

**H O M E
O F T H E
B O Y D S**

**HARKAWAY AND
THE GRANGE**

Home of the Boyds: Harkaway and The Grange**Exhibition dates:**

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Arthur Boyd

The wheatfield (1948) (detail)

oil on composition board

70.4 x 70.5 cm

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

The Joseph Brown Collection, presented through the NGV

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Benefactor, 2004

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DIRECTOR'S FOREWORD

GEORGIA CRIBB

HOME OF THE BOYDS: HARKAWAY AND THE GRANGE IS A LOCAL STORY WITH NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE. IT IS A STORY THAT SPANS A CENTURY, CENTRED AROUND THREE GENERATIONS OF AUSTRALIA'S BEST-KNOWN ARTISTS AND THEIR FAMILY PROPERTY IN NARRE WARREN NORTH/HARKAWAY.

It is fitting that Bunjil Place Gallery's first major winter exhibition focuses on the work of such revered modern masters. A number of Australia's most significant artists have worked close-by or within the City of Casey municipality. Many of the artists have made the area their home. Over the next few years the Gallery will feature other nationally significant artists and stories, in specially planned exhibitions and publications that will shed new light on the cultural and artistic vitality of this region.

Home of the Boyds: Harkaway and The Grange was conceived several years ago when this new cultural precinct for Melbourne's South East was in the final throes of planning. Leading independent curator and writer Rodney James had been engaged to imagine what the gallery program might be. He identified, from his extensive knowledge and research of Australian art history, that the story of the Boyd and à Beckett family in Harkaway was special and deserved to be told.

Rodney travelled the country talking to experts and scholars as well as many of the descendants of the families and has tracked down some of the most iconic Australian works held in major collections, and many treasures that have not been seen publicly up to 40 years.

Together with Rodney James, we wish to extend our sincere gratitude to our collaborators - the team of the Bundanon Trust as well as the members of the Boyd and à Beckett families. We are so grateful to the National Gallery of Australia who enthusiastically supported research and shared such important works with us, and David Wise, Senior Paintings Conservator, NGA whose written contribution to this publication is invaluable. Thank you to our other major lenders the National Gallery of Victoria, Australian National University, TarraWarra Museum of Art and State Library Victoria. Leading auction houses were integral in helping us locate many of the important works held in private collections - thanks to Menzies Art Brands, Christies, Deutscher and Hackett, Bonhams and Sotheby's Australia, as well

as Australian Galleries, Charles Nodrum Gallery, Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery and Glen Eira City Gallery for research assistance and facilitating key loans. We are grateful to present works from important private lenders including the Westfarmers Collection, Kerry Stokes Collection, and LauraineDiggins Fine Art.

Special thanks to the vast number of private lenders who have been so generous in lending their treasured works to us for this important exhibition.

We are proud that for our first major winter exhibition, one of Australia's most important philanthropic organisations, the Gordon Darling Foundation, have made possible this publication, which provides access to and encourages the enjoyment of Australian art for the broadest possible audience.

I wish to also make special note of the many supporters across the City of Casey, including Heather Arnold, who have enthusiastically supported our research. To our colleagues across the Bunjil Place team and to the exceptional team of Bunjil Place Gallery who have worked closely with the curator to realise this project - Penny Teale, Catherine Bennetts-Cash and Sarah Lyons.

Projects such as this which contribute to a rich cultural life and that celebrate our cultural heritage, help to contribute to achieve Council's bold vision to become Australia's most liveable city.

Bunjil Place is proud to partner with Pitcher Partners and Berwick Mazda to bring this exhibition to Melbourne's South East. Projects such as this which contribute to a rich cultural life and that celebrate our cultural heritage, help to contribute to achieve Council's bold vision to become Australia's most liveable city.

THE GRANGE: A FAMILY PERSPECTIVE

POLLY BOYD IN CONVERSATION WITH
RODNEY JAMES, APRIL 2018

1. The Grange is commonly referred to as being at Harkaway although geographically it is in Narre Warren North. Is this how the family referred to the property: as Harkaway or Hark?

Yes, we always called it Harkaway. That was probably because it sounded a bit posh. 'Oh Harkaway: Harkaway is far away'. Berwick rings a bell too but that was more the town down the road. I always called the house Harkaway too but of course it was called The Grange. Most of Dad's paintings use Harkaway or Berwick in the title.

2. You went to live at The Grange in late 1948 with Arthur and Yvonne. What do you remember of that period, given that you were quite young?

I am not the oldest of the Boyd clan. Lawrence Beck and Matthew Perceval are older than me and Matthew (my brother born in 1948). But I am the oldest granddaughter [of Merric and Doris] and [I was] the one who lived there. We lived there for about six months. I have got this vivid memory of one of Mum's old photos of me running across the lawn with my brother in the distance: there as a little toddler. I remember doing it, but it's partly because I have seen the photo and I must have been about four or something and it was just a lovely place to be.

I also remember looking up at the ceiling and the walls and seeing the murals. Everything is new to you at that age, but this was something newer than new. I hadn't seen anything like it. I didn't realise at that stage that it was Dad's work of course. However, I remember being in the big room where the mural was - it seemed enormous to me, with ten-foot ceilings, but that was because I was little.

But I also remember the feeling of being there and having to behave - not that I ever behaved badly - and of being taught to curtsy by Martin, something I had never done in my life. My memories of Uncle Martin relate more to later when he was living in Rome. Martin was a gentleman. He was a true gent.

3. Arthur went back to visit a few times in the mid and later 1950s. Did you ever accompany him or go back to the property yourself?

No, we didn't visit after that because it was all too sad and miserable. It was all too awful, and we tried to save it, I say we, but I was still a child and there was nothing they could do. But I do remember the giant pit dug away and the whole thing was taken away.

4. Is memory and recollection an important part of being a Boyd?

Yes, the five brothers and sisters have all died, so sadly, because they were all an incredibly important part of my life. Part of my lot now is to remember lots of stuff, although it is often hard to distinguish actual memories from re-seeing family photographs and rehearsing family stories.

5. Do you recall works by your great grandmother Minnie or Arthur Merric being in the house?

Don't recall the paintings by Emma Minnie. I don't recall seeing them at The Grange - I was too little - but I remember seeing them later at Murrumbidgee and everywhere else. They were an integral part of our lives.

6. The Berwick paintings are considered by many art historians and curators as being an important group of landscapes, both at the time and since. Are there any works that particularly stand out for you?

I think they are all special - we didn't single things out overly. There were works - the hills of Harkaway at Australian Galleries and the lovely early landscapes.

7. I love the work in the Tasmanian Art Gallery and Museum – the figure of the man driving a horse and cart up A’Beckett Road. Could that be Merric do you think, with his wispy white hair?

I think so, yes.

I remember that picture well. It’s a beauty. That one stands out. But there is always something happening in the foreground, then this marvellous sky in the distance. All sorts of people doing work in the foreground, and the cows and the dray. There was also a village that appears at some point in the paintings.

8. I also love the work in the National Gallery of Victoria of the crows in a wheatfield and *The drover* 1948 from the Stokes Collection in Perth. Both of them seem to share in the idea of a bucolic harmony between man and nature? Is that how you read them too?

Oh yes, yes. That’s right. Yes of course. Harmony absolutely, and no cars. And yet there would have been motor cars I suppose, wouldn’t there, but there is no sign of anything electronic – which is nice.

9. The only Berwick ones that do, are the painting of *Moby Dick Hill* and *The stone crushers* where a little train puffs away in the distance

Well a train, I don’t count as being mechanical. It’s quite beautiful, it could be steam. That’s a more natural sort of thing.

10. Did you come back from London at any stage with Arthur and Yvonne and revisit The Grange?

No, no. They came back by boat, but we had to go to school. The first time I came back to Australia was in the mid-1970s.

I heard general talk about it but wasn’t privy to the discussions to try and save the murals at The Grange. It’s extraordinary that the amount that was saved was saved.

They did manage to save a chunk and they were big enough to read, big enough to see properly and to decipher.

I remember being very impressed when I saw them again, including in the the National Gallery of Australia retrospective exhibition in 2014. I went up there for that.

It was beautiful to see it because I thought it had all turned to crumble and it was like looking at a mural done by an ancient Greek – it was big with thick walls and is was like something like a temple ... or a church. It sort of made it even more special.

11. How important do you think The Grange was to the Boyd family? Should we consider it in the same light as Murrumbena or Rosebud or even Bundanon?

More important than Rosebud. Rosebud was just his grandfather and Dad but nobody else in the family lived there.

I think The Grange meant a hell of a lot because it was like the family home and I think that it had a lot of influence on Dad donating Bundanon. He said, ‘Look what happens when you try and give something away.’ It just took so long and so much energy to give things away. Mum and Dad were forever writing letters and it just went on and on. I think it was the example of The Grange.



