

Australia House: A Little Australia in London

Olwen Pryke

When the new Australian Commonwealth sought 'representation' in London, it did not merely look for a suitable site for the new offices of the high commissioner; it also wished to establish a representative image of federated Australia in Great Britain. The ensuing controversy exposed a diverse range of practical and symbolic concerns, most particularly the ways in which Australians in Australia perceived 'Australia'; the importance to Australians, both in Australia and Great Britain, of locating and building a 'little Australia in London' to represent Australia in the heart of the metropolis; and the Australian perceptions of London that shaped these discussions. The search for an appropriate site for this 'little Australia' illustrates the unstable negotiation of identity that occurs in and through this very specific space. As Jane Jacobs has suggested, this can be a complex process, as 'expressions and negotiations of imperialism do not just occur in space'. Rather, 'This is a politics of identity and power that articulates itself through space and is, fundamentally, about space'.¹

In November 1910, the recently arrived 'special correspondent' for the *Sydney Morning Herald* embarked on a journey to find the offices of the Commonwealth Government. Located in what seemed to be 'an endless terrace of large, comfortable-looking residences', he looked up along a line of gables and chimney tops, but couldn't see any overt symbol of Australia, just a simple brass plate reading 'Commonwealth of Australia' by the side of an ordinary doorway. He lamented that 'after 10 years of federation all there is still to represent the wealth and position of the Commonwealth in the eyes of the people of England is — that'.² The puzzle, he suggested in a mildly satiric tone, was finding Australia in London. But even when Australia was located in London, there was a distinct disappointment, even disillusionment, with the offices found and the image they presented.

The premises in Victoria Street, Westminster, was acquired in 1906 at the time of Captain Robert Henry Muirhead Collins's appointment as the temporary representative of the Commonwealth. The primary initiative for this first official representation in London came from the minister for defence. At this time, Australia was beginning to plan the establishment of its own naval force, as well as the expansion of its existing military forces. Consequently, increasingly large orders for defense stores were being placed in London.³ Yet while the appointment of a high commissioner was assumed as a result of federation, nine years elapsed before the posting was made. The High Commissioner Bill finally went before the Australian Parliament in August 1909, and George Reid was subsequently offered (and accepted) the position.⁴ Prior to the appointment of the high commissioner, the Commonwealth Government was wary of expending money on more appropriate accommodation. Even following Reid's appointment, a series of *ad hoc* measures were implemented rather than a concerted attempt to find a more permanent solution.

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The selection of a high commissioner and the decision regarding the location of Australian representation in London were intimately related. Many senators argued that to appoint the high commissioner without first providing premises in which he could discharge his duties 'would be as fatuous as it would be for a bird to lay its eggs before it had built its nest'.⁵ More emphatically still, Senator Patrick Lynch suggested that 'We want the cage before we get the bird'.⁶ Mixing the animal metaphors, Senator Sir Josiah Symon proposed an alternative, counselling that 'we should first catch our hare' and recommending that if the high commissioner was to be housed in a 'palatial manner', then he should be the officer engaged in the negotiations for the acquisition of the site.⁷ This is what did eventually occur, though more by default than design.

In 1911 Alfred Deakin (then leader of the opposition and former prime minister) articulated Australia's approach to representation abroad: 'From the very establishment of the Commonwealth it was always recognised as one of the essentials that we should be represented in London, and on a fitting scale'.⁸ But where this was to occur and what exactly constituted a fitting scale were matters open to an ongoing debate that had occupied the Parliament and the press for the first decade of the new Commonwealth.

While the need for Commonwealth (or unified) representation in London was raised as early as 1894, the issue remained unresolved with the defeat of the Deakin Government in late 1908.⁹ A week after the election, when the question of Commonwealth offices in London came to be discussed, there was some sense that the contentious issue was in fact left by the previous Government to the Fisher Cabinet to determine. Following extensive discussions, the location of the site for these offices, and whether or not they should be erected at all, was still to be decided. The matter was again debated at length in 1911 (when Fisher was again prime minister), and a site was finally settled upon.

