"MONARCH OF ALL I SURVEYED, AND LORD OF THE FOWL AND THE BRUTE" OR MAN OF SCIENCE: THE DILEMMA OF THE EXPLORER IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY AUSTRALIA

Kerry Heckenberg

In his record of his second exploratory journey to Central Australia, Ernest Giles writes the following interesting comment on the events of Tuesday 16 September 1873:

> I had intended, upon reaching Mount Olga, to have had some short respite, and all along our route everything that was wanted to be done was always put off until Mount Olga was reached; but Mr Gosse's tracks here have upset all my ideas. I thought I was the monarch of all I surveyed, and lord of the fowl and the brute; but lo! a greater than I is here. So I must depart to some remoter spot, where none shall dispute my sway. (*Explorations, 1873-4* 14)

By his own account an avid reader and critic of journals of exploration written by other Australian explorers,[1] and probably of other exploration narratives as well, Giles was very familiar with the conventions of exploration writing. When he describes himself as apparent "monarch of all I surveyed, and lord of the fowl and the brute" he uses the well-known words of William Cowper (from his poem, "Verses, Supposed to be written by Alexander Selkirk," 1782) to express a popular exploratory trope, albeit with ironic intent. What I find interesting about this anecdote is the way in which Giles then undermines and reveals the instability of this notion of the power of the explorer (and therefore of related notions of identity), that the masterful exploratory gaze could be so easily thwarted by signs of the presence of another explorer, by merely his tracks. Much has been made of a suggested link between vision and power in recent writing about European explorers (for example, Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*; Pratt, "Scratches"; Ryan, *Cartographic Eye*), but I want to use Giles' comment as a starting point for a more nuanced examination of the relationship between vision, subjectivity and identity of the explorer in

[1] Commenting on the style of other Australian exploration journals in a later exploration report, Giles notes that he had "perused probably all the records of Australian travel produced by other explorers" (*Explorations, 1875-6* 16).

nineteenth century Australia that takes into account complex contextual historical and socio-cultural developments over the course of the nineteenth century.[2] In particular, I want to examine the conflicts that developed between the notion of the explorer as a man of science and the idea of the explorer as hero, especially in relation to different modes of vision and visual representation found in exploration journals. I will do so by contrasting the approach that is evident in journals produced in the first half of the century, particularly Thomas Mitchell's first journal published in 1838, entitled *Three Expeditions into the Interior of Eastern Australia*, with that found in journals from the second half.

This paper comes out a larger study, which argues that the genre of travel writing that provided pleasurable instruction (a genre that was especially influential in the eighteenth century but continued into the nineteenth century [see Batten]) was an important generic model for the style and format of the nineteenth-century inland exploration journal in Australia (for more details, see Heckenberg). In this respect it is noteworthy that critics singled out both Mitchell's *Three Expeditions* and the journal published by George Grey in 1841 for praise, commenting in particular on their "happy" "blend" of "information and amusement."[3] Reviews of Mitchell's journal in the *Atlas* newspaper (15 September 1838) and *Blackwood's Lady's Magazine* (November 1838) suggest the important role that Mitchell's pictures (most based on his sketches and some also lithographed by him as well) played in helping his journal to be both "amusing" and "instructive." The former comments that "A variety of lithographs of scenes taken on the spot, diagrams, and plates illustrative of different features of natural history, increase the value of the work" ("Opinions of the Press" [Mitchell] 4), while the latter observes:

> We never read a work with more delight than the two volumes before us; they contain a mass of the most pleasing information, of the greatest interest to all parties. The illustrations which amount to *ninety*, are exquisitely beautiful, and we do not hesitate in publicly stating that Major Mitchell must stand alone in the exploring world. ("Opinions of the Press" [Mitchell] 2)[4]

In a similar way, one reviewer of Grey's journal writes that "we have not read such a work of Travels for many years; it unites the interest of a romance with the

---

[2] For a recent critique of the more rigid approach to "colonial vision" in discussions of colonial landscape that I have found useful, see Bell, "Colonial eyes transformed"; Bell, "To See or Not to See." For more general arguments for a more pluralised approach to colonialism, see Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture* 8, 10; Clark 1-28; Dixon, *Prosthetic Gods* 1-9.

[3] A comment about Grey from *The Australian Magazine* included in the endpapers of the Fryer Library, U of Queensland, copy of Hodgkinson.

[4] See also the review from *Bell's Life in London* 1 September 1838, "Opinions of the Press" (Mitchell) 2-3.

permanent qualities of an historical and scientific treatise" (*Atlas* [Hodgkinson endpapers]).[5] Such comments reveal the important role that natural history information plays in these journals.

Mitchell was not only acclaimed by his reviewers for achieving an ideal balance between information and pleasure in *Three Expeditions*, his style and approach were also interpreted as keys to his character. He created an image of himself as an "accomplished and practical surveyor" (*The Spectator* 8 September 1838 in "Opinions of the Press" [Mitchell] 3). Furthermore, as we have seen, *Blackwood's Lady's Magazine* suggests that "Major Mitchell must stand alone in the exploring world," while *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* describes him as "a man of knowledge and feeling" on the basis of his writing style ("New South Wales" 694).[6] A subsequent review in the latter magazine suggests, "One of the most pleasing features of the whole narrative is the almost youthful buoyancy with which this man of science and travel evidently enjoys the beauties of nature" ("Mitchell's Second and Third Expeditions" 124). These comments are interesting because of the lack of conflict between science and art. At this stage "knowledge and feeling" are compatible. Mitchell is at the same time a scientist, a traveller and also a person who is aware of the aesthetic attractions of nature, but this combination became more difficult to achieve later in the century when Giles was writing.

The different modes of seeing evident in Mitchell's first journal contribute to this mixture of knowledge and feeling, or more broadly, objective and subjective approaches. Moreover, Mitchell's sketching ability contributed an eyewitness authority to his work and led to the judgment that his journal was a "sumptuous" triumph, due mainly to its appropriately handled, indeed "masterly," pictures:

> The word sumptuous is the only one which would adequately express our ideas of [*Three Expeditions*'] appearance. Each remarkable scene and group, each hill and dale, birds, beasts, flowers, and shrubs, have all been sketched by the masterly hand of Major Mitchell, whose freedom of pencilling has been ably

---

[5] *The Times* had a similar comment: "We recommend our readers to the volumes of Captain Grey, assuring them they will derive both amusement and instruction from the perusal" (Hodgkinson endpapers). See also the review from the *Monthly Review* of Grey from "Opinions of the Press" (Grey 1): "The Journals present narratives of extraordinary interest, independent of the scientific results described, or even the capabilities for colonization of the regions explored. To Naturalists, whose studies are principally directed to the Animal Kingdom, Captain Grey's volumes offer a good deal of curious matter. – Mr. J. E. Gray, of the British Museum, having described the Natural History in general; Mr. Adam White, also of the British Museum, furnishing a paper on the Entomology; and Mr. Gould giving a list of the Birds inhabiting that part of the coast."

