

# EUGENE VON GUÉRARD AND THE ETHNOLOGICAL MUSEUM IN BERLIN: CORRESPONDENCE 1878–1880

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper details the correspondence between nineteenth-century landscape painter Eugene von Guérard and the Ethnological Museum, Berlin. It includes complete translations of the relevant correspondence from Old German script. The letters contain information on the provenance of the collection of Australian Aboriginal cultural possessions that von Guérard sold to Berlin, as well as documentation of the items purchased by him on behalf of the museum. They record unexpected cross-cultural exchanges, document the building of individual and institutional collections of First Nations' cultural belongings in colonial Victoria and they trace the people and processes involved in the transfer of this collection to a major German museum. The information recorded in the letters has the potential to inform the process of reconnecting specific objects with source communities.

**Keywords:** Collecting in colonial Victoria, Victorian Aboriginal artefacts, German–Australian collecting networks, Gunditjmarra artist Johnny Dawson, nineteenth-century anthropology in Australia

## INTRODUCTION: PEOPLE, PLACES, POSSESSIONS, PROCESSES

In January 1878 the Melbourne-based landscape painter Eugene von Guérard received a letter from Dr Julius Friedländer in Berlin, inquiring as to his willingness to purchase Australian Aboriginal cultural belongings for the ethnological department of the Royal Museums.<sup>1</sup> Friedländer, the director of the numismatics department, and von Guérard, a passionate, informed and well-regarded coin collector, had shared what seems to have been regular correspondence — both professional and personal — for some years.<sup>2</sup> The artist's earliest contact with the numismatics department dated back to 1841 when he sold his father's coin collection to the Royal Museums in Berlin.<sup>3</sup> Friedländer's inquiry was made on behalf of his colleague, Dr Adolf Philip Wilhelm Bastian, the director of the museum's ethnological department.<sup>4</sup> This letter marks the beginning of the correspondence between von Guérard in Melbourne and the curators in Berlin — Dr Bastian, Bastian's assistant, Dr Franz Ludwig Voss, and Dr Friedländer — that spanned the next two and a half years, concluding on 22 June 1880.<sup>5</sup> While von Guérard agreed to collect for the Royal Museums, he expressed his reservations about sourcing many of the objects on Bastian's list of *desiderata* at a time when such objects were no longer being made in significant numbers and so many had already entered colonial museum collections. Perhaps in consideration of this, he offered to make his own personal collection of Aboriginal cultural belongings

that he had acquired on his sketching expeditions in the 1850s and 60s available to Berlin.

The seven letters that von Guérard wrote to Berlin, the four to him from the museum, and associated internal museum administrative notes and documents, record the arrangements that were put in place for von Guérard's purchase of Aboriginal cultural belongings and the acquisition of his personal collection. Von Guérard's letters contain first-hand observations about the objects, the circumstances of their acquisition, and accounts of the artist's interactions with their makers and source communities. Handwritten in Old German (*Kurrentschrift*) and held in a bound volume in the Zentralarchiv, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, they are published here in English translation for the first time.<sup>6</sup>

In translating the letters, the decision was made to remain as close as possible to the original text. A literal translation has been preferred over the temptation to adapt the text for fluency, in order to minimise the risk of suggesting a particular reading of the content, or misconstruing an intended meaning. While this has resulted in some awkwardness in the text, it also means that the original tone of the letters is preserved to the extent that is possible in translation. Von Guérard's handwriting, his sometimes unwieldy and ungrammatical sentences and archaic or even incorrect spelling, presented challenges, as did the binding of such a large number of documents together, which meant that some words at the edge of a sheet are partially or totally obscured in the binding 'gutter'. Such words can in some instances be worked out

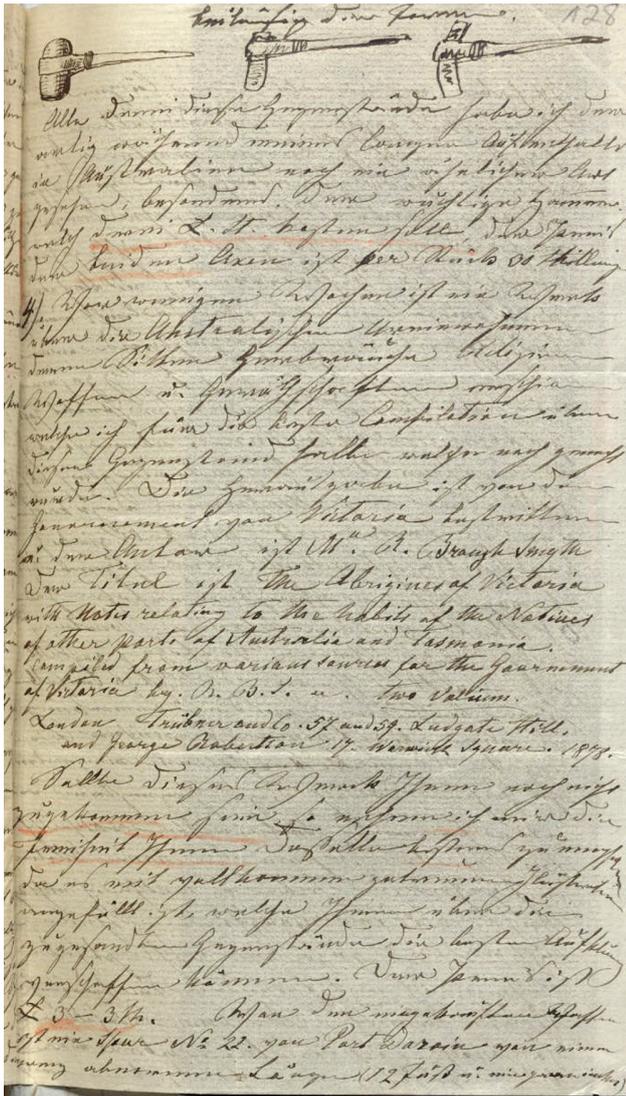


Figure 1: Page of letter von Guérard to Bastian, 25 August 1878, actual size 12 x 21.5 cm. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Zentralarchiv 2232/78. Image courtesy of Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Zentralarchiv.

or guessed by the sense of the sentence. Doubtful words in the translation are enclosed in rectangular brackets [] or are followed by [?]. Spelling inconsistencies in the terminology used for Aboriginal objects, for example, the spellings of ‘woomerah’ and ‘womerah’, have been retained as they appear in the letters.

#### Von Guérard's letters

Von Guérard's first encounter with Australian Aboriginal people took place just three weeks after he had arrived in Australia when, on 11 January 1853, he and his party of fellow miners met a group of Wathaurong people near the Moorabool River where it was crossed by the road to the Ballarat goldfields (von Guérard 1853: 11). Over the following years, as he travelled on extended sketching expeditions, he met, talked with, sketched and traded with people from the ‘Lake Victoria Tribe’ (Barkindji

people) in Adelaide, Gunditjmarra, Djab wurrung and Djargurdwurrung people in Victoria's Western District, and the Gunaikurnai in Gippsland. By the end of the decade, the Melbourne-based artist had acquired many of the ‘weapons of Australian aborigines’ that the art critic James Smith saw hanging on the walls of ‘his small and quiet studio’, and that later entered the Berlin Museum collection.<sup>7</sup> Some, as his letters record, were purchased directly from Aboriginal people he had met; others were gifts from station owners on whose properties he had stayed. Some objects were described in detail, with materials used in their making identified — Mulga, acacia gum, kangaroo sinew — and processes of manufacture analysed. Such observations reflect the artist's naturally inquiring mind and the interrogative eye for detail that underpinned his scientifically oriented approach to landscape painting that — in response to Alexander von Humboldt's influential ideas on the subject — he practised in Australia (Humboldt 1849: 438, 452–457). He responded to the design work on specific objects, recognised craftsmanship, noted rarity and, to the extent that he understood it, drew the attention of the Berlin curators to the cultural significance of particular objects.

This level of documentation — which was noted and appreciated by the curators in Berlin — distinguished von Guérard from the mostly ‘unsystematic’ collectors who were active in the years from first contact up until c.1880 (Peterson et al. 2008: 8). Not only were his observations founded on his first-hand experiences as a collector, they were informed by his practice as a museum professional at the National Gallery of Victoria and his close associations with pioneering ethnologists and anthropologists James Dawson, Alfred Howitt and Robert Brough Smyth.<sup>8</sup> On the basis of the lists and documentation provided by von Guérard, it is possible to identify which of the 102 objects (of which 95 were Australian Aboriginal objects) that he sent to Berlin were purchased on consignment, and which came from his personal collection.<sup>9</sup> All 95 Australian Aboriginal cultural belongings were catalogued under von Guérard's name as collector, a privileging of collectors over makers in the archival record that was widespread in Imperial and German museums (Sculthorpe et al. 2021: 17). The 34 objects that came from von Guérard's personal collection and via the donations he organised, and the 61 that were purchased on consignment for the museum, are here identified. The information on provenance captured in the letters is now playing a vital role in the reconnection of source communities with their cultural belongings. Research led by anthropologist Anna Weinreich, in collaboration with Vicki Couzens, Eileen Alberts and Titta Secombe, is focused on objects that von Guérard collected on Gunditjmarra country (Weinreich et al. in press). The

authors of this paper (Darragh & Pullin) have provided information for research currently being undertaken by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS).

#### *The Berlin correspondence*

The letters from the museum tend to be brief, to the point and concerned with practical matters such as the transfer of funds and arrangements for the transportation of the collection. As Bastian was absent on an extended research expedition between 1878 and 1880, most of the correspondence was handled by his assistant, Dr Voss. Von Guérard was one of many German expatriates collecting for the institution at the time, and this may have contributed to the delayed responses he experienced and which he found very frustrating. However, the cumbersome nature of the museum's bureaucracy, which is evident from the internal administrative communications associated with this transaction, may also have been a factor. Here, only the key museum documents are presented, and administrative notes are recorded in summary.

#### *Collecting for Berlin: a case study*

The von Guérard–Berlin correspondence serves as a comprehensive and detailed case study of one of the many similar transactions that played out between expatriate German-speakers in the Australian colonies—missionaries, scientists, government officials, travellers and artists—who collected on behalf of German museums in the latter nineteenth century and the institutions they collected for. These arrangements were part of a collecting frenzy fuelled by a sense of urgency to collect First Nations' material culture before it was 'too late', and one that coincided with the rise of the 'museum age' (Peterson et al. 2008: 10). For Adolf Bastian in Berlin, it was in 'an Age like ours, which callously annihilates countless *Urstämme*[first peoples]'—'beholden to future generations to preserve everything possible'—(Bastian in Lally 2008: 194). He focused his energies on collection-building—the creation of a library of objects that would serve as a repository of material for future research (Koepping 1983: ix; Penny 2021: 8–11, 197, 200).