While there were many possible sites available, the particular site needed to reflect and attempt to accommodate the multiple views of London as well as Australia's perceived and hoped-for place within it. The suitability of land was discussed and understood in both pragmatic and symbolic terms. The debate concerning the possible locations of the High Commission, both in Federal Parliament and the wider community, took into consideration the cost of the site, its specific location, the degree of control over the site, whether it was leasehold or freehold, the type of building that could be constructed upon it and whether it would produce any rental income. The debate also considered and attempted to define the primary functions of the building and the High Commission in London. The proposed sites were assessed according to whether they might act as appropriate advertisements for Australia — displaying colonial product and promoting immigration. Yet it was the symbolic considerations of prestige and national and imperial positioning, even more than these practicalities, that determined which sites were appraised. Ultimately, it was Australian perceptions of the empire, Great Britain, London, Trafalgar Square and the Strand that determined the location of the Offices of the Commonwealth. It must be remembered that there were constraints on the sites made available for assessment, and that the specific sites offered for consideration were often determined by commercial imperatives from within London. While there was a

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distinct 'push' from Australia for representation in London, there was also a 'pull' from London in support of such a venture.¹⁰

It was suggested frequently that the dispersed offices of the various States should be amalgamated in a single location. The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported in 1908:

Australians in London know, as Australians in Australia cannot know, the need of a central manifestation of our country, in place of the insignificant and scattered showing made by the State offices.¹¹

A year earlier, the acting prime minister was:

disgusted with the little pigeonholes that did duty as the headquarters of the Australian States. He had [reportedly] only succeeding [sic] in finding two of these little cribs, and he was ashamed of them.¹²

These comments seem to indicate that a particularly widespread belief held at this time, that British people were ignorant about Australia and Australian matters, may have had some foundation, due in part to the difficulty of even locating the Australian offices in London.

The *Sydney Morning Herald* did nothing to dispel this conception, prompting its statement in 1907 that it was time that:

Australia realised her duty and the price she is paying for her neglected opportunities. For years it has been a standing complaint by returned Australian visitors that we are unknown in London.¹³

In 1912, the criticism remained the same:

thousands of Australians even now have no idea how poorly Australia is outwardly projected in London ... To such it will still come as a surprise to be told that Australia in London does not exist, save in the personality of the High Commissioner and the work of his staff, while both he and they are accommodated in premises that are unknown to the majority of Londoners.¹⁴

And if Australia was somehow inadvertently stumbled upon, there was a general concern that its current representation was not appropriate. The *Sydney Morning Herald* suggested in 1911:

after all, it is advertisement that counts in these days. If we think Australia good enough to place in the chief streets in London upon the ground floor, in rooms that shall attract strangers and hold inquiries, but do not actually get so far, the very people we want to think well of us will decide the matter in our despite. They will say that we are not good enough to trouble about, since we cannot pump up enough enthusiasm to impress our friends and intimidate our enemies. They will insist that if a third-floor office is fair housing for our High Commissioner, our land must be third-rate, and our general way of doing things mean and contemptible.¹⁵

It was anticipated that the establishment of centralised representation would serve many diverse purposes. It would help to promote a single unified image of the new federation, provide easy access to information about the States and Commonwealth, provide services to visitors, tourists and potential immigrants and investors, and advertise Australian materials, products and opportunities.¹⁶ But

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these pragmatic concerns were compounded by more symbolic, even sentimental, considerations.

It was hoped that the careful selection of a prominent site would allow the fledgling nation to build 'a home of our own'. In 1911 Deakin wistfully commented that 'At present we sometimes feel ourselves strangers in our mother's house-hold'.¹⁷ Since Australia's invasion by Europeans in 1788, Britain had been regarded by many as the 'mother country', the 'old country', or simply as 'home'. A 'home' is commonly understood to be the place you regard as your proper place of residence. The term has been employed by Britons abroad, by inhabitants of British colonies and territories, and by those of British descent in Australia for Great Britain. Deakin refers to the perceived kinship between Britain and Australia, the familial ties of mother and child; yet suggests simultaneously that this relationship is not easy, that Australians in Britain may feel more like strangers, foreigners, people who belong to another country. In fact, he suggests that they may feel more like a guest or visitor in contradistinction to the members of the household — newcomers who have not yet become well acquainted with a place or who are not yet well known. And if Australia found itself uncomfortable in its mother's household, why not build a home of its own?

As early as 1904 Henry Copeland, the agent-general for New South Wales, proposed the creation of a 'little Australia in London', with the primary purpose of providing Australians with a place to meet.¹⁸ This suggests an attempt not so much to represent Australia as to replicate it in microcosm. This function alludes more directly to the meanings of 'home', which concern the domestic and intimate aspects of life: a place where Australians could be at ease, collect their mail, undertake their banking and read their local newspapers. As the Member for Barker, John Livingston, put it in 1911:

This building is not for a day, but for all time, and every Australian will make direct for it when he reaches London. There he will meet people from all the States. As the trustees of Australia, it is our duty to give Australians the greatest facilities for meeting one another in the heart of the Empire.¹⁹

A diversity of understandings of London, both real and virtual, influenced the ultimate siting of Australia's new house. London was conceived in multiple and sometimes contradictory ways.²⁰ These manifold perceptions of place require some unravelling. Some regarded London as unique, some saw the city as constant and unchanging, while others recognised the characteristics of an increasingly modern city — congested, thronging, filled with noise and people. To some it was the splendid centre of Empire, foreign, yet familiar; others simply viewed the city as home.

