

13

THE NEED
FOR
SCIENTIFIC
WORKS

The Library

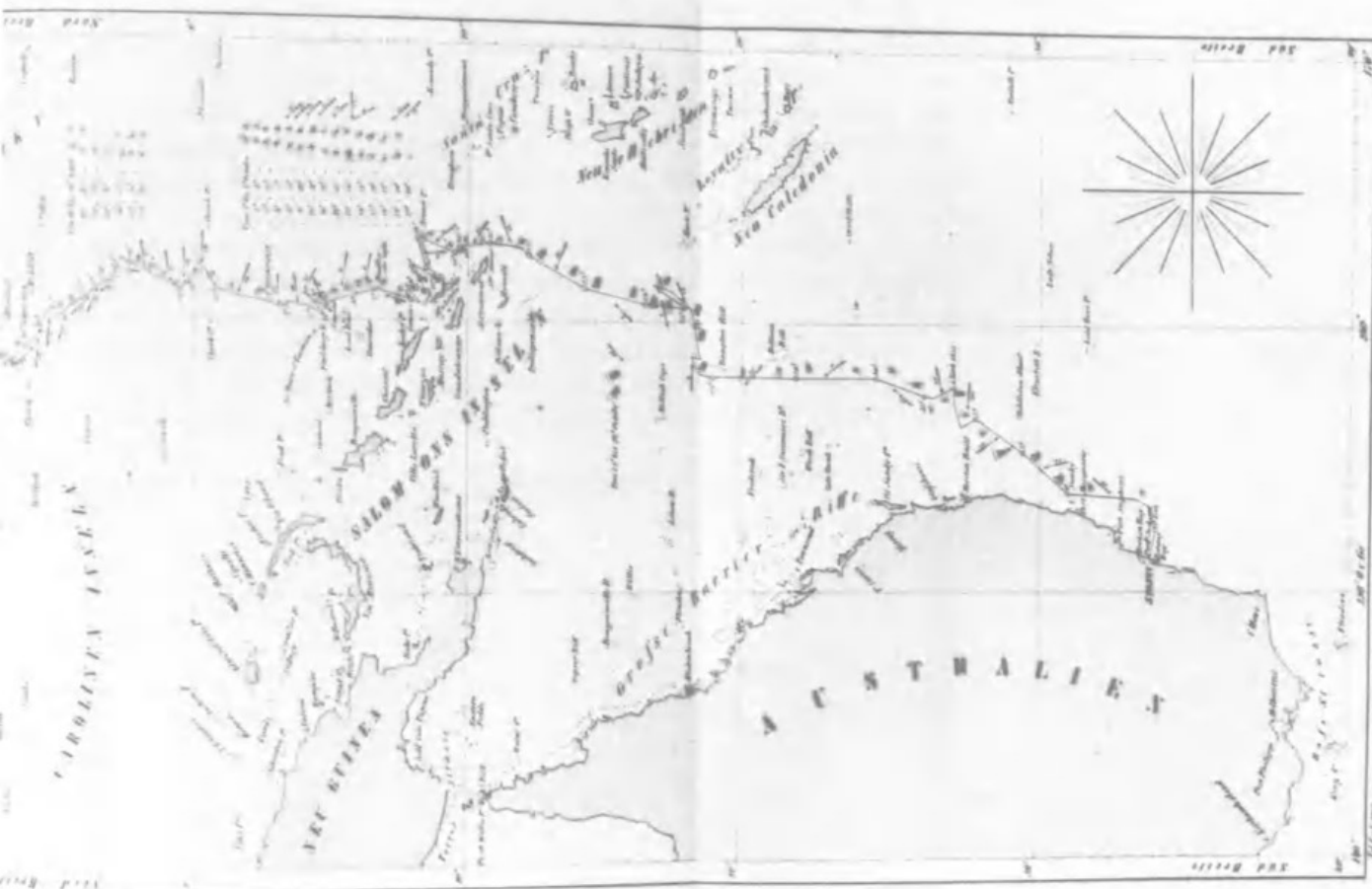
I beg also to mention that there is an utter want of proper books for the Museum. Many Zoological specimens and fossils can not be properly named and classified without the aid of such. I sincerely hope you will take this matter in to your consideration².

Staiger's working office at this time was the old Post Office building in Queen Street and even if the minister had responded to his request there would have been little space to house more than a very small library. Even six years later, in 1879, Bailey, the keeper of the herbarium—a department of the museum from 1874—reported that he did most of his work at his private residence—

there being no room at my disposal at the present museum and all the requisite books of references, being my own library³.

Apparently in 1873 parliament had approved £50 for a botanical library although it was never spent.

For three years from 1857 the Austrian frigate *Novara*, sailed on a voyage of discovery across the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans. The reports of that voyage, contained in the 16 volume *Reise de Novara*, were donated by the Imperial Academy of Science, Vienna. This was the first substantial international work acquired by the museum library. Here reproduced is the meteorological data for part of its passage and the chart of the vessel's course in the western Pacific.



The Formative Period, 1876-1881

Charles Coxen, the honorary curator of the museum also had his own small library that he probably used to help him work on his own collections as well as those he had given to the museum. Soon after his death in 1876, the board of trustees, appointed earlier that year, received an offer from his widow to dispose of his collection to the museum and this offer was recorded in the minutes of the board meeting of 20 June 1876. It was some time before all the negotiations were finalised, payment not being authorised until 24 January 1877. The acquisition of the Coxen collection of books can be said to be the beginning of the museum library.

On the same date that payment was authorised to Mrs Coxen the board decided that quotes should be obtained for an insurance policy 'for Museum collection and books'—an independent confirmation of the existence of an embryonic library. The board's interest was further demonstrated when, at its meeting on 20 June 1877, one year after receiving the offer of the Coxen collection, it authorised payment of the sum of £4.10.6d to Otto Hagen, a bookbinder who conducted a business in nearby Roma Street. Unfortunately no record exists of what Hagen's account covered but the sum expended suggests that more than twenty volumes had been bound, unless the publications were of an extra large size. One of the important publications that was acquired with Coxen's library and specifically mentioned in the annual report for 1876 was Mr Gould's *Australian Birds*⁴. Another important acquisition took place in the latter half of 1877. Silvester Diggles, a leader on the Brisbane scene in both music and the natural sciences, offered his 21-part *Ornithology of Australia* to the trustees for £20, and the offer was accepted immediately⁵. The board had had some dealings with Diggles earlier in 1877, paying him an amount of £12.19.6, but it is not known if the items supplied on that occasion included books⁶. To the end of 1877 the sources of library supply appear to have been valuable second-hand publications previously owned by leading citizens, or local work such as that by Diggles.