The von Guérard–Berlin correspondence reveals the extent to which the success of such operations was dependent on both the individual players involved and their networks of personal, institutional, national and ideological connection—the 'actors, agents, structures, processes, institutions, ideas and objects [that] exist as part of a "meshwork"' (Sculthorpe et al. 2021: 18). These letters illuminate those connections and processes: individuals were named, costings itemised, packing and transport arrangements detailed, the frustrations of institutional and mail delays noted, and specific Aboriginal

cultural belongings and their sources described, both from the artist's personal perspective, and according to the perspectives of nineteenth-century colonial and German museum staff.

The letters reveal the pivotal role played by von Guérard's friend and associate Friedländer in initiating this exchange. The connections were consolidated through the friendship that von Guérard and Bastian shared with the geophysicist Georg von Neumayer.<sup>10</sup> Like so many of their generation, their respective careers were informed by the ideas of the natural scientist Alexander von Humboldt. For Bastian, a founding figure in the field of scientific anthropology, Humboldt was 'a hero of our age', and his plant-geography was 'the paradigm for other comparative sciences', including his own theories on the development of the human mind (Bastian 1869, in Koepping 1983: 160, 161). And, as the letters reveal, von Guérard shared Bastian's commitment to public museum collections, volunteering his time and expertise, and making his own collection available to the Berlin Ethnological Museum without consideration for personal profit. His generosity may also, however, have been influenced by the status associated with having his name linked with the prestigious Berlin institution.

In Melbourne, von Guérard's good friend William Brahe, the German Consul in Melbourne, took care of the transfer of funds from Berlin and arranged for the shipping of the collection.<sup>11</sup> Von Guérard and Brahe, who commissioned his friend to paint a pair of cabinet pictures for him, belonged to a close-knit community of German-speaking artists and scientists in Melbourne.<sup>12</sup> They included Ludwig Becker (1808–1861) and Wilhelm Blandowski (1822–1878), both of whom shared his interest in Aboriginal culture during their time in Melbourne in the 1850s, and Ferdinand von Mueller (1825–1896), who was in regular contact with German museums.<sup>13</sup>

Due to his dual responsibilities as the founding curator of the National Gallery of Victoria and Painting Master of the Gallery School, the time that von Guérard could devote to seeking out the objects on Bastian's list was limited. But along with that curatorial role, which included responsibility for the gallery's ethnological collection, came expertise and connections. He had known Henry Hart, a dealer in 'Opossum RUGS and Native Curiosities', then operating on the corner of the Royal Arcade and Little Collins Street, for many years and, as a curator, he had worked with him in a professional capacity.<sup>14</sup> Hart had inherited the business from his father, Henry Hart (sic) Hart, who had exhibited '2 Opossum rugs' at the 1854 Melbourne Exhibition—an exhibit which would have, undoubtedly, attracted the attention of the newly arrived artist who showed a painting depicting the sale of a possum

skin rug by Wathaurong traders in the same exhibition.<sup>15</sup> Von Guérard entrusted Hart with the task of sourcing the objects for Berlin but, as the letters reveal, he also took a proactive role in their final selection.

In 1878, the year that von Guérard was working on the consignment for Berlin, he was in regular working contact with the mining engineer, civil servant and anthropologist Robert Brough Smyth, whose significant collection of Aboriginal cultural objects had been acquired by the National Gallery of Victoria late in the previous year.<sup>16</sup> Brough Smyth and von Guérard would have known each other prior to this as both were long-term members of the Royal Society of Victoria, and each had held positions on its council.<sup>17</sup> In early 1879 von Guérard reported to his friend Julius von Haast, the director of the Canterbury Museum in New Zealand, that the gallery's collection had been 'newly arranged', in connection with the gallery's purchase of Brough Smyth's 'extensive collection of Australian weapons &c' (Darragh & Pullin 2018: 30). The accompanying *Catalogue of the Objects of Ethnotypical Art in the National Gallery*, published in 1878, was almost certainly compiled by Brough Smyth. His two-volume *Aborigines of Victoria, with Notes Relating to the Habits of the Natives of Other Parts of Australia and Tasmania Compiled from Various Sources for the Government of Victoria*, which was published by the Government Printer in the same year, included an illustration of the kangaroo-teeth necklace 'in the possession of Mr. E. von Guérard, the well-known landscape painter' (Smyth 1878: 278, Figure 27). Von Guérard's letters reveal his high opinion of Brough Smyth's work, which he urged Dr Voss to acquire for the Berlin Museum. It is evident that he consulted the Brough Smyth volumes for some of the terminology he used and the descriptions of some objects and their uses that he gave in his letters.<sup>18</sup>



FIG. 27.— (Scale  $\frac{1}{2}$ )

Figure 2: Illustration of the kangaroo-tooth necklace in von Guérard's collection, Figure 27 in Robert Brough Smyth, *Aborigines of Victoria*.

The building of von Guérard's personal collection of Aboriginal objects was embedded in his practice as a travelling landscape painter (Pullin 2018; Pullin & Darragh 2023). Some of the most defining experiences of his career as an artist and a collector of Aboriginal cultural belongings took place at James Dawson's property, Kangatong, in Victoria's Western District. Von Guérard formed a lifelong friendship with Dawson, an enlightened pastoralist, conservationist, advocate for the local Aboriginal people and, with his daughter Isabella, a pioneering ethnographer. In the conditions that prevailed at Kangatong, von Guérard had the opportunity to meet and interact with Gunditjmara and KirraeWhurrung people, and it was there that he acquired, both directly and indirectly, some of the cultural belongings that are now in Berlin. The kangaroo-teeth necklace illustrated by Brough Smyth was given to him by Dawson's wife, Joan Dawson.<sup>19</sup> It may have been given to her by its original owner as an expression of the reciprocity that Philip Jones argued characterised the exchange of Aboriginal artefacts (Jones in Sculthorpe et al. 2021). The necklace, described by von Guérard as having been made by 'a queen of the tribe at Kangatong', is almost certainly the one worn by Yarruun Parpur Tarneen (Victorious) in the photograph of her published in James Dawson's 1881 *Australian Aborigines. The Languages and Customs of Several Tribes of Aborigines in the Western District of Victoria, Australia*.<sup>20</sup> It may also be the necklace pictured being worn by Kaawirn Kuunawarn (Hissing Swan) in the same publication (Thorner 2018).<sup>21</sup> Von Guérard's description of the necklace, which is currently (2023) on display at the Ethnologisches Museum (Humboldt Forum), and its acquisition have informed the linking of this object with community (Weinreich in Binter et al. 2022: 60–61).

On his first day at Kangatong, 8 August 1855, von Guérard met James Dawson's head stockkeeper, the Gunditjmara artist known as Johnny Dawson.<sup>22</sup> On that same day, the two artists drew portraits of each other, each of them evidently intrigued by the other. Von Guérard's response to the distinctive artistic vision and dedicated practice of his fellow artist leaps off the pages of the letters. Today Johnny Dawson's work is known only from the seven drawings (on five sheets of paper) that von Guérard acquired. He sent two to Berlin, as gifts, and the other five, on three sheets of paper, entered the collections of the State Library of New South Wales in 1913, twelve years after von Guérard's death. His account of the event that inspired the larger of the two drawings sent to Berlin — the equestrian circus performance he attended in Melbourne with James Dawson — sheds entirely new light on Johnny's work and his experiences in colonial Victoria. The circus in question was almost certainly J.B.W. Priestley's Astley's Circus, which operated on the corner of Spring and Little



Figure 3: Johnny Dawson, Gunditjmara, 'Cavalryman and family with a crowd in the background' [Circus audience and performer], ink and watercolour on paper, 25 x 41 cm. SMB,EM VI 2585a. Gifted by Eugene von Guérard. Image courtesy of Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.

Bourke streets between September 1854 and September 1855. Like London's Astley's Amphitheatre, it featured spectacular acrobatic feats on horseback (Leech 2019). Von Guérard returned to Kangatong in 1856 and 1857, and in 1874 he spent nearly three months as the Dawsons' guest at their home, Wuorong in Camperdown, where some of the Gunditjmara and Kirrae Whurrung people who had lived at Kangatong were regular visitors.

The story of this exchange began with Friedländer, and it was he who facilitated its successful completion. He acceded to von Guérard's innovative solution to the museum's problem with funding the purchase of his personal collection — even though some objects were presented as gifts and modest prices were asked for others. In lieu of financial compensation von Guérard suggested that he would accept duplicate coins from the museum's Münzkabinett in exchange for, and equal in value to, his personal collection of Australian Aboriginal objects. In August 1880 he shared the news with his fellow coin enthusiast, Julius von Haast, that Friedländer had dispatched a selection of 83 of 'some of the rarest antique gold and silver coins'. They reached him in November 1880 and he described key pieces in a subsequent letter to Haast (Darragh & Pullin 2018: 42, 42).

This correspondence documents, in rare depth and detail, the people and processes at play in one example of how museum collections of First Nations' cultural

belongings were built by colonial powers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Today von Guérard's actions as a collector, his acquisition of significant cultural objects in the context of the power disparities of colonisation, can only be seen as problematic. Nevertheless, through his actions items of cultural significance have been preserved. And through his letters the journeys of some of these objects can be retraced back to their origins, and the meanings they carry for the communities of the people who made, wore, used and treasured them, rediscovered.

#### THE TRANSLATED LETTERS

The correspondence begins with letters by von Guérard in response to his friend Julius Friedländer.

#### Letter to Friedländer 10 February 1878

Incoming register: 852 of 78.

Gipps St east, East Melbourne  
10 February 78

To Dr Ju. Friedländer  
Hindersin Strasse 8  
Berlin

Highly esteemed Director,

I received your letter of 20 December 77 quite unexpectedly and I am very pleased to see from



Figure 4: Johnny Dawson, Gunditjmara, 'European couple and horse; Horserace' [Equestrian circus performance], pencil and watercolour, 25.3 x 20.4 cm. Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, Sydney PXA 606/2.

your lines that you are well.<sup>23</sup> I will write to Director Bastian myself to tell him that it will be a difficult task to obtain even a fraction of those objects of his list.

In our ethnographic collection, which has just been recently organized, we have only a few of the weapons and utensils of the Australian Aborigines designated by Dr Bastian, and it is much easier to get such things of the Natives of the South Sea Islands than of the Australian Blacks as is evident in our collection.

It is likely that it will be especially difficult to collect good examples of original utensils from the now almost completely extinct Blacks of Victoria, because the few hundred still living are gathered together on a couple of stations under the charge of protectors and so their original wood and stone weapons &c are no longer needed. This is also more or less the case in the other older colonies, and in Queensland, north and Western Australia the contact is less easy for the collection of such objects.

I am willingly prepared, as far as time permits, to collect for the Royal Museum, but first I must know from Dr Bastian what amount he thinks to go up to, and whether for this purpose a directive could not be given to the local Consul of the German Reich, who could also attend to the shipping of the material collected.

In my last letter,<sup>24</sup> in which I pestered you again with many questions, I also wrote to you that I sent a small order for fairly modern coins to Dr Merzbacher in Munich,<sup>25</sup> with a request that he name the price of a series of old coins, a list of which I enclosed. In the last European post I received an answer from the man in which he mentioned no word of the desired modern coins but undertook to send me six antique coins for the amount placed at his disposal, including two of the Marcus Antonius, which I had already acquired long ago and for which I had merely asked the price.<sup>26</sup>

Among the names of the Roman Caesars I also mentioned Antonia,<sup>27</sup> but Dr Merzbacher referred

this name to the Family Antonia, which naturally I could not have anticipated.<sup>28</sup> I am very eager to see what these coins will be, especially a Quintus, for which Dr. M. charges 30 francs.<sup>29</sup> I would certainly not have chosen all these coins now. Such mistakes deter me from further orders.

