

Andrew Inglis Clark Deserves to Be Remembered Across the Great Divide

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The centenary of the United States was a surprisingly significant event in Tasmania in 1876. This paper traces the connections that developed between the United States of America and Tasmania as the context for Andrew Inglis Clark's developing ideas about civil and political society and his understanding of the comparative historical experiences of the two places. The paper is concerned with the context in which ideas and materials were transferred around the globe in politics, culture, literature, theology, science, technology, metaphor and spectacle.

Across the great divide

Clark died on the morning of Thursday 14 November 1907 at his residence 'Rosebank' in Battery Point, Hobart. He was 59 years of age. Two days after his death an obituary appeared in *The Mercury* under the pen name 'Jacques' who remarked with tenderness on the exit of a friend:

A spotless private life was the crown of a useful public one, and the name of Andrew Inglis Clark deserves to be remembered across the great divide with a tenderness and regard which few other public men have been able to so justly claim at the hands of their fellow countrymen.

Jacques indicated not only the length of his own association with Clark and Tasmanian politics but more importantly gave clues to the early formation of Clark's political ideas¹:

My earliest recollections of Andrew Inglis Clark take my thoughts back to the early seventies when he used to preside at the American dinner which was held annually, on July 4, at Beaurepaire's.

The obituary note in *The Mercury* provides evidence for the early origins of Clark's enthusiasm for the United States and the political and philosophical inspirations that were to cascade through his life and into the design he proposed for the Australian Constitution. This encompasses his influence in the early Australian federation meetings, the First Convention in Sydney in 1891 and the importance of his draft model for an Australian constitution when, amongst other things, he deflected the Canadian constitutional version of the division of powers in favour of that of the United States.² Crucially, Clark's American ideas were not restricted to constitutional drafting or questions of judicial review. The republic that Clark saw before him represented a great human achievement and imposingly stood in comparison with his own home and place of birth, Van Diemen's Land. This paper explores some of those associations that inspired Clark in the 1870s.

1 *The Mercury* (Hobart), 16 November 1907, p. 8. Alas, the identity of Jacques remains obscure. He was clearly an experienced local political participant and long-time associate of Clark, perhaps a man of many parts. Without any knowledge of Jacques' identity the inspiration for the pen name is a matter of speculation but a likely candidate is the melancholic observer of life in *As You Like It* for whom, 'All the World's a Stage / And men and women merely players / They have their exits and their entrances ...'.

2 As it happens Clark's father-in-law, John Ross, the Hobart shipbuilder, was a native of Nova Scotia and he may have had books about North America to which Clark had access.

Clark's American dinners

Beaurepaire's was the eponymous nickname of the Telegraph Hotel in Morrison Street on the Franklin Wharf. So, what were the American dinners at Beaurepaire's all about? Indeed that question is the departure point for this paper. Larger questions are then entailed about how ideas travel across the great intellectual and political divides and across the world. To rephrase the question: How did Clark in Hobart by the early 1870s, aged in his mid-twenties, make the transition from received mid-century British ideas to Reconstruction era American republicanism?

Clark was born in 1848 to a sound and respectable family. He lived in Collins Street Hobart. He was home educated then attended a local private school. Prior to entering the legal profession he had engineering training with facts, measurements and mechanics. Locally and circumstantially he also ingested the rule of law, the utilitarianism of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, responsible viceregal government with a restricted franchise, the anti-transportation movement, Chartism and the various denominations of English and Scottish churches that surrounded him in everyday life. He also lived in a place steeped in civic shame in the half-light of the convict shadow over Tasmania and with the continuing shame, felt even at that time, in the spectre of Truganini and her people. Around him in the streets of Hobart were former convicts and their keepers. Every day of his life the young Clark passed amongst the broken bodies and lost souls of those who had outlasted but never really escaped the system. For good measure, Andrew Inglis Clark's father Alexander Clark was the engineer who had built the treadmill and granary at Port Arthur in 1843–44, the building that later became the Benthamite model prison.

Such questions of historical context that arise for Clark may be elevated even further, to sharpen them, to make them more acute: How did Clark, the local Tasmanian boy, come to adopt American pluralist democracy, the ideals of republicanism, natural rights theory, proto-feminism, the case for a written federal constitution as well as the New England version of Unitarianism and the Transcendentalists? In other words, in a rhetorical turn, how did Clark get from Van Diemen's Land to Massachusetts, from Collins Street to Concord, from Hampton Road to Harvard and from Battery Point to Boston and back? How did he get across that great divide? Manchester, if anywhere, might have been a more obvious philosophical cradle for a young independent-thinking Tasmanian. Becoming a freethinking natural-rights republican is a prodigious intellectual leap. In this context the American dinners are of real interest. It may be surmised that he must have read Thomas Jefferson to find his way to Beaurepaire's on that evening in July 1876. That evening he ideationally went to Morrison Street via Monticello. For a short walk it was quite an intellectual journey.