Arthur Boyd
Stone crusher, Berwick 1948
tempera and oil on board
59.5 x 59.5 cm
Collection of Peter Moran
Photography courtesy of Menzies Art Brands
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HOME OF THE BOYDS: HARKAWAY AND THE GRANGE

RODNEY JAMES



THE GRANGE AT NARRE WARREN NORTH/HARKAWAY, SITUATED EAST OF MELBOURNE, WAS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT OF THE BOYD FAMILY HAVENS. IT WAS WHERE THE ARTISTIC UNION BETWEEN THE À BECKETT AND BOYD CLANS BEGAN, AND IT WAS PIVOTAL TO THEIR ATTACHMENT TO NATURE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR ATTITUDES TO AUSTRALIA AND THE LAND. IN HER SEMINAL 2002 BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY, BRENDA NIALL RECOGNISED THAT EACH OF THE BOYD AND À BECKETT PROPERTIES RESONATED AS POIGNANT TALISMANS OF STRONG FAMILIAL RELATIONSHIPS AND SHARED ARTISTIC TRADITIONS.

Although starting life as a modest homestead, The Grange grew to meet the needs of the family and became its symbolic heart. Later, it was radically transformed into a Georgian-style villa with formal gardens, in an ill-fated attempt to recapture an earlier status. The property came to express the personalities and preoccupations of each of its successive owners.

The Grange was a place of creative vitality; it was where important art was made and discussed. This ranged from the delicate gum leaf paintings of Constance, the development of Minnie's accomplished watercolour and oil paintings, the whimsical pencil drawings of Merric Boyd, the old master-inspired landscape paintings and religious murals of Arthur Boyd to Martin Boyd's semi-biographical novels of life at The Grange based on his grandmother's diaries.

The common thread was how art – painting, drawing, music and literature – could sustain and enhance people's lives, as well as how it could provide an evolving sense of attachment to the area from whence it sprung.

Arthur Boyd

Harkaway, view from The Grange 1948

oil on canvas

63.0 x 77.5 cm

Bastiaan Collection, Melbourne

Image courtesy of Bonhams

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HARKAWAY HILLS

THE ASSOCIATION OF THE À BECKETT FAMILY WITH THE BERWICK DISTRICT DATES FROM THE LATE 1850S AND EARLY 1860S. THE 1855 MARRIAGE OF WILLIAM ARTHUR CALLANDER À BECKETT (1833-1901), KNOWN AS W.A.C., AND EMMA MILLS (1838-1906) BROUGHT TOGETHER THE ELDEST SON OF VICTORIA'S FIRST CHIEF JUSTICE AND THE DAUGHTER OF A FORMER TASMANIAN CONVICT MADE GOOD. THIS UNLIKELY PAIRING AUGURED WELL FOR THE YOUNG MELBOURNE COUPLE. AFTER 10 YEARS OF SHORT RESIDENCIES AND OVERSEAS TRAVEL, THEY EVENTUALLY DECIDED TO SETTLE 40 KILOMETRES EAST OF MELBOURNE, IN THE ROLLING HILLS, VERDANT PASTURES AND BUSHLAND AT HARKAWAY.

Harkaway was then a good half-day journey from Melbourne. Though sparsely populated, the surrounding district was serviced by the townships that developed at Berwick and Narre Warren, and it comprised small farms and associated rural industries such as dairy and timber felling.

In this climate of isolation and a make-do economy, family ties were all important. The nearest neighbour to The Grange was Emma's mother, Hannah Robinson, and five surviving children from her second marriage. There was a further family connection with John Ingliss, the owner of the local general store at Berwick, who was the husband of Hannah's sister Maria.¹ W.A.C.'s younger brother Edward Fitzhayley à Beckett (1836-1932) bought land in the district and in the 1880s built a small residence at Beaconsfield Upper, calling it 'Ttekceba' (à Beckett spelt backwards).

In this climate of isolation and a make-do economy, family ties were all important.

The Grange was far enough away from Melbourne's 'polite' society but within reach of family and friends. The controversy that had surrounded the Mills family convict background and their brewery fortune held little interest for the à Beckett clan and the residents of The Grange. Other close neighbours were primarily 'dairy farmers from German Lutheran families who had left Europe during the political turmoil of the 1840s'.²

Having family, relatives and close friends located nearby would have eased the burden of living in isolation, particularly for Emma à Beckett. They also provided companionship for W.A.C., who loved nothing better than to go riding or swimming, or to practice his skills on the shooting range.

Two of W.A.C. and Emma à Beckett's six children were born after moving to Harkaway. This included Arthur Heywood (1868-1939), who eventually purchased 200 acres further along A'Beckett Road, Bunyip, in about 1895,³ and their second daughter, Emily, who married Benjamin Talworth Paine Backhouse. The city-bred and professionally trained Backhouses all became good friends of the à Becketts (and later the Boyds) and were frequent visitors to The Grange.⁴



Above left **Emma à Beckett**
Photography Elliot & Fry
State Library Victoria, Melbourne
A'Beckett Family collection

Above right **William Arthur Callander à Beckett**
Photography Elliot & Fry
State Library Victoria, Melbourne
A'Beckett Family collection



“The Grange was originally planned as an asymmetrical but graciously proportioned Australian homestead with verandahs on three sides and a large bay window off the lounge.”

(pg. 12–13) **Emma Minnie Boyd**
The Grange, Berwick 1874 (detail)
 watercolour on paper
 16.0 x 25.5 cm
 Private collection, Melbourne



THE FARMHOUSE ON THE HILL

THE SITE CHOSEN FOR W.A.C. AND EMMA À BECKETT'S NEW HOME WAS HIGH ON A HILL THAT ENJOYED COMMANDING VIEWS OF THE SURROUNDING DISTRICT, INCLUDING PORT PHILLIP TO THE WEST AND WESTERN PORT TO THE SOUTH. THE 70-ACRE PROPERTY (LATER EXTENDED BY A FURTHER 110 ACRES) WAS ACCESSED FROM A ROAD THAT ORIGINALLY LINKED TO HALLEUR ROAD, IN THE EAST. WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF A'BECKETT ROAD IN NARRE WARREN NORTH, THE EASIER POINT OF ACCESS WAS THEN RE-ROUTED FROM THE NORTH.

A local architect, George Washington Robinson, was retained to design the house. Robinson was the son of Hannah Robinson and reputedly had come to live with his mother in Berwick in 1863. A surveyor by profession, Robinson was at one time simultaneously the engineer, secretary, treasurer and valuer for Berwick Shire. He also designed his mother's house, 'Hillsley', in late 1864. It was situated at the bottom of the hill later occupied by The Grange.

Robinson's designs for the houses in the Berwick district were all similar in style and constructed from locally sourced materials. The Grange was one of four houses Robinson designed in the area that were constructed using locally produced bricks and milled timber.

William Gilbert à Beckett

The Grange, Harkaway - rear view 1927
 watercolour on paper
 23.9 x 32.8 cm
 Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria, Melbourne
 Gift of the à Beckett Estate under the Cultural Gifts Program, 2007

The Grange was originally planned as an asymmetrical but graciously proportioned Australian homestead with verandahs on three sides and a large bay window off the lounge. Aligned on a long east-west axis, it was one of the first houses to be built of brick in the district. Completing the picture was the rectangular stained-glass window featuring the à Beckett family coat of arms, which was commissioned by W.A.C. and positioned above the entrance door upon the completion of the house in 1866. According to a *Women's Weekly* article of November 1949, it was signposted by the 'grim (and rather cryptic) words': 'Forgetful of the tomb you build houses'.⁵



EMMA MINNIE BOYD

LIFE DURING THE EARLY YEARS AT THE GRANGE WAS SEEMINGLY CAREFREE. EMMA À BECKETT CHRONICLED DAY-TO-DAY LIFE IN HER DIARY AND THIS FORMED THE BASIS OF MARTIN BOYD'S LATER NOVELS ABOUT HIS FAMILY'S LIFE. FROM THESE AND OTHER DOCUMENTS, FAMILY STORIES AND PAINTINGS, A PICTURE EMERGES OF LIFE THAT CLOSELY FOLLOWED THE SEASONS - LIVING WITH AND FROM THE LAND. THE GRANGE PROVIDED FOR MOST IMMEDIATE NEEDS, WITHOUT MUCH LEFT OVER. THERE WERE DAILY CHORES AND SELF-SCHOOLING FOR THE SIX CHILDREN, 'QUICK' HOPS INTO BERWICK TOWNSHIP AND INFREQUENT TRIPS TO AND STAYS IN MELBOURNE. THE GRANGE OFFERED FREEDOM, BASIC LIVING AND DAILY ADVENTURES.

The six à Beckett children were encouraged to draw and paint by their mother and governess, Emma. An early watercolour by Emma Minnie Boyd (1858–1936); (known as Minnie) shows three of the children dutifully walking out into the garden for morning sketching. Visits to The Grange by other family members, friends and noted artists also proved fortuitous.

