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New South Wales Government Printer

The New South Wales Government Printer (NSWGP), a public works department in Sydney, was established in 1859 as an extension of the postage stamp department. The first Government Printer, Mr. Thomas Richards, established the "Photolithographic and Lithographic" department in 1868 and the "Photomechanical" department in 1877. Richards' intention for the photographs was the depiction of natural features and the material progress of the colony; the distribution of the photographs was promotional. Photographs were sent to international exhibitions, including the Centennial International Exhibition, Melbourne, 1888, when the department sent 178 photographs. The main form of presentation, however, was in album format, produced internally by the Printer's binding department. The quality, style and size of the albums were remarkable and produced as gifts for official visitors. The "Album of Views of New South Wales" presented to Lord Knutsford, the Colonial Secretary, in 1891 at the first Federal Convention includes civil works, public buildings, bridges, the Sydney Botanic Gardens and outlying districts. The photographers within the department remain unknown, but the "Narrative of the Expedition of the Australian Squadron to the South East Coast of New Guinea, October to December, 1884" (1885) has been attributed to Augustine Dyer (w. 1873-1923). Photographs were purchased and commissioned from commercial operators including Henry King, Charles Bayliss and Charles Kerry. Mr. Charles Potter succeeded Mr. Richards as the Government Printer in 1886.

See Also: Henry King, Charles Bayliss and Charles Kerry.

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