[6] Following a lengthy introduction praising the achievement of England (in contrast with other European nations) in establishing "civilisation" in its colonies and, in particular, in New South Wales, the reviewer also extols Mitchell for being, on the evidence of his book, "a man of intelligence, information, and soberness of mind" (694; for the introduction, see 690-693).

> transferred to the stone by Barnard. The various beauties of the stream named after our colonial minister, and numerous other wild, yet delicious scenes, are placed before us in the reality which art can lend to its creations. These illustrations amount to the number of ninety in the two volumes. Even in this age of typographical splendour, it is one of the most complete and perfect gems which has fallen from the press within our recollection. (*The Torch* 29 September 1838 in "Opinions of the Press" [Mitchell] 7)

His careful observation of details was praised by the *Athenaeum* reviewer:

> One of Major Mitchell's chief merits, is, that he is a vigilant observer: he prys [sic] into the rocks and the soil – he examines the woods – tastes the grasses – and some of his minor discoveries, made in this way, are extremely interesting. (Review of *Three Expeditions* 709; see 709-10)

It was also interpreted as a guarantee of his accuracy:

> Major Mitchell's journals were written from day to day, under circumstances by no means favourable to the task of composition: they are, therefore, somewhat careless in style, and occasionally obscure, but pregnant with interesting facts that possess the striking advantage of being altogether new. Such narratives would be in some measure spoiled by a scrupulous taste; the business of the expedition was discovery, and the more simply and truthfully discoveries are set forth the better. The paramount quality desired in such publications is accuracy in the details; and unquestionably, if we take into consideration the difficulties attending such an enterprise, the accuracy and minuteness of Major Mitchell's details cannot fail to surprise and gratify the public. (*Monthly Chronicle* October 1838 in "Opinions of the Press" [Mitchell] 2)

At this stage, natural history information could still satisfy scientific requirements *and* appeal to the general public. Apart from gratifying such an interest, or satisfying "curiosity," minuteness of detail could provide evidence of vigilant observation and contribute to a rhetoric of overall accuracy, a rhetoric that seems to have been found convincing by the reviewers of *Three Expeditions*, quoted above.

This mastery is dependent on close observation, not a magisterial gaze from on high. Nevertheless, a range of approaches to visual detail can be seen in Mitchell's natural history pictures. These differences can be related to problems that arose in classification, particularly in relation to the choice of the type specimen that played

an important role in characterising species. There were many issues for debate, in particular, the issue of what to select and illustrate, and how this could be seen to stand in relationship to other members of the species. An interesting series of developments in illustration in natural history resulted, concerned with the problem of whether ideal or typical specimens should be depicted or whether individual specimens should be selected to stand as representatives of a whole species. The solutions to these questions involved changes in concepts of objectivity and subjectivity in science that have been analysed by Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison.

The selection of a typical image involved interpretation on the basis of experience and was not considered subjective; the typical could be represented in a perfect or " 'ideal' " specimen or in a " 'characteristic' " or "individual" specimen and this was the dominant mode up until the middle of the nineteenth century (Daston and Galison 88). In the late nineteenth century, the particular was insisted upon in both palaeontology and anatomy and "dangerous subjectivity" could intervene in the selection of the ideal or characteristic.[7] Although the explorers usually collected only a small number of specimens and had little chance to develop ideas about characteristic or typical examples, the illustrations included by the explorers nevertheless show interesting relationships to these issues.

Mitchell's natural history illustrations in *Three Expeditions* range from extremely detailed fossil plates (e.g., Plate 49 [*Fossil remains of the* Diprotodon, . . . *and of the* Dasyurus laniarius, . . .]) to animal plates (e.g., Plates 27 and 29) that are generalised rather than highly detailed images. A very detailed mode of illustration was used for the former perhaps because very little was known about the original creature. It was therefore desirable to include as much visual information as possible about the incomplete specimens because any detail could be important. In the latter, attention is given to features that were significant for classificatory purposes according to the Linnaean system of classification (for more detail, see Heckenberg 151-189). Both the *Chaeropus ecaudatus* (Plate 27) and the *Dipus Mitchellii* (Plate 29) (the latter named in honour of its discoverer) are posed stiffly in profile with shallow depth being indicated by shading in the animals, their shadows on the ground and some rather vague vegetation. The lithographs (A. Picken is noted as the lithographer of Plate 29) are based on original sketches done by Mitchell.[8]

---

[7] Daston and Galison suggest that "the history of the various forms of objectivity might be told as how, why, and when various forms of subjectivity came to be seen as *dangerously* subjective" (82).

[8] See Mitchell Library, DLPXX22 f 4 and f 6 for the original sketches.

One of Mitchell's bird plates is, however, much more lively (both original sketch and lithograph are done by Mitchell in this case). Titled *Portrait of an Eagle that had been winged (natural size)* (Plate 36) (fig.1), it shows the head of the bird

Figure 1. *Portrait of an Eagle that had been winged (natural size)*, lithograph by T. L. Mitchell, 16.8 x 12 cm. From Mitchell, *Three Expeditions* 2: Plate 36 (courtesy of the Fryer Library, U of Queensland).

in profile nearly filling the page. It is probably significant that it is designated as a "portrait" rather than as a representation of a species. Rather than an interest in overall form and structural details, this striking picture demonstrates the characteristics of popular natural history illustration Lynn Merrill has identified: a delight in empirical detail for its own sake demonstrating a blend of the objective and subjective (53), with the ultimate goal of "appreciation" rather than "understanding" (91; also 93-96).

