

A close-up photograph of a metal reed plate from a concertina. The plate is circular with numerous small holes and is set within a wooden frame. The text "JACK STANLEY" is visible on the plate. Overlaid on this image is the title of the talk in white text.

Jack Stanley 19th Century Concertinamaker Bathurst NSW

This talk on Jack Stanley and his concertinas was delivered to the Concertina Convergence in Goulburn, in February 2022.



It is fun to start with a bold statement, and here is mine. The concertinas we know as Stanleys were not made by Jack Stanley, they were actually made by a man called George Hiscock. Bear with me...

When I first became involved with concertinas I made weekly trips to Bell in the Blue Mountains, quite close to where I live now. Concertina maker the late Richard Evans (right) kept me well entertained with concertina technicalities and stories in the beginnings of a conversation that lasted 20 years.



Amongst the tales was talk of Jack Stanley, who made concertinas in the late 19th century not far away, in Bathurst. Eventually one turned up to have work done.

It was this one. The name on the end; Stanley, so boldly carved, in antithesis to the usual discreet brass plaque, was intimidating, boastful and refreshing at the same time. Richard told me tales; how Stanley bought parts from Lachenal and made the action and the reeds himself, using clock springs for the reed steel. And how he put into the fretwork not only his name but often also the purchaser's name, and this one is the FW Holland. They were reputed to be better than Lachenal instruments,



Richard said, and very in demand by people who played for dances.

Richard's view of Stanley was reinforced by others; out there on the plains was an intrepid fearless hard worker who made his own concertinas, and not just concertinas, superior ones. I can tell you that is no mean feat, especially not only with the poor technology available in the middle of the industrial revolution but also about as far away physically from that revolution as you could get. The man was a hero.

How many people in Australia would be aware of Stanley? Sixty? A fair percentage of the people aware of Stanley would be in this room now. If one of us was writing his story we would put concertinas and the ones he made up front and centre. But, to pinch a good line from Manning Clark, "between the theory and the practice lay the full shadow of human behaviour".

Sadly, I have to tell you concertinas are not mentioned once in his lengthy obituary. The disappointment! Many other facets of his life and work are mentioned, and it seems he was a large and colourful personality.

LATE MR. STANLEY

A NOTABLE IDENTITY.

With the passing of Mr. John G. Stanley, announced in yesterday's issue, Bathurst loses one of its most notable identities, and a man who knew more about the early history of the place and its inhabitants than any other man whom it has been out lot to know.

A native of the Old Country, the late Mr. Stanley was the son of an Anglican Minister. An uncle was a member of the same profession, and a sister became the wife of a gentleman prominent in the British Consular service. After being educated at one of the great public schools of England, where his schoolmates included the late Mr. Bean (formerly of All Saints' College), Willoughby, a Bland Holt, Mr. Stanley, at the age of 18 years came to Australia, and for practically the whole of the remaining 61 years of his life lived in Bathurst. In the early days, he performed quite a variety of duties as a means of livelihood. For many years he filled the position of Warden's bailiff, for a time acted in the capacity of town clerk, and for a lengthy period occupied the post of pound-keeper. Droving and dealing also occu-

ing, however, Hall was ri police a few In his d had many suffered ma he was with stretch, a resort to tially to of his str also famishe his own sul not unmind ful horse up his journey by the fact through a thirty squar nished himse ter in his v the parched On another thirst that h for a bottle recapitulate experiences this paper. instances—c he was im stock upon by flood wi early one r of the bush about to. With the aid this man a go."

Of Mr. St. Bathurst, it say anything


Most of what we in this room know of Stanley comes from John Meredith.

Information about J. Stanley, concertina-maker, of Bathurst; to buy, examine or photograph Stanley concertinas.—6800.

Here's an advertisement I found in the Bulletin in March 1959, which I think is John Meredith looking for Jack.

One result of John Meredith's search was an article in People Magazine in December 1959.

In short it says; Jack Stanley came to Australia in 1852 and headed to Tambaroora, a



The old concertina doctor

John Stanley's squeeze-boxes called the tune at a thousand bush dances

By JOHN MEREDITH

At the turn of the century when this photograph was taken, John Stanley, of Bathurst (N.S.W.), was the concertina king of Australia.

HE learned the story of the "Concertina Doctor."

Stanley the elder came to Australia from England in 1853, his imagination fired by the tales of the fabulously rich gold strikes being made in New South Wales.

HE went straight to Tambaroora on the Turon, near Bathurst, a goldfield commemorated in

which he was a capable performer and he was in great demand to play at dances.

When the instrument broke down, Stanley fixed it with any materials or spare parts at hand. Strips of cloth stuck on with wattle-gun repaired leaks in the bellows, and pieces of old clock-spring filed down and tuned made replacements for worn-out reeds.

from England, and made his own clock-spring reeds. He taught one of his own sons, young Alfred, to make the leather and cardboard bellows, and the hexagonal wooden end-boxes.

MAKING bellows was slow work, usually taking two or three days. Then the end plates had to be cut from thin wood.

ley repaired and made new reeds for the organ in the Anglican cathedral at Bathurst.

From November until the end of the year was always the rush period in the Stanley shop. As the shearing season came to an end, shearers would drop in with instruments which had received rough handling in the station huts. Always they wanted them back into going order in time for the Christmas and New Year celebrations.

When the Stanleys had a few spare stock models of their instrument, Lydia's brother, Jim Browne, who was

goldfield on the Turon River near Bald Hill, now called Hill End. Back in his dugout, with narry a nugget, he found a job as a barman. He moved to Bathurst around 1853 and worked as the pound keeper, a drover and cattle dealer.

He had a baritone English concertina with him and was a good player. In time he gravitated from fixing his own to fixing others. The article says his business prospered, he married and had three sons and two daughters. And it says he found it a small step from repairing to building. He imported reed frames and made his own reeds from clock springs.



Stanley's son Alf, who still plays a lively fiddle tune at 83, says he and his father made about 500 concertinas. Old-timers like Fred Holland of Mudgee (N.S.W.), who played a Stanley concertina for 50 years until his death two years ago, prized them.
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He taught one son, Alf, real name Albert, who you see here playing the fiddle in about 1959, to make end boxes and bellows. Alf was Meredith's main source in the article.



And this is Alf on his wedding day at about that time, about 1903, about the time my Stanley, the CHB Morgan, must have been made. Alf says they made 500 instruments over 20 years. Now, that's 25 a year. I say this because, where are all of those concertinas?

The trouble with the People Magazine article was, I didn't find it reliable. For one, People is a superficial magazine and Meredith's article would have been pitched to this. Two, declaring it a small step from repairing to building is so misleading. And three, how do you make 500 concertinas with two people and no factory.

So that was John Meredith's take for People Magazine. I would love to see his notebooks from interviewing Alf, and I'm told they probably exist. I'm sure they will have more detailed stuff. In the meantime let me fill some bits in from his obituary and then we will examine the record and find it very wanting.

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Of Mr. St. Bathurst, it say anything

His 1913 obituary says; he came from Cambridge, his father a Clergyman at St Johns, and an uncle also a clergyman.

The world when he was born in 1834

The slavery abolition act came into force in Britain. However slaves were obliged to work free for their previous owners for a period of time equal to an apprenticeship.

The Tolpuddle Martyrs were sentenced to transportation

The first settlers arrived in Victoria from Tasmania

Male median life span was 51 years

After spending time in a private school, in 1852 he emigrated to Sydney and from there went to Bald Hill, now known as Hill End.

What was the world like in 1852?

The Irish Famine had ended. Record numbers had emigrated including to Australia

The first public toilet for women in Britain was established in London

Bleak House was published.

The Murrumbidgee River flooded and inundated the town of Gundagai killing 89

The last fatal duel on English soil took place on Priest Hill

The University of Sydney was founded

After his time on the NSW goldfields Stanley moved to Bathurst around 1853 or 4 aged 19 or 20.

He did a lot of droving when he first moved to Bathurst, though technically he lived in Kelso which was then a small town nearby rather than a suburb. The droving was often very long distance, more on that later. But think about the different world in which he was existing. Two years ago he was at school in London, now he is in the west as a drover. If it was adventure he was after, he was getting it.

Let's move from the obituary to the public record.

for	1200
Standen James—Assignment of Property by ..	1003
Stanley John—Appointed Poundkeeper, Bathurst	2162
Stanley—Additional Polling Places appointed for	821
„ Returning Officer for appointed ..	949
„ Boroughs—Writ of Election issued for	1640

This is his first appearance in the public view, in the second line from the top; in 1856 he was appointed Poundkeeper at Bathurst, at the age of 22.

At the same time on the line below he was appointed to be a returning officer for elections, a job he did for 18 years.

This a typical ad he would place in the paper to deal with the disposal of unclaimed horses in the pound. He did this for decades on top of his other interests.

BATHURST.—Impounded at Bathurst, on the 21st day of September, 1868, from Black Horse Square, by Mr. A. M'Lean; sum due at date of notice, for the first two, £1 2s. 6d. :—

One skew-bald mare, GG near shoulder, off hip down.
 One chestnut filly, G reversed over G near shoulder.
 One grey mare, 3F over T—G conjoined near shoulder; 18s.