Your communication about the very successful translation of the poems of Michael Angelo, done by our dear friend, Frau Sophie Hasenclever, pleased me and my wife very much, although we had already heard of its success from the dear authoress and also through her son.<sup>30</sup> I believe that I reported to you that Oberleutenant Felix Hasenclever delighted us with his visit here in Melbourne from China on the *Hertha*.<sup>31</sup>

In the happy hope of soon receiving some lines from you again,

I remain devotedly  
your humble  
Eugen von Guérard

#### Letter to Bastian 14 February 1878

Incoming register: 852 of 78.

Gipps St east, East Melbourne  
14 February 78

To Director Dr Bastian  
Royal Museums  
Berlin

Most esteemed Doctor.

In Director Jul. Friedländer's letter, I received your long list of weapons, utensils and objects made by the Australian Aborigines that you wish to acquire for the Royal Museum in Berlin, with the inquiry whether I would be inclined to purchase the named items when opportunity arises.

Permit me first of all to give you the assurance that I will willingly work for a national museum as far as my free time allows.

On no account can I give you hope that I would succeed in being able to get even most of the objects named by you. This is because the native Blacks in all the older Australian colonies, especially Victoria, ceased making wood and stone weapons and implements &c long ago and most of those that remain from older times have either been purchased for the various museums in the colonies or exported.

I will keep an eye out for items to be found. I myself have a small collection of weapons and other objects brought together from my previous frequent journeys through the colonies, which, for

the most part, I purchased myself from the Blacks or obtained from old friends (squatters), among them objects very rarely found. Should it be the case that what I have were desirable to the Royal ethnological collection, we could easily come to an arrangement about the conveyance on my part.

Most of all I request that you set a certain limit for me, what sum you propose to appropriate for purchases of this kind and to assign this amount to the local Imperial Consulate. Mr Brahe the Consul for Victoria is an intimate friend of mine and I am convinced he would not fail to dispatch the purchased objects safely and cheaply to the Royal Museums in Berlin.<sup>32</sup>

In the expectation of hearing more detailed information from you soon,

I am  
sincerely  
Eugen von Guérard  
Curator & Master in the National Gallery of  
Victoria  
N. B.

Permit me the inquiry Dr Bastian.

Is not my old friend Professor Georg Neumayer a close acquaintance of yours?<sup>33</sup> If it is so, and I do not think I am mistaken, I ask you to pass on very sincere regards from me and mine.

E. v. G.

Friedländer passed his letter on to Bastian, who referred both his and Friedländer's letters to the General Administration of the museums with a note stating that arising from the contents of these letters there was an immediate necessity to use every opportunity to complete the ethnological collection and recommended that 1000 Marks be placed at von Guérard's disposal for that purpose. He also wrote to von Guérard.<sup>34</sup>

Graf von Usedom, Director of the Royal Museums,<sup>35</sup> however, gave instructions that 500 Marks were to be placed at von Guérard's disposal and more details were to be requested regarding the acquisition of his private collection. A letter was also sent to the Imperial Foreign Office in Berlin on 23 April 1878 requesting that the Finance Office place the sum of 500 Marks with the Imperial Consulate in Melbourne to allow von Guérard to make purchases on behalf of Ethnographic Department and the following letter was sent to von Guérard.

**Letter to von Guérard 23 April 1878**

Berlin  
23/4/78

To E. V. Guérard, Esquire  
Curator and Master in the National Gallery,  
Melbourne (Australia)  
(East, Gipps street)

Esteemed Sir,

The department heads Dr Friedländer and Professor Bastian have placed your kind letters of 10 and 14 February this year before me and I do not delay responding as follows.

In agreement with your proposal in reference to the opportunity offered to make[?] purchases for our ethnological collection, I have through the good offices of the Imperial Foreign Office in the first instance placed a sum of 500 Marks at your disposal with our Consul Brahe, and reserve increasing it further later according to circumstances.

With respect to your own collection, I await your kind statement about the conditions under which you would be inclined to dispose of it.

On this occasion kindly accept the assurance of my esteem.

23/IV Usedom

On receipt of the letters from von Usedom and Bastian von Guérard replied as follows:

**Letter to Dr Bastian undated (post April and pre-August 1878)**

Incoming register: 2093

Gipps St east, East Melbourne

Most esteemed Professor

I received your kind letter of 23 April at the same time as that from Director Friedländer<sup>36</sup> and the note from the General Administration of the Royal Museums signed: Usedom, with the arrival of the last European post, and shortly after also received notification of the draft of 500 Marks from Consul Brahe. I hope to purchase the desired objects of the Australian Aborigines for the advised sum soon and promise to make a careful choice and where possible to collect accurate information about which region of the country they come from.

In respect to my own collection I make no conditions other than that I will set those prices which are given to me by experts, because I am parting with these objects that I have collected since I have been

here, not in consideration of making a profit, but simply because it gives me pleasure to know that they will be in one of the premier museums of the dear German Fatherland.

I will keep the collected objects until I get a definite answer from you as to the manner in which you wish to have them sent.

I dare say you will have the goodness to report to Herr von Usedom that I received his letter and the draft safely and will use the latter according to the best of my knowledge.

[Here two lines have been heavily blacked out.]

I permit myself to enclose a little letter to Dr Friedländer, if you will have the kindness to take care of it.<sup>37</sup>

Respectfully

Eugen von Guérard  
Professor Dr A. Bastian  
Curator at the Ethnological Museum  
in Berlin

In August von Guérard was able to report that he had purchased various objects.

**Letter to Bastian 25 August 1878**

Incoming letter register: 2232/78.

Gipps St east, East Melbourne  
25 August 1878.

Highly esteemed Doctor.

[1]<sup>38</sup> It has been a long time since I have been able to send you a report about the purchased ethnographic objects. Now I have the satisfaction of being able to tell you that I have spent the 500 Marks sent to me, except for a small remaining amount, which will not be enough to defray the packing completely, on 64 different weapons and objects.

[2] The purchased objects, all of which I have selected myself, are generally nearly all in very good condition and several of them of great rarity. Because time made it impossible for me to look for such objects myself, I commissioned the best dealer in such things to seek them out for me. Henry Hart<sup>39</sup> is a man whom I have known for over 20 years and who for many years has supplied very many things for the Ethnological Museum of Victoria,<sup>40</sup> which is under my supervision. I have managed to purchase several objects for you that we don't yet have. I enclose herewith the receipt list of the purchased objects, of which I have a duplicate and will add some notes for your better understanding.

[3] A couple of days ago, Hart acquired a couple of very interesting axes and a hammer from Queensland, which I would have gladly purchased, but not knowing whether you would agree to exceed the sum sent, I have not [bought] them and I hope that these objects will not be sold before I receive your answer about them. The hammer consists of a heavy oblong basalt and is, like [all?] of the tomahawks with flexible [handles] fixed with gum and sinews, and in a similar manner, two pieces of iron, probably cut from the wreck of a vessel found by the natives on the coast.



Approximately the forms.

During my long stay in Australia, I have never seen anything of a similar kind to these three objects, particularly the heavy hammer, which is to cost £3 sterling. The price of both the axes is 30 sh. per item.

[4] Some weeks ago a work on the Australian Aborigines, their customs, ceremonies, religion, weapons and utensils was published, which I regard as the best compilation on these objects, which has yet been made.

The publishing was defrayed by the Government of Victoria and the author is Mr. R. Brough Smyth. The title is *The Aborigines of Victoria with notes relating to the habits of the Natives of other parts of Australia and Tasmania. Compiled from various sources for Government of Victoria* by R.B.S. etc. two volumes. London, Trübner & Co. 57 and 59 Ludgate Hill, and George Robertson 17 Warwick Square. 1878.<sup>41</sup>

Should this work not yet have reached you, I take the liberty of highly recommending it to you, because it is filled with complete and accurate illustrations, which will give you the best explanation about the items sent. The price is £3.3s.

Of the purchased weapons, there is a spear, No. 22, from Port Darwin, of a quite exceptional length — 12 feet and a couple of inches.

I have never before seen a longer spear of this kind, which usually[?] measure at most 11 feet long. It would be a shame to cut the spear and it would require a very long crate[?]. I think it important in sending, if I have the crate internally lined with tin plate or zinc, because penetrating moisture could easily ruin some objects. I ask you to be so kind at

your earliest convenience to send me instructions on this point, and as well whether I should send off the collected objects immediately or purchase even more objects as well, because the transport will be rather expensive in any case, I will defer both until I have got confirmation from you.

[6] About my small collection, which I have placed at your disposal, I will enclose the list of the same for you here, with the comment that it would be a pleasure for me to see them incorporated into the Imperial Royal Museum because I consider these objects, which I have hung up in my studio for many years, as old friends, and which, not without trouble, I have gathered from various parts of Australia. When, with pleasure, I give them to the most important national Museum, I would, however, just like them given all together, not as single objects.

The rarest objects that I possess are a Tomahawk (Merring) of rather great weight and, I believe, of great age. I got it from an old settler in the Western District of Victoria, Mr Dawson,<sup>42</sup> without a handle but a black chief of the Warrnambool Tribe, King Konewarre (David) made me a handle for it in the old and original manner.<sup>43</sup> Up until now I would have been able to purchase only one broken specimen without handle for your collection. They are becoming rarer every day.

The second article from my collection is a necklace made from kangaroo incisors, which now are very rare to obtain. I received it from Mrs Dawson, the wife of the previously mentioned gentleman,<sup>44</sup> as a great rarity and it was made by a queen of the tribe at Kangatong in the Western District of Victoria (the station of Mr Dawson). Mr Brough Smyth's illustration, Fig 27 in his work is taken from it.

Taking into account the number of kangaroos that provided their teeth for it, and the laborious work which the making of the setting required, it means of course that not very many of this kind were made. Besides my necklace, I know of only one the same in Melbourne, in our Museum, but less well preserved.

Three throwing sticks for a kind of game of the Victorian Aborigines is described in B. Smyth's work, *Weet -Weet* (Fig. 170).<sup>45</sup>



I received them from a young lady in Melbourne (the daughter of the oldest doctor of Victoria Dr Gottfried Howitt)<sup>46</sup> (from the Westernport Tribe).

I cannot remember having seen the same objects in any other collection.

Further, a small net bag woven from grass fibres[?] — An unusually heavy shield and a kind of Waddy or club, in Gippsland [called] Warra warra, from the Aborigines from Lake Victoria in South Australia made from a young Majal [Acacia] gum. Two of my throwing sticks, called Womerah or Kur –ruk are decorated with incised decoration and the three shields decorated with incisions of a different kind than those which I have purchased for you.