Two notable family visitors were Thomas Turner à Beckett, an amateur artist and painter of landscape scenes, and his son Edward à Beckett (Cousin Ted), who had studied at the Royal Academy in London. T.T. à Beckett's small watercolour, *Minnie's hut* 1875, now held by the Fryer Library, University of Queensland, was

Emma Minnie Boyd
(Minnie's house) 1880
 watercolour on paper
 18.2 x 26.7 cm (sheet)
 Bundanon Trust Collection

Painted on location at The Grange and depicts the bush hut that had been constructed as Minnie's studio. Minnie's version of the same building, (*Minnie's house*) dated Christmas 1880, shows the clear similarities that had developed between the two artists, including the selection of a soft eucalypt palette, the dappled light and the copse of spindly trees (which survive to this day).

Minnie's version shows the clear similarities that had developed between the two artists, including the selection of a soft eucalypt palette, the dappled light and the copse of spindly trees



Above **Constance Matilda à Beckett**
Untitled (Two kookaburras, one with snake) 1872
 oil on gum leaf
 12.5 x 17.5 cm
 Australian National University Collection, Canberra
 Gift of Mr and Mrs Brett, 1970



Above left **Constance Matilda à Beckett**
Untitled (Kangaroo, kookaburras, a robin and The Grange) 1872
 oil on gum leaf
 9.5 x 20.0 cm
 Australian National University Collection, Canberra
 Gift of Mr and Mrs Brett, 1970

Below left **Constance Matilda à Beckett**
Untitled (Emu, kookaburras, a robin and The Grange) 1872
 oil on gum leaf
 10.0 x 14.0 cm
 Australian National University Collection, Canberra
 Gift of Mr and Mrs Brett, 1970

Nature is shown to be part of the experience of living at The Grange and sometimes an extension of what goes on inside.

Capitalising upon her early talent, Minnie received extra art tuition in Melbourne from 1875. From 1876 she studied periodically at the National Gallery School, Melbourne (1876-77 and 1879-88). She also received personal tuition from Louis Buvelot (1814-88), the noted Swiss émigré artist, though the exact date has never been firmly established.⁶

Minnie showed works alongside Buvelot in the Victorian Artists Society exhibition in 1874. Buvelot also visited Berwick in 1874 and may well have stayed at The Grange.⁷ *Berwick* 1874 is one of two known studies that Buvelot produced on location.⁸ The drawing depicts a dry creek bed and bank, with a dead tree placed strategically to the side. It shares visual links with some of the works Minnie produced around the same time and intriguingly those of her grandson, Arthur Boyd, when he came to paint there in the 1940s.

The art produced at The Grange involved a healthy cross-fertilisation of ideas between family members. In the 1860s and 70s, the children would often learn from one another. A series of three oil paintings on gum leaves have been attributed to Minnie's younger sister, Constance Matilda (1860-1940). If the date 1872 and attribution of these works are correct, then Constance would have been a mere 12 or 13 years of age when she created the works.

These three paintings of bush scenes on locally sourced eucalyptus leaves are thought to depict an area near The Grange; they exemplify how locally sourced materials informed the creation of works of art and signify colonial 'naturalisation' and the desire to belong.⁹ The exacting detail and complex narrative of these works suggest that they could have been done in collaboration with someone older than Constance or with more experience. Possibly produced after seeing examples of painted gum leaves by the well-publicised amateur artist William Eustace (1820-1907), their uncanny similarity to gum leaves attributed to Minnie suggest that they may have even been painted by her.¹⁰

Minnie à Beckett's many watercolour paintings and sketches of The Grange and its environs provide a substantial opus of family life. These range from intimate portrayals of family members engaged in everyday pursuits such as fruit picking, playing, relaxing or reading to sketchbook drawings that depict quiet pockets of nature, portraits and to *en plein air* landscapes of the house, property and surrounding landscape.

The Grange, Berwick 1874 is a view of the main house, garden and outbuildings sketched from the post-and-rail fence that marked the inner ring of the property. From within this familiar territory, Minnie reveals a sprawling though organic collection of buildings that she and her siblings were free to roam. The work faithfully replicates the growth of the main building. The kitchen and dining room, pictured in the right foreground, had been joined to the main house through a vestibule, while the original shingled roof was replaced by galvanised iron. Characteristically, the composition presents broad expanses of space that had been cleared to become open fields and pasture in contrast with minute detail in areas that had been left as was.



Left **Emma Minnie Boyd**
(Sunset) c.1880
 watercolour on paper
 25.5 x 18.0 cm
 Bundanon Trust Collection

Below **Emma Minnie Boyd**
Willie à Beckett at his desk in the Blue Room, The Grange 1883
 watercolour on paper
 24.7 x 34.5 cm (sight)
 Private collection, Melbourne

Right **Emma Minnie Boyd**
(The quail shooter) 1884
 watercolour on paper
 17.3 x 25.6 cm (sight)
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 Purchased 2006



(The quail shooter) 1884 looks south-west from The Grange and was painted almost 10 years later. This is an equally engaging though more accomplished watercolour that was passed down through the family until it was acquired by the National Gallery of Australia in 2006. *The Grange, Berwick, (Sunset)* c.1880 and *(The quail shooter)* were each painted during summer. They convincingly evoke the crackle and dry of the Australian bush and the softer and more diffuse morning and evening light. The diminutive figure in *(The quail shooter)* merges into the landscape, leading former National Gallery of Australia curator Anna Gray to remark: 'In this period of strong nationalist sentiment, the tiny human figure does not dominate the landscape; rather he is represented as part of it'.¹¹

An afternoon nap 1974, by contrast, is a beautifully rendered portrait of Minnie's mother resting on the chaise longue in the drawing room of The Grange. The painting was exhibited alongside the work of professional artists at the fourth Victorian Academy of Arts exhibition in the same year it was made.¹² *An afternoon nap* shows Emma à Beckett surrounded by stylish interior fabrics and furniture. Like many of Minnie's works, including the 1875 watercolour *Interior with figures, The Grange* (National Gallery of Victoria collection), it revels in the comfortable though informal nature of life at The Grange and in the idea of inside as a respite from the potentially harsher realities that lay outside.

Both works develop the motif of the open window (or door), which is characteristic of Minnie's art. The curtain is pulled back from the comfortable drawing room setting, revealing a single tree trunk in the garden. *Willie à Beckett at his desk in the Blue Room, The Grange* 1883 continues this implied relationship between interior and exterior worlds. In each case, nature is shown to be part of the experience of living at The Grange and sometimes an extension of what goes on inside.



Arthur Merric Boyd

Sheds and stables at The Grange, Harkaway 1889

watercolour on paper

22.0 x 44.0 cm

Private collection, Victoria

Photography: Viki Petherbridge

ARTHUR MERRIC BOYD

WITH THE MARRIAGE OF ARTHUR MERRIC BOYD (1862-1940) AND EMMA MINNIE À BECKETT IN 1886, THE GRANGE PLAYED HOST TO THE FIRST OF ITS ARTISTIC DUOS. THE TWO ARTISTS HAD MET AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY SCHOOL AS STUDENTS. FOLLOWING THEIR MARRIAGE, THEY LIVED FULL TIME AT THE GRANGE AND AT NEARBY 'OPOHO' BETWEEN 1886 AND 1889. MINNIE AND ARTHUR MERRIC'S FIRST SON, GILBERT, WAS BORN IN 1866 AT THE GRANGE, CLOSELY FOLLOWED BY MERRIC (IN 1888 AT GLENFERN, ST KILDA), AND LATER PENLEIGH (1890), MARTIN (1893) AND HELEN (1903).

Despite their increasing familial duties, both artists found time to paint and exhibit. Arthur Merric Boyd's *Landscape with red farm building 1888* and *Sheds and stables at The Grange, Harkaway 1889* show contrasting views of Harkaway around the same time. Arthur Merric Boyd was principally interested in the effects of light and colour in his art. *Landscape with red farm building* is a subtle interpretation of a green-tinged plain, purple hills

and grey clouds. The work suggests the heavy atmosphere of winter, unlike *Sheds and stables at The Grange, Harkaway*, which is bathed in a warm and welcoming light. The numerous buildings, placid animals and well-worn track create a feeling of intimacy and familiarity that is different from many of Minnie's responses to the Australian conditions and her idea of adapting to the land.

Emma Minnie Boyd's intimate *Seated woman in the landscape 1889* dates from the same period as the two watercolours by Arthur Merric Boyd. Minnie had begun to paint in oils and the work shows her confident application of stippled brushwork, precise detail and dense colour. The central figure appears quite at home. Though a bush setting, she attends to roses, presumably picked from a nearby garden. Minnie's ability to construct memorable images from everyday scenes and to show how the indigenous and exotic can happily co-exist is a feature of her art.

The numerous buildings, placid animals and well-worn track create a feeling of intimacy and familiarity that is different from many of Minnie's responses to the Australian conditions

The matter-of-fact account of Gilbert's tragic death underlies the moment at which the first golden period at The Grange ended abruptly. The day of 21 January 1896 started like any other, with Emma à Beckett recording in her diary that her morning began with 'picking apples in the garden'. This was followed by what was supposed to be a simple excursion into Berwick township. 'Gilbert', she wrote of her grandson, 'wanted to go on quickly' but his pony shied and he fell off. 'I expected to see him get up at once but he never moved.'¹³

Few of Minnie or Arthur Merric Boyd's paintings of the area date from after this period. Although they continued to visit, this side of the Boyd family had effectively moved on. European travel, the loss of a large chunk of inheritance during the 1890s Depression and helping to set up a farm at Yarra Glen, on the other side of the Dandenong Ranges, consumed their time and energy, as did memories of the tragic loss of their son.