Louis Isidore Beaurepaire, a Frenchman, was a professional chef who left the service of Governor Frederick Weld in 1875. In advertising his new establishment, Monsieur Beaurepaire styled himself as previously the *chef-de-cuisine* for Sir George Bowen and Sir James Fergusson.³ This may have been during their time in New Zealand where they had successively been Governor.⁴ Weld and Fergusson were friends and Weld had visited Fergusson in New Zealand just before he (Weld) took up the Tasmanian position. So, Beaurepaire joined Weld's service from Governor Fergusson either directly from New Zealand or from his previous position in South Australia. However, Louis Beaurepaire did not stay long in the service of Governor Weld, for within a just a few months he had taken the licence of the

3 *The Mercury* (Hobart), 13 May 1876, p. 3. Monsieur Beaurepaire also advised patrons and friends in his advertisement that luncheon is available from 1 pm and 'French Café and Dinner Parties attended to at any time'.

4 Bowen was the New Zealand Governor from 5 February 1868 to 19 March 1873 and Fergusson from 14 June 1873 to 3 December 1874. On 4 March 1874 a *dejeuner* was given by the citizens of Wellington to his Excellency Mr F.A. Weld, Governor of Western Australia. *Evening Post* (NZ), 4 March 1874.

Telegraph Hotel on the Hobart wharf. Previously the hotel had been called the Electric Telegraph Hotel, to distinguish the earlier usage when telegraph meant what we now call the semaphore. In Hobart the semaphore had been associated with signalling from Port Arthur but the electric telegraph was modern and when it joined Hobart and Launceston in 1857 it was surely a signal that the convict days may be left behind. In 1875, as a symbol of social progress, politeness and good taste, Beaurepaire's had quickly become the best establishment in the colony.



Telegraph Hotel photographed by the Anson Bros, c. 1887. Image courtesy of Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office, AUTAS001125642355

Louis Beaurepaire's licence to the Telegraph Hotel was granted in late 1875 and renewed on 2 December 1876. From late 1875 Monsieur Beaurepaire was already catering for Tasmanian society at various events including viceregal functions, race day luncheon at Elwick, the prestigious Poultry Association dinners, visiting cricket teams and the Hobart Regatta.⁵ If there had been Michelin stars then Beaurepaire's would have had them. But, misfortune seems to have befallen the Beaurepaire family, for on 1 October 1877 a notice of public auction appeared in *The Mercury* for all the goods and chattels of the Telegraph Hotel. By then the hotel was being operated by a woman by the name of Harriet Clark (no relation) followed by a succession of other licensees. The standards of the hotel appear to have markedly declined. So, although the American Club in Hobart was seemingly born on the fourth of July 1873, the number of celebration dinners of the American Club at Beaurepaire's could have been only two at most.⁶ The first possible 4 July dinner at Beaurepaire's was 1876 and the second in 1877.

5 On Monday 15 May 1876 Monsieur Beaurepaire paid £4 for the concession to the committee rooms booth and bar at the public auction of catering booths for the Queen's Birthday race meeting at Elwick (8 booths in total were auctioned). Henn and Co paid £1 for the right to publish the official program (also publisher of the *Quadrilateral*). *Cornwall Chronicle*, 17 May 1876.

6 John Reynolds reproduces the speech in his paper 'A. I. Clerk's American sympathies and his influence on Australian federation', *Australian Law Review*, vol. 32, no. 3, 1958, pp. 62–75. Clark stated in his presidential address that the 1876 event was the fourth such gathering.



Portrait of Marcus Andrew Hislop Clarke photographed by Batchelder & Co. Image courtesy of State Library of Victoria, H29322, image a15338

So, let us get to the 1876 dinner. The meeting on 4 July 1876 in the dining room of the Telegraph Hotel was convened by the 28-year-old President Andrew Inglis Clark with other ‘young, ardent republicans’.⁷ There could not have been many of them. When rendered into English *beau repaire* means beautiful retreat. For ‘ardent young republicans’, especially in Tasmania at that time, their endeavour ought to be seen as an audacious advance.⁸ Clark said in his speech that evening:

We have met to-night in the name of the principles which were proclaimed by the founders of the Anglo-American Republic ... and we do so because we believe those principles to be permanently applicable to the politics of the world.⁹

The cadence of this sentence may have a little bit of Lincoln to it. ‘We have met here to-night ...’, said Clark. ‘We are met on a great battlefield ...’, said Lincoln, and so forth. But this would be an exaggeration because by present standards Clark regrettably is not a particularly engaging writer. He is long-winded and often laborious.