January 1878 marked a new phase in the development of the library when the board received an offer of the 16-volumes of the *Novara Expedition*⁷. The *Novara* was a frigate which carried out a voyage in the



years 1857–1859 collecting natural history specimens, and the publications, which were offered through the agent-general in London by the Imperial Academy of Science in Vienna, were the scientific reports on the material collected. *Reise der Novara* was the first substantial international work offered to the museum library. Administrative arrangements for the forwarding and delivery of international donations were of such a nature that it was to be August 1879 before these volumes were obtained from the colonial secretary's office in Brisbane⁸.

Staiger was fully occupied as an analytical chemist and the function of custodian was an additional duty. There was little work involved in the administration of the small library collection and from 1878 it was probably done by the temporary clerk Charles Chester. The history of the museum library is, in part, the history of those who controlled the institution and of their attitudes, for it was to be 25 years before a member of staff was officially designated librarian. The documents of the period give a clear



Gould's *Birds of Australia* was one of the first sets of volumes acquired by the museum. It was part of Coxen's library which, with his collections of shells and birds, the museum trustees purchased for the sum of £239.2.0 from his widow, Elizabeth. It is now probably the most valuable set of volumes in the museum library—the plates being collectors items. Here reproduced are two of the plates from Gould's great work. *Opposite page: Chlamdydera nuchalis*—the Great Bower Bird; *this page: Chlamdydera maculata*—the Spotted Bower Bird.

indication that the board of trustees saw the importance of developing adequate library resources. Explaining its estimates for 1878–9, the board's view was that provision had been made 'for moderate additions to the scientific literature of the Museum library, a feature *the importance of which cannot be ignored*'⁹. In this short reference there is also the recognition that a library with its own identity existed within the museum.

Modest indeed was the sum spent on the library during the financial year 1878–1879 for the amount outlaid was £8.16.0¹⁰. The previous year £47.11.6 had been spent on the library in an 11-month period, so there had been a considerable drop, probably reflecting a lack of awareness as to suitable sources of supply of appropriate publications¹¹. There were a few donations, so the library was growing. However, without expertise in relevant areas and without adequate reference works, specimens usually had to be referred to outside specialists for identification¹⁰.

In 1880 the museum was installed in its new building in William Street. It had basement, ground floor and upper floor with a mezzanine gallery. On 2 April 1879 the board of trustees inspected the structure and held a scheduled meeting there. They advised the architect that a 'room under the first floor would do for a board room and that space need not be



Leatherjackets, plate 227 from volume 5 of the *Atlas Ichthyologique des Indes Orientales Néerlandaises* by Peter Bleeker, published by the Netherlands Colonial Government, Amsterdam, 1876–77.

screened off the main floors'. In later years the room where the board held its meetings was identified as the library in the basement¹².

William A. Haswell, the new curator, brought with him invaluable knowledge of how things were done elsewhere. It was to institutions and learned societies in Britain that the museum would have to look for reference works suitable to its purposes. Haswell's stay in Brisbane was fruitful in respect of the library. That he was active immediately is evident from a letter from Williams & Norgate, booksellers of Covent Garden and, later, Oxford. Dated 28 May 1880, and addressed to Haswell, it reports that all the publications required had been obtained 'with 2 exceptions'¹³. The annual report of the board for the year 1879–1880 contained the following:

The necessity for the efficient working of a Museum of a library containing at least a fair assortment of standard works in the various departments of science, has induced the Trustees to sanction a larger expenditure than usual on the library, so that at least a nucleus has been formed round which, in future years, by donation and purchase, it is hoped a useful scientific library will be formed. With this end in view, orders have been given to Messrs. Williams and Norgate, London, for a few standard works, including the *Zoological Record*, Gould's *Mammals of Australia*, Owen's *Fossil Mammals of Australia*, Carus and Engelmann's *Bibliotheca Zoologica*, etc. etc., which are expected to arrive very shortly. From the Trustees of the British Museum a very valuable addition has been made to this department in the form of a set of the British Museum Catalogues in 164 volumes. A series of statistical works have been presented to the Museum by the Department of Public Instruction, Paris, as an overture in the direction of exchanges to be carried on with the French Museums; and the Peabody Institute of Cambridge, Massachusetts, has presented a series of the valuable scientific reports issued annually by that institution¹⁴.