Also, from Hereford, by Mr. Cox, September 23rd :—

One brown horse, WP near shoulder and off ribs, three feet white, aged, 15½ hands high.
 One brown mare, FF (first F reversed) conjoined off shoulder, star.

If not released, will be sold at this Pound, at noon, on the 15th October, 1868.

J. STANLEY, Poundkeeper.

4750 6s.

A typical example, “one grey mare, identifying marks 3F over T hyphen G conjoined near shoulder; payment 18 shillings”.

I was lucky to find a photo of the Bathurst pound, still in the same place, though to be honest it is a little after his time.



„ Regulations under	255
Stamps Distributors—Appointed.. ..	313
Stanley John—Appointed Bailiff, Small Debts Court, Bathurst	1207
Statement of sums paid into Treasury by Pound- keepers	678
Staughton Stephen—Appointed to assist in	

In June 1866 at the age of 32 he was appointed Bailiff to the Small

Debts Court in Bathurst. He performed this function for much of his working life and if you wanted to define his life this might be it. I'll return to this subject later. Note the line under his name in the gazetting above, it is relevant to him too.

In 1879, now 35, the Government Gazette shows him to be Acting Town Clerk.

BOROUGH OF BATHURST.	
NOTICE is hereby given, that Mr. Alderman William Butler has been duly elected Mayor of the Borough of Bathurst, for the current Municipal year.	
Town Hall, Bathurst, 14th February, 1879.	J. STANLEY, Acting Town Clerk.
1076	3s.

We know Stanley was a musician; it is mentioned variously he played concertina, fiddle and trumpet. In a series of reminiscences published by the Bathurst Post in the 1910s, of which more later, he set great store in playing in the brass band.

He was a repairer of concertinas, first in his own house at 206 Howick St, a building that is not there now but one a couple of doors down and a few more down the street are still there and it is easy to imagine what his looked like. Small, respectable but not flash comes to mind.

Then he had what he called a “Concertina Depot”, firstly at the pound, afterwards moving to a shop near the corner of Howick and William Streets. Note this advertisement from The Record says “Anglos made to order... ..at a week’s notice”. It would be a long week!

He put out an endless stream of ads for concertinas and music services for the rest of his life.

READ



READER! Did you ever rob a Priest? or a Church? or a Blind Man? If not, you are unfit to keep a music shop in Sydney! Send for my Price List, and you will see how you are fleeced to pay for heavy rents. I have the largest and cheapest stock of Steel Anglos in Australia; extra loud, and guaranteed to last two years. Repairs reasonable; and fit, finish, and durability distancing all competitors. Look into any instrument in Sydney, and you will find it is botched with a bit of old candlestick, reduced with a rasp—and then compare it with my work, and laugh!

J. STANLEY,
Concertina Doctor,
Bathurst.

FINEST CIGARETTES. FINEST CIGARETTES

THE RECORD. 83

CONCERTINA DEPOT.
BATHURST POUND.

LACHENAL'S ANGLOS with STEEL or BRASS NOTES. A magnificent tone, superior to any others in the colony. Steel Anglos made to order to any pitch required, at a week's notice.

German Concertinas of every Description. 200 to Select from.

No narrow-tongued rubbish in stock. No old worthless Instruments that have been cracked and warped in Sydney Warehouses for 20 years.

Every Instrument is New, direct from the Manufacturer.

And will be repaired free of charge when necessary.

CAUTION.

Instruments are often brought to me for Repair, which have been bought elsewhere for steel, but have not a single steel note in them, therefore never buy any instrument unless you see the inside of it first, and see that the tongues are not long and narrow, and that there are no cracks and splits in it. Narrow Tongues will not stand, and if a shopkeeper refuses to open an instrument for you, there is something wrong with it.

J. STANLEY.

ICE! ICE! ICE! ICE!

8lb Blocks.....1s
16lb Blocks.....2s

This, from about 1883, is possibly his most quoted ad. “**READER! Did you ever rob a priest, or a church? Or a blind man? If not you are unfit to keep a music shop in Sydney! Send for my price list and you will see how you are fleeced to pay for heavy rents.... Look into any instrument in Sydney and you will find it is botched with a bit of old candlestick, reduced with a rasp - and then compare it with my work and laugh! J.Stanley, Concertina Doctor Bathurst.**”

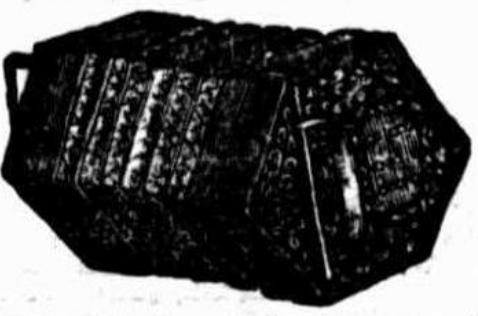
This is one of his standard ads and ran for decades with slight differences in the Bulletin, The Bathurst Post, The National Advocate and The Town and Country Journal.

Concertina Importers,
O'Connell and Spring streets.



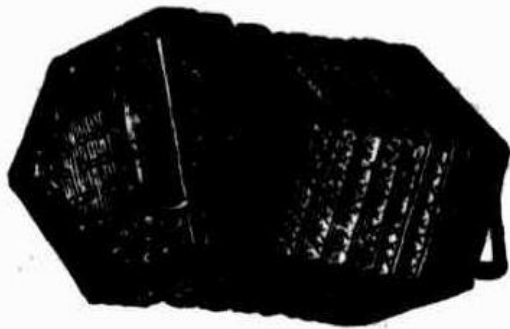
STEEL ANGLOS, Extra Loud, for Dancing.
Guaranteed for Two Years. J. STANLEY, Concertina Doctor, Bathurst.

SAN FRANCISCO PALACE OF ART.



J. STANLEY, Concertina Doctor, Bathurst
Importer of Musical Instruments and Fittings of every description. Anglos for Hot Climates, Extra Loud Steel, for Dancing, with levers screwed down. Price lists post free. 20 per cent. under Sydney rates.

This one mentions screwed down levers. His great contribution to concertina technical advance! It was not adopted anywhere else but it was a good solution for a problem which only occurred in very dry areas.



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 Importer of Musical Instruments and Fittings of
 every description, Anglos for Hot Climates, Extra Loud
 Steel, for Dancing, with levers screwed down. Price lists
 post free. 20 per cent. under Sydney rates.

WARREN, June 27, 1885.

I received concertina safe, and in good order; and I am
 glad to inform you that it suits me very well. I have been
 in the habit of buying my instruments wholesale, and
 found I had to take whatever was sent; but, through the
 recommendation of Charles Blackett to you, I find that a
 man can get an instrument worth playing. When I re-
 ceived the concertina (22 keys), I could have sold it at once
 to several people; but I intend to keep it till I sell out my
 present stock of drapery, and then, when returning, I will
 go to Bathurst, and select one 24 keys, with levers screwed
 down, which is the best invention I have ever heard of. I
 may here mention that I will do my best, in whatever part
 of the colony I go, to make your name known, for I am
 certain that you will, in every case, send a good article to
 any person ordering an instrument, being perfectly satisfied
 with my own.

THOMAS FISH, JUN., Dealer.

Mr. J. Stanley, Bathurst.

This ad includes a very heart
 felt testimonial (not!) In part it
 says, "I will do my best in
 whatever part of the colony I
 go, to make your name known".

The shop is expanding.

Merchants, Bathurst.



J. STANLEY,
CONCERTINA DOCTOR,
 WILLIAM STREET, BATHURST.

1886 in the Bathurst Post. Stanley claims “*the largest and best stock in the colony, at present larger than all the wholesale and retail houses in Sydney combined. I here allude to good English made instruments only, not to German rubbish, which is only fit to light fires.*”

Also note the middle section, which says.
"Cheap Violins of good tone at prices to astonish people who have been accustomed to deal with the Sydney Jews". Oh well...





J. STANLEY,

Concertina Doctor, Bellows Maker, Inventor of the Screwed Lever.

(BY MEANS OF WHICH CONCERTINAS CAN BE GOT OUT OF ORDER.)



THE ONLY PLACE in Bathurst to get a GOOD INSTRUMENT. A single one of my **VIOLINS** or **CONCERTINAS** is worth the whole shop of Herring Plates and Organs, which I don't touch, as they are too cheap to say any else in the line in Bathurst. The largest and best stock in the colony is kept here, thus all the wholesale and retail houses in Sydney combined. I have little to good English-made instruments only, not to German rubbish, which is only fit to light fires with.



Cheap Violins

of Good Tone and Excellent Workmanship,
at Prices to astonish people who
have been accustomed to deal with the
Sydney Jews.



Violins Repaired

No matter how much injured
PRICE LISTS POST FREE.

