

which reduced stock from 150,000 to 116,000 volumes. A postscript places the events since 1972 within the inflationary setting in which private libraries such as the Signet currently have to operate. It is sobering to reflect that the money that was obtained by sales up to 1964, and which was deemed to be sufficient to keep the Library afloat, was hopelessly inadequate by the 1970s. The April 1978 sale raised enormous publicity (some of it adverse) and a sum of £562,980 which, with further sales, should hopefully help to relieve monetary pressures until the end of the century. If not, the fine collection of 63,000 volumes that remains of legal and Scottish material may not be sacrosanct.

It may perhaps be appropriate to end this review on a more optimistic viewpoint with the last words of part two of the book: "The Signet Library is unique. Its treasures have been much diminished, it is true, but its bibliographical resources are still considerable while its visual appeal will continue to command admiration and indeed veneration."

Colin Steele,  
The Australian National University Library.

Lurline Stuart. *Nineteenth Century Australian Periodicals. An Annotated Bibliography*. Sydney, Hale & Iremonger, 1979. pp.viii, 200. \$28.

The small and predominately migrant population of Australia during the nineteenth century inevitably meant a limited market for local writers and publishers. Books and periodicals could be fairly rapidly and cheaply imported with no loss in quality from the voyage but rather an enhancement from distance and the desire to keep up with overseas standards. Hence only a handful of nineteenth-century Australian periodicals were able to find enough subscribers to survive for more than a few years. But, as the length of Mrs Stuart's bibliography indicates, our pioneer editors and publishers were not daunted by their slim prospects of success.

Four hundred and forty-nine periodicals commenced before 1900 have been described by Mrs Stuart, and this is by no means all that were published. Periodicals and newspapers with no or only a token literary content (defined as "essays, articles, fiction, poetry and minor literary items") as well as annuals have been excluded. Some of the included items are known only from advertisements, reviews or passing references in other periodicals, and a few of these may never have actually appeared. Even so, given that the earliest, the *Australian Magazine*, did not appear until 1821, the surprisingly large number published during eighty years is a tribute to nineteenth-century cultural endeavour.

A brief account of the difficulties our early editors and publishers laboured under is provided in Mrs Stuart's Introduction. Here, and in her Preface, she also outlines her own efforts to give them some memorial by locating and describing forgotten, and often deeply buried, publications in as detailed and accurate a manner as possible. Items have been listed alphabetically according to their title at commencement of publication. Changes and variations in titles, as well as subtitles and mottoes, are also given. This is followed by place of publication and the names of all known printers, publishers, proprietors and editors. Frequency of publication, size, average number of pages, price and the inclusion of illustrations are indicated with as much detail as the often incomplete runs allow. The locations of all known copies are given — and I join with Mrs Stuart in hoping that her work may bring others to light — besides extremely helpful summaries of contents and names of noted contributors and artists.

Thanks to Mrs Stuart's systematic and thorough scholarship, her bibliography will be of immense value to all students of nineteenth-century Australia, particularly to those working on cultural history, Australian literature and the history of printing and publishing. The Index of Printers, Publishers, Proprietors, Editors, Noted Contributors and Artists which Mrs Stuart has carefully prepared will bring down added blessings on her head from anyone trying to trace the publications of such an omnipresent poet as Henry Halloran (who has no fewer than thirteen entries). As the Index also includes the titles of all listed periodicals, those interested in working on particular periods rather than persons might wish for a chronological rather than alphabetical scheme for the bibliography as a whole. A chronological listing would admittedly have led to problems over those periodicals whose date of first publication is uncertain. Perhaps the best compromise would have been an appended list of titles in approximate chronological order, a suggestion that might be adopted for any future edition.

In her Introduction Mrs Stuart draws attention to the contribution made to Australian culture by the nineteenth-century proprietors who took the risks of producing their periodicals without present day benefits of government subsidies or glossy advertisements. Similar praise is due to her publishers, Hale and Iremonger, who, with an equally limited market and none of these props, have produced a book whose physical appearance complements the value of its contents. There is a beautiful coloured kookaburra cover reproduced from a supplement to *Cosmos* of 1897 and many illustrations of title pages ranging from the nationalistic *Centennial* of 1888 to the Yankeeified *Sam Slick in Victoria* of 1879. Hopefully, these may attract others besides the specialist to sample the delights of nineteenth-century Australian periodicals.

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