An examination of the compositional formats used by Mitchell in his landscape plates in *Three Expeditions* also reveals interesting variations in regard to their subjective/objective implications. In contrast to recent discussions of perspective that align it with a particular kind of viewer or distinctive scopic regime (Ryan, *Cartographic Eye*; Ryan, "Cartographic Eye" 54, 90, 97; Jay, "Scopic Regimes"), Mitchell's use of topographic and picturesque compositional practices is complex: different types of perspective construction suggest different kinds of viewer or different ways of relating to the depicted landscape.[9] While the standard model of Western landscape based on Renaissance perspective theory has a

[9] For useful discussions of the complexities of perspective, see Elkins and Maynard.

distanced ideal viewing position (see, for example, Cosgrove), Svetlana Alpers' ideas about Dutch landscape modes suggest an interesting alternative that was very important for topographic painting derived from Dutch-style prospect pictures. The imaginative effect of the latter is to place the viewer into the picture or to leave the viewer's position unspecified.[10] The gaze of the explorer looking at landscape is not just a monarchical one. Furthermore, perspective is just one element of a picture and its overall effect should be evaluated in terms of its contribution to particular images.

In examining the impact of different sorts of perspectival construction, I want to consider not only questions of power and domination, but also narrative voice. These different perspectival constructions can be related to the landscape formats characteristically found in the descriptive and sentimental modes of nineteenth-century travel writing identified by Mary Louise Pratt ("Scratches"). In the former case she suggests that the describer tends to efface himself, presenting the landscape by itself or with staffage figures that form part of the description. This is more akin to Alpers' Dutch mode. In the sentimental style, landscape is relegated to the background and the scene centres on what is happening to the narrator (153 and Figs 1-4). Often a one-point perspective composition is used to focus attention on this central figure. However, Mitchell's pictorial strategies in *Three Expeditions* provide an interesting contrast with these usual modes of illustration. Because he was both artist and narrator he moves between objective and subjective stances in his landscape plates, depending on whether he includes himself or not, producing the combination of objective information and first-person experience that is characteristic of this journal.

An examination of the perspective construction of Mitchell's most topographic image supports the notion that the viewer's location is unspecified in such images. His "panoramic" *Part of New South Wales from the summit of Jellore* (fig. 2) is a prospect picture, presenting the viewer with a wide and objective view over an unbounded piece of countryside.[11] Mitchell's picture also offers the viewer a sense of mastery, but this has nothing to do with "the picturesque" or fixed one-point perspective. A diagram Mitchell included in a book he published on surveying,

---

[10] See Alpers, especially 26-71. Although such Dutch painting did use perspective, it usually employed a wide angle of view, which means that the ideal viewpoint is very close to the surface of the picture (Dubery and Willats 84-89). Alternatively they employed a bifocal method of construction, which lacks the central focus of one point perspective (Damisch 29-44). Martin Jay mentions this mode of picturing in his encyclopaedic study of attitudes to vision (*Downcast Eyes*), but while admitting the possibility of "the multitude of visual cultures in modernity" (62), then dismisses this as an aberration from the dominant Albertian mode (see 60-63).

[11] The word "panorama" – from the ancient Greek "*pan*" [all] and "*horama*" [view] – was invented by Robert Barker in 1791 to describe his semi-circular view of Edinburgh, which was exhibited in London in that year (Wilcox 20; also Comment). Circular panoramas were developed from the prospect picture.

entitled *Outlines of a System of Surveying*, 1827 (fig.3), makes clear the way in which different viewpoints are accurately combined to produce such a panoramic image. The basis of its construction is not the stationary viewpoint of traditional one-point perspective, but instead a shifting one. The result is that emphasis is placed on the landscape forms and the relationship between them rather than the viewer's interaction with the landscape.[12] The overall authority of this image is created by a combination of factors: Mitchell's assurance of the accuracy of the methods used in its construction, the wide expanse of countryside that is encompassed and the naming of the various features that are included in it.

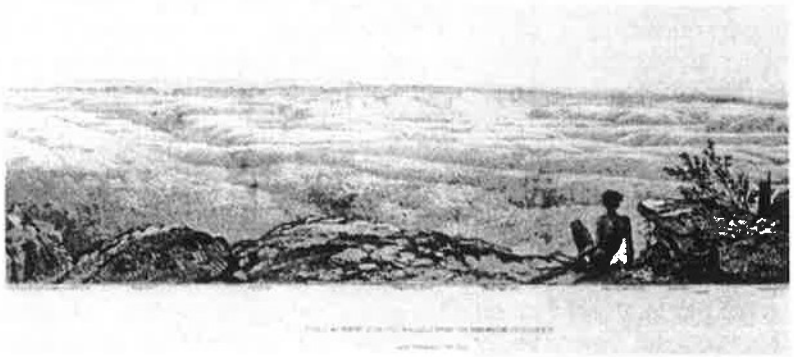

Figure 2. *Part of New South Wales from the summit of Jellore*, lithograph by T. L. Mitchell, 35 x 8.5 cm. From Mitchell, *Three Expeditions* 2: Plate 38 (courtesy of the Fryer Library, U of Queensland).

Mitchell's other, more picturesque, landscape images have two basic compositional formats that can be related to the number and type of figures included. In those that include the figures of several explorers, including probably Mitchell himself, the viewer usually has an elevated (and imaginary) viewpoint, e.g., *Crater of Murroa, or Mount Napier, in Australia Felix*, Plate 22 (fig.4).[13] This

[12] Compare Ryan who elides the viewer position in the circular panorama ("the viewer is positioned at the centre of the world" ["Cartographic Eye" 21; also 177-183]) with that of the viewer who is describing an actual panoramic view; but I would certainly argue for a difference in the position of the viewer of ordinary painted "panoramas." For a discussion that stresses the complexities of the subject-position of the viewer of the circular panorama, see Galperin 34-61.

[13] Other examples include *View of Nundawar range, where the party could not cross it*, Plate 7; and *Boat on the Glenelg*, Plate 35.

picture is noteworthy because two explorers are shown chopping down trees, trying to improve the clarity of the view while others are searching for a clear viewpoint.