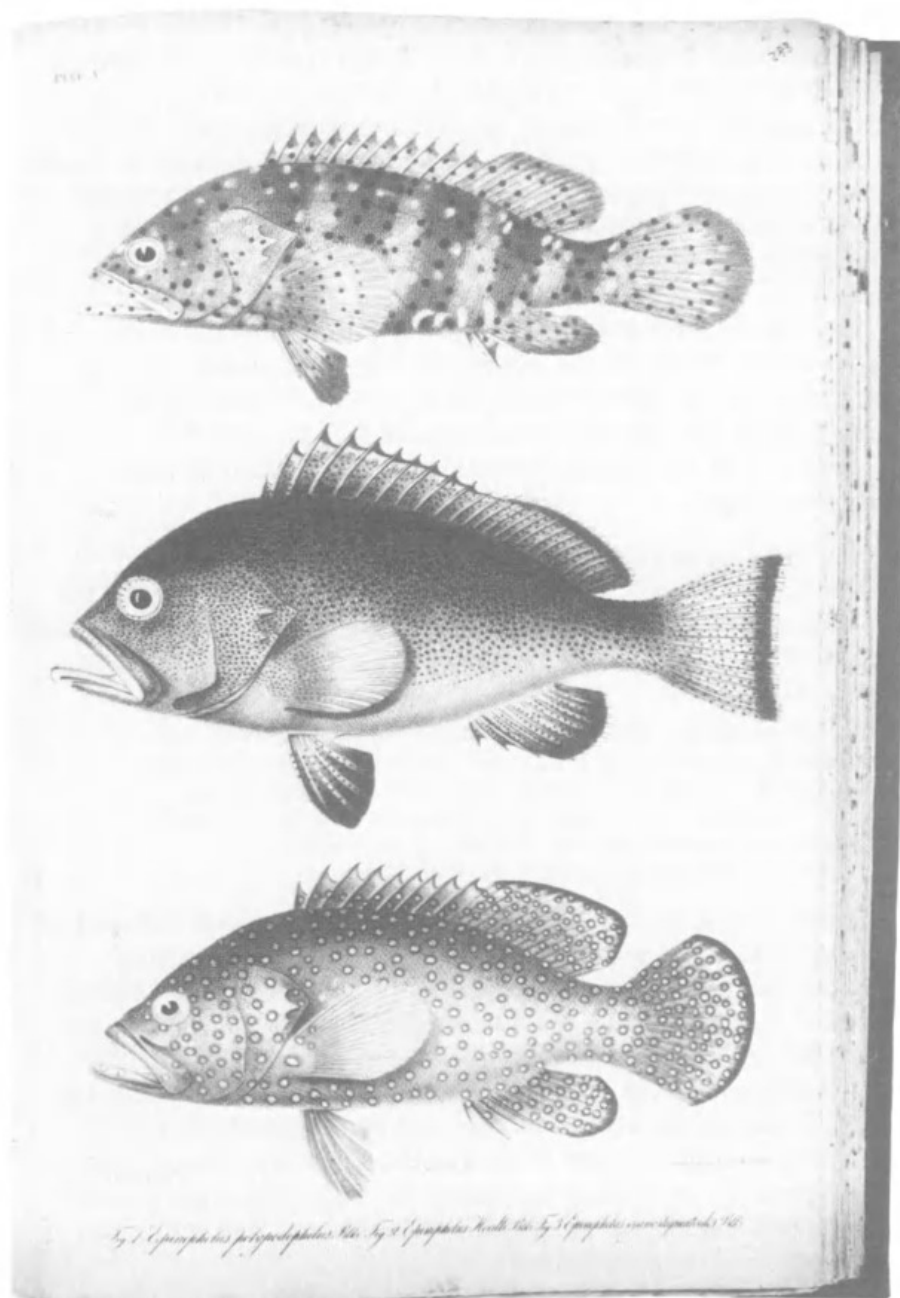
The catalogues from the British Museum were not the result of action taken by Haswell but had resulted from a board initiative. In 1856 a library open to the public on a subscription basis had been opened in Brisbane. This was the School of Arts library in Ann Street. In its collections there was *The Catalogue of the Fishes in the British Museum* and this was made available on loan to Staiger at the museum. Early in 1879 the School of Arts required the Catalogue to be returned, and on complying the museum board wrote to the British Museum asking for a copy for its own use¹⁵. Almost immediately it realised that the British Museum might be happy to supply its full range of catalogues and the board decided to ask on 19 February 1879. Publications of this type are exceptionally useful working tools and the British Museum Catalogues were invaluable for many years.

Zoological Record, ordered by Haswell, was and still is a fundamental research tool in the natural sciences. The Zoological Society of London began this publication in 1864. In annual issues it indexes the world-wide literature on zoological subjects. Divided into classified sections, with author and subject lists, *Zoological Record* permits a researcher to establish and identify literature published on any particular topic. Naturally, it cannot provide the literature itself and eventually other tools were evolved that would. Haswell's action ensured that the museum library was equipped with a complete set of *Zoological Record* from 1864 onwards.

The publications from Paris had a somewhat different significance. On 4 December 1879 the board of trustees received a communication from the Service des Echanges Internationaux, Ministère de l'Instruction Publique des Beaux Arts, Paris. It offered an exchange of publications issued in

France for material published by the museum. The system of exchanging publications was later to be a valuable source of acquisitions by the museum library but in 1879 the Paris overture was a little premature for the museum had nothing to exchange.

Generally in Queensland at this time libraries were in their infancy. The parliamentary library was well established and for that reason tended to receive reference works that would have been better suited to other libraries, had such special libraries existed. On 7 September 1880, the librarian of the parliament advised that he had been empowered by his library committee to pass a selected publication to the museum¹⁶. While functions and collecting policies of such libraries as existed remained undefined this type of interchange and co-operation would be essential. It was to continue for many years and important accessions to the museum library resulted. On 25 September 1880 board approval was given to the



Reef Cod, plate 283 from volume 6 of the *Atlas Ichthyologique*. Peter Bleeker was a surgeon of the Dutch East Indian army. During his service in Batavia, 1842-60, he wrote 432 articles on the fish fauna of the Indo-Australian archipelago. However, the *Atlas* was his chief work. As well as providing descriptions of a comprehensive range of species from the region, many were illustrated for the first time in the nine volumes of the *Atlas*, which were purchased by the Queensland Museum in 1884—one of the few original sets in Australia to this day. As in so many zoological works of this period, the plates are chromolithographs, each individually hand painted.

Queensland Philosophical Society to store its books on museum premises and no doubt this expanded the library resources then available to the museum staff.

After Haswell vacated the curatorship towards the end of 1880 to accept a higher paid appointment in Sydney, and had been replaced temporarily by F.M. Bailey, the library collection continued to grow. On 18 May 1881, in the minutes of the board meeting, there is the first mention of any person being given a specific library responsibility. There were some unusual features:

It was also agreed that Mrs Fenwick purchase a stamp suitable for stamping the books of the Library. Also that a list of the books be prepared. Also if duplicates were in the Museum two native catskins were to be given to Mrs Fenwick.

It would seem that the catskins were to be Mrs Fenwick's reward for the labour involved. John Fenwick was a member of the board of trustees.

At first much of the basement portion of the William Street museum building had been almost useless and the board of trustees, in its annual report for 1879–1880, drew attention to the fact that this area could 'by but a very moderate expenditure' be used for preserving and storing of specimens and materials¹⁴. Such use would, of course, have a direct impact on the library environment. Towards the end of 1881 the improvements were effected to the basement¹⁷. The carpenter on the staff was also authorised to prepare shelving in the basement though this was not necessarily for the use of the library¹⁸.