Among the purchased items, which I emphasise as particularly rare to find, is a tool that was used to manufacture boomerangs, called a Dowak or Dunah, Fig. 150 in B. Smyth's work.

A pair of woomerahs from Western Australia. A double toothed spear called Mongile. Two reed spears from North Australia furnished with long stone tips. Two staffs entwined with snakes presumably used in ceremonies.

A womerah from the North West coast of Aust. Fig. 147 B. Smyth's work. A shield from Western Australia. Fig. 148 B Smyth.

You will see that among the heavy war clubs, there are a pair of highly interesting examples with decoration depicting the human form, [examples] such as these are only very rarely found.

Many objects or weapons, which I consider highly unusual will certainly not escape your scholarly judgment. A necklace consisting of tiny little pieces of reed is also an object which might come up only very rarely for purchase now. I possess a couple of coloured sketches by a young Aborigine who had a remarkable propensity for the artistic expression of his memories. They represent European scenes and figures conceived in the most unusual way. I place great value on these artistic productions, which I also received from Mrs Dawson, and it would interest me to know whether you think that they would also be of value for the Imperial Royal Museum.

[7] By this post you will receive from Consul Brahe the receipt concerning the 500 Marks received, signed by me, and you will see from my bill from H. Hart that it amounts to £24. 4 sh., of which, after deducting the discount, I have paid £23. 12 sh to H. Hart.<sup>47</sup> According to Consul Brahe's calculations 500 M amounts to £24. 12 sh English, therefore £1 Sterling still remains at my disposal. Should the packing costs and other outlays for the dispatch cause an additional expense, I will let you know the exact particulars.

In the hope that you will be satisfied with my purchases, I give you the assurance that it gave me great pleasure, as far as my restricted time permitted, to help to collect for our national Museum according to the best of my knowledge and to correspond with a man of your eminence.

[8] On mention of your venerable name our librarian, Mr Sheffield requested me to ask whether one of your works,<sup>48</sup> which is in our excellent library, has another sequel or concludes with the sixth volume.

Dr Adolf Bastian, *Reisen in China von Peking zur Mongolischen Grenzen und zurück nach Europe* 1871, six parts.<sup>49</sup>

With the request to pass on my most friendly greeting to Dr Friedlander and my dear old friend, Dr Neumayer.

I remain, with great respect,  
Your,  
Eugen von Guérard

List of my weapons and objects of the Australian Aborigines

|  | Sh   | D.    |
|--|------|-------|
| 3 shields at 12 ½ Sh   | 37-  | 6     |
| 1 pointed club (Leon-ile or Langel)                          | 12   | 6     |
| 1 Bag (net) from native grass[?]                             | 5    | 6     |
| 3 Small throwing boards for the spears<br>(Womerah) at 5 sh. | 15   | -     |
| 3 Throwing game projectiles<br>(Weet-Weet) at 5 sh.          | 15   | -     |
| 1 Kangaroo tooth necklace                                    | 60   | -     |
| 1 Heavy stone axe  | 45   | -     |
| 1 Light stone axe  | 35   | -     |
| 2 Throwing spears at 6 sh.                                   | 12   | -     |
| 1 Long serrated spear  | 12   | 6     |
| 2 War clubs at 7 sh.   | 14   | -     |
| 1 Basket of woven reeds                                      | 3    | 6     |
| 20 items   | £13. | 7 sh. |

Should you wish to have these objects, I am able to give you the locality where I purchased or got them. My wife<sup>50</sup> reminded me that she has genuine possum skins made by the Blaks [sic] which are worked with the characteristic incisions in order to make the skin more pliable and it would be a pleasure to give them to the Museum if you found them of use in their worn out condition. I can also send you several bunches of emu feathers as used by the Aborigines for head decorations or other uses. Also, I believe I can procure the tail of the lyre bird used as a head decoration in corroborees, if you want it.

[10] In reference to the previously mentioned weapons of the natives of the Solomon Islands, I want to inform you that I have weapons that I had the opportunity to buy when a man with a large number of objects from these islands came to Melbourne, from which I selected a large number for our Museum.<sup>51</sup>

- 1 a spear over 7 English feet long
- 15 reed arrows from various tribes there
- 1 very long decorated[?] spear
- 1 long and heavy war club
- 1 heavy oar shaped club of a chief
- 1 combination axe and oar shape of light wood painted



1 other instrument for ceremonial or for other[?] use, of light wood and painted.

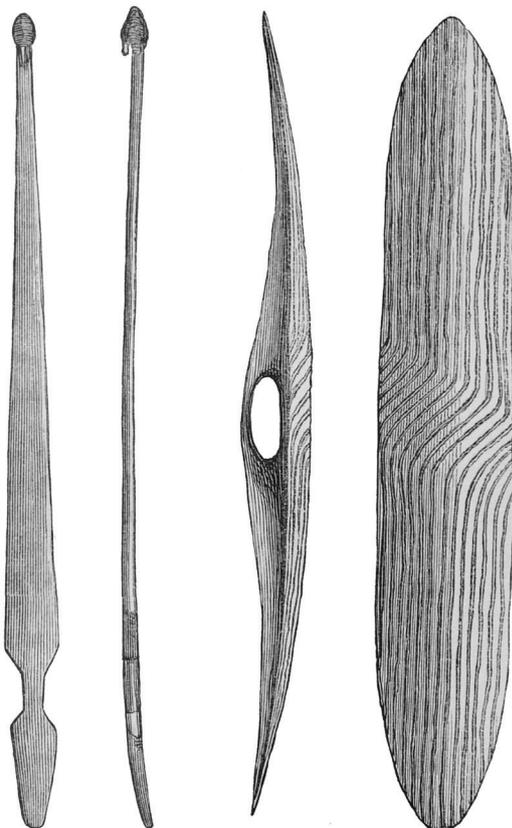


FIG. 147.

FIG. 148.

Figure 5: Illustration of womerah, Figure 147; illustration of shield, Figure 148, in Robert Brough Smyth, *Aborigines of Victoria*.



FIG. 150.—(Scale  $\frac{1}{10}$ .)

Figure 6: Illustration of stone chisel (Dow-ak), Figure 150 in Robert Brough Smyth, *Aborigines of Victoria*.



Figure 7: Kangaroo-tooth Necklace, Gunditjmara, from von Guérard's collection, 70 x 8 x 1.5 cm(h x w x d). SMB,EM VI 2579. Image courtesy of Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.



Figure 8: Stone axe, Gunditjmara / Kirrae Whurrung, from von Guérard's collection, 4.5 x 37.5 x 10.5 cm (h x w x d), SMB,EM VI 2575. Image courtesy of Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.

As Bastian was by this time absent on a journey to the Pacific, the letter was dealt with by his assistant Dr Voss,<sup>52</sup> who in response wrote the following report.

**Voss note 12 November 1878**

to 2232/78

Report to the General Administration.

Concerning the letter sent by Mr von Guérard and the proposals made at the same time, the following points may be made.

To 1. The costs for the packing would have to be calculated separately, especially with regard to the further proposals made below.

To 3. Of the objects offered, the basalt stone hammer would be of interest to us and Mr Hart would perhaps also be prepared to reduce the price somewhat. Buying both the iron axes cannot be contemplated on account of the high prices (30 shillings each), as interesting as they are at the moment as samples of the first attempts at the use of iron on the part of a people until then unacquainted with the use of metal objects.

To 4. The said work is of great interest and its acquisition for the library of the Royal Museum is therefore most earnestly recommended.<sup>53</sup>

To 5. A single sawing through of the length would not hurt, because both ends could be put together again here.<sup>54</sup> To have a special crate prepared for this single item would be too expensive. Perhaps, however, the remaining spears could also be packed in the same crate and then indeed the length of the crate would be a small consideration. For objects of wood that are not coloured or decorated with easily destructible materials (feathers, basket work made from delicate plant fibres &c) a well closing crate will suffice, perhaps made especially waterproof with bitumen or iron bands. Easily damaged objects must, however, be packed in tin crates (fabric, clothing material, feather decorations).

To 6. The private collection offered by Mr von Guérard would be a very acceptable enrichment of the Australian collection in consideration of the not too high price and the precise determination of places of origin, to which attention is particularly called. Also the young Aborigine's sketches would be of interest.

To 7. cf to 1.

To 8. Dr Fränkel would perhaps be able to furnish particulars most easily about this. As far as I know the work was completed with the published six volumes.<sup>55</sup>

To 9. The possum skins offered as gifts by Mrs von Guérard should probably be accepted with thanks. Should the decorative objects made of emu feathers and lyrebird tails to be acquired be worth the money, I dare say this would be acceptable to mention.

To 10. The objects mentioned from the Solomon Islands are of interest, especially both the sketched items (paddle axe and ceremonial club). However, it would be desirable to ascertain the price beforehand.

As Mr von Guérard evidently is striving with great enthusiasm to make suitable acquisitions for the Royal Museum at the most reasonable prices possible, it would be well to include appreciative words about this in the answering letter.

Berlin 12 November 1878

Dr A Voss

1926/ 79

No letter was written to von Guérard and the matter was held over until 1 April 1879, when Voss was instructed to write to von Guérard in keeping with his report. On receipt of Voss's letter, von Guérard replied.



Figure 9: Possum skin rug in eight sections, Victoria, gifted by Mrs von Guérard, 84 x 76 cm (h x w x d), SMB,EM VI 2580. Image courtesy of Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.

**Letter to Voss 7 July 1879**

Gipps Street East Melbourne  
7 July 1879

Most esteemed Dr. Voss

I received your kind letter of 19 April 1879 with the last European mail, and I am pleased to find in it, at least in part, an explanation why I have only now received an answer which might settle for me how to send the Australian weapons and objects purchased for the Royal Museum, and at the same time my own small collection of a similar nature.

I suppose in the haste of the preparations for his extensive scientific journey, Dr Bastian completely forgot the commission he gave me and therefore neglected to give you the necessary information regarding his wishes. I have delayed the dispatch of the aforesaid purchased items and my collection until now, because, as I shall have to arrange this, I wanted to receive instructions from Dr Bastian with precision about the manner of dispatch in order to avoid any liability in this regard. However, because I had also heard nothing definite from you, I consulted with my friend, A. Brahe, Consul for Germany, and he promised to send the long case containing the above-named objects to the German Consul in London. I am pleased to be able to send the purchased items, because I have only limited space at my disposal in my house, and in addition I do not wish Dr Bastian to think that I had accepted his commission with reluctance or carried it out with tardiness.

As you clearly stated in your letter that my collection, inclusive of the objects from the Solomon Islands, is of interest to the ethnological department of the Royal Museum and as I am convinced that several of these objects can now only be found with great difficulty, I have not hesitated a moment longer in immediately sending off everything that I possess of ethnological value as the packing costs, the transport and the trouble cost no more for the whole lot than for a portion of them, and I cannot afford to waste my time.

As the various objects in my small collection were collected sporadically during my 26 year-stay in Victoria and the other Australian colonies on my journeys back and forth through the land, and I brought them back to Melbourne with me often with great difficulty, and without me making exact notes about their prices, I have as, an indication of value, followed the prices which are asked for them here and which in most cases have also been paid by the local Museum.