His language generally lacks rhythm and it is too ornate. His meaning wilts in imprecision. Perhaps that style made him a good Judge of the period. While Clark read Lincoln deeply he did not have an ear for Lincoln’s lean, rich language. If the American historian Garry Wills is right that the Gettysburg Address profoundly changed political language then unfortunately Clark did not grasp that point.¹⁰ Clark writes as a high Victorian rather than as a new republican of the reconstruction era. Wills argues that Lincoln of the later period wrote with spare elegant phrasing because he had spent the Civil War in the Telegraph Office of the White House. He was the first telegraph President. Alas President Clark in the Telegraph Hotel lacked that style. Clark wrote long letters. He should perhaps have written more telegrams or at least have applied more consistently that economy to his drafting style and to his own prose.

Despite the three earlier meetings of the American Club, the date 4 July 1876 is the moment when Clark’s political interests solidified into permanent principles—as Lincoln would have it—dedicated to the proposition that ‘all men are created equal’. Lincoln got the phrase of course from Jefferson in the *Declaration of Independence*, for whom men are endowed with ‘unalienable rights’. The point here is that Clark in 1876 in Tasmania adopted and expressed those audacious self-evident ideas. He may also have adopted Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s proposition that ‘man is born free’ which Jefferson in the

7 H. Reynolds, ‘Clark, Andrew Inglis (1848–1907)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 3, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, Vic., 1969; *Launceston Examiner*, 5 July 1878, p. 2.

8 Contemporary works on Jefferson to which Clark likely had access were: George Bancroft, *History of the United States*; Henry S. Randall, *The Life of Thomas Jefferson*, 1871; Samuel Schmucker, *The Life and Times of Thomas Jefferson*, 1857.

9 John Reynolds, op. cit., p. 62

10 Garry Wills, *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words That Remade America*, Simon and Schuster, Riverside, 1992. Lincoln according to Wills greatly admired the prose style of General Ulysses S. Grant who wrote clear, precise, concise orders from the saddle as he prosecuted the war.

shadow of slavery of course could not say. Clark, via John Stuart Mill, also seemingly grasped Mary Astell's fundamental question about women. Astell, writing in 1700, anticipated Rousseau with the question that if men are free why are women 'born to be their slaves' to be 'now and then ruin'd for their Entertainment'?¹¹

The language of freedom in Tasmania

Such high-flown language is almost entirely absent from Tasmanian political prose. Yet somehow Van Diemen's Land, born in chains in 1803, turned into the Tasmania of 1903 with the universal franchise. The magnitude of that change ought to be emphasised and more fully appreciated. No polity in the history of the world has had such transformation. In 1808, on the Hobart town parade ground, a woman called Martha Hudson was brutalised on the arbitrary orders of Lieutenant Edward Lord. For insubordination, she was tied to a moving cart, stripped to the waist and publicly flogged to unconsciousness.¹² In 1914 three women living in Tasmania also by the name of Martha Hudson are shown on the electoral rolls.¹³ By 1903 in Tasmania the powers of government can be seen to arise from the consent of the governed. The transformation occurred almost wholly within the span of Clark's own short lifetime. Liberal democracy, whatever its shortcomings, was achieved in Tasmania without poetry, statuary, arches, marches, bronze busts, stone monuments or even an annual day of celebration. That extraordinary transformation goes still unnoticed and remains to this day pitifully unremarked. Yet all of the republican ideas of consent, constitutions and freedom that are associated with liberal democracy were at play in the formalities of the dinner that cold Hobart evening in 1876 in the dining room of Beaurepaire's as Andrew Inglis Clark's proposed the toast to the *Declaration of Independence*. His speech that night can stand as the moment that brought forth, for him at least, the idea of a new republican nation.

The republic here is not just a narrow constitutional question of the Crown and the viceregal office. Clark held the wider idea that Tasmania needed a new birth of freedom. The faces in the streets of Hobart in 1876 would have told him so, for Clark natively understood the tyranny portrayed in Marcus Clarke's *His Natural Life*, published as a serial between March 1870 and June 1872. The first edition of the book in 1874 was called *For the Term of His Natural Life*. It has never been out of print. Moreover, Port Arthur did not finally close until 1878. Even if Van Diemen's Land was somewhat luridly presented in Marcus Clarke's literature, the penal system nonetheless achieved its mundane objective of grinding rogues down (if not 'honest' as Jeremy Bentham prescribed).¹⁴ Social contract theory, the bearer of the political concept of consent, had been so diluted as to be absent under the Crown in Van Diemen's Land. At best it was Thomas Hobbes' grim version of the social contract, not the more liberal versions of Grotius, Locke or Rousseau. *Natural Life* in Van

11 Mary Astell, *Some Reflections upon Marriage Occasion'd by the Duke and Duchess of Mazarine's Case Which is Also Consider'd*, John Nutt Stationers Hall, London, 1700, p. 65.