This was the state of affairs on 24 January 1882 when the board selected Charles Walter de Vis for appointment to the vacant curatorship of the institution. Initially appointed for six months, he was a major influence on the development of the museum. It is also with the appointment of de Vis that the second significant period of library development began.

A Period of Consolidation, 1882–1890

The year 1882 saw the issue of two annual reports by the board, the first relating to the financial year 1881–1882 and the second to the calendar year 1882. These reports assist in tracing the development of the library. In the first it was said:

During the last year the extensive botanical library, previously kept in the Curator's cottage at the Botanic Gardens, has been transferred to the large room in the basement floor of the museum building, where Mr Bailey now works as government botanist. In this room are also contained the few works of reference belonging to the museum and the varied library of the Philosophical Society¹⁹.

At this time, in addition to the library where the botanist also worked, there was a laboratory used by de Vis for examining and classifying specimens and there was working space for the taxidermist and museum carpenter¹⁹. Just before June 1882 the additional working areas were laid with asphalt and lighted with additional windows¹⁹. Until October 1882 natural light provided the only form of lighting anywhere in the museum building. In that month a gas connection was made to the basement²⁰. Internal stairs provided access to the basement from the ground floor. These were closed off with a small gate at the head of the steps when it was found that members of the public were mistakenly descending the stairs in search of further exhibits²¹.

The main source of material for the library in 1882 appears to have been donations. There was one that was remarkable, the first of its kind. It

came from an anonymous source and was a £10 cash donation for the purchase of books²².

The annual report for 1882 showed the enthusiasm of the board for the library to be undiminished:

The very scanty resources of the museum library, when brought under the notice of the late minister, received from him the consideration which was desired, and the works of reference most immediately required for research were at once ordered. The board respectfully recommend that this, the only collection of scientific literature freely open to the student, should be rendered as complete as possible in every department of inquiry²³.

The importance of the museum library to the community is thus recorded. Its only competitors in Brisbane were the schools of arts' libraries which were not free but available only on payment of a subscription. No such thing as a free public library existed in Queensland at that time.

The attitude of the minister responsible for the museum was also an important factor in determining the course and rate of development of the museum library. In 1882 the requests of the board did not fall on deaf ears. This is evident in the comments of the trustees in the annual report for 1883:

In attaining that measure of success we have been chiefly aided by the liberality with which our requirements have been met by the Government. We refer more especially to an ample grant of the furniture needful for the display of specimens, and for that increase of our small library which is now providing partially for the necessities of research. The importance we attach to the formation of an efficient collection of books of reference will, we hope, excuse us in cherishing the expectation that the favour we have obtained in this work will be still further extended.

By the help of the library — imperfect as it yet is — and by that of our collections, our officers have been enabled to supply the nomenclature of, and other information respecting, natural objects to many inquirers.....²⁴

This happy conjunction of a board and a minister, who both recognised that an adequate library was not a luxury but a necessity, was responsible throughout the 1880s for consolidating the efforts of the museum administrators of earlier years — Staiger, the board of trustees and Haswell.

On 5 June 1883, payment was authorized to the booksellers Williams and Norgate of an amount of £223.7.0d. The list of acquisitions shows that the library got more than full value for the money for there were some outstanding and far-sighted purchases²⁴. These included *Annals and Magazine of Natural History* 1838–1883 (90 volumes); *Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society* 1845–1883 (39 volumes); *Proceedings of the Zoological Society* 1830–1883 (56 volumes); *Transactions of the Zoological Society* 1835–1853 (9 volumes); *Transactions of the Palaeontographical Society* (36 volumes); *Zoology of H.M.S. Erebus and Terror* (2 volumes); *Histoire Naturelle des Poissons*, a series by Cuvier and Valenciennes (22 volumes of text and 19 of plates). These and similar purchases of inestimable value created the basis of the museum library, and gave it an importance as a reference source for the natural sciences that was disproportionate to its size. This has continued throughout its existence. Nor were the donations for the year 1883 without significance²⁴; The Hon. Captain Hope gave the 16 volumes of Cuvier's *Animal Kingdom*. The museum's former curator,

Haswell, was the author of one publication—*Catalogue of Australian stalk- and sessile-eyed Crustacea*. de Vis and the board acknowledged that—

many valuable additions, both by gift and purchase, have been made to the Library. The Trustees of the British Museum and those of the Australian Museum Sydney, and most of the scientific Societies and establishments of Australia and New Zealand have enriched it with their several publications; but the most numerous examples of this liberality have, as usual, been received from the United States through the Smithsonian Institution²⁴.

