pages of this *Bulletin*. Regrettable as that may be, it is worse still that there exists at present no medium where the bibliography of Australian science is systematically recorded. It is, of course, true that the *Australian national bibliography* and *Australian science abstracts* contain references to bibliographical work, but the Australian scientific community itself seems far from convinced that the systematic study of bibliography could have a major part to play in the world of Australian science.

It is therefore with special pleasure that one notes the work by a one-time officer of the Papua New Guinea Department of Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries whose contributions to the bibliography of Australian fauna show a genuine interest and a good deal of competence. During the past six years Max C. Downes has published two substantial bibliographies on the crocodiles⁸ and ⁹ (and three extracts from them) and a bibliography of bustards (Otididae [Aves]);¹⁰ in both instances extensive references to the Australian literature are included. A number of considerations arise from Downes's work.

The three titles referred to are preliminary working bibliographies and are essentially designed to be of use to fellow scientists. They are being distributed with the specific objective of eliciting comment on their comprehensiveness and form of presentation. It is with regard to this latter point that a brief exchange of letters ensued between Max Downes and myself, the salient features of which may be of interest to other bibliographers. The extracts are published with the consent of my correspondent:

[1.5.76

MCD to DHB]

The papers should be considered as a whole. All have been produced for a specific purpose, and so contain well recognised limitations. These will be misunderstood if the lists are not considered as essential preparatory tools leading to full bibliographical control at a later date,

and secondarily as interim working aids for zoologists.

Firstly they are, in the main, lists from secondary sources, and this is the first time this material has been gathered together. Instead of a list of 300 items, the zoologist is very pleased to be able to search from up to 10,000, in the case of the Crocrodilia. The limitations in style and scope of the lists were necessary to cope with these numbers.

Secondly it is impractical to produce final wildlife bibliographies in Australia at this moment and until the wildlife literature resources are assessed and better organized. For any group of animals thousands of original papers cannot be located. In addition it seems that the most effective way to do this is in special collections such as the British Museum (Natural History), after the citations have been listed from the secondary sources.

I hesitate to burden you with over-much discussion. But it seems important to draw attention to the intended function of the *working drafts* in the context of zoology where few retrospective aids are being developed, rather than consider them in the context of more advanced fields of general bibliography where resources and facilities may be more advanced.

Perhaps there is a problem in reconciling the needs of zoologists with the views of librarians. I am sure you will be able to advise me on the way out of this. My solution has been to look on bibliography as a developing, though controlled, process, not only the birth of perfectly formed little bibliographies. If through lack of adequate facilities we must take 5 to 10 years over the production of a bibliography, it is not accepting an inferior product if we rearrange the process to issue controlled interim reports. These are vital in stimulating interest in and production of bibliographies, and they are necessary for the zoologist who must write up his results. The production of *working drafts* can be as consistent and as disciplined and as useful as the final product in many respects, - if the limitations are fully recognised.

The inclusion of citations from secondary sources containing errors and incomplete data has been much criticized, even when well marked. But I cannot make the entries in the Bustard working draft more accurate or precise than the secondary authors who quoted them, until the vast multitude of original papers are accessible. So

it comes to a question of whether this method, which can produce such extensive secondary lists in a relatively short time, is useful in bibliography, or whether the disadvantages outweigh the advantages.

I was amused to find this quotation by a zoologist, Dr. E. Coues, written in 1897. 'I think I never did anything in my life which brought me such hearty praise - "in mouths of wisest censure" - immediate and almost universal recognition, at home and abroad, from ornithologists who knew that bibliography was a necessary nuisance and a horrible drudgery that no mere drudge could perform. It takes a sort of inspired idiot to be a good bibliographer, and his inspiration is as dangerous a gift as the appetite of the gambler or disomaniac - it grows with what it feeds upon, and finally possesses its victim like any other invincible vice.'

[10.5.76
DHB to MCD]

I don't think I can offer much advice on the problem arising from my criticism of your work on Bustards. The advantages referred to in your letter (paragraphs 2-3) are undoubtedly significant. Nevertheless I believe that it is more economical in terms of man hours to reduce the subject area and maybe the period covered than to launch one's attack on so wide a front that no entry can be accepted with confidence.

I am ignorant of the fields in which you are an expert, but it would seem to me wiser to start with a well defined and sufficiently narrow aspect of Australian wild life, gather the references, organize them and ensure that they can be picked up to lead to the next area of bibliographic survey. If we think of the literature on Australian wild life as consisting of a large but not unlimited number of overlapping (not concentric!) circles, we can surely look upon this whole field as a series of Venn diagrams. The totality of the wild life literature would then be dealt with in self contained sectors which will show some overlap, but will at least be manageable in one life-time.

I also don't think that the production of "perfectly formed little bibliographies" is useful unless they hang together to form a larger whole. I believe your paragraph on this point under-rates the need for bibliographic accuracy - a question which is of particular importance

for bibliographers working in the fields of science. They are more easily seduced into using mindless computers to overcome what they mindlessly believe to be drudgery.

Max Downes has a big task ahead of him and I am certain all members of the Society wish him well in the pursuit of Australian wild life bibliography.

D. H. Borchardt

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NUYTSIANA

[Supplementary material to John Fletcher's "Peter Nuyts and his *Album Amicorum*" published as part of the society's first occasional paper.]

The following details of the domestic and marital career of Pieter Nuyts, both in the Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies, derive from an essay written in 1966 by Miss J.S.M. Heman as a student of the University of Nijmegen.

A copy of Miss Heman's typescript is held by the *Stadsarchief* in Breda. For this information, and for the thoughtful provision of a xerox copy of the relevant pages (pp.2-6, and 24-25), I am indebted to Dr. C. Lohmann, archivist of the municipality of Etten-Leur.

- 1620 6 April: death in Middelburg of Elisabeth Nuyts (née Walrams), mother of Pieter Nuyts.
- 1620 13 April: death in Middelburg of Laurens Nuyts. Both parents are buried "in de nieuwe kerk in haar eijge graft".
- 1620 26 April: marriage of Pieter Nuyts to Cornelia Jacot, daughter of Hans Jacot (died 4 February 1624) and Anna Jacot (née Verhalft, died 18 February 1623) of Middelburg.
- 1626 22 May: Pieter Nuyts leaves for the East Indies "met mijn oudste Broertje" Laurens.

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