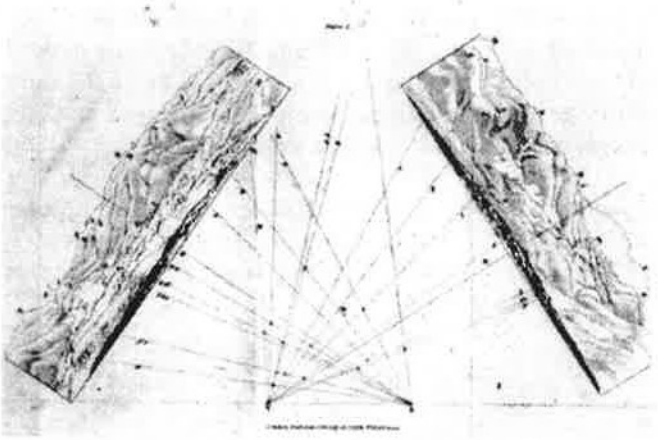

Figure 3. *Landscape Sketching by Survey*, T. L. Mitchell. From Mitchell, *Outlines of a System of Surveying* Plate 1 (courtesy of the Mitchell Library).

Figure 4. *Crater of Murroa, or Mount Napier, in Australia Felix*, lithograph by A. Picken after a drawing by T. L. Mitchell, 15.6 x 9.4 cm. From Mitchell, *Three Expeditions* 2: Plate 22 (Frontispiece) (courtesy of the Fryer Library, U of Queensland).

Meanwhile, an Aboriginal man is shown at rest, already enjoying what can be seen. The accompanying written text complains that the "extinct volcano"

> was by no means a better station for the theodolite on that account; on the contrary, it was the worst possible, for as the trees grew on the edge of the crater, no one station could be found to afford a view of the horizon, until the whole circumference was cleared of the trees, and this was too great a work for us on that visit. (2: 249)

Where there are no figures, or only staffage Aboriginal figures, the viewer can imagine that they share the artist's viewpoint, e.g. *Cobaw waterfall, with natives fishing*, Plate 37 (fig 5).[14] In *Mitre Rock and Lake from Mount Arapiles*, Plate 31,

Figure 5. *Cobaw Waterfall, with natives fishing*, lithograph by G. Barnard after a drawing by T. L. Mitchell, 15.6 x 10.2 cm. From Mitchell, *Three Expeditions* 2: Plate 36 (courtesy of the Fryer Library, U of Queensland).

two tiny explorers are depicted on the left, dwarfed by Mount Arapiles, while the viewpoint is more central. Drama is increased in this image because the foreground is eliminated. A potential expansive view is limited by framing cliffs. Again in this

[14] See also *The Pic of Tangulda, from the West*, Plate 8; *Inaccessible valley of the river Grose*, Plate 10; *Back-water, or flood-branch of the Murray, with the scenery common on its banks*, Plate 28; *Western Extremity of Mount Arapiles*, Plate 32.

case, the viewer can imagine themselves in the artist's shoes. A difference in subjectivity can be discerned in Mitchell's pictures: the elevated viewpoint provided in pictures that include the artist is a more distanced, omniscient and objective one, while if the viewer feels that they share the artist's viewpoint, they also become more intimately involved with his experiences. In this way in his use of perspective, Mitchell incorporates a strategic use of topographic and picturesque practices into his visual images in ways that depend on the type of representation and, within that representation, the particular features that are being treated.

Further evidence of the complex modes of viewing to be found in the exploration journals can be seen in two particularly interesting pictures in which

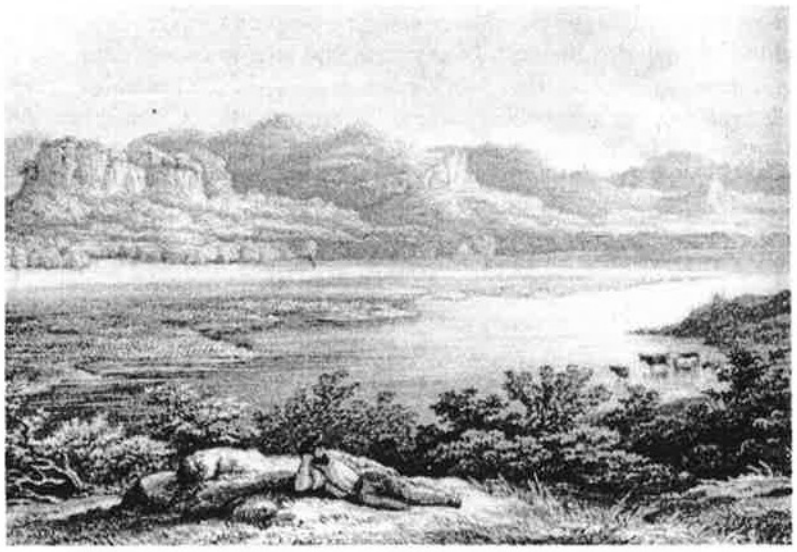

Figure 6. *Martin's Range*, lithograph by T. Picken after a sketch by T. L. Mitchell, 18.4 x 10.2 cm. From Mitchell, *Tropical Australia*: Plate 5 (courtesy of the Fryer Library, U of Queensland).

explorers are shown with their backs to the scene of interest. One example comes from Mitchell's 1848 journal and is entitled *Martin's Range* (fig 6).[15] Mitchell uses

[15] This picture has been the subject of some controversy (Finlayson 212-228; see also Carter, *Road to Botany Bay* 107, 110, 113, 131-134). Finlayson argues that the picture misrepresents the nature of Lake Salvator. However, while I agree that Mitchell was over-optimistic in using the designation "Lake" for this wetland area, I would argue that the picture represents the River Salvator, not the "Lake," and depicts a scene described in the written text as having taken place on the banks of the river. Nevertheless, the picture is "improved" (as are the other landscape plates in this journal), but

the foreground of this image to create the mood of the scene (following advice such as that given by the picturesque theorist, William Gilpin, who suggested that the foreground was not important for creating a likeness so this was where individual touches could be introduced [69]). The viewer is presumably meant to see the reclining figure as an explorer relaxing at the camp, shown with the cattle that were taken both to carry goods and for use as a food supply. But he could also be seen as a farmer in a land of plenty where grass and water were supplied to stock without any effort on his part. With his back to the landscape and his sideways look, he does not play the usual role assigned to such figures: he does not point out the magnificence of the scene, although he does contribute a sense of scale. This figure is perhaps meant to represent Mitchell himself. The elevated viewpoint used in this one instance in *Tropical Australia* supports this reading since we have seen that Mitchell often employed this device when he produced images in *Three Expeditions* in which he included himself. In any case, the man is shown enjoying the outdoor pleasures of exploration. He is very much at home in the landscape, something that would probably be an appealing notion for the prospective immigrant, an important reader targeted in this journal.