J. STANLEY, Box 20,
or William Street, Bathurst.




N.B.—See last Stanley's Sermon, in which the gifted "VENATOR" (who is also a contributor to the *Frederick's Journal*, *Sydney Bulletin*, *Sydney Times*, *Frederick's Journal*, and *Woolly Independent*—being also organist at a Sydney Church and a brilliant player, and who is a most competent judge) says:—"I can safely say that there is not a shop in Sydney, which can compete with Stanley's, in his particular line."

In the Bulletin

turned pea-green with suppressed pleasure at the delicate compliment paid to his private morals.

IMPORTER OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS AND FITTINGS OF EVERY DESCRIPTION.


PRICE LISTS POST FREE. TWENTY PER CENT. UNDER SYDNEY RATES.



**J. STANLEY,
CONCERTINA DOCTOR,**
WILLIAM STREET, BATHURST.

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J. STANLEY, Bathurst, Fret Cutter, &c.,
Bellows Maker. Purchaser's name cut in
fret work of concertina if desired. Bellows made,
any number of folds required. Additional folds
can be inserted with any bellows already in use.
Old instruments bought or exchanged for new
ones.




J. STANLEY, Concertina Doctor, Bathurst.
Fittings of every description, Anglos for hot
climates, Extra Loud Steel for Lancing, with
levers screwed down, bushed key holes, and other
improvements. Brass Anglos altered to steel to
any pitch desired.

In this ad, also in The Bulletin, he advertises himself as a fretcutter, something he learned for making concertina ends perhaps, and now he is hoping for some side income from it. He is not calling himself a maker.

PRICE LISTS POST FREE. TWENTY PER CENT. UNDER ANY SYDNEY HOUSE.



**J. STANLEY,
CONCERTINA DOCTOR,
BATHURST.**



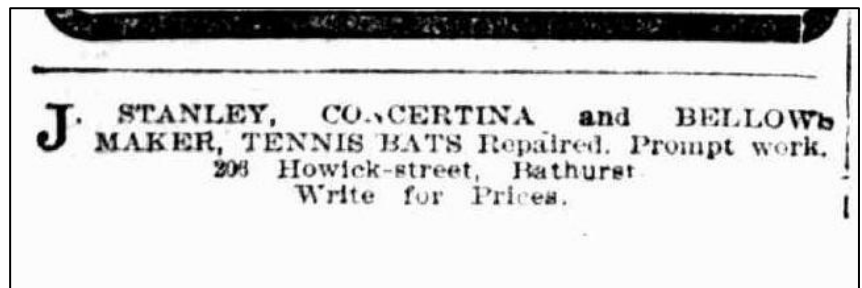
Again, in the Bulletin



Australian Town and Country, 1904.
 “Anglo-German concertinas, Brass altered to Steel, any tone required. Bellows 5, 6, 7 or 8 folds, made to order. Old Anglos repaired and made equal to new. Purchaser’s name cut

into fretwork tops free. Tennis racquets Re-strung, Equal to New. J Stanley Concertina Maker, Bathurst.” The fragment of the ad above, for J Heine engineer refers to a Sydney firm still trading and who made my fly press in the 1930s.

In the 1913, the last year of his life, things have changed. It seems the shop has gone and he is back to 206 Howick St and the word racquet has been changed to tennis bats. Is this a sign someone else, maybe his son Alf, has taken over the shop? Or perhaps a dying man working a dying business at home.



What comes through in any reading of his life is the way he looks for any opportunity to make a shilling. One of the side lines Stanley took on earlier in his life was to open an ice cream café in 1890.

J. STANLEY.

Mr. Stanley has been established about twelve months in his pastrycook's shop and ice cream saloon in George-street, Though he does not think he has anything to complain of as to the patronage bestowed on him by the people of Bathurst, he thinks that that mysterious personage, the “clerk of the weather,” has been using him badly so far this summer. It is not at all hot enough for Mr. Stanley and for the sufficient consumption of his ice creams and cool drinks. Of the latter he presented for inspection his latest invention—a “flapdoodle”—which is an exquisite drink. What is a flapdoodle? We have learnt the secret, but are not going to tell it. Mr. Stanley has a luxuriously furnished parlor upstairs, which he de-

This article is from the National Advocate on Boxing Day 1890

Mr. Stanley has been established about twelve months in his pastrycooks shop and ice cream saloon in George Street, Though he does not think he has anything to complain of as to the patronage bestowed on him by the people of Bathurst, he thinks that that mysterious personage, the 'clerk of the weather,' has been using him badly so far this summer. It is not at all hot enough for Mr. Stanley and for the sufficient consumption of his ice creams and cool drinks. Of the latter he presented for inspection his latest invention — a 'flapdoodle' — which is an exquisite drink. What is a flapdoodle? We have learnt the secret, but are not going to tell it. Mr. Stanley has a luxuriously furnished parlour

upstairs, which he devotes to his lady customers. There and in the huge cool balcony that it opens upon they can lounge at their leisure, with books and a piano to amuse them. Besides carrying on this business Mr Stanley undertakes the repair of musical instruments, the making and repair of accordions and concertinas being his speciality.

This is a classic advertorial, he must have paid for it. One of the features of talk about Stanley has been a lack of photos. We know this one because it was in so many ads.



I take pleasure in presenting this one, from the collection of Sandra Ireland via the Bathurst Historical Society.



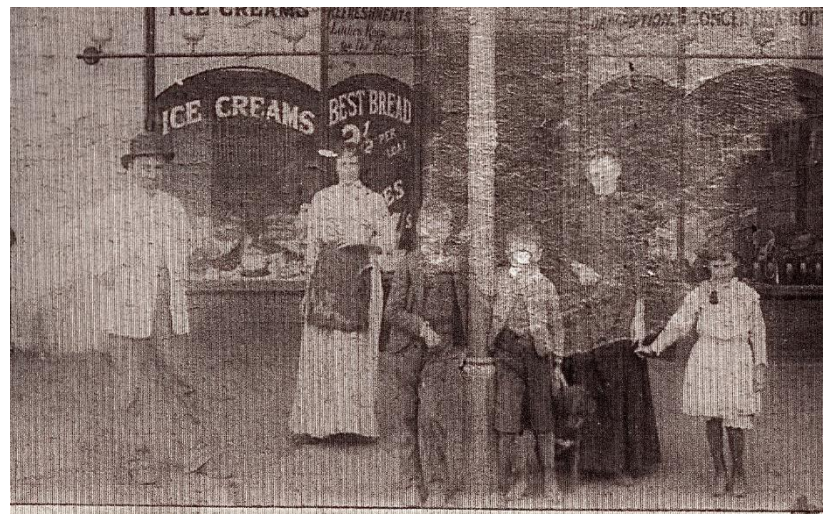
Here it is a little tweaked, making it a little more readable.



At first glance it is a group of people standing outside a shop. But look at the signs above the shop windows and the right one proclaims “J Stanley, Concertina Doctor”. And

“Instruments of every Description”. The left window is the front of his ice cream shop, dating this photo to around 1890.

The figures outside the shop consist of a family group comprising a mother or nanny, three children and a dog. Behind and to the left are two people, a man and a woman. They are not standing close. I am surmising the young woman with the apron works in Stanley’s ice cream shop and I believe the man standing to the left, in the white shop coat, is Stanley.





Note the small boy to the left and a couple of blokes to the right. The family is too young to be his own. The article says the ice cream parlour was in George St but his music shop is mentioned a few times at this period as being in the School of Arts, corner of William and Howick. The architecture of the shop does not fit with the School of Arts. Addresses are something I have not yet pinned down, but there is no reason the shop had to stay in one place.

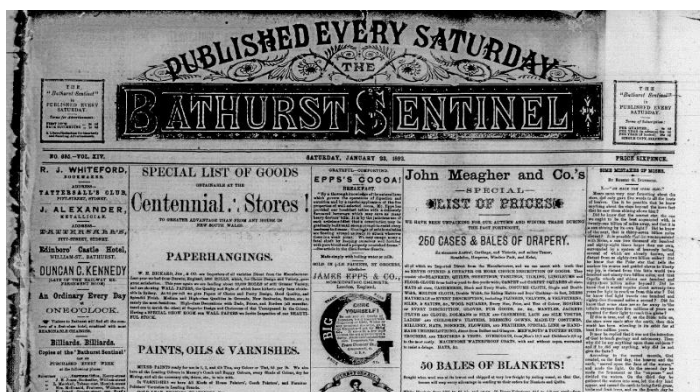


There is good reason to think in the 1890s the shop was in this building in George St, the Webb building, in the shop to the left of centre where it says Saddle and Harness Maker. This picture is from a couple of decades earlier. The building is still there, much changed.

Stanley was for decades caretaker of the School of Arts. There is no end to the things he turned his hand to. The School of Arts is in the tall building on the right in the picture but the building on the corner is in every shot of it I found and perhaps it was all one complex. Maybe being



caretaker was his way of paying the rent on his shop when it was in this building?



I found great pleasure in discovering Stanley was a substantial newspaper contributor, because it means there are so many clues to the man. Bathurst has had many newspapers. The Bathurst Sentinel ran for 2 years and few editions remain. Jack Stanley was a contributor and editor for four months while the editor, Dan Mayne, was in prison for assault during a libel case.