12 The notorious flogging of Martha Hudson created an administrative crisis for Lieutenant Governor David Collins. The Magistrate G.P. Harris who saw the incident and questioned Lieutenant Lord was immediately placed under arrest for defiance of military authority. This situation exposed an almost impossible contradiction between military and civil authority at the same unsteady time that Governor Bligh was overthrown in Sydney. The controversy followed both Collins and Harris to their early graves in 1810. The corrupt and brutal Edward Lord would become the richest man in Van Diemen's Land. John Currey, *David Collins: A Colonial Life*, Miengunyah Press, Carlton, Vic., 2000, pp. 269–70. Barbara Hamilton-Arnold (ed.), *Letters of G. P. Harris 1803–1812*, Arden Press, Sorrento, 1994, pp. 105–15.

13 The Tasmanian electoral roll of 1914 shows three women by the name of Martha Hudson, two in the division of Bass and one in Franklin

14 Bentham's proposition about the utility of the penal system was that it would 'grind rogues honest'.

Diemen's Land was designed and intended to be solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and long. The sentence that precedes the famous quotation from *Leviathan* is worth revisiting. The state of nature is a place for Hobbes with:

no knowledge of the face of the earth, no account of time, no arts, no letters, no society and which is worst of all, continuall feare, and danger of violent death. And the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish and short.¹⁵

The central contradiction of the convict system in Van Diemen's Land was to maintain the solitary, nasty, brutish system whilst simultaneously willing society, arts, letters and science to emerge over time. Moreover, maintaining brutality and developing productive economic labour were also fundamentally at odds.

On natural life

For a while—take the year 1822—two jurisdictions exemplified how the state of nature was internalised into captive institutions: Van Diemen's Land for convictism and Virginia for slavery. Both places, for some pitiful people, simultaneously allowed both the iron manacles of the Leviathan state and the ever-present menace of the state of nature. Even Hobbes himself did not apparently contemplate that miserable co-existence. Leaving slavery aside, *natural life* in criminal law was a term denoting penal detention of no definite period. The phrase was originally informed by protestant theology wherein *natural life* also meant the base existence of the corrupted flesh. This idea or origin of natural life appears to lie in the theological distinction between natural life and spiritual life. Two examples from evangelical literature will suffice. For example, the relationship between natural life and spiritual life was described in a sermon by the nonconformist clergyman Phillip Henry (1631–1696) who had suffered in the 'Great Ejection' from the newly established church under the Act of Uniformity of 1662. His sermons were finally published in 1833 with those of his son, Matthew Henry (1662–1714) who was a strenuous and influential Presbyterian sermoniser and commentator on the Bible. For Phillip Henry, 'Life is three-fold; there is natural life, spiritual life and eternal life'. The life of the body flowed from its union with the soul, when body and soul part, we die. Spiritual life is the life of the soul flowing from its union with God; when God and the soul come together the soul lives, when they part it dies. Only Jesus can bring soul and God together. Without the union of body and soul the natural life of the body is already in immanent death. The third stage after natural life and spiritual life is eternal life, which is life in heaven.¹⁶ The second example is from the implacable Edward Irving (1792–1834) of the Church of Scotland who was obsessed with biblical prophecy and the book of Revelation. For him the natural life was deemed to be dead and wicked, as in the embodiment of the fallen Adam in a devil-possessed world. For Irving:

This is the true idea of original sin: That man like God hates all natural life, and loves to make it die because it once, and but once, sinned against God.¹⁷

Natural life in this context is an unredeemed pitiless state of sin, stain and immanent death in contrast to the spiritual life, when one is joined to God through Jesus Christ allowing the entry into eternal life, everlasting. Natural life, in this form, is a living death of venality, spiritual abandonment and terminal incarceration. Natural life here is dramatically embodied in the

15 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 'The Incommodities of Such a War'

16 Phillip Henry, 'Christ is our Life', Sermon X in *Miscellaneous Works of Rev. Matthew Henry*, vol. 2, Joseph Ogle Robinson, London, 1833, Appendix p. 30.

17 Edward Irving, *Exposition of the Book of Revelation*, vol. 3, Baldwin and Craddock, Paternoster Row, 1831, p. 1145.

doomed figures of—say—the cannibal Alexander Pearce and the benighted abused Rufus Dawes. Or, as Sir Francis Forbes in evidence to the Molesworth Committee of the British Parliament in 1837 said of convict transportation, ‘in my opinion ... may be made more terrible than death’.¹⁸ That quotation is given as the frontispiece to the first edition of *For the Term of His Natural Life*. That proposition is oddly the general reason too why John Stuart Mill in 1868 was able to justify the utility of capital punishment. Mill argued that natural life in incarceration may be worse than death. Execution was justifiable on utilitarian grounds.