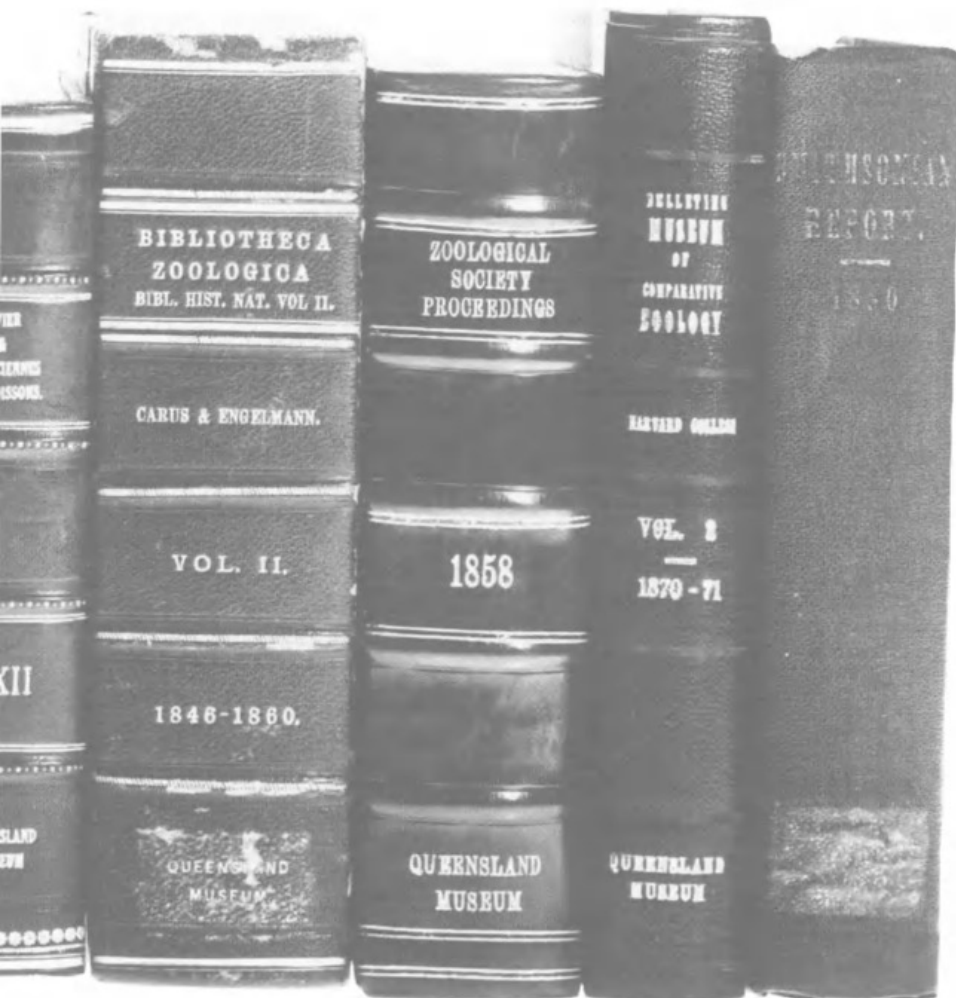
Towards the end of 1883 the Philosophical Society gave way to a newly-formed organisation, the Royal Society of Queensland and it applied to the board for the use of the museum premises for its inaugural



meeting²⁵. The new society had already enrolled some 67 members²⁶. There was an external entrance to the library through a gate from the William Street footpath, at the south-eastern end of the building. It was almost certainly down the pathway from this gate that many of the leading men of science made their way to the gaslit library on the evening of 8 January 1884. It is appropriate that this meeting should have taken place in the only scientific institution that then existed in Queensland—the museum.

Already by the end of 1883 space for the museum's collections was a pressing need, and at the meeting of the board held in the library on 12 November 1883 Douglas gave notice that at the next meeting 'he would move that the government be addressed in reference to the establishment of a free library in the present museum building, and the construction of another building better adapted to the purpose of a museum'.

Although furnishings for the library were purchased in 1884—six chairs and a clock²⁷—difficulties were growing in that department, de Vis reporting that the library apartment was inconveniently small and its shelves already filled. What was called the library was now, in fact, a study occupied in common by three and frequently four officers engaged on different subjects—to their mutual hindrance. It was also a reception room for visitors²⁸. The upper floor of the museum was used for the display of molluscs, anatomy and botany, and one end was filled by the herbarium.



Some of the important acquisitions to the museum library before 1883 (L to R): *Annals and Magazine of Natural History*, volume 1, series 1, 1838. The first of an uninterrupted run of this much-used journal that continues to the present day. *The Zoology of HMS Erebus and Terror*. The scientific reports of a journey of exploration that circumnavigated the Southern Ocean, 1839–43. *Reise de Novara*, 1862–5. One of the 16 volume set of the scientific reports from the voyage of the Austrian frigate 1857–9. *Corals*, by Milne Edwards and Haime, published by the Palaeontographical Society, 1850–54. *Histoire Naturelle des Poissons* by Cuvier and Valenciennes, 1828–50. One of 22 volumes, purchased in 1883. *Bibliotheca Zoologica*, Carus and Englemann, 1846–60. A natural history bibliography purchased in 1880. *Proceedings of the Zoological Society, London*. The museum continues to subscribe to this classic journal, first published in 1830. It is now known as the *Journal of Zoology*. *Bulletin of the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard College* vol. 2, 1870–1. Acquisition continues today through exchange. *Smithsonian Reports* 1880, a gift from the great American Institution—one of the many publications it donated to the Queensland Museum. Acquisition of the *Reports* as *The Smithsonian Year* continues through exchange.

On the ground floor were displayed minerals, fossils and anthropological items. Zoology was in the mezzanine gallery.

In the basement the crowding was compounded by the arrival of an important donation to the library in 1884. This, the *Specifications of Patents* from 1617 to 1881 inclusive, came from Britain. The board of trustees had always intended that the museum should be concerned with technology as well as natural sciences, and patent specifications were a first priority for a technological section. Space was somehow found and the *Patents* volumes were arranged in a special apartment fitted up for the purpose²⁹. Late in 1884 the government announced that a new museum would be built, but years would pass before the prospect of additional space became a reality.

The inward flow of serials and monographs continued unabated, each year bringing acquisitions of scientific value. Ten years after the library's modest beginnings in 1876 it was receiving further publications of lasting value such as *Archiv für Naturgeschichte* (101 volumes), *American Journal of Science* (131 volumes), *Zoology of the voyage of H.M.S. Beagle* (5 volumes), as well as many scientific catalogues, guides and serial parts from interstate and worldwide sources, such as the British Museum, the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard University, and the Indian Museum at Calcutta, to mention but a few³⁰. Volumes of the reports of the important *Scientific Results of the Challenger Expedition* arrived regularly from 1884 onwards³¹. In 1887 and 1888 purchases were not so numerous, but donations maintained a steady level. The Brisbane School of Arts made a donation of the report on the Crustacea of the *Norske-nordhave Expedition 1876-1878*³², and Brisbane and Sydney booksellers were being approached for publications—though the supply from the latter source was small³³. In 1889 an important source of publications appears in the donation lists for the first time: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London³⁴. In the initial donation several hundred official publications covering a wide range of subject areas of interest to the museum were received. Perhaps, in view of the shortage of space, it was fortunate that, in 1888, the museum was instructed to transfer the *Patents* to the Registrar General's Office.