And what of his private life? In 1865 at the age of 31, Jack Stanley married Emma Pontifex at Bathurst. They needed permission to marry as she was under 21. By the next year they were both with someone else!

What happened in those 15 months? Annulment? Divorce? Bigamy? His wife's new marriage was in the paper so unlikely to be bigamous. Back then divorce took years, needed an Act of Parliament, and afterwards neither person could remarry. So most likely it was an annulment. Stanley's new relationship was common law from 1866 until 1879 when he and Lydia Brown finally married.

Lydia's parents were part of a group called The Lace Makers of Calais. By 1848 there were 3000 British workers in Calais making lace, and they had been there for 30 years. Don't imagine alleyways full of old women dressed in black, outside to use the light to see what they were doing. These makers used automatic machines invented in Nottingham in the early years of the industrial revolution. Their products had been banned from France to protect French manual workers from cheap lace made by these machines. To get access to the market British manufacturers smuggled machines into France and set up in Calais. 30 years later, in 1848, an economic downturn associated with a revolution in France (not the big one but one of a number in Europe that year) made their lives difficult. Lydia's family was amongst 650 who decided with the assistance of the British Government to emigrate to Australia, and a large contingent was directed by the NSW Government to call Bathurst home. Others went to Maitland. They didn't start a lace industry because they didn't have the machines.



Lydia and Jack had 5 boys and two girls. One, Emily, a promising young piano player, died in 1887 at the age of 16 from erysipelas, a common infection. She caught this from a fly bite on the nose on a trip to swim in the river, the fly being thought to have been on a nearby dead dog

This portrait of her is in the Bathurst Historical Society Museum. It is basically a drawing and she appears dressed in mourning clothes. This would have been from a photograph and points to the possibility of other Stanley photos out there somewhere. Unmentioned anywhere, they also had two sons who died in the first year of life.

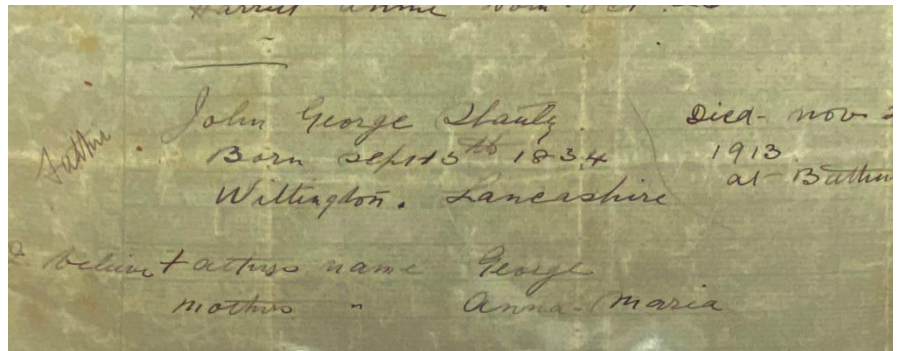


Now the story takes an unusual turn. I said at the beginning the concertinas we value were not made by Jack Stanley. This is because the person we know as Jack, or John George Stanley did not exist. There is no John George Stanley in the births record in the UK in the relevant time frame. There was no such person.

When investigating a story such as this there is no substitute for perseverance. But you also need luck, and it was on my side.

Through Sarah Swift at the Bathurst Historical Society I met Sandra Ireland, a descendant of Jack Stanley, the grand-daughter of his son Alf (Albert) Stanley. She became interested in family history when she retired.

She looked into a stack of papers on top of her mother's wardrobe and found her grandfather Alf had left a note saying his father, Jack Stanley, had been born in Whittington, Lancashire on September 5th 1834. Sandra also found a diary



written by a woman called Harriet Ann Gale. On his second marriage certificate Jack had said his mother's name was Harriet Ann Gale.



Sandra is a very good researcher, she has that great trait called persistence. She found records showing Harriet Ann Gale was married to a Reverend Thomas Hiscock in 1883. They were missionaries, not in Africa as one might imagine, but in continental Europe. Converting the heathen Roman Catholics perhaps. In 1834 Gale bore a son, George John Hiscock, in Whittington, Lancashire on same day as the handwritten note Sandra found in her mother's records

said Jack Stanley had been born.

Harriet Ann Gale's diary, now in the NSW State Library, records their mission taking her and her husband and their son, with a daughter born on the way in Cracow, across Europe. Later it lists her attempts to lift her son's position in society after her husband's death when George was 10, and her anguish that he might be going off the rails.

The young George Hiscock attended Seaforth Village School near Liverpool. At one point Harriet says her now 16 year old son, George John Hiscock, after a five year stint at Christ's Hospital, (which is actually a secondary school, established in 1552 in London and still a school today) wanted to go to sea, but was persuaded to go to Kings College, a precursor to the University of London. Later, she writes, he is desperate to get away from the horrors of London.

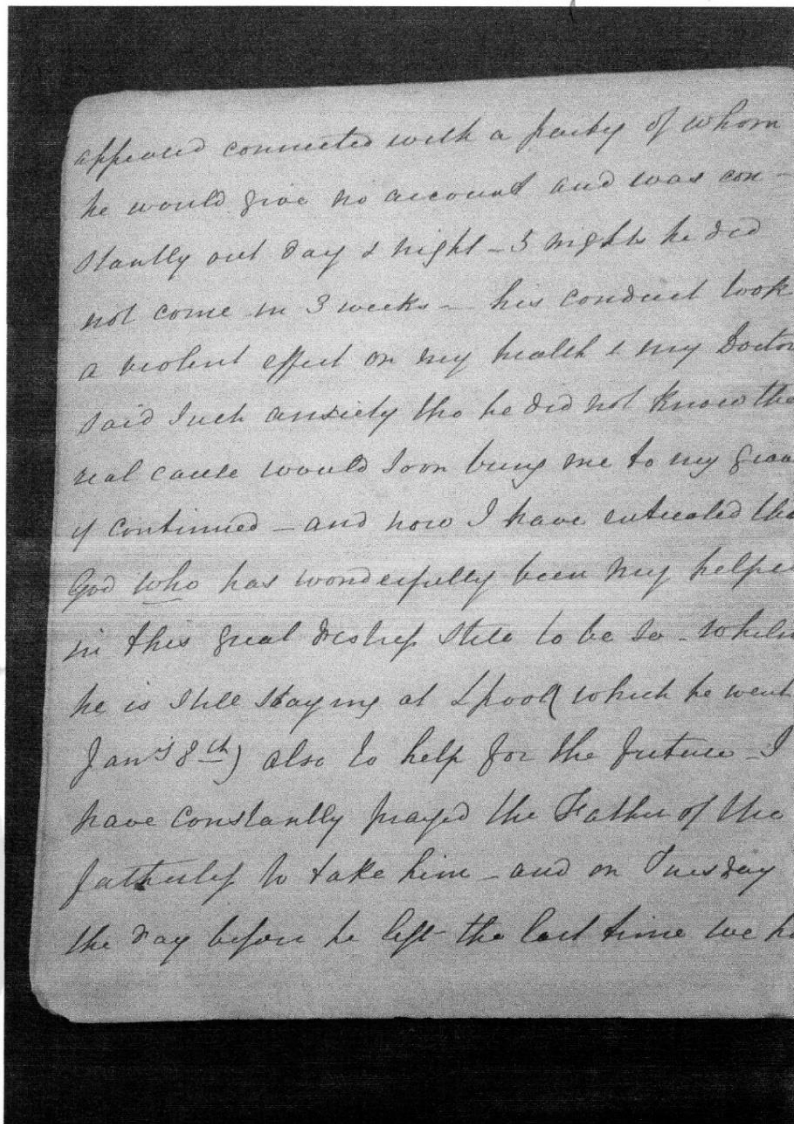
The London George Hiscock experienced was extreme; in the 1850s they had the Great Stink, when the River Thames became a giant sewer overflowing not only with human waste but also dead animals, rotting food and toxic raw materials from the riverside

factories. And you have to remember this is Dickensian London. There was also the Great Exhibition in the Crystal Palace where the countries of the Empire exhibited and maybe the NSW exhibit took his fancy. Or maybe it was just thirst for gold.

George John Hiscock emigrated at 18, and he is the man we know as Jack Stanley. What we don't know is why he changed his name. Did he change his name before coming or after? Did he change his name so he could work as crew on the way out and then jump ship? If so he must have left with no money and as his mother was of independent means it points to her cutting him off completely or him running away. There are no J Stanleys or George Hiscocks on the passenger lists for 1852, nor on the convict lists. And no record of a crew member by either name jumping ship.