Senators and members of the Federal Parliament debated the importance of London and the significance of the placement of Australian representation there. The following parliamentary exchange illustrates the complexities of these discussions.

Senator Colonel Neild: In all London, there are only one or two sites like this, and if you want to get a suitable site you have to pay for it.
 Senator Lynch: And there is only one London in England.
 Senator Colonel Neild: There is only one London in the world.
 Senator Walker: There is a London in Canada.

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Senator Colonel Neild: There are a number of places called London in the world, but, as the greatest city in the world, and the capital city of the greatest nation in the world, there is only one London as we understand it.²¹

This interchange suggests a shared understanding of London, but clearly this understanding is not tightly defined and remains open to interpretation. This complexity is further exposed by the parliamentary debates that attempted to determine the most appropriate location for the Commonwealth Offices within London.

As Senator Colonel John Neild noted, there were tens of thousands of properties available in London, ‘but they would not answer our purpose. We do not want a building in a back street’.²² Senator Pulsford agreed that Australia ‘does not desire merely to obtain so many square feet of land, but a site in the very centre of the heart of the Empire’.²³ Livingston, upon his return from Great Britain, seemed overawed by the size of London, its immensity and breadth:

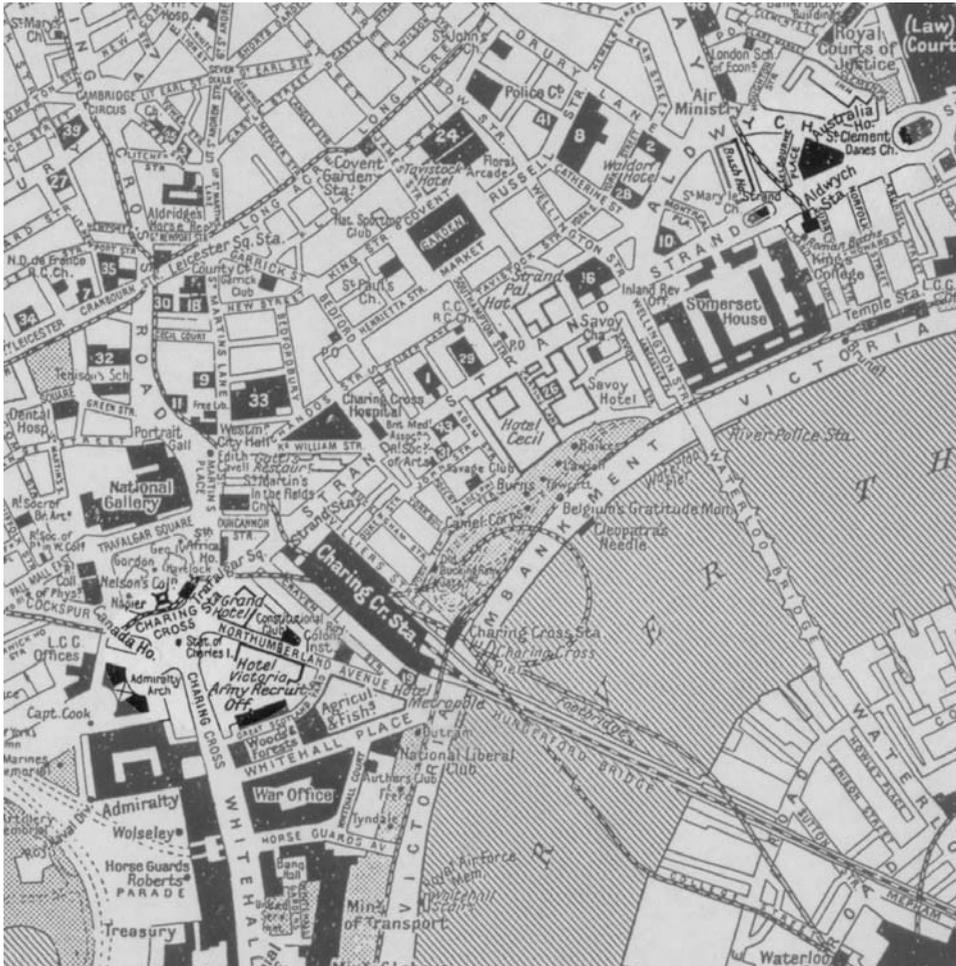
it would be impossible for any one to say, from a general view, where the heart of London is, London is everywhere ... When approaching London the guard asked me where I wanted to be put down, and I said “London”. He said, “It is all London”.²⁴

This was Livingston’s first encounter with the vastness of London. His remarks demonstrate the difficulties of negotiating the actual London when you have only an imagined conception of London as a guide.