The other example (fig.7) comes from Grey's journal, part of his detailed

Figure 7. *Sandstone Caves with Paintings near Glenelg River*, lithograph by G. Barnard after a drawing by G. Grey, 16.5 x10.7 cm. From Grey 1: Frontispiece (courtesy of the Fryer Library, U of Queensland).

---

this is done within conventional bounds. It is not a matter of complete fabrication. For a more detailed discussion of this issue, see Heckenberg 220-223.

written and pictorial record of his discovery of the Wandjina figures (1: 201-205, 213-216). Here the look I want to discuss suggests a certain discomfort. In his written text, Grey is most taken by the way the figures look at him, how they have expressions and how some were good-looking, but he soon moves from an interactive encounter with them to a more distanced, descriptive and classificatory mode of dealing with them, as Paul Carter has pointed out (*Living in a New Country* 51-53; see also 53-56). Perhaps this is why the seated explorer in the view of the *Sandstone Caves with Paintings* is shown looking at the viewer rather than at the drawings. The peculiar power of the painted figures is thereby downplayed. Grey's other pictures include detailed natural history illustrations plus more general landscape images depicting events on the expedition, contributing to his successful mix of information and pleasure and providing complex sorts of viewing experiences.

However, by the middle of the century it was becoming increasingly difficult to meld information and pleasure in a single work, in satisfying the interests and expectations of different segments of the audience developing at that time. Instead of a single educated readership, there was an increasingly diverse audience composed of specialist readers, such the "geological reader" Mitchell addresses in one section of *Three Expeditions* (2: 358). Finally, there is that important reader who emerged around the middle of the century, the "general reader." I would suggest that it is in part in response to these developments that the natural history content is reduced in amount in Mitchell's second, less successful journal. What is present is more distinctively divided into specialist and populist material than in his earlier widely praised journal.

Journals of exploration to inland Australia produced in the second half of the century also lack the extensive natural history information that was such an important part of the earlier journals. They are also characterised by an approach that Giles describes as "dry" in a passage in one of his journals in which he endeavours to justify his approach, one that harkens back to the earlier ideal of pleasurable instruction so successfully achieved by Mitchell and Grey along with Edward Eyre in his *Journals of Expeditions of Discovery into Central Australia*, 1845, and Charles Sturt, particularly in his second journal entitled *Narrative of an Expedition into Central Australia*, 1849 (*Explorations*, 1875-6, 15). However, unlike these earlier explorers, Giles' principal published journal, *Australia Twice Traversed* (1889), also includes comparatively little natural history information, particularly illustration. While the earlier explorers endeavoured to become "lords of the beast and fowl" not by looking down from on high but by producing detailed inventories of the creatures they encountered complete with illustrations, this is not a characteristic of the later journals even though natural history collecting was still encouraged then, particularly by Ferdinand von Mueller (1825-96) (Jones 20-23).

Furthermore, although like the journals of Mitchell (in 1838) and Grey, Giles' 1889 journal has many pictures, there is very little variety in the type of illustration he includes. Along with other less heavily illustrated journals from the second half of the nineteenth century, instead of an effort to record as many aspects of the discoveries of the expedition as possible, there is a shift in the illustrative content to an emphasis on the events of the expedition, the personalities involved and their struggles against a hostile land and its "savage" inhabitants. Examples include *South Shore of Lake Eyre* from Stuart's *Journals* (1865) with a subtle note of threat introduced by armed Aboriginal figures who have been introduced (without any textual warrant) into one side of the scene, a more explicit and shocking scene of a violent encounter from Giles' journal (fig.8),[16] or a picture of the explorers trying to shield themselves from a dust storm [*The Dust Storm. – Under the Lee*] from Warburton's 1875 *Journey across the Western Interior of Australia*. Portraits of explorers become common as frontispieces in the journals and illustrations conform to Pratt's experiential mode whilst the written text (with Giles as an exception) consists of a fairly dry recounting of the events of the expedition complete with information necessary to a geographical text.

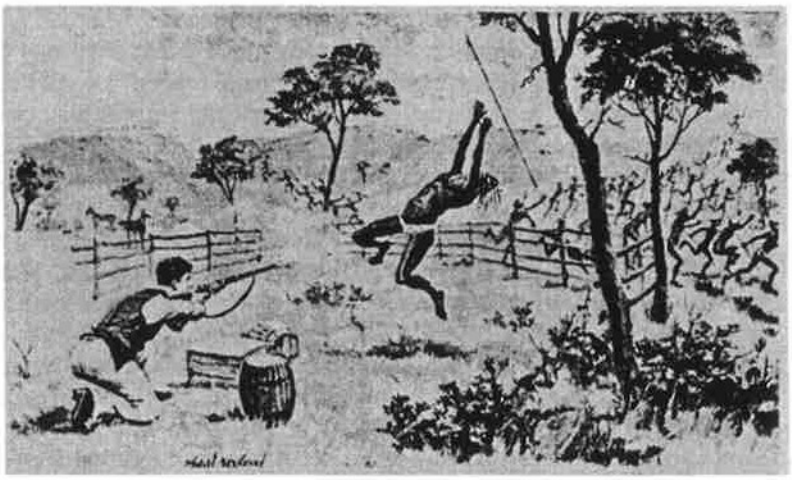

Figure 8. *Jimmy at Fort McKellar*, engraving by S. Berkeley after a drawing by H. C. Prinsep, 15.2 x 9.3 cm. From Giles 2: facing p.51 (courtesy of the John Oxley Library, Brisbane).

[16] For further discussion of the important topic of relationships between explorers and Aboriginal people, see Heckenberg 233-273.