His mother, as a fervent Christian, wrote in her diary of her hopes he would become a minister. Perhaps he was running away from this, hey, I would. Harriet's diary records, *"he appeared connected with a "Jacky" of whom he would give no account and was constantly out day and night. 5 nights he did not come in three weeks and his conduct took a violent effect on my health."*

Page 3

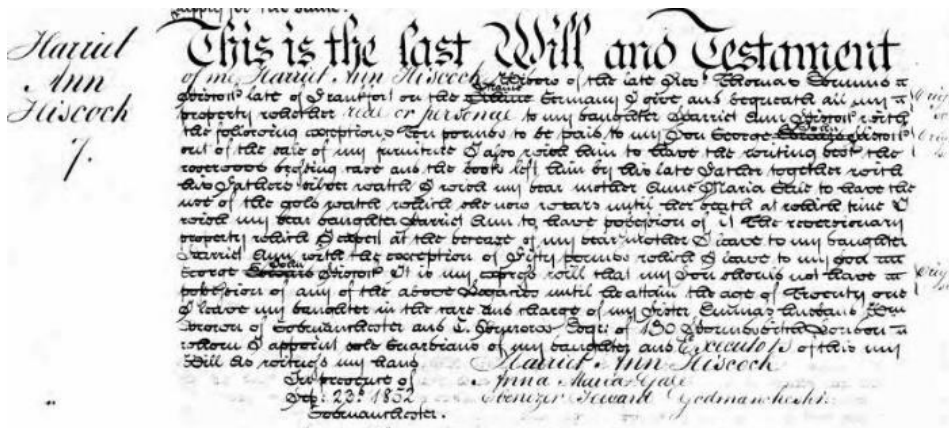


Jacky is possibly a shortening of Jackeen, a term of derision for a Dubliner, used by those from the West of Ireland. But Jacky could also be shortening of the slang for a sailor, Jack Tar, much more likely. As to what they did together, drunkenness, brothels, perhaps a relationship, who knows.

So we know now his real name was George John Hiscock. It is of note he named one of his sons George John, perhaps after himself, and a daughter Harriet Annie, perhaps after his mother. And as said on his marriage certificate to his second wife he names his mother as Harriet Ann Gale. So why did he come to Australia, why did he change his name to John George Stanley?

A strong possibility is; and this was common when the son of a family with

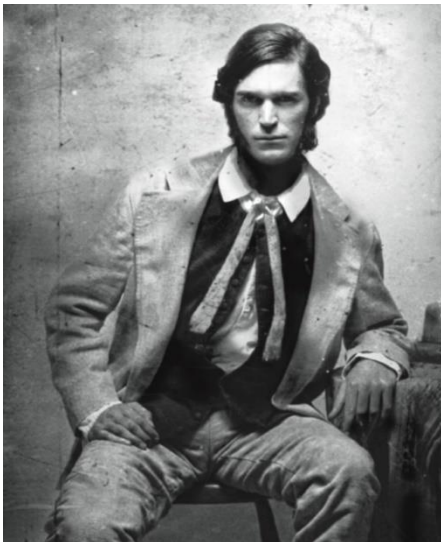
elevation in society did something that blackened the family name; they might be sent to the colonies to live out their life and save the family further embarrassment. However there is no sign of an annuity. Maybe he blotted his copy book somehow with all including his mother and fled for a forgiving place.



When his mother died in 1852 he received 50 pounds in her will.

His mother's diary holds more clues. Watch this space! I will continue to refer to George Hiscock as Jack Stanley.

This is a good moment to consider what sort of man was he?



He was a friend of Ben Hall.

He met Hall when Hall was a stockman and before he was a wanted man. In his obituary it mentions in 1865 Stanley rode out two hours and warned Hall the police were coming and lent him a horse to escape, his own having wandered. This was three days before Hall's death.

OLD TIME MEMORIES.

(By Ross Hood).

III.

In article No. II. I note one or two slight typographical errors. I wrote "Tommy Toy" and not "Tommy Fog." In another place reference is made to "Tempest" Street, but this should have read "Lambert" Street. As there are a number of ex-Bathurst residents in and around Wellington, who may read these articles and they will note the errors in the names of persons and places, hence these corrections.

I will now carry on my story a little further. At the time of the gang's visit to Declut's, Mrs. Declut had in her employ an aboriginal girl named Nooney, as a nurse, and when this girl noticed Jack Gilbert in the yard she grabbed up the child she was minding and ran into the house and planted it under a bed in one of the bedrooms. She could not be located for some time, and after the gang's departure she was asked where she had got to? Her reply was, "Oh, me plant under bed. Me no want to see Jack Gilbert. He no good." In my previous article I mentioned where the gang was the night

the gang and their visit to the town. "Bathurstians" will recollect I mentioned that Dry Creek comes down from the hills and crosses Havanah Street, and you "old 'uns" will remember the long white house that stood on the allotment at the back of this street. This was Paddy McKinley's house. That was the house that Hall and his gang visited earlier on that Saturday evening, where they spent some time having a jollification before coming into town. They were having a good time with Mrs. Hunt and Kate Kelly, and the former knew something of the gang's visit, and knew they were coming, for she got the two girls to go to the police station to get the washing belonging to the single men, and, at the same time, gather what information they could concerning the movements of

the police and bring the news back to Mrs. Hunt. The girls were just beginning to drop to this dodge when I met them, as they had noticed there were signals hung high up on the clothes line, which showed up over the top of the house. For danger a red blanket or petticoat was hung up, and for "Things quiet. Nobody about," a white sheet was displayed on the line. The gang spent 3 or 4 days at intervals

In the Wellington Times, Nov 4, 1920, an old man called Ross Hood reminiscing in a column called "Old Time Memories", says this of the Ben Hall gang;

Wellington Times Nov 4th 1920

"For danger a red blanket or petticoat was hung up (at Mrs Hunt's), and for things quiet, nobody about, a white sheet was displayed on the line. The gang spent 3 or 4 days at intervals at Mrs. Hunt's enjoying themselves, until it became unsafe for her to allow them to call any further. I am sure there are still some old Bathurstians who will remember the old concertina that used to have the wind pumped out of it, and they will also remember its artist — Jack Stanley. They will also recall the horses tied to the fence of an evening. I have heard that music and seen those horses from distance. I was told the horses belonged to the gang, whose camp was up on the Bald Hills, and as I looked up that night I could see a camp fire burning. "

When I read this I think, what were the tunes he was playing?

ON THE WORLD'S STAGE.

BY JOVIAL JACQUES.

Talking of music I have just read of a "Coon" and Contest. All the darkies in the district, had their own favorite band, and all these ent red for the contest and played so furiously that people said the dead in the cemetery rose from their graves and walked miles away looking for a quieter spot to rest in. It was a friend of my old friend Jack Stanley's—Tom Pepper by name (of whom more anon) who told me this, and therefore it requires confirmation. Getting back to the bands, however, the judge was accused of giving the prize to the wrong band—all band contests generally end that way. But in self defence the judge said he gave them the verdict because none of their first violins had more than two strings, all the concertinas had three notes missing, and the drummer had put his foot (it was really half a yard) through the big drum, so the judge thought that band "had done splendidly—under the circumstances." But the conductor of a better band said the real reason was the judge's best girl, a substantial looking negress, with an impediment in her off-eye, played a fiddle in the favored band, and he was afraid to award the prize to any other crowd. Verily a judge at a musical contest should be "above suspicion" and quite unattached to all the players. He should be several other things also, but I fear the model

and riding the tail off every four-legged thing that had been impounded—barring Tim Brady's donkey, for no one living could ride that brute long. One day a great concertina player—George Case, I think—came to Bathurst, and opened our eyes and ears to the beauties of that really fine instrument, a good English concertina. But behold, that artist had barely left us before the irrepressible Jack Stanley popped up, and did all that Case had done, and a deal more besides, for he could not only play the instrument to perfection, but he could "doctor" a sick one, or make a brand new one if required. How he managed all this was a mystery, but it gave us a fair idea of the sterling and brilliant qualities that were locked up in that small, active, wiry form. I have never heard anyone, even in Sydney, to equal Jack's operatic selections on his favorite instrument. And there was never an entertainment got up for any good cause without Jack Stanley's name being first on the programme. He was indeed a wonder, but a good sample of the clever, bustling, hustling, active workers of the good old days.

It is a bitter commentary on our social affairs that an honest, sterling, constant worker like my old friend "Jack" can only say at the end of a long, busy, and well-spent life that he has enough to eat and a comfortable bed to sleep on, "but has not been able to coin money." Such a man should now be sitting under the shade of his own figtree enjoying his

This is from a Bathurst paper, The National Advocate, 10th Sept 1904, written by a person using the pseudonym 'Jovial Jacques'.