With much pleasure the few items which cost me nothing are included for the Museum in Berlin as evidence of how prepared and glad I am to be of service to a national collection.

I received the four message sticks of the Aborigines of Western Australia from Miss L. Palmer,<sup>56</sup> whose father is the government surveyor in that Colony, and with them I believe I am sending a valuable gift for your collection because they are said to be very rare and are certainly very interesting in an ethnological connection as they provide evidence of higher intellectual development of our Blacks than is accepted in general, showing how they are able to communicate over long distances using external symbols.

Both the drawings that I am sending you, I likewise ask you to consider as something exceptional because they are also of great rarity here. The original families, who had possession of this stretch of country before the British seized Australia, were still living on a station between Warrnambool and Port Fairy in western Victoria, with the Aboriginal name of Kangatong, which at that time was in the possession of my friend, Mr James Dawson. As just a young man of 16–17 years little Johnny [sic],<sup>57</sup> the natural heir of this property, was taken to Melbourne by Mr Dawson and on that occasion he also took him to a circus with equestrian performers. The larger sheet of the two is a product of the impressions which remained with him from that time and under pressure from his artistic nature it was executed only later. The English officer with his family, the red-cheeked ladies, the clown on high scaffolding etc., etc. – all these whirled like a mad dream in his imagination, as this sheet shows. This young Aborigine had never received the slightest instruction in drawing but usually he spent the time in the evening hours, after a hard day's work with the large herd of cattle, in the production of similar drawings. I received these sheets nearly 23 years ago, during my visit to Kangatong, as a curiosity.

The waist belt of human hair that was given to me by Eduard Schaefer,<sup>58</sup> one of the most important goldsmiths in Melbourne, was brought to Melbourne by a German ship captain from the Maldon [Malden] Islands and given to the above-named gentleman. This belt is also said to be hard to get. I said to both Miss Palmer and Mr. E. Schaefer I would send their gifts, documented with their names, to the Royal Museum in Berlin.

The three throwing game projectiles (Weet - Weet) are now of great rarity. (We have no examples in our collection.) The description of the game in

which they are used is given in detail in Mr Brough Smyth's work, as well as the use of all weapons and implements of the Aborigines, which is why I earnestly recommend this book to you.

Please also appreciate both the stone axes appropriately, I cannot find two so complete examples (particularly not for purchase) in Melbourne except in our Museum. In the Museum we have a large number of such stones (from the collection of Mr Brough Smyth which the Museum has purchased)<sup>59</sup> but only a few of them are correctly furnished with handles. The curious very heavy stone hammer I mentioned in one of my previous letters, in the possession of the dealer in curios, H. Hart, will probably be hard to get at a lower price because when I spoke to the owner a couple of days ago he did not want to accept a lower offer and he said to me that in spite of all his efforts since my purchase of weapons etc for the Royal Museum, he has not been able to get new objects. On the various Aboriginal stations in Victoria, where the last remnants of the dark population of this Colony (some hundreds) are kept by the government, there are still Aborigines who manufacture weapons and other tools after the old style as an enterprise. However, I place very little value on these modern objects that have never been used. There is very little opportunity to get anything from the interior of Australia where the Aborigines still live in their primitive state, because transport is very troublesome and compared with the effort of bringing anything here, the sale does not promise a sufficiently tempting profit.

You write to me that you do not know whether the administration of the Royal Museums has adequate means at its disposal to acquire my collection (particularly the part from the Solomon Islands). I do not know what connection the various directors of the departments of the Royal Museums have in relation to the General Administration, but I venture to make a suggestion for the adjustment of the differences, which perhaps could be satisfactory for both parties, if it is feasible for the General Administration to enter into it.

You have probably ascertained from Director Friedländer that my main hobby is the collection of numismatic treasures and because I presume that the Royal Museum is in possession of very many duplicates owing to the magnificent new acquisitions,<sup>60</sup> there would be the possibility that the Administration of the Royal Museums, in agreement with Director Friedländer, could make an exchange of such duplicates up to the amount of

the value for the ethnological objects sent by me.

Therefore esteemed Doctor would you have the kindness to speak to the relevant persons about my suggestion and communicate to me as soon as possible about it? If I see the possibility of the implementation, I will contact Dr Friedländer directly about more detailed provisions.

With this opportunity I also take the liberty of making you aware that I am in possession of a large collection of contemporary and fossil shells, which contains representatives of more or less all classes. It would please me if such a collection, which I made over many years, was incorporated into a German collection after my decease. Should the department for this branch of the natural sciences have a particular interest in them, then this matter could also be easily arranged. My collection is mainly rich in Australian, Tasmanian, New Zealand and Fiji shells.<sup>61</sup>

Because I cannot determine the value of them myself, I would leave the valuation of them to the kind judgement of our eminent Professor McCoy, Director of our Natural History cabinet at the University.<sup>62</sup>

Most amicably recommending myself to you, I remain most humbly your,

Eugen von Guérard

#### List of Australian objects

|  | Shilling |
|--|----------|
| N.1. Long serrated spear, the barbs cut from the same piece. From the Yarra Tribe, east of Melbourne.  | 12       |
| 2,3,4. Throwing stick (womerah) and two throwing spears (Tir-rer) from a Tribe at the southern Grampians (west of Melbourne), purchased in a camp of Aborigines at the foot of Mt Sturgeon 1856. | 17       |
| 5. Shield against spear throwing with an inset handle (called Kirrenn) <sup>63</sup> Yarra Tribe, east of Melbourne.   | 12½      |
| 6,7,8. Throwing game projectiles of the Aborigines, called Weet-Weet. Yarra Tribe (east of Melbourne) are very hard to obtain.   | 15       |
| 9. Heavy shield (against club blows) with the handle cut out of the same piece (Mulga) from the Yarra Tribe.   | 12½      |
| 10. Heaviest kind of shield, as above, bought in the camp of a Tribe in the neighbourhood of Timboon (West Victoria).  | 12½      |

11. Lean-ile or Langel, usually called Liangle by the old colonists. From a Tribe near Timboon.<sup>64</sup> 12 ½
12. Womerah or throwing board. From the same Tribe, with interesting engraving. 5
13. Ditto. A similar one from the Yarra Tribe. 5
14. Waddy or light war club from the Tribe near Timboon. 6
15. Ditto. War club made from Mayal wood from a Tribe at Lake Victoria on the Murray River, South Australia. 8
16. Boomerang purchased from a young Aborigine at the foot of Mt William, Grampians, West Victoria. 5
17. Ditto. From the Aborigines of Kangatong, between Warrnambool and Mt Rouse West Victoria. 5
18. Stone axe. This heavy stone axe is very old. The handle was made for me by an old chieftain of the Warrnambool Tribe, King Koneware. 45  
8 £ .13 Sh. 6 d.<sup>65</sup>
19. Smaller stone axe (Merring) furnished with a handle for me by the same old King Koneware. The wood from the young wattle (Acacia) is stuck together with gum from this tree and bound with kangaroo sinews, the common and customary manner of the oldest times utilised by the Aborigines. (from Kangatong). 35
20. Netbag woven by an Aborigine from Kangatong, from yarn made and coloured by them. 5
21. Reed basket woven by another woman of the Mount Rouse Tribe (Bin-nuck). 2½
22. Kangaroo teeth necklace of incisors held together with kangaroo skin and sinew, now very hard to get. Also made by the Aborigines of West Victoria. No. 22 was made at Kangatong. 60
23. 8 possum skins, as examples of the manner in which Aborigines worked them in order to make fur blankets.
24. Tail feathers of the Aust. Emu used to make waist aprons and head decorations by the Aborigines.
25. Emu wing.
26. Feet of the wild turkey. Bustard.

27. Tail of the Australian lyre bird from the mountain forests near Marysville, 75-80 Engl. miles east of Melbourne. 6  
5£+ 8. 6.  
8. 13. 6  
£14 + 2 =

- 28, 29, 30 and 31. Message sticks of the Aborigines of Western Australia. Rare. Gift of Miss M. H. Palmer.
32. Waist belt of the natives from the natives of the Maldon [Malden] Islands. Gift from Mr Schaefer (made from human hair)
33. Drawings from memories of the young Aborigine, Black Johny [sic] from Kangatong, West Victoria
34. Emu feathers from various parts of this bird used by the Aborigines to make belts and other adornments

Objects of the Natives of the Solomon Islands purchased by me in Melbourne in July 1872.

Shillings

- I. Long spear from New Island.  
Hootakaria wood. 15
- II. War club " " " 5
- III. Chieftain's club " " 6
- IV. Ceremonial club, paddle or other (breadfruit tree) 6
- V. " " in axe form " " 6
- VI. Bow Bookay Bay (Bookata wood) 6
- VII. Fifteen arrows from different islands 30  
3£. 14 Sh.  
14" x 2  
£17. Sh.16.

These objects purchased from a seaman who came to Melbourne from the Solomon Islands with a large collection of weapons and all kinds of other objects from these islands. I purchased a large number of objects of the most interesting kind for our National Museum from him and I chose only these few items for myself, because I presumed a similar opportunity to get such things at reasonable prices would soon not be found.

I heard at the German Consulate here that the crate will go from here by the steamer *Kent*, departing towards the end of this month via Suez to London.

### Respecting the packing

In order to make the crate, which is made of very strong kauri pine wood and lined with zinc (because of moisture), not too long, I found it necessary to saw through the longest spear (12 foot 2 inches), but in a way that it can be put together again almost imperceptibly without trouble. For the same reason I have taken out a long hardwood point from a long reed, which can easily be attached again with glue.

I request that every care is used on unpacking so that nothing is broken off the fragile wooden objects. I have carefully wrapped the more damageable points of the spears in paper and put them in the little basket lying at the upper end. The small objects are packed in the little basket made of yarn. I have wrapped all things in paper where rubbing was to be feared and laid them together as firmly and flat as possible and finally, as empty space still remained, filled it tightly with plane shavings and hope now that the whole collection will arrive in Berlin in the best condition as I think I have not missed any precautionary measures.

Of the 500 Marks that I have received from the Royal Administration for disposal and which I have spent as per submitted invoice, only 20 Marks [= £ 1] still remain. The enclosed invoice for the crate of kauri pine lined with zinc amounts to 2 £ 5 sh.,<sup>66</sup> accordingly my claim for it [the crate] consists of 1 £ 5 sh. or 25 Marks to which I will not add several small tips.<sup>67</sup> But I have still not received the invoice for transport costs to London.



Figure 10: Reed basket, Kolorer gundidj, Djabwurrung, ('Mount Rouse'), from von Guérard's collection, 24.5 x 14 cm(h x w x d). SMB,EM VI 2578. Image courtesy of Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.



Figure 11: Shield, Wurundjeri ('Yarra Tribe'), from von Guérard's collection, 87 x 15 x 5 cm), SMB,EM VI 2564. Image courtesy of Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.



Figure 12: Chieftain's club, Solomon Islands, from von Guérard's collection, 3.3 x 109.5 x 12 cm(h x w x d), SMB,EM VI 2589. Image courtesy of Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.