The difficulty of determining the exact heart of London, the centre of the empire, was compounded by the distance between Australia and London in space, time and understanding. This great distance had implications for the ideas of London held by people in Australia. Many had never visited London and relied upon others’ experience to determine their own views. One senator conscientiously questioned men of his acquaintance who had recently been in London, and so was dependent on hearsay in order to make his decision regarding the fitness of the site under discussion.²⁵ A distinction was often drawn between those who had been to London and those who had not. For example, the *Sydney Morning Herald* suggested that ‘Few Australians who know London’ would question the suitability of the site then under consideration, implying that only those who had an immediate knowledge of the city could have a reliable opinion.²⁶ When a senator wished to disagree with a comment made in Parliament, he intimated that perhaps his colleague had not been to London.²⁷ Senator Lynch was able to reply to the gibe by saying that he had indeed been to London, but twenty-two years beforehand. He considered that his recollections were ‘quite sufficient’ to enable him to comment on the proposed site, indicating an understanding of London as constant through time.²⁸ Yet the London he imagined was a memory of the city as it had been twenty years before and had little to do with the city of the current decade. Even outdated knowledge such as Senator Lynch’s was given credence over that derived from others’ experience.

Livingston thought it impossible to find the true heart of London, yet the attempt was made. While much of the then-contemporary debate attempted to locate the ‘true’ heart, recent scholars recognise that imperial cities have many different ‘centres of empire’, which may be interpreted in disparate ways.²⁹ The

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Map of London. Section of 'Plan of the Crowded Districts of Central London with a Guide to Theatres and Principal Cinemas' in St John Adcock (ed.), *Wonderful London*, Fleetway House, London, c 1920s, p vi.

City, locus of the great metropolis's financial business, vied with Trafalgar Square, which occupied a nostalgic position of importance in the hearts of many previous visitors to London. The Strand, particularly following its renovation and expansion, came to rival this standing. While various sites for the proposed Australia House were considered, only two were entertained seriously — one adjacent to Trafalgar Square, and the other on the Strand.³⁰

Responsibility for the Strand and its environs passed from the Metropolitan Board of Works to the newly founded London County Council in 1889. Their first substantial project aimed to link Holborn with the Strand and simultaneously remove slum dwellings located in the area.³¹ The widened Strand remained but was supplemented by a crescent road that left the thoroughfare near Wellington Street and returned to it near St Clement Danes Church and the Royal Courts of

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Justice. The eastern end of Aldwych was opened to traffic early in 1905, the Kingsway in October 1905.³² It was then described as the 'the largest and most important improvement which has been carried out in London since the construction of Regent Street in 1820'.³³ However, there was considerable disappointment with the success of Kingsway in its early years, some sarcastically suggesting that it should be converted into an open-air roller-skating rink on account of its suitable width and desolate appearance.³⁴

In 1907, a section of the Aldwych curve was considered by the Australian Government as a potential site. The Commonwealth was offered options on three blocks of land.³⁵ None of these were for sale at this time, and only leaseholds were procurable. Certainly, the London County Council appeared keen to accommodate the Commonwealth in its negotiations for the site.³⁶ Apart from an Australian High Commission being a worthy neighbour to the proposed new County Hall, there was an undeniable financial imperative for the council to lease the new blocks and begin to recoup the cost of the radical remaking of this area.³⁷ In addition, the London County Council hoped that the successful transaction would bring the island site itself into the market and that the Australian example would be followed in the near future by other dominions.³⁸ Indeed, the council played on intercolonial rivalry by making it known that the Canadian Government was also negotiating for a site nearby on the Strand.³⁹ There were clearly commercial imperatives underlying the desire for Australian representation in London.⁴⁰

The London County Council was explicit in its support of the Commonwealth Offices in London. The chairman of the Improvements Committee stated that the London County Council:

had felt that, in dealing with the Commonwealth Government, they ought not to drive too hard a bargain or approach the question simply and solely from a commercial point of view.⁴¹