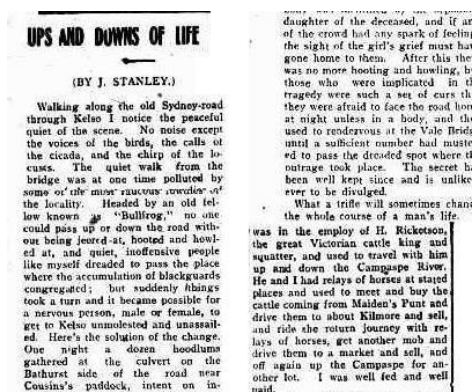
"My esteemed old friend Mr. Jack Stanley, who when I first knew him was one of the smartest and busiest men in Bathurst, what the Yankees would call a born hustler, always on the alert to catch on to anything new and keen to be up with, or if possible, be a little ahead of the times. At first friend Jack kept the Bathurst pound down on the flat, and poor Joe Kean, myself and diverse other

young nippers used to drive him into frenzy at times by getting over the rails and riding the tail off every four-legged thing that had been impounded, barring Tim Brady's donkey, for no one living could ride that brute long. (This is a 19th century case of joyriding). One day a great concertina player, George Case, I think, came to Bathurst (and let me insert myself into this again, Professor George Case was a famous English Concertina player, but also made his own concertinas in England and he may have been a big influence on our man Jack) anyway George Case opened our eyes and ears to the beauties of that really fine instrument, a good English concertina. But behold, that artist had barely left us before the irrepressible Jack Stanley popped up, and did all that Case had done, and a deal more besides, for he could not only play the instrument to perfection, but he could 'doctor' a sick one, or make a brand new one if required. How he managed all this was a mystery, but it gave us a fair idea of the sterling and brilliant qualities that were locked up in that small, active, wiry form. I have never heard anyone, even in Sydney, to equal Jack's operatic

selections on his favourite instrument. And there was never an entertainment got up for any good cause without Jack Stanley's name being first on the programme. He was indeed a wonder, but a good sample of the clever, bustling, hustling, active workers of the good old days. It is a bitter commentary on our social affairs that an honest, sterling, constant worker like my old friend Jack can only say at the end of a long, busy, and well-spent life that he has enough to eat and a comfortable bed to sleep on, but has not been able to coin money. Such a man should now be sitting under the shade of his own fig tree, free from all cares, but unfortunately it is only the wily schemers, the men who know all about underground engineering, and can pull the political ropes, who, as a rule, are able to do that — and they do it without working, too....

...This may be the fashion of modern days, but we miss the grit and manliness of the brave men of old. Put Jack Stanley and the Czar of all the Russians into the fighting pit to-day and the little Bathurst Veteran would knock the big fellow out in one round. (*Russia was the world bogeyman in the early 1900s.*)

Now a little from Jack Stanley in his own words.



In the early 1910s Jack wrote a number of columns, ten or so, for the Bathurst Post under his own name titled "*The Ups and Downs of Life*". When I lightly took on the search for Stanley I never imagined I would hear from the man himself. Such a thrill.

"I was in the employ of H. Ricketson, the great Victorian cattle king and squatter, and used to travel with him up and down the Campaspe River. He and I had relays of horses at

stated places and used to meet and buy the cattle coming from Maiden's Punt and drive them to about Kilmore and sell, and ride the return journey with relays of horses, get another mob and drive them to a market and sell, and off again up the Campaspe for another lot. (For the record, that's about 140km as the crow flies but note the starting point is 620km from Bathurst.) I was well fed and well paid. I had a jolly life, but was always on the move and had good pay, £3/10 a week but I had two good pulls over the hands, I did not drink and I treated my horses well, but I did not like the Victorians. They called us Sydney "Ducks". (The first letter in the word "Ducks" is hard to read on Trove, probably not a homonym!) I left at last and came back to the Lachlan and got employment at Birrawang. At Christmas I got a fortnight's holiday, so I started for beautiful Bathurst and arrived the day before the opening of the first bridge over the Macquarie. There was great rejoicing; a bullock was being wasted by being -roasted whole... ..there were wines and drink galore. I forget who performed the ceremony of opening, but while on the ground Charles Clements, one of my employers, met me and told me that he had just hired twelve men to go to

Melbourne with cattle and that I must start back in the morning and take charge. I demurred after riding 250 miles and only arriving the day before, so he said, if you don't like it, come up to the Royal and I will settle with you. I said, 'All right! Going across the Vale Bridge I saw the late Mr. Edward Austen. He said, what are you doing?' I said, 'Nothing; I've got the sack. He took me home with him and put me on as clerk and wool buyer. I got on all right.'

On being a Bailiff.

"The recent murder of Sergeant Mickey in Sydney, and the fining of Trevor in the sum of 65 pounds for assaulting a bailiff, recalls some of my experiences and the comparative immunity from trouble and assault in my career, for which I take credit for kindness and fair dealing with people in unfortunate circumstances. I had once to distrain (it means seize money from in lieu of a debt, I didn't know either) a very wild fellow, a few miles out of town. The creditor was a parson who wanted his money and would take no more excuses and broken promises. The first precaution I took was: to go to the police barracks and tell the sergeant in charge my destination, and tasked him if I did not return before four o'clock to send out a man to make enquiries. I took with me a man, who was supposed to be a disappointed candidate for the office of hangman, but he suited me, for the people with whom I letted him as a lodger would pay up at once to get rid of him; so he was invaluable to me. We went to the place to be distrained upon, and I was very careful to avoid any cause for irritation in my manner or conduct, and all passed off amicably, until I was leaving, when K, the subject of the distraint said, 'What are you going to do, with this man? I told him I would leave the man in charge, and the man would make himself useful and agreeable in the kitchen, and 'help to fetch wood and water. K. said, 'I am not going to feed your man.' I told him that he was liable for all the expenses he put us to in recovery of the rent, and in that case we must feed ourselves, and I would seize the flour and provisions with everything else on the premises. This got him up and he answered, 'By Jabors (don't know what Jabors is), I'll blow out the brains of any man who takes my children's food.' I said, 'Now,' look here, K., I know you and what you are, so I went to the barracks and saw the sergeant in charge and told him where I was going and what a mad-headed fellow you are and tasked him if I did not call and report myself before four o'clock today to send a man to find out the reason. My stand settled him, and before that hour he found the whole of the money, £100 and costs of execution.

On another occasion the same solicitor, the late Henry Price, sent for me. He told me wanted me to go up to Jack's Creek, near Canowindra, and take possession of some property under bill of sale. I asked whom against but he would not tell me. I told him I would not go unless I got the name first. He then gave it to me. I said, I want £10. He laughed at me. I explained, I saw him tried for murder at Tambaroora, and he escaped by the verdict of manslaughter and served a sentence. The distance is 60 miles from here, and it would require a buggy and pair, as I have to carry my man. (By his man he means muscle!) Price afterwards sent for me and said, my price was too high, and his client, the mortgagee,

would try some other way of recovering his money. He did; he left his business and drove up himself, and informed the man that he had come to take possession under the bill of sale. The man was one of those whining, cringing hounds, who would go on his knees, imploring for mercy, and eventually he talked the mortgagee into three months extension time, and the amateur bailiff came home with a loss of £10 for expenses, and not one single shilling paid off the debt. When the three months were up, Price sent for me again. I declined to touch the case at all, but I said, as your client wants a reliable man at 5/- a day, I will recommend one. This man was engaged, and went up and seized, and got a friendly reception. In fact, he was fed like a fighting cock for four days, and then his host made him drunk and removed all the property, and as in the case of Mrs. Hubbard, 'the cupboard was bare and the poor bailiff had none.' The man who thus cheated the bailiff was afterwards hanged at Darlinghurst for murdering his wife at Redfern. Another time Price sent for me. He said, James Smith got £200 from one of our clients on his shop, and now he has disappeared, sheep and all, and we cannot get any trace of him. I want you to find him and seize. I arranged to start at once, but I asked for full power to deal with the case on my own as probably I would be too far away to consult with him in case of any difficulty. I got carte blanche to act as I thought best, and I took an ex-policeman with me. At Burruga, I picked up my first information, and followed my quarry up mile after mile. He took across the Abercrombie and over two or three boggy rivers, and at last I ran him down over the Levels, near Taralga. I saw many sheep, I left my mate and went and interviewed the shepherd, and made an offer for the sheep. I was unknown. I got a lot of valuable, information, but I kept it to myself; as my police friend had no control over his tongue. On the third night, I pulled my quarry up. He was greatly surprised and had just taken up selection, and was living under a tarpaulin, the house not being finished, and cooking going on in the open-air. As soon as I reached the place, I produced my authority and demanded the sheep under mortgage. He was quite jolly and independent. He told me he had nothing but a few sheep, which were un-shepherded, about 800. He added: 'You can take them. I said, you have a thousand with Brown under halves.' He said he had forgotten them. I next said: There another thousand with Jones. He made the excuse of failure of memory after being sunstruck. I reminded him that Lee had another lot, and that a criminal prosecution would follow for obtaining money under false pretences. That settled him, and he came into Bathurst with me and paid £100 down, and arranged to bring his wool next shearing into the mortgagee's stores, and I sent out an order to my man to withdraw. Some months after I picked up a dirty scrap of the Herald and saw that the very next morning Mort and Co were going to sell in Sydney a number of bales of wool bearing a brand which was familiar to me. I thought the matter over for an hour and got an inspiration at last. They were the letters of the brand of wool I had seized near Taralga. I ran to the telegraph office, next to the School of Arts in Howick St. I wired to Mort and Co. to stop the sale. I then went to the solicitor I was acting for, and he and his client wired to their agents in Sydney, and the wool was seized and all monies recovered. It was a lucky fluke, and I was well rewarded for my trouble, as but for my lucky find of the newspaper the money would have been lost altogether."