WILLIAM GILBERT À BECKETT

FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF EMMA À BECKETT IN 1906, THE FIRST-BORN SON, WILLIAM (WILLIE) GILBERT À BECKETT (1864–1941), INHERITED THE GRANGE. WILLIE HAD FOLLOWED IN HIS FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS AND TRAINED AS A SOLICITOR BEFORE SETTLING ON THE LAND. WHILE AT THE GRANGE, HE TOOK AN ACTIVE INTEREST IN THE AFFAIRS OF THE DISTRICT AND SERVED AS A MEMBER OF THE BERWICK SHIRE FOR 18 YEARS AND AS AN HONORARY JUSTICE OF THE PEACE.¹⁴ WILLIE À BECKETT WAS ALSO AN AMATEUR WATERCOLOUR ARTIST AND A SKILLED WOODWORKER —AN ALTARPIECE CARVED AT THE GRANGE FOR HIS LOCAL BERWICK CHURCH REMAINED IN SITU UNTIL THE CHURCH WAS REMODELLED SOME TIME LATER.

The Grange, Harkaway 1927 and *The Grange, Harkaway - rear view 1927* were gifted to State Library Victoria from the à Beckett estate in 2007. The latter shows the house from the north, shaded by exotic trees, with green grass and with wisteria wrapped around the fretwork of the verandah. A work by a visiting artist, J. Charley, dated two years earlier, also showed the front of the house and its circular driveway, festooned by exotic shrubs, roses and other blooms. Featured in *Table Talk*, the house had increased in size and developed more extensive gardens, including an 'olde world garden created by Willie's wife Joan'.¹⁵ Admired as one of the loveliest homes in the district, The Grange became the setting for garden parties and was increasingly used as a country retreat as well as a working farm.

The Boyd and à Beckett family members continued to visit, with some sustaining the family tradition of making artworks that responded to the house and its surroundings. A landscape of the back paddock at The Grange was painted by Arthur Merric and Minnie's son Penleigh around 1910. The work shows the steady development of Penleigh's impressionist style prior to World War I through faceted brushwork and rich tonal variation.

In the 1920s, the eldest son, Merric, visited The Grange with his wife and fellow artist Doris Boyd. It is believed they lived at The Grange for a fleeting period in the 1930s.¹⁶ One of Merric's reasons for being there was to extract clay for use in the family pottery business that he set up in Murrumbena. Some of the Boyd pottery was built using Berwick-sourced clay.¹⁷



William Gilbert à Beckett

The Grange, Harkaway 1927
watercolour on paper
22.4 x 33.3 cm

Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of the à Beckett Estate under the Cultural Gifts Program, 2007

MARTIN BOYD

THE RETURN OF WRITER MARTIN BOYD (1893–1972) FROM ENGLAND SET IN TRAIN A FAR MORE RADICAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE GRANGE. THE FUTURE OF THE PROPERTY WAS UNCERTAIN, AND MARTIN OFFERED TO LEASE OR BUY IT FROM HIS COUSIN BILL À BECKETT, WHO HAD INHERITED THE FARM FROM HIS FATHER, WILLIE. MARTIN BOYD RETURNED TO AUSTRALIA WITH A STATED DESIRE TO RESTORE HIS GRANDPARENTS' HOUSE AND RE-ESTABLISH THE GRANGE AS THE SEAT OF THE BOYD-À BECKETT FAMILY. MARTIN WAS NOW FINANCIALLY SECURE DUE TO THE SUCCESS OF HIS NOVEL *LUCINDA BRAYFORD* (1946), AND THOUGH HE HAD NOT LIVED THERE HIMSELF HE KNEW IT WELL THROUGH FAMILY VISITS AND STORIES.

The physical transformation of The Grange proved more in keeping with Martin Boyd's English tastes than directly meeting the needs of the building. Boyd documented its 'extremely dilapidated condition' and the 'slow process to get it in order'. He remarked in a letter to an English friend in December 1948 that 'but room by room it becomes habitable ... Now I sit in a drawing room which is hardly distinguishable from the saloon at Little Eversden, in the same chair in the same bureau.'¹⁸ Though he had good intentions, his remodelling of the interior rooms and their decoration with furniture and fittings alienated some of the à Beckett side of the family, who no longer recognised it as their own.

The process of gentrification continued outside, with the removal of the front verandah and the addition of a Georgian portico and a doorway arch. A Norfolk pine that shaded the north side of the house was cut down and plans were put in place to transform the garden into more formal beds.

Martin Boyd returned to Australia with a stated desire to restore his grandparents' house and re-establish The Grange as the seat of the Boyd-à Beckett family.

Martin Boyd's attitude to The Grange and the surrounding district has been rightly characterised by Brenda Niall as one of ambivalence. While he appreciated the connection of his family with the land, and on occasion referred to the rugged beauty of the surrounding countryside, he also saw much of it through an English veil.

He wrote to his friend Pamela Gill in early 1950: 'This morning, my dear Pamela, having 20 minutes to spare for luncheon, I drove through the wild Australian bush, with serpents and wallabies (possibly) lurking on either side of the track, to collect the parcel, and was rejoiced to see the handwriting of P. Gill'. The following year, he further admitted, 'I am still trying to restore this wilderness to order + myself almost ruined - as the property - as the result'.¹⁹

ARTHUR BOYD

ARTHUR BOYD (1920–99) SHARED NO SUCH AMBIVALENCE. HE HAD VISITED THE GRANGE AND HARKAWAY PRIOR TO MARTIN BOYD ASSUMING OWNERSHIP AND THIS MAY HAVE WHETTED HIS APPETITE TO RETURN FOR A MORE EXTENDED PERIOD. THE MELBOURNE ARTIST JESSIE TRAILL ALSO MAINTAINED A STUDIO AT 238 HARKAWAY ROAD AND WAS FRIENDS WITH ARTHUR'S PARENTS, MERRIC AND DORIS BOYD. IN THE MID-1940S, ARTHUR BOYD VISITED HER AT THE HARKAWAY STUDIO TO 'FURTHER EXPLORE THE ETCHING PROCESS'.²⁰

Berwick landscape c.1943 is the earliest of Arthur Boyd's known paintings of Harkaway and was possibly painted around the same time as the visit. Painted on or near The Grange property, the painting depicts one of the à Becketts chopping firewood. Stylistically this work links with Boyd's pre-war works and his 'discovery' of Louis Buvelot. Boyd was particularly taken by a watercolour of Bacchus Marsh held in the National Gallery of Victoria, and he set out to emulate, in Richard Haese's words, 'Buvelot's concern to play off massed forms against open clearings, dark against light, creating a sense of space through tonal recession from the dark foreground into a lighter middle ground'.²¹

Berwick landscape shows a massing of foliage and a similar transition from dark to light. It references Buvelot's pictures, incorporating fallen trees that are placed diagonally back into the picture and that merge into the soil. Boyd may have seen works by Buvelot of the Berwick area that contained a similar motif, as several of his watercolours from this time follow similar compositional arrangements.²²

***Berwick landscape* 1946 is painted in sky blues, golden yellows and crisp greens. It continues Boyd's use of a broad brush (and palette knife) to create licks of paint that are reminiscent of the earlier period.**

While Boyd's 1943 Bacchus Marsh paintings create a 'slightly gloomy view' of the Australian bush epitomised by Buvelot, some of his early Berwick works recapture the sylvan and sun-saturated paddocks of his Mornington Peninsula paintings from 1936–39.²³ *Berwick landscape* 1946 is painted in sky blues, golden yellows and crisp greens. It continues Boyd's use of a broad brush (and palette knife) to create licks of paint that are reminiscent of the earlier period. The focus on intimate pockets of nature contrasted against wide horizons, which he discerned in the work of both Buvelot his grandmother Emma Minnie Boyd, are also apparent and would return in the 1948–49 series of Berwick landscape paintings.



Arthur Boyd

Berwick landscape 1946

oil on canvas

50.6 x 60.7 cm

Private collection, Sydney

Photography courtesy of Menzies Art Brands

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“Berwick landscape shows a massing of foliage and a similar transition from dark to light. It references Buvelot’s pictures, incorporating fallen trees that are placed diagonally back into the picture and that merge into the soil.”



THE GRANGE MURALS

IN 1948, MARTIN BOYD GENEROUSLY OFFERED ARTHUR A £500 COMMISSION FOR THE MURALS AND FREE LODGING FOR HIM, YVONNE AND THEIR DAUGHTER POLLY. THIS MEANT THAT ARTHUR BOYD COULD ESCAPE THE TIGHT CONFINES OF THE FAMILY HOME AND POTTERY IN MURRUMBEENA. ALTHOUGH LIVING WITH MARTIN HAD ITS OWN TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS, ESPECIALLY FOR YVONNE AND THREE-YEAR-OLD POLLY, THE CHANCE FOR ARTHUR TO PAINT FULL TIME AND TO WORK ON SUCH AN AMBITIOUS SERIES OF MURALS WAS AN ATTRACTIVE PROPOSITION THAT COULD NOT BE REFUSED.