That is one version of natural life—the miserable Van Diemen’s Land version. However, on the other side of the great divide, the idea of natural life is embodied by Henry David Thoreau who deeply yearned for a natural life of organic individual freedom. The sort that might ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire to the snow-capped mountains of the Rockies.¹⁹ Thoreau’s natural life was to be realised at Walden. But he used the phrase natural life in 1849 in the final chapter of his book *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*.²⁰ ‘A natural life’, wrote Thoreau ‘round which the vine clings, and which the elm willingly shadows’. Such a life ‘needs not only to be spiritualized, but naturalized, on the soil of earth’. This happy expression of natural life as a shelter would soon be *Walden: A Life in the Woods* (1854).²¹

So a natural life in Van Diemen’s Land and a natural life in Massachusetts were not the same. In linguistics, in technical language, this is called an auto-antonym or a contronym; words or phrases with the same spelling but with diametrically opposite meanings. Apt examples are the words *sanction*—to permit or to punish—and the word *bolt*—to hold fast or to go free. Thus there is an auto-antonym inherent to the term ‘convict bolters’, escaping the bolts to go free, and if the bolters were lucky they would get to China. Surely a defining theme of the history of Tasmania from convictism to the present has been the ambition to cross over from the misery of Alexander Pearce’s natural life pining on the Gordon River to Thoreau’s version of the natural life to let the Gordon and Franklin wild rivers run free and the people to run free with them. From the Concord and Merrimack to the Franklin and Gordon and Derwent and Tamar rivers, this is an emotional social and political Tasmanian dream of freedom and Andrew Inglis Clark himself had that dream or vision of civic, political and psychological freedom. He hoped for Tasmanians to cross that great divide of the convict sanction of natural life to a deliberate examined natural life, born in the larger idea of republicanism. He was reaching for a new world of freedom and independence—to domesticate to Tasmania that version of a civic religion. The birth of that idea for Clark may be tendentiously placed, or perhaps just symbolically placed, in his presidential speech at Beaurepaire’s in 1876. For three decades, to come, he pursued that ideal derived from American liberation philosophy as he tried, without hyperbole, to apply it in Tasmania.

18 The frontispiece quote to *His Natural Life* (1874) carries the following passage: ‘It is apparently your opinion that Transportation may be made one of the most horrible punishments that the human mind ever depicted?’ – ‘It is in my opinion that it may be made more terrible than death’. Evidence of Sir Frances Forbes before the Select Committee on Transportation of the British House of Commons, 28 April 1837, Q1347.

19 ‘Let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia and Lookout Mountain of Tennessee ... from every mountain side. Let freedom ring’. In 1963 Martin Luther King tied the landscape of the United States to its ‘true creed that we hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal’.

20 David M. Robinson, *Natural Life: Thoreau’s Worldly Transcendentalism*, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, 2004, p. 1.

21 H.A. Page’s book *Thoreau: His Life and Aims* was sold by the Hobart stationer Walch and Birchall in 1879 for 3s 6d.

And so to Philadelphia

The immediate reason for the toast by Clark that night in 1876, and the reason everyone else was interested in the United States at that time, was the centenary of the *Declaration of Independence* for which there is a substantial material Tasmanian connection. The central event of the centenary was the Philadelphia International Exhibition, styled as the first World's Fair.²² It ran from 10 May to 10 November 1876. The date 10 May was chosen as the opening day as that day was the seventh anniversary of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad in 1869 when the eastern and western rail lines were tied with silver and golden spikes at Promontory Summit, Utah, below the snow-capped mountains of the Rockies. The Central Pacific and the Union Pacific lines were joined. After the Civil War this was the single most important event that made the nation. The railroad surveys of the continental watershed in the Rocky Mountains in the mid-1860s also delivered the phrase 'across the great divide', according to *Webster's Dictionary*. Ten million people attended the Philadelphia Exhibition in 1876, one fifth of the American population. It had 200 buildings. The main building was the largest in the world, temporarily. Richard Wagner, deeply indebted, wrote the music for the Centennial March. He reputedly said 'the only good thing about that piece of music was the fee' which was \$5,000 and paid in advance.²³ The grand march was played on the morning of 10 May by an orchestra of 150 musicians with a chorus of 800 voices before an audience of 25,000. Reviews were mixed.



The centennial event had been planned since 1868. In the wake of the Civil War it was a supra-national reconstruction project. Accordingly, the Fair was interpreted in the context of the founding principles of the Union, just as Lincoln had done for the Constitution itself at Gettysburg in 1863, four score and seven years after 1776. Philadelphia was a huge ideological and technological international event. Earlier exhibitions in London, Paris and Vienna had been studied and copied. Eleven nations had their own buildings, as did twenty-six of the 37 US states. Philadelphia showed the first typewriter (Remington), the first galvanised steel cables for the Brooklyn Bridge, Heinz Ketchup from Pittsburgh, penny farthing bicycles, Wallace-Farmer dynamos that made electric light and the right arm and torch of the Statue of Liberty. The exhibition showed the first telephone by Alexander Graham Bell that he had developed in attempting to improve Samuel Morse's telegraph. In just two years, by 1878, Bell Telephone would already rival the telegraph. Also on display were the objects and results from the extensive global scientific exercise by the United States

Navy to plot the 1874 incidence of the Transit of Venus, just over one hundred years since Captain Cook had undertaken the same task.