UPS AND DOWNS OF LIFE

BY J. STANLEY.

History repeats itself. Years ago, Mrs. Potiphar was seized with a mania, and now the suffragettes are tarred with the same brush, and they require drastic treatment, and as flogging is repulsive to English ideas in the case of female offenders, I am going to suggest a new method of dealing with these furies. In old times the female prisoners were kept at Parramatta, in a building called the factory. A carpenter was sent inside one day to make some repairs, but the women took possession of him, and subjected him to such treatment that the man never recovered. Oppenheim, in one of his works, relates the adventures of an English lady, who fell into the hands of Turkish officials and soldiery, and after reading the book I am often of the opinion

would give her a copy of the information she required for the fee of 5s. She insisted on her right to see the book, and I fetched the C.P.S. out of court and told him the trouble. He confirmed my statement, but she persisted, and put down the fee 5s. The C.P.S., Captain Hales, looked up the Act, and found that she was correct, and told me to take the money and show her the book. I drew my chair up for the lady, opened the register before her, and patiently waited events. While I watched her proceedings, she opened at the births, and ran her gloved finger down the entries. Suddenly, she stopped with an exclamation, "I've got her! I'll take the flashness out of her! It's my turn now!" I said, "What's the matter?" She said, "Nothing," gave me a nod, bade me "Good morning," and left the office. I again went and fetched the C.P.S., and told him what I had seen and heard. He sent me for Sergeant Waters. I explained matters again, told them the woman's name,

On the subject of suffragettes.

"History repeats itself. Years ago, Mrs. Potiphar was seized with a mania,

(Potiphar's wife is a figure in the bible and the quran. According to the Book of Genesis, she falsely accused Joseph of attempted rape after he rejected her sexual advances, resulting in his imprisonment)

and now the suffragettes are tarred with the same brush, and they require drastic treatment, and as flogging is repulsive to English ideas in the case of female offenders, I am going to suggest a new method of dealing with these tunes. In old times the female prisoners were kept at Parramatta, in a building called the factory. A carpenter was sent inside one day to make some repairs, but the women took possession of him, and subjected him to such treatment that the man never recovered. Oppenheim, in one of his works, relates the adventures of an English lady, who fell into the hands of Turkish officials and soldiery, and after reading the book I am often of the opinion that the surest way of dealing with these viragos would be to deport them to the Turks for a time to cool down their passions. We are told that 'Hell has no fury like a woman scorned.' No doubt this is true."

Stanley also said...

"One way to stop shooting accidents, and a sure way, would be to flog the perpetrator. I remember that was the only thing that stopped garrotting some years ago, and I think that will be the best and quickest cure for the suffragette epidemic." (Garrotting was a method of robbery prevalent in London not long before, choking would be a better word.)

These ravings by Stanley did not go unopposed and this letter in reply to one of his columns shows Stanley and bailiffs in general in a different light.

Mr Jennings and Mr Stanley (To the Editor.)

Sir, I have often seen men poke mangy dogs in the ribs with a long stick to make them get on their feet before blowing their lights out, and

MR. JENNINGS AND MR. STANLEY.

(To the Editor.)

Sir,—I have often seen men poke manged dogs in the ribs with a long stick to make them get on their feet before blowing their lights out, and I find I have to take up my pen to give J. Stanley, Senr., a poke in the ribs for the dirt he tried to throw at me in this morning's issue of the "National Advocate." Stanley accuses me of being in the low Chinese gambling dens. I admit being in Jimmy Thompson's soup kitchen many a time for a basin of soup, and so have a lot of my friends, and amongst them some of the brightest intellects Australia ever produced, and every one of them would scorn to recognise a bailiff.

Stanley refers to my being brought up to the court recently. I challenge him to prove I was brought up recently and fined for evicting a bailiff. I admit I was fined for putting a bailiff out of a house some eight years ago, and fined £10 4s, but, remember,

I find I have to take up my pen to give J. Stanley, Senior, a poke in the ribs for the dirt he tried to throw at me in this morning's issue of the National Advocate. Stanley accuses me of being in the low Chinese gambling dens. I admit being in Jimmy Thompson's soup kitchen many a time for a basin of soup, and so have a lot of my friends, and amongst them some of the brightest intellects Australia ever produced, and every one of them would scorn to recognise a bailiff.

Stanley refers to my being brought up to the court recently. I challenge him to prove I was brought up recently and fined for evicting a bailiff.

I admit I was fined for putting a bailiff out of a house some eight years ago, and fined £10 4s, but, remember, J. Stanley, Senior, I never borrowed money off the late Dan Mayne to get the bailiff out of my house over 20 years ago and never paid him back (I think he is suggesting Stanley had to do that. Mayne was the newspaper editor mentioned earlier who went to gaol for assault.)

I went to visit a friend once in the Gladesville asylum, and came to one poor fellow that was holding up part of a bed. He was screaming out, 'How much? I must sell.' I asked the warder what was the man's mania. He said, 'Oh, he was one of Sydney's worst bailiffs. He was always selling some poor unfortunate persons off, especially widows and orphans, and it has sent him off his head, and you see we have to humour him.'

I can see that J. Stanley Senior wants to be the bailiff in that yarn. I will let him be the bailiff just to humour him. I think that if he looks up that 13 shillings that is on his books he will find it was for barley supplied to him by Dan Mayne to feed his horse, that Dan used to call 'Squirt' in the 'Sentinel.'

Now for a word of advice to Stanley: 'If you cannot write clean, don't write at all, as' some of your chickens will surely come home to roost, and they will be covered with dirty slime for you to scrape off.' — Yours, etc.,

FRED JENNINGS,

A thorough hater of bum-bailiffs

To the music story. If only he had devoted a column to concertinas!

In his own words.

"Tom Fanning, father of Charlie and Maude, a very fine violinist, was located here for years. I played second violin to him at the Governor's ball, held at what is now, the. ..Club House Hotel. "

And in another piece...

"In Busche's band I was playing E flat trumpet, and one night Johannes Wirth (later of the circus family) stood behind me and found fault with my music score. I let him alter it and he

greatly improved it. He was a slide trombone player and could play a hornpipe on that difficult instrument, and was the best I ever heard except Duproz, a coloured player in the real Georgia Minstrels”

Stanley never mentions playing the concertina.

A few words on Stanley's instruments.



I have seen inside a number of Stanley concertinas; all but one are Lachenal instruments, not just Lachenal parts but Lachenal concertinas, albeit with a new end and sometimes the action board has new pivots.



They actually have Lachenal numbers inside. This one is from about 1905.

This is not something that could happen if you bought Lachenal parts. He has repurposed second hand Lachenal concertinas with his own end. Did he buy new ones? There would be little room for profit if so. Did he managed to pick them up, like a pawnbroker,

from those in financial trouble needing a shilling or two? It is easy to imagine a situation in which a bright eyed person bought a new instrument and then finding the learning hard and also being a little short of money due to a reversal of some sort, soon needs to sell it. Stanley was the obvious man to sell to, and in fact probably the only man, and hence could get the instruments cheap.

So he made the reeds, right?

A personal story. I obtained my Stanley a couple of years ago and was disappointed in that it plays poorly. When I looked inside the very poor reeds were also very Lachenal looking. I thought about replacing the reeds with better ones but was warned off from doing by several concertina people who were worried it might remove the historical context, all this without me even mentioning the idea. I assumed at that moment Stanley's concertinas were no good. I spent time reading Trove and saw Stanley's advertising. It is very, very retail advertising and I assumed he was all bluff.

He may have made the reeds in a couple of the concertinas I saw, but if so I could not see why he would, they are no better than typical Lachenal reeds. I hoped I had not seen the good ones. But he was such a boaster I suspected if he had re-made the reeds in their entirety we would have heard about it directly. I don't doubt he could make a reed as he mentioned changing brass reeds to steel.




One thing he trumpets is his redesign for the climate. Here it is and the pivot point for the lever is screwed to the action board rather than being hammered in like a nail. It is a sound design. An aside; there is a famous poem contemporary to Stanley about a bush dance. At one point the dance is held up because the concertina needs repair. The poem describes the "tink, tink, tink" coming

from the room next door where repairs were being mad. The only quick repair that might be made on a concertina and would make a sound like that would be to bang back in the very part Stanley sought to improve.



This is the concertina with is Fred Holland's name on it, now in the care of his descendants including Bruce Kurtz who plays it and brought it along today. Again it is a Lachenal concertina at heart. Given my experience with all of the other Stanleys I had seen I approached it in a very jaundiced way but was persuaded by the reeds. They are a very sharp set of reeds.