On receipt of this letter Voss passed it on to Friedländer for consideration of von Guérard's suggestion on 15 September 1879. The latter replied on 24 September that nothing stood in the way of von Guérard receiving Münzkabinett duplicates in exchange for ethnological objects.

In the meantime, another letter was received from von Guérard.

**Letter to Voss 3 August 1879**

No. 2132/79  
Gipps street East Melbourne  
3 August 1879

Dr Voss  
Curatorial Assistant at the Royal  
Museum in Berlin.

Most esteemed Dr Voss.

In the hope that you have received my letter of July in which I reported to you on the packing of all of the ethnological objects, of those that I obtained here for the Royal Museum in Berlin as well as my small collection, I now hasten to inform you that the crate left here on the steamer *Kent* on 26 July and travels through the Suez Canal to London, where it is addressed to the German Consul. Right after the arrival of the *Kent* you will presumably be informed [?] of it from there, but it may be advisable to write to the Consul in London as soon as possible about the forwarding.

As I have already informed you in my letter, the value of my small collection sent amounts in total to

|                     |     |    |   |
|---------------------|-----|----|---|
|                     | £17 | 16 |   |
| Outlay for crate    | 2   | 5  |   |
| Transport to London | 1   | 13 | 6 |
|                     | £21 | 14 | 6 |

20 Marks remaining of the 500 Marks

|                  |     |                   |
|------------------|-----|-------------------|
| Deducted from it | 1   |                   |
| Remaining        | £20 | 14 6 <sup>8</sup> |

Consequently cash expenditure for the crate and transport to London £2 18sh 6d

Enclosed you will find the invoice from the forwarding agent in Melbourne, which Consul Brahe has paid in full[?].<sup>69</sup>

I hope that I will very soon receive the pleasing information that the crate with all the objects in it have arrived in Berlin in good condition.

Respectfully  
your humble  
Eugen von Guérard

By November 1879 nothing had been done by the General Administration and the arrival of the consignment from Melbourne in a perfect state of preservation prompted Voss to request the Administration to give consent to the offer by Friedländer to allow duplicates from the Münzkabinett to be used in exchange for von Guérard's collection.

Only on 7 February 1880 was a letter sent to Dr Peters, Director of the Zoological Museum of the University, asking whether the Zoological Museum would be interested in acquiring von Guérard's shell collection. Peters' reply on 12 February 1880 stated that their collection was rich in shells from the regions represented in von Guérard's collection and that it would be unlikely that his collection would contain anything they lacked. In any case the Museum could not purchase anything without seeing the specimens to judge their value. So the offer was declined.

A letter was also sent to von Guérard.

**Letter to von Guérard 7 February 1880**

to No 1926/79  
and 2132/79

Berlin 7 February 1880  
General Administration of the Royal Museums  
Mr Eugen von Guérard  
Melbourne  
Gipps Street east.

The General Administration informs your honour that your kind letters to Dr Voss of 7 July and 3 August last year reached here and that the crate with the ethnological objects has been received safely and the General Administration gladly agrees to your proposal to cover the costs for these objects by delivery of duplicates from the Royal Coin Cabinet. Would you have the goodness to now indicate more precisely the kind of duplicates that you desire as compensation?

Communication with the Zoological Museum of the University here has been made regarding your shell collection.

On behalf of  
[initials]

7/2

Marginal notes.

Request certificate about the purchased items.

Ulbrich

Inventoried see No. 2.1880

Berlin 10.4.80 Dr Voss

For Mr Schäfer and Miss Palmer and Mrs von Guérard (see previous letters) I request letters of thanks be drafted.

Berlin 29.4.80 Dr Voss

Following Peters' reply the General Administration informed von Guérard that his shell collection was not wanted.

**Letter to von Guérard 16 February 1880**

No 332/80

Berlin 16 February 1880  
 General Administration of the Royal Museums  
 Mr Eugene von Guérard  
 Melbourne  
 Gipps Street east

With reference to the closing passage of our letter of 7 February, the General Administration notifies your honour most humbly herewith that the Zoological Museum of the Royal University here under date 12 February informed us that its collection is already rich in shells from Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand and the Fiji Islands, and therefore it would be very doubtful whether it would be lacking in many of the species contained in your collection. At any rate the Zoological Museum could not enter into a purchase without having seen them in order to judge the value of them, and then in all probability only the purchase of a small part would be required for the Museum. Therefore the Museum refrains from pursuing the matter further.

On behalf of  
 [initials]  
 17/2

In the meantime von Guérard, dissatisfied with the long delay in replying to his letters, sent off a letter to Friedländer.

**Letter to Friedländer 20 January 1880**

To 1926/80

Gipps street east East Melbourne  
 20 January 1880

Most esteemed Director

By the last European mail that arrived here at the New Year, I had the pleasure of getting your friendly letter of 26 October through Dr Voss and I hasten to reply to it by the post departing in a few days, seizing the opportunity to wish you a very happy and prosperous year and at the same time to thank you for your kindness.<sup>70</sup> I was very eager to hear from Dr Voss about the ethnological objects sent to the Royal Museum, whether they were satisfied with them and understood the value of particular things according to their rarity. Unfortunately, in his letter Dr Voss did not go into a review of these items in the slightest, so that I must believe my whole consignment has not been yet examined with any attention.

Is Dr Bastian still travelling?

In any case I am pleased that I know those

Australian objects that I collected during my travels often with great difficulty are preserved in a national museum. I just wish that some of the very rare items which are among them might be also recognised accordingly. It would have pleased me if a few words of particular thanks for the presents of Miss Palmer and Mr Schäfer had been expressed, because I prevailed upon both to give these contributions to my consignment. It is a pity that the distance from here to Berlin is so very great and that all consignments generate such inconvenience and costs and above all take such a long time. Really one must arm oneself with the patience of Job to bide the endless time until one gets some kind of a result, until even only half satisfactory answers arrive.

I thank you very sincerely for your kindness and friendship in having taken up my suggestion for an exchange so readily. I just fear that I have taken advantage of your kindness too often. However you can be assured that I know to value your kindness in the fullest measure.

Should the General Administration, despite your friendly willingness, not wish to enter into my suggestion, I would...

[Remainder of letter not in the Ethnological Museum file.]

The first two pages of this letter were passed on to the General Administration which prompted them to finally write letters of thanks to Miss Palmer, Edward Schaefer and von Guérard's wife. There is no record of a letter of thanks being sent to him.

**Letters to donors 8 May 1880**

To 1926/79  
 Berlin 8 May 1880  
 General Administration of the Royal Museums  
 Miss L. Palmer  
 Melbourne

Respected Miss,

You have had the great kindness to forward four message sticks as a gift to the Royal Museums through the agency of Mr von Guérard. The General Administration shall not fail to express its sincere thanks to you for this proof of gracious goodwill.

Goldsmith Eduard Schaefer  
 at Melbourne.

Your honour has had the great kindness... a belt of human hair... as above

Mrs von Guérard  
at Melbourne

Gracious madam,

You have had the great kindness.... 8 skins of possums as samples of the manner in which the Aborigines (Blaks) [sic] fashioned them for the production of skin blankets... as above

Mr Eugène von Guérard  
at Melbourne

The General Administration has still to thank your wife, Mr Schaefer and Miss Palmer for the gifts which have gone to the Royal Museums through your honour's kind agency.

The General Administration now ventures to send you three letters of thanks with the most humble request to kindly send them to the relevant addresses.

The General Administration of the Royal Museums  
[initials]

The final letter in the series was from von Guérard to Voss, prompted by a personal letter from Voss, which was not recorded or a copy kept. Though von Guérard offered to be of further assistance to the Museum, there is no record that they took up the offer.

**Letter to Voss 22 June 1880**

No 2131/80  
Gipps street East Melbourne  
22 June 1880.

Most esteemed Doctor

I received your letter of 30 April some days ago with the enclosure by Director Friedländer. I thank you for it and particularly that you mention the gifts from Miss Palmer and Mr Schaefer for the Museum. Anyone who is not familiar with the organisations of museums, galleries and similar collections considers a gift made not so much as a donation to the public in general but to the respective management and expects some words of thanks from the latter. Miss P[almer] and Mr Sch[aefer] were both pleased to hear that their kind gifts were deemed interesting.

Unfortunately I have neither seen nor heard anything here of Professor Bastian and in the event that he was in Sydney, I am very sorry that I was not able to welcome him in Melbourne.

As you suppose we are very busy here with all the preparations for the International Exhibition.<sup>71</sup> The colossal, not very beautiful building is completed except for a few details and stands on the highest point of Melbourne surrounded by pleasure gardens. In general the public here is not very interested in this ill-timed undertaking, because our whole country numbers only 900,000 inhabitants and in proportion to this population the expenses are completely unjustifiable without the slightest hope of enough success in a pecuniary regard both for the government and the exhibition.<sup>72</sup>

I know Mr Katzenstein only a little.<sup>73</sup> He is here again and has imported a large quantity of pictures and furniture. Two large ethnological collections have been purchased in Sydney for our Museum in the last few months. One consists of more than 500 objects from almost all islands of the Pacific Ocean and cost £200 Sterling, whereas the other collection of a couple of hundred objects comes mainly from the Solomon Islands and was purchased for £100. Both these collections, combined with similar Australian and other objects which we already had, will surely form one of the largest collections of this kind in the world.<sup>74</sup>

I presume Professor Bastian, on returning from his great journey, will also bring many treasures with him for the museum in Berlin.<sup>75</sup>

If in future I can be of use in any way to the Administration of the Royal Museums, I would always be pleased to do my best.

Although not knowing you personally, my kind regards,

I am most humbly  
your  
Eugen von Guérard

P.S.

I just heard through our Consul Mr Brahe that he assumed the ethnological collection was under the supervision of Professor McCoy and therefore contacted that gentleman to get the catalogue of this collection for Professor Bastian.<sup>76</sup>

Up to now this department of our Museum remains under my supervision and as soon as the supplement or a new catalogue is printed (which will require a considerable time) I will be pleased to send one to Professor Bastian. I ask you give my regards to the honoured gentleman.

E. v. G.

**Hart Invoice 8 August 1878**

Hart's invoice included with von Guérard's letter of 25 August 1878 is transcribed here to provide information on what was purchased from him.