So, how does Philadelphia relate to Tasmania? The answer is found as a direct consequence of the visit to Hobart by the United States Navy from October 1874 to February 1875 on the Transit of Venus expedition. The USS *Swatara* visited for the purposes of that scientific endeavour and left behind in

22 Robert W. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Exhibitions 1876–1916*, Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1984.

23 Lieselotte Overvold, 'Wagner's American Centennial March: genesis and reception' *Monatshefte*, vol. 68, no. 2, 1976, pp. 179–87.



Crew of the USS *Swatara* on deck, 1874. Image courtesy of Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office, PH30/1/112

Tasmania great public enthusiasm for the United States of America.²⁴ (Much more so than the visit of the USS *Enterprise* would achieve in 1976.) The Commander, Commodore Ralph Chandler, became a celebrity in Tasmania along with William Harkness who led the scientific party. On the evening of Tuesday 24 November 1874, Captain Chandler was seated beside Governor Charles Du Cane at the Governor's substantial farewell ball in Hobart. It was a 'brilliant assemblage in the Town Hall'. Moreover, wrote *The Mercury*, 'we have had nothing equal to it in Tasmania for a long time'. It was deemed as big as or bigger than the Duke of Edinburgh's visit. The British flag hung on one side of the large room and the American flag on the other in honour of the presence of the *Swatara* and thanks to Captain Chandler the committee had been able to display flags of all nationalities.²⁵ All things American were embraced.²⁶ The Governor regretted that the breakup of his household prior to his departure did not permit the sufficient extension of hospitality to 'our gallant visitors from the other side of the Atlantic. (Loud Applause)'.²⁷ Note, that the Governor did not say 'the other side of the Pacific'. He said, 'the other side of the Atlantic', which neatly locates both Tasmania and its departing Governor sentimentally within the bosom of Mother England. Had Andrew Inglis Clark been at the gala dinner that evening he would surely have had a different perspective. Neither the Clark nor the Ross families appear to have attended. Perhaps they were not sufficiently socially well recognised as to be invited.²⁸ But, according to the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* entry on Charles Du Cane, Truganini attended the Governor's last levee. Four days later he departed for England. The transit of Venus occurred on 9 December 1874. A month later, on 13 January 1875, Governor Weld assumed office and his household retinue had a new *chef-du-cuisine*.

24 As reported in *The Mercury*, 18 February 1875, p. 2. The *Swatara* arrived in Hobart on 3 October 1874, one of the main places identified by the US Navy. Two observation posts were established, one in Hobart and one in Campbell Town.

25 *The Mercury* (Hobart), 25 November 1874, p. 2. 'Over the principal entrance, and the entrance to the ante room, stars of bayonets and swords were placed which had the effect of greatly enhancing the novelty of the scene'. In the centre of the main table was a memento of the visit of the officers of the *Swatara* in the shape of a cake 'surmounted by an eagle and a bannerette, with two flags on each side, the word "welcome" inscribed thereon'. The decorations were mounted under the supervision of Mr Thomas Whitesides and the Quartermaster of the *Swatara*. Captain Chandler participated in the first dance and he took the central seat at the supper table. A gushing address about the excellence of appointed governors was made by the Chairman of proceedings, Sir Robert Officer, the Speaker of the House of Assembly, which was surely not intended as a slight on political systems with elective governors. There was bunting everywhere.

26 The crew of the *Swatara* was celebrated when on 9 October a heavy squall hit Hobart and a local boat had to be regained by the American crew. *The Mercury* reported in the same article that Mr Clark's cab that was left in front of his house in Collins Street was blown across the road by the high winds and in consequence a pole was smashed. *The Mercury* (Hobart), 10 October 1874, p. 2.

27 *The Mercury* (Hobart), 25 November 1874, p. 2.

28 Andrew Inglis Clark was later invited to viceregal levees on 25 May 1879. See *The Mercury* (Hobart), 9 June 1879, supplement, p. 1 and Governor Weld's farewell, *The Mercury*, 7 April 1880.

During early 1875 the Tasmanian Government of the progressive Premier Alfred Kennerley was heavily pressured by the Victorian Government and the Tasmanian newspapers to participate in the Philadelphia Exhibition. Melbourne was driving the Australian campaign led by Sir Redmond Barry. In preparation for Philadelphia the Victorians initiated a Melbourne intercolonial exhibition in late 1875 to funnel and filter the Australian exhibits.²⁹ By April 1875 the Tasmanian Government agreed to participate and established a Royal Commission for both the Philadelphia and the Melbourne intercolonial exhibitions, with Sir James Wilson MLC as the chair supported by about twenty commissioners, north and south. It was a significant organisational and financial commitment.