These developments became especially marked at a time when not only the requirements of separate sciences became more specific, but also roles became more specialised. The artist and scientist were being constructed as particular types of individual with ideal characteristics and the idea of the explorer as hero becomes dominant. At the same time a new middle class readership was developing as mass education spread, particularly after 1870.[17]

The concept of the scientist was introduced in the first half of the nineteenth century: William Whewell (1794-1866) suggested the word "scientist" in 1834 in order to refer to "the students of the knowledge of the material world" (qtd Roos 161). In his *Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences* (1840) he implied a distinction between the activity of the artist and the scientist when he observed: "we might say that as an Artist is a Musician, Painter, or Poet, a Scientist is a Mathematician, Physicist, or Naturalist" (qtd Roos 161). However, the division of scientists into specialists concerned with particular facets of the material world was not fully realised until much later in the nineteenth century (Roos 161-162; Brantlinger xiv; Yeo 4-6). The rise of the expert rather than the generalist gentleman scholar is one important indication of the increasing specialisation of knowledge that was occurring in the first part of the nineteenth century. Today, as Steven Shapin comments, "The gentleman's traditional civic exercise of moral authority and the scholar's disengaged moral proprietorship of systematic knowledge have both been supplanted by the same social person – the *expert* – leaving both the 'scholar' and the 'gentleman' as almost empty linguistic shells" (314; see 279-327). However, early in the nineteenth century it was still possible to maintain the ideal of the generalist who could aspire to wide knowledge across many disciplines (Schweber 1-37).

An important difference between the expectations for the approach of the artist and the scientist can be seen in the attitude to subjectivity. In the early part of the century, the imagination and emotion were considered an important part of the life and experience of an accomplished person, including the scientifically inclined (Schweber 18-19). This is evident in the comments on Mitchell that have already been mentioned. However, as the nineteenth century progressed and science became more specialised, the developing ideal of the objective scientific observer became incompatible with expressions of imagination and emotion (Paradis and Postlewait ix-xiii; Paradis 85-110).

Empirical observation in the Baconian tradition both relies on and distrusts the senses, and this dilemma became more acute as science became more professional in the nineteenth century; personal commentary was not appropriate in the writings of the professional scientist towards the end of this period (Levine 366-367; see discussion 363-391). Science was distinguished from other endeavours by its

---

[17] For discussions of increases in readership in the course of the nineteenth century, see White 88-89; Askew and Hubber 110-137. For the availability of books in Australia, see Kirsop 16-42.

method and this method was associated with particular character traits: Richard Yeo identifies these as "hard work, patience, and humility" (17).

A distinction also developed between popular science and professional science, something that was debated around the mid-century (Yeo 10-12). As already mentioned, popular natural history literature and its accompanying illustrations developed as a genre distinct from the publications of specialist science; a delight in a multiplicity of accurate details, a lack of interest in general theories or explanations and an emphasis on subjective responses are important features (Merrill). The earlier inland Australian journals share some of these traits. Dry detail without the leaven of emotion and personal commentary found in popular natural history writing did not appeal to the "general reader" as a review of Leichhardt's 1847 journal suggests:

> Although evidently a good comrade and considerate chief, [Dr Leichhardt's] enthusiasm as a naturalist and man of science preclude much heed of his companions' peculiarities – if such they had. Enough that they are at hand [. . .] thus the book goes on, every thing put down with the dry brevity of a seaman's log. Hence Dr Leichhardt's volume, though highly valuable and interesting to naturalists and emigrants, will scarcely be appreciated by the general reader. Learned and well written, the amusing element, which readers of the present day are apt to make a condition for their favour, is but scantily scattered through its pages. ("Research and Adventure" 603)

The scientific appendices included in the *later* journals are included as evidence of achievement of the expedition; they are something for the specialist rather than the general reader. More detailed examination of the material could be expected in more specific texts devoted to the topic at hand.

As well, the ideal image of the British or American explorer as nationalist/imperialist hero was created in the second half of the nineteenth century, first of all by some explorers themselves in their journals, where they followed the model of the adventure story, and in the persona they adopted for their public lectures (Riffenburgh 41-44 where the examples of Elisha Kent Kane and Francis Leopold McClintock plus others are discussed). It is noteworthy that Henry Morton Stanley undertook a lecture tour of Australia in the 1880s (Askew and Hubber 135). Particularly important were the representations of explorers developed by others in various venues and media, in paintings, theatrical and music hall entertainments, in imperial exhibitions, novels, accounts of lives of explorers, but especially in the popular (often illustrated) press. Explorers were praised as exemplary national or imperial figures, men who embodied the sort of national characteristics that were to be encouraged and emulated. The adventure story was often aimed at the developing

children's market for literature; it was an important vehicle for promulgating this ideal (Riffenburgh 41-44; Phillips; Crotty 133-167). These changes affected the genre of the explorer journal and the sort of representations included in them, influencing the shift towards portraiture and depictions of heroic deeds that can be seen in the later Australian journals.

In Australia, the idea of the explorer as a distinctly national hero was constructed both in the historiography of Australian exploration and in poetry and literature. Historians such as William Howitt in 1865 and Ernest Favenc in 1888 stressed the suffering and heroism of Australian explorers battling the sterile wilderness. Howitt states that Australian explorers "present to those familiar with their labours and adventures, scenes of danger and wild romance, of heroic daring and devoted deaths, such as few countries have to show" (1: iii). Favenc's book was a government-sponsored project, "*compiled from state documents, private papers and the most authentic sources of information*" and "*issued under the auspices of the governments of the Australian colonies*" as the subtitle states (*History of Australian Exploration* title page). Later he argues, "The great charm of Australian exploration" "is the spectacle of one man pitted against the whole force of nature" (v-vi). Another example is provided by George Grimm who suggests, "The story of the exploration of Australia is one which we cannot willingly let die. There are many reasons for keeping alive the remembrance of such heroic deeds" (v).

In poetry of the first half of the nineteenth century, Australian explorers were compared to either classical or war heroes (Sellick 3-5). But after Sturt's expedition into the arid centre of Australia, and especially after the deaths of Leichhardt (in 1848) and Burke and Wills (in 1861), the attitude of poets was similar to Favenc's notion of the explorer as hero. They also created an image of the heroic explorer pitted against a hostile land (Sellick 5-9). This was further reinforced with the rise of the genre of the adventure novel (Sellick 7; also Dixon, *Writing the Colonial Adventure*; Healy 307-316; Haynes 129-140). Illustrations helped to cement this ideal.

Lacking the sort of exotic dangers created by the writers of romantic fiction (cannibalistic savages in a land with bubbling mud and active volcanoes, for example [Favenc, *Secret*]), the actual explorers in the preceding decades had concentrated on their struggle against the land, either prosaically as in most cases, or more expressively in the case of Giles. It is because their struggle and triumph are important that pictures of the hazards of the expedition and triumphant departures and arrivals are stressed in the visual records of exploration included in the journals. In the more prosaic journals, the pictures highlight the theme of struggle, danger or achievement against the odds that is a more subdued element in the written text. The investment of the identity of the later nineteenth-century Australian explorer in this notion of determined struggle further complicates the notion that the power of the explorer is related to visual domination.