The Grange murals took aspects of Arthur Boyd’s existing practice in a bold new direction. He combined Old Master techniques and subjects in a recognisably Australian setting. The overall feeling is less malign and more forgiving than his earlier religious works that concentrated primarily on humanity’s destructive impulses and fall from grace.

As Deborah Hart has observed, Arthur Boyd gave considerable thought to how he would approach painting on such a grand scale, and on the techniques and materials that he might employ. Boyd tested ideas for potential subject matter, and ‘enlivened by the challenge, he studied reproductions of many of the great European masters, especially Tintoretto, Titian, Rubens and Rembrandt’.²⁴



Pen-and-ink drawings such as *Study for the mural at Harkaway, Victoria* [1948–49] explored a range of subjects that ultimately do not appear in the mural. These nonetheless important studies helped Boyd to hone his skills, including fluid brushwork contrasted against areas of sharper line and shading: they recall the line-work of Rembrandt. The choice of subjects, such as the Nativity scenes and the women at the well, were a further indication of Boyd’s debt to the Dutch master.

Boyd, ‘enlivened by the challenge, studied reproductions of many of the great European masters, especially Tintoretto, Titian, Rubens and Rembrandt’

Susannah with the Elders 1945 and *Kneeling figure watching embracing figures* 1947 point to the complexity of Arthur Boyd’s ideas, and their continual evolution and reinterpretation. The 1945 oil painting explores ideas to do with apprehension, lust and despair. Produced towards the end of World War II, it is dark, pessimistic and violent. The motif of lecherous voyeurs preying on the unsuspecting Susannah is further developed in the 1947 sketch. The unwanted advances of the elders are replaced by Boyd’s commonly used motif of the watcher and the watched – of an unwelcome intrusion that threatens to derail a moment of intimacy or passion.

Above left **Arthur Boyd**
Study for the mural at Harkaway, Victoria [1948–49]
ink and wash on paper
36.0 x 55.0 cm
Private collection, Victoria
© Reproduced with permission of Bundanon Trust

Above **Arthur Boyd**
Susannah with the Elders 1945
oil on canvas mounted on composition board
66.6 x 96.8 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
The Arthur Boyd gift 1975
© National Gallery of Australia

In the mural there is a gentler approach that, as has often been pointed out, relates to Boyd's study of the rich colour palette and feathery brushwork of Venetian Jacopo Tintoretto (c.1518–94) and his versions of the same subject. Boyd's figure of Susannah looked directly to Rembrandt's *A woman bathing in a stream* 1654 for inspiration. In Boyd's work, Susannah wades into a serene forest pool, her clothes hoisted to avoid getting wet, 'exchanging a conspiratorial glance with the spy'.²⁵ The tone changes from being the victim to being self-aware and the setting is replaced by a Harkaway thicket. An aqueous blue-green palette contrasts with the striking red of the gown and detailed brushwork, and dense foliage creates a less harsh landscape than in the former works around the same theme.

An aqueous blue-green palette contrasts with the striking red of the gown and detailed brushwork, and dense foliage creates a less harsh landscape than in the former works around the same theme.

The Old Testament subjects used in the mural were chosen and modified after discussion between Martin and Arthur Boyd. Importantly, each story lent itself to Boyd's personal inflection, activated by the recognisably Berwick landscapes. The largest of the murals was reserved for *The prodigal son*. This was a theme that Arthur had developed previously; for example, in a major 1946–47 painting, as well as less well-known variations such as *Figure study incomplete prodigal son* c.1948 from the Bundanon Trust Collection.²⁶

The story of the prodigal son had strong personal associations for both Arthur and Martin Boyd. Arthur had high regard for his father, Merric, who he often depicted on his chair in the Brown Room of 'Open Country' at Murrumbidgee. A further distinctive touch (not recounted in the biblical story) is included: 'of the mother in the ritual of welcoming their son home'.²⁷ Doris was a strong and independent role model for Arthur. The focus on the son's return and 'the expression of contrition, paternal love and forgiveness' represented a new take on an old theme for Arthur.²⁸ The same theme of the son returning to the family fold also held a strong message that Martin Boyd would have been keen to convey.





“The Grange murals were completed within two months, with Arthur Boyd exhausted by the process.”

(pg. 32-33) **Arthur Boyd**
The prodigal son (Harkaway mural, The Grange) 1948-49
 (detail)
 casein tempera, powder colours on plaster on mortar
 © Reproduced with permission of Bundanon Trust

In the process of painting the mural, Arthur Boyd also altered or extended some of his existing religious-themed paintings. The large and magical painting, *Jacob's dream* 1946-49 was originally dated 1947 but is widely considered a work that was painted over several years. The Genesis story of Jacob's dream at Bethel recounts his being sent into the wilderness to escape from his brothers, who harboured plans to kill him. Jacob dreams of his resolve to return home with God's blessing and protection, a sign of His presence in our lives.

Boyd's painting shows two distinct aspects of the communication - the dream itself and the union of Jacob with God. The biblical reference to the ladder that leads to heaven has been removed, and the focus is on Jacob and his psychological and physical relationship with the Berwick landscape. Whereas the earlier *Study for Jacob's dream* c.1946-47 is a generic setting in which the drama unfolds, *Jacob's dream* includes a large gum tree with the characteristic white trunks, a windmill and red-brown-green palette. God and man's relationship is set in the here and now, and there is the suggestion that Jacob is at peace in his Australian bush surroundings.

The biblical reference to the ladder that leads to heaven has been removed, and the focus is on Jacob and his psychological and physical relationship with the Berwick landscape.

Arthur Boyd used the Berwick landscape as the basis for the mural. This included one whole section on the rear wall devoted to the landscape, with parts of each subject painting and a frieze linking each section. *Landscape* c.1948 and *The dam* 1948-49 each carry strongly articulated stylistic and painterly qualities that underpin the mural. The muted greens and yellows carry the feel of a Tintoretto further and reveal Boyd's imaginative interchange between depictions of the local landscape and religious iconography.

The Grange murals were completed within two months, with Arthur Boyd exhausted by the process. Fittingly, a large party was organised for May 1949. According to one local newspaper account, The Grange 'provided an attractive setting for the late afternoon party which Martin Boyd gave last weekend'.²⁹ More than 100 carefully selected guests witnessed the unveiling of Arthur's murals, along with Martin's collection of treasures 'and the small sitting-room, which has been painted by Mr. Boyd himself in panels of French blue and white with allegorical scenes depicted on the ceiling and walls'.³⁰

No expense was spared in Martin's attempt to recapture the atmosphere of earlier à Beckett gatherings: '... with caterers, Italian waiters and a florist to arrange the decorations on trestle tables. There was to be croquet on the freshly mown lawn. The white damask tablecloths, borrowed from his Aunt Gertrude à Beckett, had been used ... half a century before.'³¹

Above right **Arthur Boyd**
Jacob's dream 1946-49
 tempera on composition board
 107.0 x 127.0 cm
 The Wesfarmers Collection, Perth
 © Reproduced with permission of Bundanon Trust

Below right **Arthur Boyd**
Figures sleeping on a hill, figure with ladder and angels: 'Jacob'
Study for Jacob's dream
 c.1946-47, Melbourne
 pencil on paper
 37.8 x 56.1 cm (sheet)
 Visual Arts Board Australian Contemporary Art Acquisitions Programme 1975
 Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
 © Art Gallery of South Australia



ARTHUR BOYD PAINTINGS 1948–49

ARTHUR BOYD'S BERWICK LANDSCAPES OF 1948–49 CONSTITUTE A HIGH POINT IN THE ARTIST'S OEUVRE AND IN MID-CENTURY AUSTRALIAN PAINTING. AROUND 25 MAJOR WORKS WERE COMPLETED OVER A PERIOD OF SIX MONTHS. THESE HELPED TO CEMENT BOYD'S REPUTATION FOR DEVELOPING A PERSONAL AND IDIOSYNCRATIC VISION OF THE AUSTRALIAN BUSH, INFUSED WITH THE APPROACH AND TECHNIQUES OF THE OLD MASTERS. MOST OF THE PAINTINGS WERE DONE IN OIL AND/OR TEMPERA, A MEDIUM THAT BOYD HAD LEARNT FROM MAX DOERNER. USING A HALF-AND-HALF MIXING TECHNIQUE HELPED BOYD TO ACHIEVE A PECULIAR LUMINOSITY, DELICACY OF COLOUR AND IMMENSE VARIETY AND LIGHTNESS OF TEXTURE, WHICH IS APPARENT IN RELIGIOUS WORKS SUCH AS *JACOB'S DREAM* AND THE LANDSCAPES.³²

Arthur Boyd's subjects were mostly found within a one- or two-kilometre radius of The Grange. This included the views towards Port Phillip and Western Port, looking down the valley from the house, and an aspect that took in the Dandenong Ranges to the north and Cardinia to the north-east. Remnant pockets of bush, ploughed paddocks, dams and running creeks also caught his interest, as did the changing light and conditions experienced over summer and autumn.