In July 1907 Captain Collins was asked by the Commonwealth Government to ascertain the lowest procurable rental for the whole of a site that had the frontage to both the Strand and Aldwych and included the corner facing eastward. Yet the Member for Parkes, Bruce Smith, was concerned that the proposal was one of the most un-businesslike ever placed before the chamber — the members being asked to debate the issue with little specific information and no definite proposals.⁴² The Commonwealth reportedly selected the most valuable portion of the land and offered for it the value attached to the lowest-priced portion.⁴³ In the interim, to complicate matters, the Victorian Government took an adjoining site, and paid almost exactly what the London County Council had asked. Lord Elcho, chairman of the Public Improvements Committee, went on to say that while the London County Council was anxious to accommodate the Commonwealth on their site: 'and ready as they [were] to make concessions ... they cannot ... give, even to the Commonwealth, the best site they have to give at a price so far below its value'.⁴⁴

The negotiations were still proceeding in April 1908, when the London correspondent for the *Sydney Morning Herald* commented:

Australia has been before the British public in quite unaccustomed degree this week. Not, perhaps, in the way we should most like, for a dispute between Sir William Lyne, Member of the Commonwealth House of Representatives, and the

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London County Council as to the now famous Strand site is not the best way imaginable for the advertisement of Australia. But it is something, in the dearth of fame that is our ordinary portion here, to find ourselves mentioned at all, so we are grateful for even a bad eminence.⁴⁵

Sir William Lyne charged the London County Council with having unduly favoured Victoria at the expense of the Commonwealth by allowing the State to acquire their land at a lesser cost. However, the varying values of the blocks were largely due to the fact that the main frontage of Victoria's land was to a side street, and the block desired by the Commonwealth faced the Strand for its entire length.⁴⁶ Reflecting on the extended negotiations for the procurement of a site, the Member for Parramatta, Joseph Cook, ventured that the record of the procedure connected with the selection of various sites was one of which no Government need be particularly proud.⁴⁷

The other site considered was located on the corner of Northumberland Avenue and Charing Cross on Trafalgar Square. It was thought to be particularly desirable to locate the proposed offices on a site serviced by a major thoroughfare and frequented by the public. Deakin concluded that while the City proper was the great financial centre of the Kingdom, Trafalgar Square was the great centre of the populous and travelling London:

If you wish for a place where the public eye can be caught and the popular mind impressed, where you will come in touch with the masses of London and its visitors, go to Trafalgar Square.⁴⁸

He argued that it was passed by a greater stream of people than any other spot in London and, indeed, 'In the world!', as the Member for East Sydney, John West, concurred.⁴⁹ Others, however, derided the modern Trafalgar Square as an 'attraction for small boys and women who wish to see the fountains and the Horse Guards', not the centre it had been forty or fifty years previously.⁵⁰

However, this wasn't the only criticism of the Trafalgar Square site. A number of issues influenced the decision not to approve the purchase or lease of the site in Trafalgar Square.⁵¹ Uncertainty regarding the character of the vendor and the lack of detail regarding the negotiations prompted wariness among the senators and members of parliament debating the proposition.⁵² Also, there was some doubt about the suitability of the location and its comparative merits (and shortcomings) in relation to the Strand site considered previously. The building was reportedly in a dilapidated state, and immediate expenditure was considered necessary to repair it. The Member for Dalley, William Wilks, commented that he had seen:

a photograph of the building and it reminds [one] of a Paddy's Market in Australia. All that I could see upon it was a placard advertising 'Bovril' ... If it is such a valuable site in the great city of London why is it used for comparatively insignificant business purposes?⁵³

And, more significantly, why was it available for purchase by the Commonwealth? Part of the answer may be revealed by a closer examination of the map: while the site was conspicuous, it was actually located in 'a kind of dull backwater ... There is very little movement, almost empty pavements, and it is quiet enough to be used for a cab rank'.⁵⁴ Although revered from afar as a prestigious diplomatic and administrative centre, Trafalgar Square was

simultaneously considered by some as merely a tourist destination and the location of prosaic commercial interests. These examples illustrate the discrepancies between image and reality and highlight again the distance between Australia and London in space, time and understanding.