The personalities of explorers also become important so their portraits are included in the most prominent position in the journals, as a Frontispiece, but they are all shown as men of society following the usual model used for portraits of the author, i.e., in repose rather than as active adventurers. There is very little sense of the explorer as hero in the Frontispiece photograph of Stuart seated and wearing a crumpled suit or in Warburton's engraved portrait in which he looks introspectively at nothing in particular, no doubt reflecting on the rigours of his expeditions. The fact that the sole natural history illustration in this journal is the "Warburton beetle" pictured on the title page is also significant. It is Giles who presents himself most self-consciously as an exemplary figure in his Frontispiece portrait: he is positioned frontally in his photograph of head and shoulders, slightly above the eye level of the viewer. With his head turned to his left, he looks resolutely and reflectively into the distance, suggesting that at this moment at least he is "monarch of all [he] survey[s]." However, the small role assigned to natural history in his journal means that his desire to be "lord of the fowl and the brute" must be disallowed on grounds other than the prior presence of a fellow explorer.

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank the anonymous reviewer of this paper for helpful comments.

Works Cited

Alpers, Svetlana. *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century*. London: John Murray in association with the U of Chicago P, 1983.

Askew, M. and B. Hubber. "The colonial reader observed: reading in its cultural context." *The Book in Australia: Essays towards a cultural & social history*. Ed. D. H. Borchardt and W. Kirsop. Melbourne: Australian Reference Publications in association with the Centre for Bibliographical and Textual Studies, Monash U, 1988. 110-137.

Batten, Charles. *Pleasurable Instruction: Form and Convention in Eighteenth-century Travel Literature*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1978.

Bell, Leonard. "Colonial eyes transformed: looking at/in paintings: an exploratory essay." *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Art* 1.1 (2000): 42-64.

---. "To See or Not to See: Conflicting Eyes in the Travel Art of Augustus Earle." *Orientalism Transposed: The Impact of the Colonies on British Culture*. Ed Julie F. Codell and Dianne Sachko Macleod. Aldershot and Brookfield: Ashgate, 1998. 117-139.

Brantlinger, Patrick. "Introduction: Zadig's Method Revisited." *Energy & Entropy: Science and Culture in Victorian Britain*. Ed. Patrick Brantlinger. Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana U P: 1989. ix-xxii.

Carter, Paul. *Living in a New Country: History, Travelling and Language*. London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1992.

---. *Road to Botany Bay*. London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1987.

Clark, Steve. "Introduction." *Travel Writing and Empire: Postcolonial Theory in Transit*. Ed. Steve Clark. London and New York: Zed Books, 1999. 1-28.

Comment, Bernard. *The Panorama*. Trans. Anne-Marie Glasheen. London: Reaktion, 1999.

Cosgrove, Denis E. *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*. London and Sydney: Croom Helm, 1984.

Crotty, Martin. *Making the Australian Male: Middle-Class Masculinity 1870-1920*. Carlton South: Melbourne U P, 2001.

Damisch, Hubert. "Claude: A Problem in Perspective." *Studies in the History of Art* 14 (1986): 29-44.

Daston, Lorraine and Peter Galison. "The Image of Objectivity: The Talismanic Image." *Representations* 40 (Fall 1992): 81-128.

Dixon, Robert. *Prosthetic Gods: Travel, representation and colonial governance*. St Lucia: U of Queensland P, 2001.

---. *Writing the Colonial Adventure: Race, gender and nation in Anglo-Australian popular fiction, 1875-1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1995.

Dubery, Fred and John Willats. *Perspective and other drawing systems*. Rev. ed. London: The Herbert Press, 1983.

Elkins, James. *The Poetics of Perspective*. Ithaca and London: Cornell U P, 1994.

Favenc, Ernest. *The History of Australian Exploration from 1788 to 1*888. London: Griffith, Farran, Okeden & Welsh; Sydney: Turner & Henderson, 1888.

---. *The Secret of the Australian Desert*. London: Blackie and Son, 1895.

Finlayson, Brian. "Sir Thomas Mitchell and Lake Salvator: An Essay in Ecological History." *Historical Studies* 21:83 (October 1984): 212-228.

Galperin, William H. *The Return of the Visible in British Romanticism*. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins U P, 1993.

Giles, Ernest. *Australia Twice Traversed: The Romance of Exploration, Being a Narrative Compiled from the Journals of Five Exploring Expeditions into and through Central South Australia, and Western Australia, From 1872 to 1876*. 2 vols. London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1889.

---. *Explorations*, 1873-4. Adelaide: Parliamentary Paper No. 215, 1874.

---. "Proceedings of the Hon. Thos. Elder's Expedition, under the command of Ernest Giles, from Perth to Adelaide." *E. Giles's Explorations, 1875-6*. Adelaide: Parliamentary Paper No. 18, 1876.

Gilpin, William. *Three Essays: On Picturesque Beauty; On Picturesque Travel; and On Sketching Landscape: to which is added a poem, On Landscape Painting*. London: R. Blamire, 1792.

Grey, George. *Journals of Two Expeditions of Discovery in North-West and Western Australia, During the Years 1837, 38, and 39, Under the Authority of Her Majesty's Government. Describing Many Newly Discovered, Important, and Fertile Districts, with Observations on the Moral and Physical Condition of the Aboriginal Inhabitants, &c. &c*. 2 vols. London: T. and W. Boone, 1841.

Grimm, George. *The Australian Explorers: Their Labours, Perils, and Achievements. Being a narrative of discovery from the landing of Captain Cook to the centennial year.* Melbourne and Sydney: George Robertson & Company, 1888.

Hardman, William ed. *The Journals of John McDouall Stuart during the Years 1858, 1859, 1860, 1861, & 1862, When He Fixed the Centre of the Continent and Successfully Crossed it from Sea to Sea, With Maps, a Photographic Portrait of Mr. Stuart* [Frontispiece], *and twelve Engravings drawn on wood by George French Angas, from sketches taken during the different expeditions.* 2nd ed. London: Saunders, Otley, and Co, 1865.

Haynes, Roslynn D. *Seeking the Centre: The Australian Desert in Literature, Art and Film.* Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1998.