To No 2232/78

Melbourne, Augst 8 th 1878

Herr Von Guérard

|    |                            |          |                  |  |
|----|----------------------------|----------|------------------|--|
|    |                            |          | Bt of L. H. Hart |  |
|    |                            |          | Royal Arcade     |  |
|    |                            |          | Melbourne        |  |
| 1  | Victorian shield           | 12       | 6                |  |
| 2  | Fighting club              | 12       | 6                |  |
| 3  | do do <sup>77</sup>        | 12       | 6                |  |
| 4  | Boomerang                  | 5        |                  |  |
| 5  | Carved waddy               | 7        | 6                |  |
| 6  | Super. <sup>78</sup> " "   | 10       |                  |  |
| 7  | " " small                  | 5        | 6                |  |
| 8  | Carved waddy               | 7        | 6                |  |
| 9  | Woomera                    | 5        | 6                |  |
| 10 | Fighting club              | 5        | 6                |  |
| 11 | Boomerang N. S. W.         | 5        |                  |  |
| 12 | Shield                     | 15       |                  |  |
| 13 | War spear                  | 7        | 6                |  |
| 14 | " "                        | 7        | 6                |  |
| 15 | Eeling spear               | 11       |                  |  |
| 16 | Reed spear                 | 7        | 6                |  |
| 17 | " "                        | 7        | 6                |  |
| 18 | " " small                  | 5        | 6                |  |
| 19 | Long " " Port Darwin       | 12       | 6                |  |
| 20 | Boomerang                  | 5        |                  |  |
| 21 | Curious spear P. D.        | 10       | 6                |  |
| 22 | Jagged spear <sup>79</sup> | 12       | 6                |  |
| 23 | " "                        | 12       | 6                |  |
| 24 | Native Bag                 | 5        |                  |  |
| 25 | Mountain stick             | 6        |                  |  |
| 26 | Corroberee "               | 5        | 6                |  |
| 27 | do "                       | 5        | 6                |  |
| 28 | Waddy Victr                | 5        | 6                |  |
| 29 | 3 Boomerangs               | 12       |                  |  |
| 30 | Fighting waddy             | 4        | 6                |  |
| 31 | Waddy Vic                  | 6        | 6                |  |
| 32 | Reed spear                 | 5        | 6                |  |
| 33 | Waddy Vict                 | 5        | 6                |  |
| 34 | do W. Aust                 | 5        |                  |  |
| 35 | Waddy Victoria             | 5        | 6                |  |
|    |                            | £13. 14. | 6                |  |
|    | Bt Forward                 | 13. 14.  | 6                |  |

|    |                         |         |   |
|----|-------------------------|---------|---|
| 36 | Waddy                   | 5       | 6 |
| 37 | Shield                  | 12      | 6 |
| 38 | Waddy                   | 5       | 6 |
| 39 | "                       | 5       | 6 |
| 40 | War do                  | 8       | 6 |
| 41 | Boomerang S. Aust       | 5       |   |
| 42 | do W. "                 | 5       |   |
| 43 | 2 Woomeras W " 7/6 e    | 15      |   |
| 44 | Shield                  | 15      |   |
| 45 | Woomera V.              | 5       | 6 |
| 46 | Stone Hooked Club       | 6       | 6 |
| 47 | Woomera Victor          | 5       | 6 |
| 48 | " P. Darwin             | 6       | 6 |
| 49 | Mountain stick          | 6       |   |
| 50 | Waddy                   | 5       |   |
| 51 | Barb spear              | 7       | 6 |
| 52 | Victoria do             | 7       | 6 |
| 53 | Jaggd spear             | 11      | 6 |
| 54 | " " W. A.               | 7       | 6 |
| 55 | : "                     | 7       | 6 |
| 56 | Stone Headed do N. Aust | 15      |   |
| 57 | " " N. Aust             | 15      |   |
| 58 | Fighting waddy          | 5       | 6 |
| 59 | Native Basket           | 4       | 6 |
| 60 | " "                     | 4       | 6 |
| 61 | Native Chains... Vict   | 10      |   |
|    |                         | £24. 4  |   |
|    | Discount 2½ p.c.        | 12      | 0 |
|    |                         | £23. 12 | 0 |

Received Augst [sic] 9th 1878

by cheque

Lewis H Hart



Figure 13: Reed necklace (described as a 'chain' in Hart's list), Victoria, 54.4 x 23 x 3 cm (h x w x d). Purchased from Hart on consignment for Berlin. SMB,EM VI 2545. Image courtesy of Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.

### Acknowledgements

The authors thank Dorothea Deterts, Curator, Ethnologisches Museum Berlin, for her generous assistance over many years, and Anna Weinreich, Assistant Curator, who brought these letters to our attention. Michaela Hussein-Wiedemann and Hendryk Ortlieb, Zentralarchiv, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin responded to our requests promptly and consulted the original documents on our behalf. We are grateful to Elizabeth Willis for research assistance, Herbert Mees for advice on some difficult passages of translation and David Holloway for technical assistance. We wish to acknowledge and thank Gilgar Gunditj elder Auntie Eileen Alberts for generously sharing some of her family story with us.

### Conflicts of interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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## Appendix

To assist future researchers identify the items from von Guérard's own collection as distinct from those items purchased by him from L. H. Hart, the Ethnological Museum registered numbers are given along with the numbers of von Guérard used in his list. It has not been possible to assign registered numbers against the items in Hart's list.

- N.1. Long serrated spear VI 2560.
2. Throwing staff (womerah) VI 2563.
- 3, 4. Two throwing spears (Tir-rer) VI 2561, 2562.
5. Shield VI 2564
- 6,7,8. Throwing game projectiles VI 2565 a-c.
9. Heavy shield VI 2566.
10. Heaviest kind of shield VI 2567.
11. Lean-ile or Langel VI 2568.
12. Womerah VI 2569.
13. Womerah VI 2570.
14. Waddy VI 2571
15. Waddy VI 2572.
16. Boomerang VI 2573.
17. Boomerang VI 2574
18. Stone axe VI 2575.
19. Smaller stone axe (Merring) VI 2576.
20. Netbag VI 2577.
21. Reed basket VI 2578.
22. Kangaroo teeth necklace VI 2579.
23. 8 possum skins VI 2580.
24. Tail feathers of the Aust. Emu VI 2581.
25. Emu wing VI 2586a.
26. Feet of the wild turkey. Bustard. Not registered. Possibly discarded.
27. Tail of the Australian lyre. Not registered. Possibly discarded.
- 28, 29, 30 and 31. Message sticks. Gift of Miss M. H. Palmer. VI 2582a, c, 2583. One possibly missing.
32. Waist belt. Gift from Mr Schaefer VI 2584.
33. A + B. Drawings by Black Johny [sic] VI 2585a-b.
34. Emu feathers VI 2586b.

### Solomon Islands

- I. Long spear VI 2587
- II. War club VI 2588
- III. Chieftain's club VI 2589.
- IV. Ceremonial club, paddle or other VI 2590.
- V. Ceremonial club in axe form VI 2591.
- VI. Bow Bookay Bay VI 2592.
- VII. Fifteen arrows VI 2593.

## Endnotes

- 1 Johann Joseph Eugen von Guérard, born Vienna 1811, studied and painted in Italy 1827–1838, studied and painted in Düsseldorf, Germany, 1838–1852, lived and worked in Australia, December 1852 – January 1882, lived in Düsseldorf 1882–1891 and London, 1891–1901, died Chelsea, London 4 April 1901.
- 2 Julius Friedländer, born Berlin 25 June 1813 – died Berlin 4 April 1884. He was appointed Director of the Königliches Münzkabinett in 1868. A. von Sallet, 1885. Julius Friedländer. *Zeitschrift für Numismatik* 12:116–119.  
The letters within the date range of this correspondence indicate that Friedländer wrote to von Guérard on 10 December 1877, [?] April 1878, c.30 April 1879, 26 October 1879, and von Guérard to Friedländer between April and August 1878. It seems the letters were addressed to, and written from, Friedländer's home address, and therefore not kept in the museum archives.
- 3 Bernard von Guérard, born Düsseldorf 1771 – died Naples 1836. Artist, known principally as a painter of miniatures and portraits of members of the Royal Court, Vienna 1793–1827, and the courts of Trieste, Turin, Milan and Naples, 1827–1836.
- 4 Adolf Phillip Wilhelm Bastian born Bremen 26 June 1826 – died Port of Spain, Trinidad 2 February 1905. Bastian visited Australia in 1851 and was in Auckland for a few days in March 1880. He was appointed Director of the Ethnologisches Museum in 1873. *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* 37 (1906): 233–256.
- 5 Albert Franz Ludwig Voss, museum curator, born Fritzow 24 April 1837 – died Berlin 19 July 1906. Voss joined the museum in 1874, becoming director of the prehistory department in 1886, serving until 1906. *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* 38 (1906): 761–762.
- 6 Königliche Museen Acta betreffend die Erwerbung ethnologischer Gegenstände. Vol. 2 vom 1. Januar 1877 bis 31. Januar 1881 Pars 1 B Australien, Incoming registers: 852/78; 2093/78; 2232/78; 1926/79; 2132/79; 332/80; 1926/80; 2131/80. The volume is being digitised, with publication on the museum's website scheduled for 2024.
- 7 James Smith, 'A Colonial Artist', *The Illustrated Australian Mail*, 22 February 1862, pp. 49–50.
- 8 James Dawson (1806–1900) see P. Corris, *Australian Dictionary of Biography* 4: 35 (1972); Robert Brough Smyth (1830–1889) see M. Hoare, *Australian Dictionary of Biography* 6: 161 (1976); Alfred William Howitt (1830–1908) see W.E.H. Stanner, *Australian Dictionary of Biography* 4: 432–435 (1972).