The matter remained unresolved until the sites were again considered in 1911. Sir George Reid, the newly appointed high commissioner, ultimately recommended the purchase of land on the Strand. On 12 December 1911, the Senate debated the resolution and the decision was made to acquire the site.⁵⁵

The London County Council was clearly anxious to have the Commonwealth Offices placed on the Aldwych curve of the Strand, and was willing to break its ordinary policy and let the Commonwealth have the freehold.⁵⁶ In fact, the Council had kept the offer open for a considerable time in order to oblige the Commonwealth Government.⁵⁷ The chairman of the Improvements Committee reflected on the negotiations, remarking that 'They had been very delicate negotiations, as at several periods they had been afraid that any haste or lack of elasticity on their part might have broken them down', but it was 'fitting that a site of that importance should be occupied by the Commonwealth of Australia'.⁵⁸ Finally, the *Sydney Morning Herald's* special correspondent seemed to sigh with relief, and declared that the decision for the location and construction of the Commonwealth High Commission would mark the 'beginning of the end of Australia as a Cinderella dominion, lurking in holes and corners of the Empire's metropolis, a ragged and forlorn expression of itself'.⁵⁹

The final location for Australia House on the Aldwych curve of the Strand was partly the result of pragmatic considerations, but underlying these determinants were the symbolic considerations of prestige and display, the ideas that determined appropriate 'representation', and national and imperial positioning. It was not simply the decision of the Australian Government or the London County Council (though the council certainly promoted the positioning of Australia House on the Strand), nor of the Australian prime minister or high commissioner. Neither was it simply the availability of land; more particularly, it was what constituted suitable land. Australia's representation in London was the result of both a distinct 'push' from the periphery and a concerted 'pull' from the centre.

This complex negotiation exposes the frictions between understandings of imagined space and their application to reality: the difficulties for Australians attempting to find the centre of the empire from a distance; and the importance to Australians, both in Australia and Great Britain, of locating and building a 'little Australia in London'. Representing Australia in the heart of the metropolis would make Australia knowable and definable within the empire and its preeminent city. The protracted debate comprised a series of self-conscious gestures and decisions, exposing the ways in which material and imagined geographies constitute each other, both reflecting and helping to solidify Australian national and imperial identities at the commencement of the twentieth century.

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- village-building schemes to encourage free immigrants to the colony. To ease the numbers of prisoners in the colony, male transportation was suspended for two years and female transportation was increased. As the *Times* explained to the British reading public, this change had been implemented ‘with the view of eventually restoring that natural proportion of numbers between the sexes, the disturbance of which has on all occasions led to such dreadful crimes’. *Times*, 16 December 1846.
- 67 Gladstone to Eardley-Wilmot, 30 April 1846, *British Parliamentary Papers, Colonies, Australia*, vol 10, 1847–48, p 33. In his diary Gladstone noted on 29 April ‘Cabinet dinner at Ld [sic] Aberdeen’s — where Sir Eardley-Wilmot was discussed’. The following day his diary noted, ‘Wrote to Sir Eardley-Wilmot’. See M R D Foot and H C G Matthew (eds), *The Gladstone Diaries*, vol 3, 1840–1847, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1974, p 534.
- 68 Gladstone to Eardley-Wilmot, 9 March 1847, *British Parliamentary Papers, Colonies, Australia*, vol 10, 1847–48, p 39.
- 69 Eardley-Wilmot to Gladstone, 5 October 1846, *British Parliamentary Papers, Colonies, Australia*, vol 10, 1847–48, pp 34–5.
- 70 See A Alexander, *Obligated to Submit*, op. cit., pp 170–72.
- 71 *Hobart Town Courier*, 30 September 1846.
- 72 *Naval and Military Gazette*, CO 280/196, Archives Office of Tasmania, pp 7–8.
- 73 See K Fitzpatrick, ‘Mr Gladstone and the Governor’, op. cit., p 33.
- 74 S H Northcote, ‘The Case of Eardley-Wilmot’, op. cit.
- 75 K Fitzpatrick, ‘Mr Gladstone and the Governor’, op. cit., p 35.
- 76 J Fenton, *A History of Tasmania*, op. cit., p 175.
- 77 K McKenzie, *Scandal*, op. cit., p 5.

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- 1 Jane M Jacobs, *Edge of Empire: Postcolonialism and the City*, Routledge, London, 2001, p 1.
- 2 ‘The Week in London, An Australian’s Notes’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 November 1910, p 10.
- 3 *Argus*, 16 February 1906.
- 4 W G McMinn, *George Reid*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1989, pp 250–70.
- 5 *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates (CPD)*, Senate, 25 November 1908, pp 2159–60.
- 6 *ibid.*, p 2176.
- 7 *ibid.*
- 8 *CPD*, Representatives, 12 December 1911, p 4124.
- 9 J R Thompson, ‘The Australian High Commission in London: The Origins and Early History 1901–1916’, M.A. Thesis, Australian National University, 1972, pp 14–5.
- 10 The exact extent of these push-pull forces, whether one was stronger or preceded the other, is difficult to define. The desire for a unified physical representation of ‘Australia’ certainly predated federation, and this desire was accommodated in the heart of the empire. It may be argued that this became a mere sleight of hand, giving the appearance of condoning greater independence and authority for a new nation while simultaneously drawing the dominion closer to the centre. Luke Trainor makes a similar argument regarding the commercial relationship between ‘Australia’ and Great Britain in the years just prior to federation. See Luke Trainor, *British Imperialism and Australian Nationalism: Manipulation, Conflict, and Compromise in the Late Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 1994.
- 11 ‘Australia in London’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 April 1908, p 5.
- 12 *CPD*, 24 September 1907 condensed in *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 September 1907, p 10.
- 13 ‘The Commonwealth London Office’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 September 1907, p 6.
- 14 ‘Australia in London’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 February 1912, p 8.
- 15 ‘Australia in London’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 March 1911, p 6.
- 16 Memorandum by Acting Prime Minister Sir William Lyne reproduced in *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 September 1907, p 10.
- 17 *CPD*, Representatives, 12 December 1911, p 4129.
- 18 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 October 1904, p 6.
- 19 *CPD*, Representatives, 12 December 1911, p 4138.