Healy, J. J. "The Lemurian Nineties." *Australian Literary Studies* 8.3 (May 1978): 307-316.

Heckenberg, Kerry. "The Art and Science of Exploration: a study of genre, vision and visual representation in nineteenth century journals and reports of Australian inland exploration." PhD Diss. U of Queensland, 2002.

Hodgkinson, Clement. *Australia, from Port Macquarie to Moreton Bay; With Descriptions of the Natives, Their Manners and Customs; The Geology, Natural Productions, Fertility, and Resources of that Region; First Explored and Surveyed By Order of the Colonial Government.* London: T. and W. Boone, 1845.

Howitt, William. *The History of Discovery of Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand, from the Earliest Date to the Present Day.* 2 vols. London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, and Green, 1865.

Jay, Martin. *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought.* Berkeley: U of California P, 1993.

---. "Scopic Regimes of Modernity." *Vision and Visuality.* Ed. H. Foster. Seattle: Bay Press, 1988. 3-23.

Jones, Philip. "The Horn Expedition's place among nineteenth-century inland expeditions." *Exploring Central Australia: Society, the Environment and the 1894 Horn Expedition.* Ed. S. R. Morton and D. J. Mulvaney. Chipping Norton: Surrey Beatty & Sons, 1996. 19-28.

Kirsop, Wallace. "Bookselling and publishing in the nineteenth century." *The Book in Australia: Essays towards a cultural & social history.* Ed. D. H. Borchardt and W. Kirsop. Melbourne: Australian Reference Publications in association with the Centre for Bibliographical and Textual Studies, Monash U, 1988. 16-42.

Levine, George. "By Knowledge Possessed: Darwin, Nature, and Victorian Narrative." *New Literary History* 24.2 (Spring 1993): 363-391.

Maynard, Patrick. "Perspective's Places." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 54.1 (Winter 1996): 23-40.

Merrill, Lynn L. *The Romance of Victorian Natural History*. New York and Oxford: Oxford U P, 1989.

Mitchell, Thomas Livingston. Diary 1825. Mitchell Library, Sydney.

---. *Journal of an Expedition into the Interior of Tropical Australia, in Search of a Route from Sydney to the Gulf of Carpentaria*. London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1848.

---. *Outlines of a System of Surveying, for Geographical and Military Purposes; Comprising the Principles on which the Surface of the Earth may be Represented on Plans*. London: Samuel Leigh, 1827.

---. *Three Expeditions into the Interior of Eastern Australia; with descriptions of the recently explored region of Australia Felix, and of the Present Colony of New South Wales*. 2 vols. 2nd ed. London: T. & W. Boone, 1839.

"Mitchell's Second and Third Expeditions." *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 45:279 (January 1839): 113-129.

"New South Wales." *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 44:277 (November 1838): 690-716.

"Opinions of the Press." Endpapers of copy of Grey in Fryer Library, U of Queensland.

"Opinions of the Press." Endpapers of copy of Mitchell, *Three Expeditions* in John Oxley Library, Brisbane.

Paradis, James. "Darwin and Landscape." *Victorian Science and Victorian Values: Literary Perspectives*. Ed. James Paradis and Thomas Postlewait. New York: The New York Academy of Sciences, 1981. 85-110.

Paradis, James and Thomas Postlewait. "Introduction." *Victorian Science and Victorian Values: Literary Perspectives*. Ed. James Paradis and Thomas Postlewait. New York: The New York Academy of Sciences, 1981. ix-xiii.

Phillips, Richard. *Mapping Men & Empire: A Geography of Adventure*. London and New York: Routledge, 1997.

Pratt, Mary Louise. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. London and New York: Routledge, 1992.

---. "Scratches on the Face of the Country; or, What Mr. Barrow Saw in the Land of the Bushmen." "*Race*," *Writing, and Difference*. Ed. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. Chicago and London: U of Chicago P, 1986. 138-162.

"Research and Adventure in Australia." *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 62.385 (November 1847): 602-614.

Review of *Three Expeditions into the Interior of Eastern Australia* by Thomas L. Mitchell. *The Athenaeum* No. 570, Saturday 29 September 1838: 707-710.

Riffenburgh, Beau. *The Myth of the Explorer: The Press, Sensationalism, and Geographical Discovery*. Oxford and New York: Oxford U P, 1994.

Roos, David A. "The 'Aims and Intentions' of *Nature*," *Victorian Science and Victorian Values: Literary Perspectives*. Ed. James Paradis and Thomas Postlewait. New York: The New York Academy of Sciences, 1981. 159-180.

Ryan, Simon. *The Cartographic Eye: How Explorers Saw Australia.* Cambridge, Cambridge U P: 1996.

---. *The Cartographic Eye: Scopic Regimes in Journals of Australian Exploration.* PhD Diss. U of Queensland, 1992.

Schweber, S. S. "Scientists as Intellectuals: The Early Victorians." *Victorian Science and Victorian Values: Literary Perspectives.* Ed James Paradis and Thomas Postlewait. New York: The New York Academy of Sciences, 1981. 1-37.

Sellick, Robert. "The Explorer as Hero: Australian Exploration and the Literary Imagination." *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society of Australasia (South Australian Branch)* 78 (1977): 1-16.

Shapin, Steven. "'A Scholar and a Gentleman': The Problematic Identity of the Scientific Practitioner in Early Modern England." *History of Science* 24 (1991): 279-327.

Thomas, Nicholas. *Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government.* Cambridge: Polity P, 1994.

Warburton, Peter Egerton. *Journey across the Western Interior of Australia, with an Introduction and Additions, by Charles H. Eden, Esq.* Ed. H. W. Bates. London: Sampson Low, Marston, Low, & Searle, 1875.

White, Richard. *Inventing Australia: Images and Identity 1688-1980.* Sydney: George Allen & Unwin, 1981.

Wilcox, Scott B. "Unlimiting the Bounds of Painting." In Ralph Hyde, *Panoramania! The Art and Entertainment of the 'All-Embracing' View.* Exhibition cat. London: Trefoil Publications in association with the Barbican Art Gallery, 1988. 13-44.

Yeo, Richard. "Science and Intellectual Authority in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Britain: Robert Chambers and *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation.*" *Energy & Entropy: Science and Culture in Victorian Britain.* Ed. Patrick Brantlinger. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana U P, 1989. 1-27.