- 9 The total consignment of 102 objects sent to Berlin included seven from the Solomon Islands.
  - 10 George Balthasar Neumayer (1826–1909), physicist and meteorologist. See R.A. Swan, *Australian Dictionary of Biography* 5: 329–331.
  - 11 Wilhelm Alexander Brahe, Consul for Germany. Born 3 August 1825 at Paderborn – died at Hawthorn, Victoria, 25 December 1917. Brahe arrived in Victoria in May 1849. He was admitted to the Victorian bar as a conveyancer in 1856 and as a solicitor in 1866. He was Consul from 1868 to 1912. *Argus* 28 December 1917, p. 4.
  - 12 *Argus* 17 October 1871, p. 6. One of the two works is *Rose's Gap, at the Northern end of the Grampians* [1871], 34.0 52.0 cm, Private collection.
  - 13 Ludwig Becker showed 'Part of a necklace made of native seeds, worn by the Chief of the Murray tribe', and a 'Pencil drawing by an Aborigine', at the 1854 Melbourne Exhibition, Cat 294 (nos. 2 and 3): 29.
  - 14 *Argus* 2 June 1870, p. 1; 10 April 1876, p. 8. Lewis Henry Hart, antiquities dealer. Born London 5 July 1838 – died Melbourne 25 April 1915. Hart was the son of Henry Hart Hart [sic], curiosities dealer. *Argus* 27 April 1915, p. 1. Melbourne General Cemetery Lewis Henry Hart Headstone inscription.
  - 15 *Official Catalogue of the Melbourne Exhibition, 1854, in connexion with the Paris Exhibition, 1855*, p. 25, No. 224 Hart, Henry, 91 Collins St-W, '2 Opossum rugs, Victoria and Van Diemen's Land'; p. 32, No. 328, item 1 De Guérard, John [sic], 102 Collins St-E. 'Aborigines met on the road to the diggings'.
  - 16 Brough Smyth's collection was purchased on 15 November 1877.
  - 17 Brough Smyth was a member of the Philosophical Society and then Royal Society of Victoria from 1855–1864, and secretary from 1855–1857, and in 1863. Von Guerard was a member from 1859–1867, and on the council from 1864–1867.
  - 18 The Brough Smyth volumes were acquired by the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, though when is not known.
  - 19 Mrs Dawson. Joan Anderson née Park, born c 1806 – died Wuorong 21 October 1879. *Camperdown Chronicle* 28 October 1879, p. 2.
  - 20 Yarruun Parpur Tarneen (Victorious), the daughter of Weerat Kuyuut, was, according to Dawson, a 'Chiefess of the Moporr Tribe'. She and her husband, Wombeet Tuulawarn, were key informants for Dawson's book.
  - 21 Kaawirn Kuunawarn (c1820–1889), also known as King David, see J. Critchett, *Australian Dictionary of Biography* Supplementary Volume: 211 (2005).
  - 22 Johnny Dawson, also known as Johnny Kangatong, born Tarrone c. 1840, died Framlingham 1883. He was entrusted to James Dawson's care by his father to protect him from an outbreak of small pox and the ongoing violence of the Eumeralla wars. He and his wife, Sarah, who also grew up at Kangatong, lived at Framlingham Aboriginal Station near Warrnambool from the late 1860s. Johnny died of consumption there on 3 October 1883. Along with Kaawirn Kuunawarn and Yaruun Parpur Tarneen, they visited the Dawson family at Wuorong, and Isabella Taylor, née Dawson, at neighbouring Renny Hill, throughout the 1870s and 1880s. Information from Gilgar Gunditj elder Auntie Eileen Alberts, 15 September 2022.
  - 23 Not found.
  - 24 Not found.
  - 25 Eugen Merzbacher, German numismatist and coin dealer, born Munich 4 December 1845 – died Munich 18 December 1903. *Mitteilungen Bayerischen Numismatischen Gesellschaft* 22/23 (1903/04): xii–xiv. *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten* 22 September 1903, p. 3.
  - 26 Marcus Antonius (83BC–30BC), Roman statesman and general.
  - 27 Antonia Augusta was the daughter of Mark Antony and Octavia. Coins with her image were issued by her son the emperor Claudius.
  - 28 Antonia family. An important Roman family that included generals, various Roman politicians and some emperors.
  - 29 A Roman coin, but it is not clear which.
  - 30 *Saemtliche Gedichte Michelangelo's...* Mit deutscher Uebersetzung von Sophie Hasenclever (Leipzig, 1875).
- Sophia Hasenclever, born Berlin 6 January 1823 – died Düsseldorf 10 May 1892, daughter of Wilhelm von Schadow, Director of the Künstakademie, Düsseldorf. Married Richard Hasenclever, a local doctor. *Kölnische Zeitung* 11 May 1892, p. 2. Von Guérard visited Sophie and her husband at their home at Grevenbroich on 25 October 1845: Von Guérard sketchbook XVI, 1843, State Library of New South Wales, DGB14, v. 6. [loose sheet].
- 31 Felix Hasenclever born 1851 – died London 23 August 1892, son of the above. Joined German navy and was appointed Korvettkapitän (commander) 19 February 1889. He was German naval attaché in London at the time of his death. The *Hertha* visited Melbourne on 30 March 1874 at which time he was in fact an Unterleutnant (junior lieutenant) on the ship. *Argus* 31 March 1877, p. 6. *Pall Mall Gazette* 24 August 1892, p. 6. *Karlsruher Zeitung* 28 August 1892, p. 1.

- 32 Brahe see note 11.
- 33 Neumayer see note 10.
- 34 Letter not found.
- 35 Karl Georg Guido von Usedom, administrator, born Kartzitz on Rügen 17 July 1805 – died at San Remo, Italy, 22 January 1884. Von Usedom was a diplomat who was appointed Director of the Royal Museums in 1872. He retired in June 1879. *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 39 (1895): 375–377.
- 36 Letters not found.
- 37 Letter not found.
- 38 Numbers in brackets indicate where numbers were written on the letter by Albert Voss and refer to his notes of 12 November 1878.
- 39 Hart see note 14.
- 40 The ethnological collection was part of the National Gallery of Victoria and under the control of von Guérard. It was later transferred to the National Museum of Victoria, now Museums Victoria.
- 41 Smyth see note 8.
- 42 Dawson see note 8.
- 43 Kaawirn Kuunawarn see note 21.
- 44 Mrs Dawson see note 19.
- 45 The end of the drawing is obscured in the binding gutter. We have used a copy of the Brough Smyth illustration as it is clear that von Guérard copied it.
- 46 Edith Mary Anderson née Howitt. Born 3 August 1834 at Nottingham – died at Barragunda, Cape Schanck, Victoria, 3 December 1884. *Argus* 12 December 1884, p. 1.
- 47 See document at end of the correspondence.
- 48 Henry Sheffield was sub-librarian of the Melbourne Public Library from 1858 and Librarian from September 1875 until his retirement in 1881. He was born at Whitechapel, London, on 30 April 1809 and died at Warrnambool on 14 April 1908, aged 98. *Argus* 12 September 1875, p. 5; 25 April 1908, p. 64. E.L.T. Armstrong, 1906, *The Book of the Public Library, Museums, and National Gallery of Victoria, 1856–1906*, Melbourne: 114–5.
- 49 This work was volume 6 of *Die Völker des Oestlichen Asien, Studien und Reisen*.
- 50 Louise (Catharina Luisa Josepha) von Guérard née Arnz, born Düsseldorf, 2 May 1817 – died Chelsea, London 12 March 1891. Daughter of Heinrich Arnz (1785–1854), director of Arnz & Co, a leading firm of printers and lithographers in Düsseldorf. Married Johann Joseph Eugen von Guérard at St Francis's Church, Melbourne, 15 July 1854. Of her fourteen siblings, two of her brothers, Albert and Otto Arnz, were Düsseldorf School artists and three of her sisters married important Düsseldorf painters (Otto Achenbach, Joseph Fay and Albert Flamm).
- 51 Purchased from one Bennett of Launceston in July 1872. See Report of the Trustees of the Public Library, Museums, & National Gallery of Victoria, ... for 1872. *Victoria Parliamentary Papers* 1873, no. 16, p. 21.
- 52 Voss see Note 5.
- 53 Brough Smyth's *Aborigines of Victoria*.
- 54 This refers to the spear over 12 feet long, no. 22 in Hart's list.
- 55 Max Fränkel, librarian, born Landsberg an der Warthe 11 March 1846 – died Berlin 10 June 1903. Fränkel was librarian to the Berlin museums from April 1875 until 1890. *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* 18: 127. *Allgemeine Zeitung*, Beilage, 12 June 1903, p. 464.
- 56 Miss L. Palmer. Probably Eliza (Lizzie) Ann Palmer, daughter of James, surveyor, and Harriet Berrill. She was born on 13 August 1853 at Clerkenwell, Middlesex and died at Guildford, Western Australia, on 10 February 1936. She married Hubert Edward Barker Gull at South Yarra on 17 June 1886 and moved to Western Australia. *Argus* 24 June 1886, p. 1. *West Australian* 11 February 1936, p. 1. Her father was employed on the Victorian Railways and for a time on construction of the railway to Geraldton in Western Australia.
- 57 Johny see note 22.
- 58 Eduard Schaefer (Schäfer), jeweller and goldsmith. Born 15 March 1811 at Liegnitz, Silesia – died 15 August 1895 at Windsor, Victoria. *Age* 16 August 1895, p. 1.
- 59 The collection was purchased in November 1877. See Report of the Trustees of the Public Library, Museums, & National Gallery of Victoria, ... for 1877. *Victoria Parliamentary Papers* 1878, no. 7, pp. 73, 75.
- 60 For some of the collections acquired see *Zeitschrift für Numismatik* 12: 116–119.
- 61 The collection was also offered to the Imperial Museum in Vienna in February 1881, but eventually sold to the Ballarat School of Mines in November 1881, see T. A. Darragh & R. Pullin, 2018: 52, 75.
- 62 Frederick McCoy (1817–1899), Professor of Natural Sciences in the University of Melbourne, see G. C. Fendlay, *Australian Dictionary of Biography* 5: 134 (1974). McCoy was also honorary director of the National Museum of Victoria situated in the grounds of the university.
- 63 Called Kerreem in Brough Smyth.
- 64 Refers to the Camperdown area.
- 65 Total at bottom of the page.
- 66 The invoice dated 7 July 1879 from William Shaw, paid on the same date.
- 67 Small tips given for sundry small services.

- 68 This is the total amount that von Guérard was owed if his collection was purchased, but he was only paid £2/18/6 in cash.
- 69 The shipping agents were William McCulloch & Co. Their invoice made out to Brahe, dated 28 July 1879, consisted of freight £1/1/-, lighterage 2/6, entry 2/6, commission on bill of lading 5/-, cartage 2/6, amounting to £1/13/6 paid by cheque on 1 August 1879.
- 70 Letter not found.
- 71 Melbourne International Exhibition 1880–1881. The exhibition was opened on 1 October 1880.
- 72 Von Guérard made similar comments about the Exhibition in his letters to Haast, though he later changed his mind and thought the Exhibition was magnificent, he also thought the disadvantages exceeded the advantages. See T. A. Darragh & R. Pullin, 2018: 34, 42, 47. The Exhibition did break even and the number of visitors amounted to 1, 330, 279. See *Melbourne International Exhibition 1880–1881. Official Record* 1882, pp. lxxviii–lxxix, lxxii.
- 73 J Katzenstein. Probably Joseph Herbert Katzenstein, wine and spirit merchant. Born Hesse c1826 – died 20 November 1901 at Melbourne. *Argus* 23 November 1901, p. 9. For an advertisement for paintings and furniture, see *Argus* 21 February 1880, p. 6.
- 74 One collection of 450 objects from the South Sea Islands was purchased on 3 April 1880 from the executor of a deceased Sydney resident and the other a collection of 216 Native Weapons from New Guinea was exhibited by the owner at the Sydney International Exhibition in 1879. Report of the Trustees of the Public Library, Museums, & National Gallery of Victoria,... for 1880. *Victoria Parliamentary Papers* 1881, no. 7, pp 70, 73.
- 75 Bastian arrived in Cooktown, Queensland, aboard *Bowen* from Hongkong via Darwin on 29 December 1879. He later went on to Sydney where he visited the Sydney Exhibition, at which he saw the Australian Museum's ethnographic display. On 12 January 1880, he proposed an exchange with the Australian Museum for duplicates from their respective collections. After leaving Sydney, he spent a few days in Auckland, New Zealand in March 1880, departing there aboard *City of New York* on 31 March 1880. He returned to Berlin about September 1880. *Brisbane Courier* 30 December 1879, p. 3; *Auckland Star* 31 March 1880, p. 2; *New Zealand Herald* 31 March 1880, p. 4; *Australische Zeitung* 27 April 1880, p. 4. Königliche Museen Acta betreffend die Erwerbung ethnologischer Gegenstände. Vol. 3 (1B Australien) 422/81.
- 76 Brahe sent the catalogue to Bastian on 13 May 1880 in response to Bastian's request in a letter written from Auckland written on 29 March 1880.
- 77 Abbreviation for ditto.
- 78 Superior.
- 79 '12 Fuß 2 inches English' in von Guérard's handwriting.