- 20 See Dana Arnold (ed.), *The Metropolis and Its Image: Constructing Identities for London, c 1750–1950*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1999 for a discussion of some of the many ways in which London has been perceived over time.
- 21 *CPD*, Senate, 25 November 1908, p 2180.
- 22 Senator Colonel Neild, *CPD*, Senate, 25 November 1908, p 2180.
- 23 Senator Pulsford, *CPD*, Senate, 25 November 1908, p 2169 and p 2163 ff.
- 24 *CPD*, Representatives, 12 December 1911, pp 4137–8. Livingston was a member of the Australian parliamentary delegation to England which attended the celebrations of the coronation of George V in 1911. He subsequently published an account of this journey titled *Three Australians Abroad*, Laurie and Watson, Mount Gambia, 1912.
- 25 Senator McGregor, *CPD*, Senate, 25 November 1908, p 2164 and *CPD*, Representatives, 25 November 1908, p 2216.
- 26 ‘Australia in London’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 December 1907, p 3.
- 27 Senator St Ledger, *CPD*, Senate, 25 November 1908, p 2189.
- 28 Senator Lynch, *CPD*, Senate, 25 November 1908, p 2190. Deakin also acknowledged the age of his conceptions: ‘At present we sometimes feel ourselves strangers in our mother’s house-hold — or, rather, we did so more than twenty years ago, when I first had the privilege of visiting the country of my fathers’. See *CPD*, Representatives, 12 December 1911, p 4129.
- 29 See Ian S Black, ‘Rebuilding ‘The Heart of the Empire’: Bank headquarters in the City of London, 1919–1939’ in Dana Arnold (ed.), *The Metropolis and Its Image: Constructing Identities for London, c 1750–1950*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1999; Jacobs, op. cit.; R Mace, *Trafalgar Square: Emblem of Empire*, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1976; and particularly Felix Driver and David Gilbert, ‘Heart of Empire? Landscape, space and performance in imperial London’, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 1998, volume 16, pp 18–21.
- 30 Memorandum by Acting Prime Minister Sir William Lyne reproduced in *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 September 1907, p 10. See also National Archives of Australia (NAA), A2911 2/1909 Part 1, Trafalgar Square Site. Offices of High Commissioner.
- 31 *Globe*, 4 June 1903 cited in Charles Gordon, *Old Time Aldwych, the Kingsway and Neighbourhood*, T Fisher Unwin, London, 1903, p 36. See also Sir Gwilym Gibbon and Reginald Bell, *History of the London County Council 1889–1939*, Macmillan & Co, London, 1939, pp 451–2.
- 32 Harold Clunn, *London Rebuilt 1897–1927*, John Murray, London, 1927, p 55 and A Stuart Gray, *Edwardian Architecture: A Biographical Dictionary*, Duckworth, London, 1985, p 82. For an entertaining description of the opening see James Winter, *London’s Teeming Streets*, Routledge, London, 1993, pp 208–9.
- 33 Pamphlet issued at the opening of the Kingsway and Aldwych improvement, 1905 cited in Gibbon et. al., op. cit., p 451.
- 34 Clunn, op. cit., p 62.
- 35 Memorandum by Acting Prime Minister Sir William Lyne reproduced in *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 September 1907, p 10.
- 36 ‘He [the Acting Prime Minister] had a conviction that the London County Council was very anxious that Australia should secure this block of land’. See *CPD*, 24 September 1907 condensed in *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 September 1907, p 10.
- 37 Percy J Edwards, Clerk of Improvements Committee of the London County Council, *History of London Street Improvements, 1855–1897*, cited in Gordon, op. cit., pp 6–7.
- 38 ‘Australia in London, The Offices in the Strand, Welcome to the Commonwealth’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 March 1912, p 7.
- 39 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 September 1907, p 10
- 40 Another scheme for a Dominions House was put forward by Earl Grey in 1913. It was to stand adjacent to the Commonwealth Offices on the Strand. A primary aspect of the ‘Empirorium’ was to provide adequate facilities for enabling ‘the home’ manufacturers access to Dominion customers, as well as providing a permanent display of Dominion product. *Argus*, 29 July 1913, p 7.
- 41 ‘Australia in London, The Offices in the Strand, Welcome to the Commonwealth’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 March 1912, p 7.
- 42 Memorandum by Acting Prime Minister Sir William Lyne condensed in *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 September 1907, p 10.