Philadelphia was a colossal event and a very substantial Tasmanian effort was made.³⁰ Tasmanian businesses and individuals provided minerals, native seeds and timbers, fleeces and skins, agricultural produce, manufactures, artworks and handicrafts. Lengthy essays emphasising the pride of Tasmania were written that allowed only the slightest mention of a convict past. Much statistical information was included. When the time came the Australian colonies sent commissioners to Philadelphia to curate their exhibitions. The Tasmanian stall was at the rear of the large New South Wales stall. The main day in Philadelphia was of course 4 July 1876. The *Declaration of Independence*, the original document itself, was unveiled, on loan to the city with special permission from President Ulysses S. Grant. Richard Henry Lee's grandson (of the same name) read the Declaration aloud because in 1776 his grandfather had proposed the Resolution of Independence from which Jefferson's Declaration followed two days later.

On that same day in Tasmania, 4 July, the *Launceston Examiner* published the entire text of the *Declaration of Independence*. That night in Hobart, President Clark's American dinner took place at Beaurepaire's Telegraph Hotel. Whilst in Melbourne the celebration took place at the home of the American vice-consul S.P. Lord, 'Manhattan', in Carlisle Street, St Kilda. Toasts were drunk to President Grant, Queen Victoria and the Governor of Victoria, who was none other than Sir George Bowen who by this time had transferred from New Zealand. By invitation of Mr Lord the *Declaration of Independence* was read 'with good elocutionary effect' by the Reverend Charles Clark. A toast to the Declaration was proposed with musical honours moved by Mr Lord.³¹

At the close of the Philadelphia Exhibition the official review had this to say about Tasmania:

From Tasmania there was much to interest, (sic) prominent among the exhibits being some curious photographs of aboriginal women, one of them being the sole survivor of the Tasmanian aborigines. There was also a companion portrait of 'Billy Lanney', the last Tasmanian aboriginal man. There were also shown some pretty tables painted in groups of native ferns, wreath of flowers, etc., the handiwork of some Hobarttown ladies.³²

In fact on 8 May 1876, two days prior to the Philadelphia opening, Truganini had died. She was buried on 10 May at midnight at the old convict Female Factory in South Hobart. At that very moment, across the other side of the globe at nine o'clock in the morning in Philadelphia, the gates opened to the World's Fair.³³ One hundred thousand people attended that day. The Tasmanian photographs

29 Sir Redmond Barry was here appointed for the fifth time as the commissar for such exhibitions.

30 Tasmanian contributions to the Intercolonial Exhibition, Melbourne, 1875, and the Philadelphia International Exhibition, 1876, Government Printer, Hobart, 1875.

31 The US Consul General Thomas Adamson was visiting Sydney and more guests would have attended but for the opening of the Deniliquin–Moama railway. *The Argus* (Melbourne), 5 July 1876, p. 6.

32 J.S. Ingram, *The Centennial Exhibition, Described and Illustrated: Being a Concise and Graphic Description of this Grand Enterprise Commemorative of the First Centenary of American Independence*, Hubbard Bros, Philadelphia, 1876, pp. 425–6.

33 Mindful that in 1876 there was no world time as such. The International Meridian Conference of 1884 in Washington DC saw the adoption of Greenwich Mean Time. Tasmania moved to an Australian standard eastern time in 1895.

on display were those taken in 1866 at 42 Macquarie Street, the studio of Charles A. Woolley, for an earlier Melbourne Intercolonial Exhibition. Woolley was assisted at that time by Louisa Meredith. The suite of portraits was loaned for the 1876 exhibitions by H.M. Hull, the Clerk of the House of Assembly and Secretary of the Royal Commission for the Philadelphia Exhibition.³⁴ That Tasmanian highlight of the World's Fair was not chosen just at random by J.S. Ingram for his official publication of the Philadelphia event. The portraits were not mere curiosities or a courteous inclusion to represent an otherwise distant and irrelevant place. On the contrary, the pictures were central to one of the main themes of the entire Philadelphia Exhibition.³⁵ It was organised around ethnological themes that were presented as the sturdy base for the idea of American national progress. An exhibition directive from the Washington Office of Indian Affairs mandated that photographs of American aborigines, as they were called, were to be collected and displayed.³⁶ Accordingly, the Tasmanian Aborigines could thus be measured directly against the American aborigines.



