

CATALOGUES

‘ONE OF THE DELIGHTS of my life as a youngster was to be taken to visit my Grandfather who was secretary of the Adelaide Fruit and Produce Exchange,’ begins Robert Edwards’s introduction to **Hordern House**’s catalogue of his collection. ‘On one of these visits I happened on the Old Curiosity Shop, which was quite close to the market, in lower Rundle Street. It was a young boy’s paradise, overflowing with an extraordinary array of intriguing objects... Aboriginal and Pacific Islander artefacts covered the walls and hung from the ceiling. After several visits my attention focused on a small set of shelves holding a collection of old books on Australian history...’ Read on, and you learn how Edwards has come, not only to make himself a great collection but also to put his knowledge to good purpose as Founding Director of the Museum of Victoria and Curator of the South Australian Museum’s Aboriginal Heritage collections. Official business was always punctuated by visits to booksellers at both ends of the Antipodes going back over fifty years and more.

His memories are captivating and so is his collection, starting with the unrecorded *Frightful Wrecks!* 1833, the broadside account of the first convict shipwreck (A\$18,500). Bligh *Voyage to the South Sea* 1792 belonged to Stephen Fuller who was one of those who set Bligh on his fateful way (A\$18,500). Hawkesworth *Account of the Voyages* 1773 (A\$22,500) adds Cook to the discovery story, while Parkinson *Journal of a Voyage to the South Seas* 1773 is Joseph Banks’s sister Sophia’s copy (A\$36,000), and *The Voyage of Governor Phillip to Botany Bay* 1789 is a rare coloured copy (A\$48,000). *South Australia Illustrated* 1847 (A\$45,000) was the outcome of George Angas’s explorations with the governor, Sir George Grey, as anxious as he to convey the beauty of the landscape, Grey making the first reproductions of Aboriginal art in *Journal of Two Expeditions* 1841 (A\$5750). The same proselytising urge can be seen in Atkinson *Account of the State of Agriculture... in New South Wales* 1826 with its fold-out colour frontispiece (A\$38,500). Early maps include Mitchell’s *New South Wales* 1834 (A\$28,000), historic documents the original warrant for the arrest of Edward Gibbon Wakefield (A\$26,500). Savage *Some Account of New Zealand* 1807 is Beckford’s copy in his half red morocco (A\$14,500). Thelkeld *Specimens of a Dialect, of the Aborigines of New South Wales* 1827 (A\$44,000) is the first of its kind, while Moore *A Descriptive Vocabulary*

of the Native Language 1842 (A\$2800) was the first of several such, one printed by the Vatican 'Propaganda Fide' press. Pictures range from Cruickshank and Rowlandson's colourful cartoons (on the 'fishing fleet' theme, A\$3650) to the first colour plate books. Earliest is Dayes 'View of Sydney Cove' 1804 (A\$35,000), but Wallis *Historical Account of... New South Wales* 1821 has colour plates by convict artists, Lycett and Preston (A\$38,000). This is capped by Lycett *Views in Australia* 1825 (A\$65,000) and Gill's magnificent watercolour of Sturt's overland expedition leaving Adelaide in 1844 (A\$185,000). This is not the last of Edwards; there is more to come, and, lively and diverse as this, we look forward expectantly to the next tranche from Hordern House.