Harkaway, view from the Grange 1948 and *Landscape near Berwick* 1948 provide a characteristic view of the distant valleys and hills. These landscapes seem quite 'traditional' in approach and are reminiscent of earlier works by Penleigh Boyd. However, Boyd introduces a more personal and contemporary note into the idyllic scenery through his characteristic white tree trunks in the middle distance (a Merric Boyd motif), the treatment of curvilinear and sometimes grotesque forms, and the strong contrasts between the dry summer grass and lush, green pasture.

Using a half-and-half mixing technique helped Boyd to achieve a peculiar luminosity, delicacy of colour and immense variety and lightness of texture, which is apparent in religious works such as *Jacob's dream* and the landscapes.

Important to these works was Boyd's concentrated study of famous landscape paintings and adventurous compositions by Bruegel and Italian Renaissance masters, including Titian and Tintoretto. The picture plane of *Landscape with Poddy* c.1948 is tipped up and forwards to adopt an unusual viewpoint from the bottom of the hill looking up. The crackling grass, burnt by the summer sun and reminiscent of related works such as *The cornfield* (UK Rhodes Trust) and *The wheatfield* (1948), is painted in precise detail and predate Boyd's celebrated Wimmera paintings, in which golden hues are contrasted with the intense sky dotted with wispy clouds.

A second group of the Berwick works focuses on the theme of rural labour and agricultural life. These works include *The drover* 1948, *Berwick landscape* c.1948, *Harkaway landscape* c.1948 and the slightly later (*Harkaway, farmer and black crows*) (1950). Franz Philip has written perceptively about *The drover*, which was 'a gift to (Arthur Boyd's) niece, Lenore Boyd ... (and) painted in the same year as *Boat builders, Eden, New South Wales* ... Boyd focuses our attention on the pockets of human activity without lessening the impact of the overall breadth and scale of his vision. The experience of Bruegel's art allowed the artist to find ... a vocabulary of representation for a landscape both panoramic and intimate.'³³ It is less about nostalgia or a nationalistic reinterpretation of life on the land than it is with looking at the past to form a new and distinctive Australian modernism.



Above **Arthur Boyd**
The wheatfield (1948)
oil on composition board
70.4 x 70.5 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
The Joseph Brown Collection. Presented through the NGV Foundation by Dr Joseph Brown AO OBE, Honorary Life Benefactor, 2004
© Reproduced with permission of Bundanon Trust

Right **Pieter Bruegel the Elder**
1525–1569 Brussels, Netherlands
The harvesters 1565
oil on wood
119.1 x 161.9 cm
The Metropolitan Museum of Art





“Boyd focuses our attention on the pockets of human activity without lessening the impact of the overall breadth and scale of his vision. The experience of Bruegel’s art allowed the artist to find ... a vocabulary of representation for a landscape both panoramic and intimate.”



“A second group of the Berwick works focuses on the theme of rural labour and agricultural life. These works include *The drover* 1948, *Berwick landscape* c.1948, *Harkaway landscape* c.1948 and the slightly later *Harkaway, farmer and black crows* (1950).”



Arthur Boyd
The dam 1948–49
 oil on canvas on composition board
 69.1 x 80.8 cm
 TarraWarra Museum of Art
 Gift of Eva Besen and Marc Besen AO, 2001
 © Reproduced with permission of Bundanon Trust

The intimacy that Philip refers to is also apparent in *The dam* 1948–49, a major work acquired by a friend of the Boyds, Denison Deasey, around 1954. It focuses on a pocket of nature surrounded by tree trunks and thick, dark undergrowth and twisted limbs. There is an implicit suggestion that we have chanced upon a secluded clearing in the bush, much like in Boyd’s mural of Susannah. The dark, sombre tones evoke the primordial qualities of the Australian bush, while a more welcoming and warming yellow glow of light from the sun gives a concomitant sense of life and of nature’s beneficence.

“The dark, sombre tones evoke the primordial qualities of the Australian bush, while a more welcoming and warming yellow glow of light from the sun gives a concomitant sense of life and of nature’s beneficence.”

The wheatfield (1948) has a direct link to a work by Pieter Bruegel. Boyd first became interested in Bruegel (and Hieronymus Bosch) and his 16th-century scenes of everyday village life and use of a bird’s-eye perspective during the war years. The fisheye-lens approach provided a way to describe the tumultuous and somewhat out-of-kilter world that Boyd wanted to convey.

Bruegel’s *The harvesters* 1525 was originally part of a series of six works showing contrasting times of the year and is a fine example of Bruegel’s naturalism and non-idealised observation of rural life. The influence on Boyd is evident in the viewpoint directed slightly to the right, the hard-edge zigzag of the remaining wheat crop, and the strong contrasts between a bright-yellow foreground, mellow green middle area and the hazy, diluted atmospheric effect in the background. In *The wheatfield*, Boyd even includes the two birds flying in formation over a field. The only element missing is Bruegel’s contented peasants!

Arthur Boyd took great interest in exploring seemingly inconsequential and specific incidents that commented on the relationship between humans and nature. This could take a demonstrably personal tack, as in the depiction of the man driving a horse and cart in *A’Beckett Road, Harkaway* 1949 and the related drawing *Horse and cart on a lane: Berwick* 1947–49. Arthur Boyd was well versed in family stories concerning his great grandfather, W.A.C. à Beckett, and his collection of buggies and drays, which he drove at breakneck pace on the property. The figure could also be his father, Merric, a man who was equally at home with a horse and jinker, and often appeared in Arthur’s work in this way.

Stone crusher, Berwick 1948 is full of visual incident that draws out the toughness of local industry and the theme of rural labour. The stone-crushing plant is perched recklessly on the hillside, with the quarry placed directly beneath; the branches and stumps are blackened by fire and the presence of the two black crows hovering over the ploughed field add a note of foreboding and point to the precarious nature of man’s existence. Warmth is conveyed tonally through application of assorted colour grounds, so that ultimately the work exudes an equally positive view of life on the land.

CRITICAL RESPONSE

ARTHUR BOYD'S ADROITNESS WITH OLD MASTER TECHNIQUES AND HIS ABILITY TO FUSE RELIGIOUS AND MYTHOLOGICAL SUBJECTS INTO HIS ART HAS LONG BEEN A HALLMARK OF HIS MATURE STYLE. CONTEMPORARY CRITICS WERE IN THE MAIN ENTHUSED BY THE NEW WORKS AND BOYD'S ATTEMPTS TO FORM HIS OWN VISION OF THE AUSTRALIAN LANDSCAPE. THE FIRST EXHIBITION OF BERWICK-RELATED LANDSCAPES WAS AT THE LOWER GALLERY, KOZMINSKY, IN COLLINS STREET, MELBOURNE, IN SEPTEMBER 1949. MELBOURNE CRITICS NOTED BOYD'S DEBT TO BRUEGEL AND HIS ATTEMPTS TO FORGE SOMETHING NEW IN AUSTRALIAN ART. ARNOLD SHORE WROTE OPTIMISTICALLY: 'WITH OTHER YOUNG PAINTERS, HE ASSURES A HOPE THAT WE HAVE ALREADY BROACHED A NEW ERA IN AUSTRALIAN ART, AND THAT VICTORIA IS AGAIN TO THE FORE IN THIS RESPECT'.³⁴

The biggest supporter of the exhibition, however, was Martin Boyd. He was appalled that none of the works appeared to have sold (one had but there was no red sticker) and by, in his perception, the general lack of understanding shown by the public 'for a painter who sees more in the Australian landscape than a pretty surface'. Martin wrote to Arthur reassuring him that he had purchased three of the pictures and guaranteed the exhibition expenses. *The plough, A'Beckett Road, Harkaway* and *The dam* were all fine pictures that happened to accord with Martin's Anglified appreciation for Harkaway and Narre Warren as resembling the English countryside.³⁵

Subsequent exhibitions of key works from the series brought a similar response. Five Berwick paintings were included in a survey of Arthur Boyd's work held at David Jones Art Gallery, Sydney, in September 1950. The *Sydney Morning Herald* critic singled out Boyd's 'integrity, a sense of adventure and a tremendous will for work'.³⁶ Noted painter/critic James Gleeson claimed in a similar tone: 'Although one is still aware of their stylistic origins, they combine such directness of approach with subtlety of observation that he must be regarded as one of the most talented of the younger painters in Australia'.³⁷

Along with the Wimmera and Grampian landscapes, Boyd's Berwick paintings from 1949–51 had successfully enhanced and extended his reputation as one of Australia's most admired contemporary artists.