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- 43 'Australia in London', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 December 1907, p 3.
- 44 *ibid.* and Memorandum by Acting Prime Minister Sir William Lyne condensed in *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 September 1907, p 10.
- 45 'Australia in London', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 April 1908, p 5.
- 46 *ibid.*
- 47 Further, 'If we take, for instance, the first site proposed, it is asserted in official circles in London that there was never any serious intention on the part of the Commonwealth Government to conclude the purchase of that site, as was suggested here'. *CPD*, Representatives, 1 December 1908, pp 2444–5.
- 48 *CPD*, Representatives, 25 November 1908, p 2243.
- 49 *ibid.*, 12 December 1911, p 4126.
- 50 *ibid.*, pp 4133–4.
- 51 *CPD*, Senate, 25 November 1908, p 2196. For the debate in the House of Representatives see *CPD*, Representatives, 25 November 1908, p 2227.
- 52 See press clipping from *Argus*, 24 November 1908 signed E E T in NAA, A2911 2/1909 Part 1, Trafalgar Square Site. Offices of High Commissioner. Also Senator McColl, *CPD*, Senate, 25 November 1908, p 2171; *CPD*, Representatives, 25 November 1908, p 2239 ff; and McMinn, *op. cit.*, pp 256–7.
- 53 *CPD*, Representatives, 25 November 1908, p 2237.
- 54 Octavius Beale to the editor, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 January 1909, p 14.
- 55 *CPD*, Senate, 12 December 1911, p 4114 ff.
- 56 'Australia in London', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 February 1912, p 8.
- 57 'The Week in London, An Australian's Notes: The Scheme Being Considered', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 November 1910, p 10. See also 'Australia in London, The Offices in the Strand, Welcome to the Commonwealth', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 March 1912, p 7 and 'Australia in London', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 February 1912, p 8.
- 58 'Australia in London, The Offices in the Strand, Welcome to the Commonwealth', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 March 1912, p 7.
- 59 'An Australian's Notes, Australia in the Strand', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 August 1913, p 8.

'The New Prima Donnas': 'Homegrown' Tasmanian 'Stars' of the 1860s Emma and Clelia Howson

Nicole Anae

- 1 *Sunday Tasmanian*, 7 March 2004.
- 2 'Contestant Biography; Amali Ward', *Australian Idol*, Grundy Television, Australia and New Zealand, 11 October 2004.
http://au.australianidol.yahoo.com/contestants/amali_ward/index.html
- 3 Veronica Kelly, 'Hybridity and Performance in Colonial Australian Theatre: *The Currency Lass*' in Helen Gilbert (ed.), *(Post)Colonial Stages: Critical and Creative Views on Drama, Theatre & Performance*, West Yorkshire: Dangaroo Press, 1999, p 40.
- 4 *ibid.*
- 5 Lawrence Zion, 'The Sound of "Australian" Music' in Verity Burgmann and Jenny Lee (eds), *Constructing a Culture: A People's History of Australia since 1788*, McPhee Gribble, Fitzroy, 1988, p 211.
- 6 The Wizard Jacobs was probably the best known illusionist of the 1850s. He performed in Hobart in April 1855. Circuses in the 1860s were followed by ensembles such as the Gregory Troupe, who appeared in Hobart in 1871 and included 'Mdlle. Gertrude's troupe of dogs,' and well-trained ponies (see *Mercury*, 29 May 1871). The 'Japs', as they were affectionately known, were a large company of contortionists and acrobats who appeared at Hobart's Theatre Royal during February 1872.
- 7 Ernest Scott, *A Short History of Australia*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1964, p 213.
- 8 *Mercury*, 10 June 1856.
- 9 Geoffrey Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance; How Distance Shaped Australia's History*, Sun Books, Melbourne, 1974, p 156.
- 10 *Courier*, 7 April 1837.