Conditions in the basement library could not have been pleasant in 1889 for William Street was being lowered and explosions and dust were daily nuisances³⁵. Maintenance of the library had also become a problem. Apart from space difficulties there was the question of binding. Otto Hagen bound hundreds of volumes and supplied other items but it appears that, about 1889, his business closed, at least at its Roma Street address³⁶. The need for binding was urgent. In 1890 the museum requisitioned for 200 volumes to be bound by the Government Printing Office, apparently unaware that funding would have to be arranged despite the fact that a government department was being called on to provide the service³⁷. Binding by the Government Printing Office was thus not to provide the solution.

The supervision of the library collection was now probably the responsibility of the clerical assistant, Henry Tryon, who came to the museum in September 1883³⁸. Tryon became assistant curator in 1885, though there appears to have been no change in his duties. Tryon, 'a young and distinguished student', was also secretary of the newly formed Royal Society³⁹. On 1 April 1887 the curator sought approval of the trustees for a youth, H. Hurst, 'to perform on trial without salary the duties of clerk and librarian for as long as may be convenient to the board'. Hurst came on the staff, but his unpaid status—which seemed to place him even lower on the reimbursement scale than Mrs Fenwick with her two catskins—was not to

remain long. In September he became the geological collector and soon after was referred to as the 'Keeper of Minerals and Fossils', although the library remained his responsibility for some years⁴⁰.

In November 1890 the contents of the library were catalogued, presumably by Hurst³⁷. This was the first time the items, which had been accumulating for 14 years, had been brought to account in a central listing. The form of the catalogue appears to have been a handwritten list, for the museum did not acquire a typewriter until October 1892⁴¹, and de Vis spoke of the catalogue being 'kept posted to date'⁴², almost as though it was written up like a ledger account. In this period, and for many years afterwards, it was the custom for many libraries to issue published catalogues of their holdings as a working tool for those who wished to use it. Although it was intended that the catalogue of the museum library be so published³⁷ this proved to be too costly. By this time the library had taken on that character which it bears today, with a preponderance of scientific periodicals and fewer books.

The Exchange Programme, 1891-1910

It had been the practice until 1889 for the Royal Society of Queensland to publish scientific work submitted by de Vis, the curator of the museum⁴³. However, de Vis was prolific and this was not entirely practical, so the museum began publication of its own journal (see Chapter 7). Issue No. 1 of the *Annals of the Queensland Museum* was published in 1891. By the time that No. 2 was presented for approval on 6 May 1892 material sufficient for No. 3 was ready. Continuity of publication seemed assured. The museum now had something to exchange for the publications of other institutions and learned societies. The earliest records show that, by 1895, the *Annals* was being sent to exchange partners in many countries—Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Germany, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, France, Ireland, Scotland, England, South Africa, Ceylon, Nova Scotia, Canada, Newfoundland, India, Mauritius, New Zealand, Straits Settlements, Guatemala, Holland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Finland, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, U.S.A. and the West Indies. A number of copies were also addressed to private persons some of whom had sent copies of their own published works to the museum⁴⁴.

Not so happy was the situation in respect of staffing of the library. Because 'the work of the office and library at present performed by the Keeper of the Minerals and Fossils was to the neglect of his duties as an expert' the board decided, on 5 June 1891, that 'a youth should be engaged for clerical and other subordinate duty at a salary of about 6 shillings a week'. At least the youth was to be paid for his services which must be considered some sort of improvement on the terms of Hurst's original appointment. Hurst did not remain in employment with the museum for very long thereafter, leaving in November of the same year. The youth, appointed in September 1891 to look after the library and clerical work, was A. Preston. In the course of time, after one or two upwards adjustments in his wages, the board decided there would be no further increases for him because, there being no opportunity for promotion, they felt it unfair to induce him to stay⁴⁵. It seems that Preston went to Ballarat School of Mines⁴⁶. When he left the museum he was replaced by A.J. Norris and subsequently, from 1898, by G.H. Hawkins (see Chapter 3).

The year 1893 was something of a disaster for the institution. This was the beginning of the great economic depression and the year of the great flood. Funding was slashed and many staff were retrenched⁴⁷. The



Kathleen Thomas (née Watson),
librarian 1933-42.

museum library was destined not to be restored to its former position for several years. Nevertheless, it remained open to students and learned societies. The curator had been left with 'barely sufficient means to keep the museum open to the public'⁴⁸. The reduction of staff meant that some space in the basement was unoccupied and certain other organisations were given permission to use it. They included the Royal Society, the newly formed Natural History Society and the Queensland branch of the Royal Geographical Society of Australasia^{48,49}. The office clerk was the only staff member available to handle the library's affairs. A reduction of £150 in the library estimates⁵⁰ was partly offset by the sale of £38 worth of duplicate material to the British booksellers Williams and Norgate⁵¹. Other duplicates were exchanged for publications needed by the library and some were given to the Department of Agriculture library⁵².

The collection continued to expand through donations from other institutions and societies, and as a result of the exchange of the *Annals*. Some purchases, mainly books, had been made and additional book cases obtained⁵³. Lack of binding was becoming a problem of great magnitude. Hundreds of volumes lodged with the Government Printing Office were eventually returned unbound on the minister's authority⁵⁴. Binding was a major problem for a library collection in which scientific periodicals predominated. When, in 1899, preparations were being made for the move to the Exhibition building a library stocktake revealed 7,342 volumes. However there was still no card catalogue and no furniture in which it could have been kept⁵⁵.