C.A. Woolley, Portrait of Truganini, 1866.
Image courtesy of National Library of
Australia, an23378504

In Philadelphia, three hundred Native American people from 53 nations were also brought to the exhibition. But on 6 July news reached Philadelphia of the disaster in the Montana Territory at the Little Bighorn River where General Custer's cavalry unit was destroyed with 268 killed by the Lakota Sioux led by Sitting Bull. In Tasmania *The Mercury* reported the battle and predicted a 'war of extermination against the Red Skins'.³⁷ American news was prominent in Tasmanian newspapers. The Philadelphia story, in the wake of the Emancipation proclamation, was all about industrial progress and national development that met on the intersection of Victorian anthropology and scientific racism.³⁸ The Federal Office of Indian Affairs under John Quincy Smith, a friend of President Grant, imposed the theoretical framework for the ethnology at the exhibition. It was adopted from the work of the German anthropologist Gustav Klemm and his theory of *Kulturgeschichte* that was directly applied by the Smithsonian curator Otis T. Mason. Klemm was also the main influence on Edward Burnett Tylor with a variation of the hypothesis of the three stages of culture—for Klemm these were savagery, domestication and freedom.³⁹ It was Tylor who wrote the preface for Henry Ling Roth's book of 1890, *The Aborigines of Tasmania*, and so the lines of thought across the continents join again.

- 34 *Cornwall Chronicle*, 19 December 1866. Woolley won a tender to take the photographs for £10 assisted by Mrs Meredith. The Aborigines were given permission by the government to come up from Oyster Cove. *The Mercury* (Hobart), 6 June 1866. Three pictures were taken of each subject: full face, side face and profile. *The Mercury* (Hobart), 12 September 1866.
- 35 *The Mercury* (Hobart), 7 August 1875.
- 36 Otis T. Mason, *Ethnological Directions Relative to Indian Tribes of the United States*, Government Printing Office, Washington, 1875.
- 37 'American Indian Massacre', *The Mercury* (Hobart), 26 August 1876, p. 3. The *Cornwall Chronicle* and the *Examiner* also reported the story.
- 38 John Wesley Powell, who had surveyed for the railroad across the Rockies, was given a collecting role for the Philadelphia Exhibition for native materials in the west.
- 39 Ingram, op. cit., p. 22. For a discussion of Klemm, see Chris Manias, 'The growth of race and culture in nineteenth century Germany: Gustav Klemm and the universal history of humanity', *Modern Intellectual History*, vol. 9, no. 1, April 2012, pp. 1–31.

The effect of the Philadelphia Exhibition on ethnology and museums was to be lasting. Both the Smithsonian and the Pitt Rivers museums adopted similar strategies for curating ethnological exhibits and that global influence reached the Australian colonies.⁴⁰ On a wider scale, Spencer Fullerton Baird of the Smithsonian Institute acquired all the exhibition materials and shipped them to Washington in forty rail cars. After Philadelphia the Smithsonian added a new museum, called the National Museum in which much of the material was housed. The National Museum was proposed by President Grant and funded by Congress. The same thing happened in Chicago in 1893. The Chicago exhibition gave the world the Ferris wheel, Wrigley's chewing gum, Frederick Jackson Turner's 'frontier thesis' and it hosted Buffalo Bill's Wild West show. As a direct consequence of the 1893 exhibition Chicago got the Field Museum as well as skyscrapers. Indeed both American exhibitions followed the lead of the Great Exhibition of 1851 when the South Kensington Museum was established, now called the Victoria and Albert. The Smithsonian still retains a few Tasmanian items from 1876, including the handiwork of Louisa Meredith and a painting of *Avoca* by Mrs H.M. Hull, wife of the Secretary to the Tasmanian commission.

Conclusion

The fate of the American Club in Hobart is not known⁴¹ but we do know what happened to Clark. Two years later, in 1878, he was a member of the Tasmanian Parliament whilst denounced as a republican and a communist by *The Mercury* that had not forgotten his 1874 essay on the French Republic. *The Mercury* imputed the republicanism of the 1871 Paris Commune to Clark rather than that of the American naval officers of the *Swatara* or the enthusiasms of the 1876 Centennial, or the republicanism of Jefferson, Madison or Lincoln or Whitman or Thoreau or Emerson.

The importance and lasting influence of Clark's American political ideas have been traced since his own lifetime and appear to hold the interest of generations of Australian historians. However, a good deal of work yet remains to be done in that vein. This paper of course represents a retrospective and rather expansive reading of a small dinner amongst friends in Hobart in 1876. In the technical realms of historical method the argument here may appear to fall into the sins of teleology and historicism—of seeming to inflate historical moments by, as it were, reading history backwards. The intention of the paper is rather to develop the context for the early development of political ideals that Clark took from the United States and to show how Tasmania was connected to the rest of the world or at least to significant parts of the world that were on the rise. Clark was highly unusual in his time and place. From the 1870s he looked from Tasmania across the Pacific. In the main, his elders and contemporaries still thought that from the vantage point of *home* the United States lay across the Atlantic.

40 For a fine survey of the period see George W. Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, Free Press, New York, 1987.

41 The club appears to have lasted until at least 1878, when the *Examiner* reported a meeting noting 'the peculiar opinions' of those who attended (*Launceston Examiner*, 5 July 1878, p. 2).