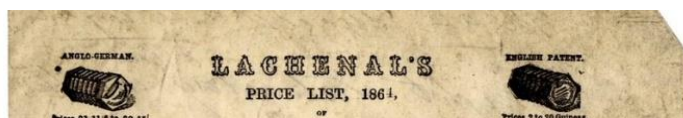
Note the Address—
S. FORSTER and SONS,
HARRINGTON-STREET, SYDNEY.



STEEL ANGLOS. Extra Loud, for Dancing.
Brass Anglos altered to steel. Accordions with
sliding steel Anglo notes. **J. STANLEY,** Concertina Doc-
tor, Bathurst

Carson Woods, and Co.
Importers of AMERICAN GOODS and SPECIALITIES.

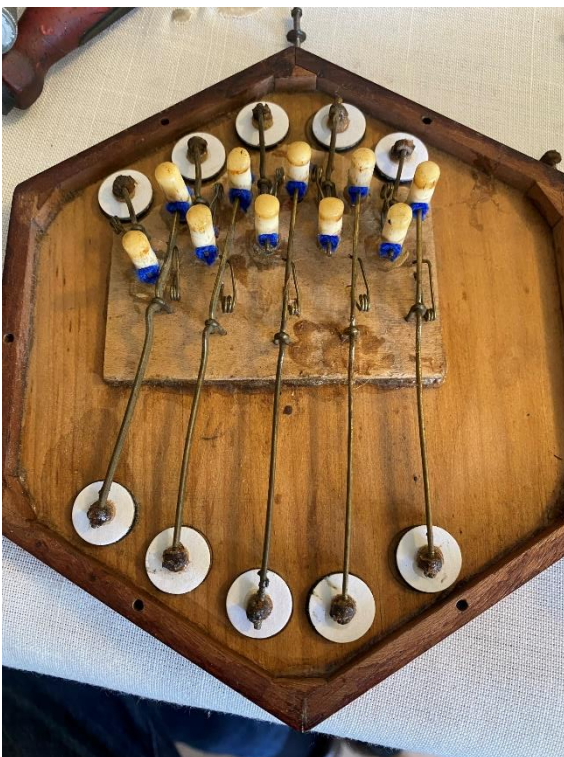
This advertisement says, concertinas “Extra loud for dancing”. The loudness comes from the reeds. The reeds in the FW Holland instrument above justify this advertising. I believe he made the tongues, and fitted them nicely to the frames. Not a quick or easy job.



PANS, or TRAYS, i.e., the Woodwork, containing the Notes, fitted and tuned ready for use in, and adapted to, Treble Concertinas; by the use of which Connoisseurs can have two or three distinct qualities of tone in the same instrument, it only being necessary to unscrew the tops, take out the pans already in, and substitute others as pleasure.	—	3	5	7	8
BOXES to hold Pans, Mahogany, 7/1; Rosewood, 10/1.	0	14	0	—	—
BOARDS containing 24 assorted Notes, tuned perfectly correct, and ready for immediate use	—	24	4	—	7
NOTES, tuned, 6d. each, 5/6 per dozen, or per set, perfectly tuned	—	1 1/2	3	5	6
VIBRATORS, tuned, and ready for use in the Notes, 3/4 per doz., or per set. Ditto reduced ready to tune, 9d. per dozen, 8/6 per gross	0	12	6	—	—
TUNING APPARATUS. Mahogany, six-sided, with screw-driver, file, &c., complete, by means of which parties at a distance from a Tuner can keep their own Instruments in repair.	0	18	6	—	—
DITTO Superior quality, with 4 holes, to admit of tuning Treble, Alto, and Chords.	1	15	0	—	—
CASES. American Leather, 10/6, solid Leather, 18/, splendid quality, lined with Silk, &c.	1	1	0	—	—
MUSIC STANDS, with Slide, to enable the Player to play standing or sitting.	—	—	—	—	—

This 1864 Lachenal Catalogue includes shows concertina parts can be bought separately.

A point of interest, the note name stampings on the reeds in the Holland are very crude. He would have needed to make or get stamps made. These are wide and blunt whereas stamps from the Lachenal and Jones factories in his other concertinas were sharp. The Holland concertina does not have the redesigned pivots; perhaps it predated the modification.



So given the ease of playing better reeds can provide it is no wonder players like Fred Holland were still playing until older. I imagine if Dooley Chapman's Stanley concertina ever comes to light it will turn out to be as good. Sadly Chris O'Sullivan, who knew where it was, died recently.

One note about mine, the CHB Morgan. It is pitched low, just sharp of A/E. It may have been used for singing and if so it had no need of smart reeds. Was it once good with a set of Stanley's reeds but a new owner wanted to use it for singing in low keys and had the reedpans and reeds swapped? This might explain why there are two different Lachenal serial

numbers in mine, one for the reed pans and another for the bellows.



The Bathurst Historical Society has a Stanley instrument. I asked to visit to take it apart and to my pleasure the curator Sarah Swift said yes! I had the loveliest day there with her team and discovered much interesting information.

Here is the BHS Stanley, and it presents differently to all the others. At first I thought it was a German instrument. Inside it was obvious it was a George Jones.

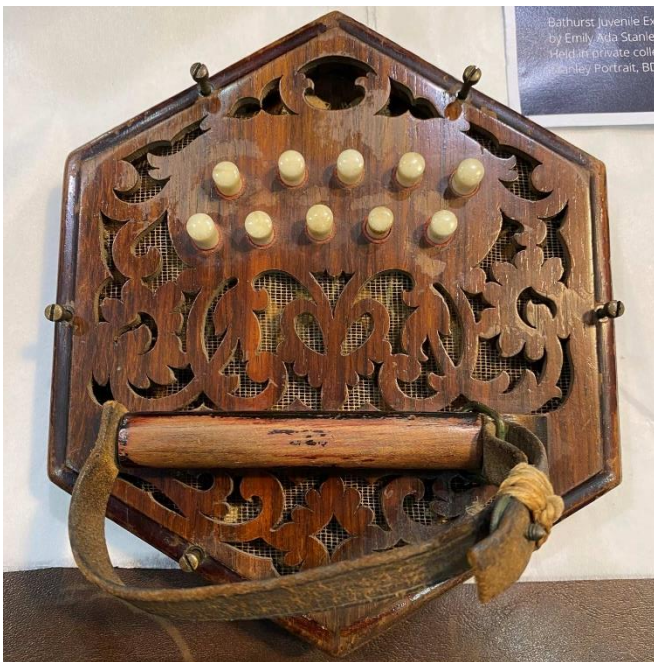
Giveaways are the wider reeds which Jones called “Broad Scale Reeds”, perhaps an advertising gimmick to counter Wheatstone’s “Long Scale Reeds”. And the inkless style of stamping is also a clue pointing to George Smith Jones. Jones began his career as a concertina maker in 1844 by working for Charles and William Wheatstone at their workshop in Conduit Street, London. This is only 15 years or so from the first concertina patent. Like many of the early workers Jones moved out on his own, probably after the patent ran out. In those days a patent lasted the length of two apprenticeships. Jones later invented the third row and claimed to have invented Anglo-German concertinas



It would appear the end is also made by George Jones rather than Stanley and to the eye the only Stanley feature about it is the label. Did he just re-label a Jones concertina? Here is a comparison between the labels.



There is a similarity in terms. Name, Patent Concertina, Location. Recently I saw a Lachenal English with this same label so it seems Stanley had them printed.



This instrument shows signs of being a superior concertina. It has no Stanley screwed posts, but it has bushed buttons and good reeds. Did he sit there replacing the reeds until it worked well? Or are these original Jones reeds? I love the wrist strap repair.



At the Bathurst Historical Society with the Stanley/Jones concertina. Picture credit: Sarah Swift.

So what of Stanley concertinas? A sales gimmick or a serious instrument?

To my knowledge Stanley never made a concertina from scratch. The most he ever did was take a second hand instrument, a Lachenal or Jones, and replace the ends with a design he cut himself, and he also sometimes replaced the pivots with screwed ones of his own design, and he made his own reeds for some, reeds of good design and execution. He does not seem to have made a reedpan. However the reedpan either needs extraordinary skill with a chisel and plane or a mechanised equivalent of today's router. With a router there are around 110 machining operations necessary. Or maybe he did this and I have just not come across it. I accept him as a concertinamaker and do not think the bar needs to be so high as to say you need to make every part. It is unlikely any concertina makers have ever made every part. Small screws for example, such as are used to hold reeds, are best left to specialists whether now or then.

The great variation in quality in the concertinas bearing the name Stanley may be explained by thinking of him as a businessman. If someone came into the shop flush with money and with no playing ability he could well skimp on the reeds but make the instrument look flashy. Or if they were going back out to the station in a week there would not be time. If anyone was going to get their name cut into the fretwork and he had heard of them as a musician he would know the instrument had to be good.

George John Hiscock died in Bathurst, NSW, 22 November 1913, aged "79"

I need to thank Dave Johnson for helping me on the day, Sarah Swift, Curator at the Bathurst Historical Society, and Sarah Ireland, great grand-daughter of George Hiscock, who provided the family information and photo. Also Trove. Support it or lose it.

This article/talk by Chris Ghent, concertina maker, onetime journalist.