Among the temporary staff recruited to assist with the move was Ernest Albert Lower⁵⁶. In seeking a position Lower wrote that he had 'been in the employ of Dr. Jas. C. Cox of Sydney as Conchologist & Travelling Naturalist for a number of years; have also a very fair knowledge of Botany'. Lower was given a job in October 1899 as 'packer'⁵⁷. On 3 March 1900 he became 'printer'. He wrote a very fair hand and appears to have been engaged on the preparation of the countless labels needed for exhibits in the new accommodation. On 18 February 1901, some six weeks after the museum re-opened to the public—the opening took place on 1 January, Federation Day—Lower was appointed 'Librarian and Label Writer' by the minister for Public Instruction⁵⁸. His appointment was backdated to 1 July 1900. The library seemed assured of continuing supervision for the first time, but on 27 June 1902, de Vis was notified that the services of Lower and three other museum staff were to be dispensed with three days later. The period was eventually extended to 30 July⁵⁹. The state was still in a period of economic depression and the new free public library—the Public Library of Queensland—opened, at the end of April 1902, in the old museum building in William Street⁶⁰. The staffing required at that new library seems to have been compensated for by retrenchments at the museum. Lower was the first appointee to be designated 'librarian'. In later years he developed a very fine collection of shells, numbering 3000, and resided in Sydney. At this time he recalled his duties at the museum as including librarian, writer, printer, keeper of aquariums and clerical duties⁶¹. A classified card catalogue of the library was completed in July 1901 and Lower probably made a contribution towards its preparation⁶². Presumably the catalogue card cabinet, on the need for which the trustees had deferred a decision in September 1899, was later obtained⁵⁵. In April de Vis reported that he had acquired, from the parliamentary library, the 46 volumes of the *Scientific Reports of the Challenger Expedition*. This is one of the mysteries of the museum library

that has not been resolved, for the museum was purchasing these volumes from 1884. It indicates very clearly that proper registration procedures for the library were needed⁶³.

Director de Vis was now more than 70 years of age. Museum library holdings had passed 10,000 items in June 1904, about 90% being volumes and the remainder fugitive material⁶⁴. Control of the institution passed from the Department of Public Instruction to the Department of Agriculture and then to the Chief Secretary's Department. The board of trustees held its last meeting about September 1907⁶⁵. The *Annals of the Queensland Museum* had continued as a medium of exchange but its publication rate slowed. One improvement did take place before the board was disbanded—more than 300 volumes were being bound, in April 1907, by bookbinder George Hooper of Elizabeth Street⁶⁶. There remained a vast backlog—one that has never been overcome.



Kylie Whitehead, library assistant, watches as her colleague, Victoria Coops, uses one of the near vertical ladders supported on the horizontal fixed rails that were installed in 1934—after librarian Nora Holdsworth had sustained an injury while 'standing insecurely on a ladder'.



The library outgrew its accommodation and wound its way through the building—along both sides of the passages, through the basement, and into curators offices and the lecture theatre.

A Re-awakening, 1910-1917

The appointment of Hamlyn-Harris as director in October 1910 re-awakened a sense of direction and opened the next phase of library history. Before taking up the position officially he visited museums in other Australian states and referred back to the museum lists of publications he considered vital for its library to possess⁶⁷. The lists were checked against holdings and approval was obtained from the Chief Secretary's Department for the purchase of those not already held. Vere Chambers, rumoured to be the grandson of de Vis, had been appointed a short time previously to carry out library and clerical duties⁶⁸⁻⁹. Robert Etheridge jnr, in his 1910 report to the premier, describes Chambers as 'a young man of eighteen years and about two years service' whose 'books are neatly kept..... He has only an elementary knowledge of library work'⁷⁰.

Although attempts to catalogue the library had been made previously, there were no proper accession or registration procedures and it was impossible to check holdings and record loans adequately. Hamlyn-Harris arranged for two registers to be opened, one for books and the other for journals. The first entries were made in 1911 and included the existing collection. Museum staff who later recalled this period said that it was Hamlyn-Harris who gathered together the publications previously scattered throughout the building and housed them in one very large 'light and airy' room in the basement. From that time forth this room became the library. The new director, imbued with a sense of purpose, was also energetic in his endeavours to develop the exchange programme. For this purpose a new publication with a larger format—the *Memoirs of the Queensland Museum*—replaced the *Annals*. A number of publications were found to have been lent to private persons and never returned so Hamlyn-Harris bent his energies to their retrieval⁷¹. He laboured under irksome restrictions, requiring approval for even small expenditure on important items. A letter, dated 31 January 1911, sought the authority of the chief secretary to have Roth's *Bulletins on Queensland Aborigines* bound⁷².

Vere Chambers resigned in 1911 and his place was taken by Clarice Sinnamon, a member of a well-known Brisbane family⁷³. Douglas Rannie continued what would prove to be a line of librarians. He was appointed in June 1913 on a salary much less than half of what he had previously received as a classified officer⁷⁴. At one time he had been Inspector of Factories and Shops and Superintendent of Labour at Charters Towers. His testimonials included one from Sir Samuel Walker Griffith at that time Chief Justice of Australia⁷⁴. Cuthbert Butler—later to be a member of parliament⁷⁵—was the next librarian (1915-1917). World War I had begun and there was a consequent breakdown in many exchange arrangements, particularly those in continental Europe.

Hamlyn-Harris had consolidated the library and given it an identity. A man of cultivated background, he understood the need and relevance of a properly functioning library. In other Queensland institutions at this time and for many years thereafter there was, apparently, a view that libraries, however neglected and lacking in continuous control they might be, could somehow instantly deliver services to an expected standard on demand. In this respect Hamlyn-Harris was ahead of his time on the local scene.

A Period of Financial Strigency, 1917-1945

Heber Longman, who succeeded Hamlyn-Harris, became the longest-serving museum director. Joining the staff in 1911, he became director in 1917 and remained in charge until after World War II. It was a stagnant

period for the library, with neither expansion nor contraction in a long period of financial stringency. Museum staff were fewer at the end of Longman's tenure than at the beginning. The survival of the institution in the face of the economic depression between the two world wars was an achievement in itself. Librarians in Longman's time were Alec Fenwick (1917–1930), Nora Holdsworth (1931–1933) and Kathleen Watson (1933–1942). Fenwick had been president of the Waterside Workers' Federation⁷⁶. The attributes he brought to the job were not those which aroused Longman's enthusiasm but they were probably those most needed for the library at that time:



Librarian E.P. Wixted (*right*), and E. Crome — collector of aeronautical memorabilia — with Mrs Mary Tully, Sir Charles Kingsford Smith's widow, examine part of the Kingsford Smith collection of memorabilia presented to the museum aviation collection by Mrs Tully on behalf of the Kingsford Smith family.

A Librarian in a State Museum should be an educated person with a definite interest in science, and with ability to arouse interest in the work of the institution. Mr Fenwick lacks both the temperament and the training for this work, and at times his manners and his methods are not in keeping with his position. As a technical custodian of books, however, he has done excellent work, and he keeps the library in good order. He does the work to the best of his ability and is regular and methodical⁷⁷.