By 1952, Boyd's friend and art critic for the *Herald* Alan McCulloch claimed for Boyd the mantle of 'probably the most completely Australian painter extant'.³⁸ Along with the Wimmera and Grampian landscapes, Boyd's Berwick paintings from 1949–51 had successfully enhanced and extended his reputation as one of Australia's most admired contemporary artists.

LATER LIFE OF THE GRANGE

MARTIN BOYD'S TIME AT THE GRANGE PROVED SHORT. HE RETURNED TO EUROPE IN 1951, LEAVING MARY AND JOHN PERCEVAL AS CARETAKERS, BUT DID NOT RETURN. MARTIN BOYD'S STATED MISSION TO RESTORE THE À BECKETT SEAT HAD COME TO NOUGHT, ALTHOUGH HIS LEGACY DID CONTINUE THROUGH THE ART THAT WAS PRODUCED THERE.

Arthur Boyd returned to the area again over 1958–59, producing some evocative works prior to leaving for England himself. Although he may have visited The Grange, the works themselves were done farther afield. *The storm, Berwick* 1958 and *Berwick landscape* 1959 are exquisitely painted small works that focus on seasonal effect and subtle atmospheric variations, influenced again by his grandmother Minnie. They are also very similar to works with a similar motif painted at nearby Lysterfield.

***The storm, Berwick* 1958 and *Berwick landscape* 1959 are exquisitely painted small works that focus on seasonal effect and subtle atmospheric variations, influenced again by his grandmother Minnie.**

The sale of The Grange in 1955 and its subsequent resale to a quarry in 1963 signalled its death knell and weighed heavily on Arthur Boyd and his family. Photographs taken on the 26 November 1967 show that the house had fallen into disrepair and the garden had become overgrown; it was now being used as a dump by the quarry. The murals were still in situ but showing signs of cracking and areas of loss and damage due to heavy blasting and the work of vandals.³⁹

Among the many people who came forward with concerns and suggestions was artist Joy Hester. She wrote to Sunday Reed in the mid-1950s, relaying a visit to The Grange with John Perceval. Both were disheartened by what they saw and the 'thought of all that lovely Hark world of Arthur just being painted over with kalsomine does something to me ...'⁴⁰

At Arthur's request, Sunday Reed's husband and fellow art patron John Reed became directly involved through his capacity as director of the Museum of Modern Art. A letter to the Monash University vice-chancellor, dated July 1964, acknowledged the work being undertaken by the latter to save the mural. Reed also advised of a recent development with the National Trust, expressing 'an interest in the mural and in the preservation of the whole of The Grange property, with a view to maintaining the house, and of course, the mural, intact. This suggestion has been mentioned to Arthur Boyd, who has expressed the hope that it may be possible.'⁴¹



The Grange, Harkaway 1967
photography by Richard Dunbar



The *Age* reported positively on consideration being given to convert the house into an art museum. It claimed that the previous idea to cut the walls and transport them to a museum was being 'scrapped' because of the 'high costs involved'.⁴² The article said that 'Several prominent artists have offered their work for exhibition in the old home if the plan bears fruit'.

Unfortunately, none of these plans were to eventuate. Bill à Beckett, who had grown up in and inherited The Grange, worked to have the building classified and preserved through the National Trust of Australia. A register number was assigned – F404 – and 'Preserve Notable' dated 20 October 1966, but nothing came of it.⁴³

Above **Arthur Boyd**
Berwick landscape 1959
oil on board
14.5 x 24.5 cm
Private collection, Melbourne
Photography courtesy of Menzies Art Brands
© Reproduced with permission of Bundanon Trust

Above right *Harkaway, The Grange* 1965
photography by J T Collins
State Library Victoria
J.T.Collins Collection, La Trobe Picture Collection
Gift of John T. Collins, 1987

Below right *Harkaway, The Grange* 1965
photography by J T Collins
State Library Victoria
J.T.Collins Collection, La Trobe Picture Collection
Gift of John T. Collins, 1987

In a final desperate bid to retain the mural, Arthur Boyd enlisted the aid of the Melbourne art dealer Joseph Brown. Although resident in England, Arthur and Yvonne Boyd visited Melbourne in 1969. If they visited The Grange they would have been more disheartened by what they saw. Eventually, Brown was able to safely extract four substantial portions of the mural, along with some smaller fragments, and negotiate their relocation to the nascent National Gallery of Australia in Canberra. Encased in concrete, these have proved difficult to conserve and exhibit but the restoration of *The prodigal son* section in 2014 went some way towards bringing together what many consider to be one of Arthur Boyd's finest works.

With the cutting up and relocation of the mural pieces and the demolition of The Grange an important chapter in Australian art effectively closed. This exhibition is the first to present a history of The Grange from its inception through to its end. The art that was produced chronicles life on the land and the evolution of the house over 100 years. Successive generations of Boyds used The Grange to develop their own pictorial vocabulary, which merged local subject matter with more universal themes.



ENDNOTES

- 1 Brenda Niall, *The Art of the Boyds*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 2002, p. 49.
- 2 Niall, *The Art of the Boyds*, p. 49.
- 3 The property was known as 'Ballantrae', and a large house was built there in c.1899.
- 4 Backhouse had selected land in Gembrook in 1874. Between him and his brothers the family held a substantial parcel of 960 acres which they managed as one farm.
- 5 *Australian Women's Weekly*, 5 November 1949, pp. 57–58.
- 6 In her essay on Emma Minnie Boyd, Jane Alexander suggests that the tuition occurred around the late 1870s or early 1880s. 'Emma Minnie Boyd 1858–1936', exhibition catalogue, Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, 2004, p. 8. In determining the date, most writers, including Alexander, refer to an article published in *Table Talk* in 1890 that is equivocal: 'she was placed under the tuition of the late Mr Louis Buvelot, the eminent landscape artist. This accounts for her delicacy of touch, which is at the same time marked by a precision which was one of that artist's characteristics', 21 February 1890, p. 6.
- 7 Berwick was too far away to travel from his Melbourne home and back on the same day and he would often camp or seek overnight lodgings on his field trips.
- 8 The oil, whereabouts unknown, was included in a Mechanics Institute fine arts exhibition held at Ballarat in June 1976. According to the writer, 'An excellent addition to the display is made by Mr J. W. Hines, Collins Street, who sends a landscape with cattle by Willis, view near Berwick (Buvelot), and three paintings by Richardson, *Ballarat Star*, 16 June 1876, p. 3.
- 9 On this idea, see Patricia Dobrez, 'Constance à Beckett', *Heritage: The National Women's Art Book, 500 Works by 500 Australian Women Artists from Colonial Times to 1955*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 1995, p. 273.
- 10 For example, Emma Minnie Boyd (attributed), *Bush scene with kangaroo, emu and kookaburras and bush hut*, undated, Lawsons, 27 August 2015, lot 641. Although slightly different in subject and style, see *Bush scene, the walk: Chiltern area of north-eastern Victoria* 1860s, oil on gum leaf, 12.5 x 20.3 cm, National Library of Australia (NLA), Canberra. According to NLA records, 'When the leaf first arrived, our staff appear to have attributed it to Alfred William Eustace who was known for painting on gum leaves. The attribution then seems to have been changed to Emma Minnie Boyd sometime between 2000 and 2003 when the Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery requested to borrow it for an exhibition.' Eleanor Goodwin, Reference Librarian, Pictures and Manuscripts Branch, NLA, to Rodney James, 3 August 2017.
- 11 Anna Gray quoted in Deborah Hart, *Arthur Boyd: Agony & Ecstasy*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 2014, p. 57.
- 12 Alexander, *Emma Minnie Boyd*, p. 7.
- 13 *Diary of Emma à Beckett*, 1857–1905, 21 January 1896, Manuscripts National Library of Australia.
- 14 He was survived by his widow, daughter of the late Mr Arthur Walstab, and four children, Mr W.A.K. à Beckett, Lieutenant A.R. à Beckett (AIF), Mrs Norman Barrett and Mrs Wilfrid Minson. 'Obituary', *Argus*, 4 March 1941, p. 5.
- 15 *Table Talk*, 14 June 1934, p. 29.
- 16 Jessie Traill, quoted in Roger Butler (ed.), *Stars in the River: The Prints of Jessie Traill*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 2013. In 1936, she recorded that the two were living there.
- 17 N.E. Beaumont, James F. Curran and R.H. Hughes JP, *Early Days of Berwick*, first published 1948, rev. 2nd edn, 1959.
- 18 Martin Boyd, quoted in Niall, *The Boyds*, p. 230.
- 19 Martin Boyd to Pamela Gill, correspondence, 15 June (1950); 23 July 1951, Martin Boyd Papers, National Library of Australia, Canberra, series 1, folder 8.
- 20 Butler, *Stars in the River: The Prints of Jessie Traill*.
- 21 Richard Haese, *Rebels and Precursors: The Revolutionary Years of Australian Art*, Penguin, Melbourne, 1981, p. 211.
- 22 Arthur Boyd, *Berwick*, undated, watercolour, 26.5 x 33 cm, Leonard Joel, 31 July 1990, lot no. 124, illus.; and *Landscape near Berwick*, Victoria, watercolour, 38.1 x 55.2 cm, Christie's, 6 March 1970, lot 49.
- 23 For example, *Berwick landscape* c.1946, oil on board, 41.5 x 56.5 cm, Sotheby's, 29 October 1987, lot no. 412, illus.
- 24 Hart, *Arthur Boyd*, pp. 51–52.
- 25 Ursula Hoff, *The Art of Arthur Boyd*, Andre Deutsche, London, 1986, p. 45.
- 26 *The Prodigal Son*, 1946–47, oil and tempera on casein ground on canvas, 101 x 121 cm, Bonhams, Important Australian Art, Sydney, 24 November 2014, lot no. 42.
- 27 As Deborah Hart observes, Boyd was also drawing on painted and drawn images of his own father seated in a chair, *Arthur Boyd*, p. 53.
- 28 Janet McKenzie, *Arthur Boyd: Art and Life*, Thames & Hudson, London, 2000, p. 79.
- 29 *The Dandenong*, 1 June 1949, p. 6.
- 30 *Age*, 30 May 1949, p. 5.
- 31 Brenda Niall, *Martin Boyd: A Life*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1988, p.148.
- 32 Franz Philip, *Arthur Boyd*, Thames & Hudson, London, 1967, p. 52.
- 33 Philip, *Arthur Boyd*, p. 60.
- 34 *Argus*, 8 December 1949, p. 12.
- 35 Martin Boyd correspondence to Arthur Boyd, Tuesday (1949), National Library of Australia, Martin Boyd Archives, series 1, folder 8.
- 36 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 September 1950, p. 4.
- 37 *Sun*, 4 September 1950, p. 18.
- 38 Alan McCulloch, *Herald*, 8 September 1952.
- 39 'The Grange, Harkaway', *Casey-Cardinia – Links to Our Past*, 11 February 2013, caseycardinialinkstooourpast.blogspot.com.au/2013/02.
- 40 Joy Hester, quoted in Hart, *Arthur Boyd*, pp. 58–59.
- 41 John Reed to Dr J.A.L. Matheson, 29 July 1964, National Trust of Australia (Victoria) archives.
- 42 *Age*, 25 September 1964.
- 43 National Trust of Australia (Victoria) archives.