Nora Holdsworth was a graduate in science and Kathleen Watson a graduate in arts. In 1934 an injury was sustained in the library and the record of the event reflects the shortcomings of the library accommodation:

Sir,

Owing to the height of our Library, and the fact that there are no less than thirteen shelves, one above the other, in most of the series, there is an element of danger in removing books from the upper shelves, when standing insecurely on a ladder. I should be extremely obliged if the Department of Public Works could assist us by placing some kind of rod or rail on the shelf lines where the long ladder rests, on which it would securely remain, without slipping, whilst in use in any one section.....⁷⁸.

The rails were put in place and they were there until the museum moved in 1986 — more than fifty years after the incident.

The Modern Period, 1946-1986

George Mack became director in 1946 and inherited an institution in a depressed condition following World War II. In the disturbed post-war period there was a rapid succession of librarians and assistants (see Appendix 2). Claire Forde, who stayed longer than most—from 1957 to 1962—and made a substantial contribution, was the daughter of F.M. Forde who had been prime minister of Australia for a few days in 1945. Shirley Gunn, a zoological assistant, also helped in the library and later became a well known University of Queensland librarian.

A major part of the library's periodical collection was not bound. George Mack set himself the task of rectifying this situation, channelling funds into its accomplishment. He took pride in having secured approval for a contract with a private firm of bookbinders instead of the Government Printing Office⁷⁸. Smith and Paterson, the firm engaged, did much to reduce the massive backlog until the business closed in the early 1970s.

The publishing practices of the many hundreds of organisations from whom the museum received publications showed endless variation. They varied within each publication, from period to period over a spread of more than fifty years, and from one series to another. Preparation of complete volumes for binding was laborious and tedious with unending searching and checking.

A fixed location system had been instituted by Hamlyn-Harris in 1911 and was still in use at that time in many other libraries. It designated the position of a publication by panel, number of shelf and position on shelf. The location 11/1/2 meant panel 11, shelf 1, book 2. After fifty years of this system periodicals in the same series were scattered in a variety of places on the library's 700 shelves—space at the original location having run out. Shelves were crammed and the topmost holdings much in need of

An illuminated address to Kingsford Smith from the Municipality of Lane Cove—from the collection of memorabilia presented by the Kingsford Smith family.



cleaning. It was Mack's particular desire that *all* the periodicals and other publications emanating from one institution or organisation should be found in one place on the shelves and this was an instruction given to E.P. Wixted when he was appointed librarian in April 1961. A new system was developed and the holdings re-sorted. The new system identified the publisher as Mack insisted it should. The principle was similar to that used by the U.S.A. Public Documents Library.

By this time the library had outgrown its accommodation and had begun wending its way through the building. The process continued and eventually library material was located in more than thirty rooms and corridors. The space difficulty was compounded in the late 1960s with the development of a history and technology section. Subject areas and library suppliers proliferated accordingly. Publications on clocks, porcelain, silverware, pottery, costumes, medals, period uniforms, engines, coins and so on, were now acquired in addition to those on natural history. Some sections, such as art, needed to be strengthened and others, such as conservation and maritime archaeology beginning in the early 1980s, had to be developed from scratch.

Special collections, usually including material other than books and periodicals, relating to a specific subject area or object, are also an innovation in the library. At this stage the special collections are a newspaper collection (1900–1933), Australian patent specifications covering some seventy years, and a collection of aviation memorabilia and papers.

The aviation collection was named in 1973 for Queensland aviation pioneer Thomas Macleod. It is interesting that much of Macleod's pioneering effort took place in 1911 on a hillside at Oxley on a property now owned by the Sinnamon family. It was also in 1911 that a member of that family, Clarice Sinnamon, became museum librarian. There is also a link between the Queensland museum and aviation history in Sir Charles Kingsford Smith's, aircraft *Southern Cross*. The original owner of that aircraft was G.H. — later Sir Hubert — Wilkins, who had bought it for his

Wixted (*left*) with pioneer aviators Harry Purvis and Norman Lennon in the room housing the Thomas Macleod Queensland Aviation Collection. This room had previously been the museum's spirit collection store — until a more appropriate external building was constructed for the purpose in the early 1970s.



1926 Arctic expedition partly with savings from his 1923–1925 exploring expedition to Queensland and the Northern Territory. Those savings resulted largely from the free rail travel provided by the Queensland government and the use of the museum as a base for the expedition (see Chapter 7).

The patents collection also recalls early years of the museum, for the library lost its original British *Patents* in 1888 and gained another, more relevant, Australian collection ninety years later.

Since 1965 there has been a marked extra workload in the library that has been generated by a growing and increasingly diverse collection, a larger professional staff and by the problems associated with the administration of a resource that was scattered throughout the building. The excellence of the library holdings, especially in the area of natural history, effected by the efforts of the first board of trustees, and Haswell, de Vis and Hamlyn-Harris, has also now resulted in its frequent use by other scientists, either directly or through interlibrary loan. Fortunately, with the exception of the years 1965 and 1966 when he had to do without help, Wixted had one, and from 1976, two library assistants.

The museum library is now installed in its new building at South Brisbane with its computer print-outs and visual display units that resolve, in seconds, profound bibliographic problems that formerly would have kept library staff occupied on literature searches for very long periods. The library has come a long way since 1879 when it moved into its first new building with its embryonic collection in which the most important volumes were those acquired from Charles Coxen and Silvester Diggles and the *Reports of the Novara* — a gift from the Imperial Academy of Vienna. Those who, like Wixted, studied in the basement of the Queensland State Library in the early 1950s will be able to imagine what it may have been like before 1900 — before gaslight, telephone or typewriter were installed and with the museum botanist, the carpenter and the curator working nearby.



Charles Kingsford-Smith, with his family, visited the museum's aviation collection in July, 1978, while he was in Brisbane to celebrate the 50th anniversary of his father's epic trans-Pacific flight from Oakland, California.



Wixted, E P. 1986. "13 The need for scientific works: The Library." *Memoirs of the Queensland Museum* 24, 253–273.

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