THE PRODIGAL SON: OUT OF THE DARK

DAVID WISE
SENIOR PAINTINGS CONSERVATOR, NGA

IN 2014, THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF AUSTRALIA (NGA) ORGANISED A MAJOR ARTHUR BOYD RETROSPECTIVE EXHIBITION, *AGONY AND ECSTASY*. IT FEATURED MORE THAN 200 WORKS – PAINTINGS, DRAWINGS, PRINTS AND SCULPTURES FROM THE COLLECTION. AMONG THESE TREASURES, ONE WORK, A MURAL FRAGMENT KNOWN AS *THE PRODIGAL SON*, WAS PERHAPS THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY. IT IS A PIECE THAT HAD BEEN ABANDONED AND RECOVERED, LOST AND FOUND, DAMAGED AND RESTORED. IT WAS AT THE CENTRE OF A DRAMATIC LAST-MINUTE RESCUE AND HAD NEVER BEEN ON PUBLIC DISPLAY SINCE IT WAS PAINTED IN 1948–49. THIS IS THE STORY OF THIS WORK AND THE EFFORTS INVOLVED IN FINALLY REVEALING IT TO THE PUBLIC.

The NGA has four large fragments and four smaller pieces of the mural, which once covered the walls of the dining room of Arthur Boyd's uncle's house, The Grange, at Harkaway. Boyd's uncle, Martin Boyd, commissioned Arthur to paint the mural as part of his restoration of the former family home. They agreed between them on the central themes of the walls, based around biblical stories such as *The Assumption of the Virgin*, *Susannah with the Elders* and *The prodigal son*, transposing these into a landscape drawn from around Harkaway itself.

In keeping with the grand scale of the mural and following his interest in Old Master techniques and painters such as Titian, Rembrandt and Tintoretto, Boyd chose to work in a modified fresco technique. Unlike true fresco, in which the pigments are applied to wet plaster, fusing the colour into the surface, Boyd used a *fresco secco* technique. For *fresco secco* the paint is applied over a dry plaster layer so that the final image is built up from the surface rather than being incorporated into it. The advantage of this, for the artist, is that they can paint more freely, working across the surface, adding layers and correcting as they need to. In true fresco, the artist has to decide beforehand exactly which area they are going to complete so that the plaster remains wet for the period of painting. This was known as the *giornata*, in theory the amount of painting which could be completed in one day.

To obtain the matte, unsaturated-looking surface characteristic of fresco paintings, Boyd used a water-based paint made from casein, a glue based on milk protein, and dry pigments rather than oil paint. Similar paints, including those made using animal glue, egg or gums as a binder, were historically used for *fresco secco*; they are typically grouped together as *distemper* paints.

The mural, as a complete work, had a short history. Martin Boyd had left The Grange by 1951 and the house was then sold. Its final year was spent as a derelict shell, before being demolished in 1967 as part of the clearance work for a new quarry. While the house was deserted, the murals were neglected, vandalised and graffitied. Fortunately, as the property was in the process of being demolished, a small team organised by Dr Joseph Brown was able to get permission to recover parts of the mural. Photographs from the time show the room with the ceiling removed and the walls cut into sections; a concrete plinth has been cast onto the bottom edge, to the parts of the mural to be saved.

Its final year was spent as a derelict shell, before being demolished in 1967 as part of the clearance work for a new quarry. While the house was deserted, the murals were neglected, vandalised and graffitied.

In a move that was necessary to secure the fragments for transportation but was to have significant ramifications later, the sections, including the bricks forming the wall, the plaster render and the painted image, were cast into large concrete blocks. The backs of the blocks still have the imprint from the doors of the property that were used to make the mould the concrete was poured into, and the sides and the concrete bases have handprints and a collection of the demolition rubble that must have strewn the site. In 1969, the rescued pieces were donated to the Commonwealth Art Advisory Board, before being transferred into the NGA Collection in 1990.



Above left
The *prodigal son* in storage

Above right
The back of the block showing the impressions of the doors used for the mould

Below left
The block mounted on its specially designed trolley and the equipment needed to move it



If perhaps not exactly forgotten, once the fragments were in storage their existence was not widely known. A newspaper article from 1989 suggests that even the artist was unaware that parts of the work had survived. The difficulty in making the pieces available for viewing was not helped by their physical condition. The concrete shell, which had kept the paint layer intact for transport, made the individual fragments incredibly heavy. For example, *The prodigal son* fragment weighs around 3.5 tonnes; and even the smaller of the four pieces is around 1.5 tonnes. Additionally, the blocks are not stable enough to be stored vertically, so they have spent their lives horizontally on shelving, only able to be moved with considerable planning and the use of heavy-lifting equipment. As the blocks have settled, structural cracks have appeared in several of the pieces, but fortunately *The prodigal son* has only surface cracks; and these do not extend into the old wall or through the supporting concrete.

Large cranes and a semi-trailer were used to bring the work to the gallery; however, once inside the NGA building such aids were not feasible. Manoeuvring the trolley with the work on it was largely done manually.

Above left
The true colours revealed during cleaning

Below left
After treatment

Arthur Boyd

The prodigal son (Harkaway mural) 1948-49
casein tempera, powder colours on plaster on mortar
190.0 x 178.0 cm

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Gift of Arthur Boyd 1969

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Once the decision had been made to prepare *The prodigal son* fragment for exhibition, the logistics of how this would happen needed to be worked through. As can be imagined, this involved much discussion, planning, engineering assessment and design. The sheer difficulty of moving such a large and heavy slab from off-site storage to a second-floor display space meant a trolley needed to be made that was capable of supporting the panel upright and could be moved without heavy equipment. Once on the trolley, the work could not be easily removed while it was at the NGA; the way the panel was to be displayed, therefore, had to accommodate the slab on the trolley. Large cranes and a semi-trailer were used to bring the work to the gallery; however, once inside the NGA building such aids were not feasible. Manoeuvring the trolley with the work on it was largely done manually.

Before it could go on display, *The prodigal son* had to be restored. Although badly disfigured with graffiti drawn onto the surface and carved through the paint and plaster, the unaffected paint was actually in good condition. The panels had been protected in storage but there was still a thick accumulation of dust that had built up over 50 years. Once this had been removed, together with the grime that had collected while the house was deserted, the clarity and brilliance of Boyd's colours became apparent. The many areas of physical damage and loss were filled and the missing paint retouched with watercolour. While this is quick to write, the actual process took months to complete! For the exhibition, the panel was slowly moved on its trolley into the gallery space. An enclosure was built around it, hiding the structure used to hold the work upright and allowing the visiting public to enjoy Boyd's creation for the first time.



What of the future? The remaining pieces of the Harkaway mural deserve to be seen. They are an important part of our understanding of Boyd's work, and something the artist himself considered significant. Unfortunately, as discussed, their current state makes them very difficult and costly to display, and currently several of the mural fragments would not structurally be able to withstand the process that *The prodigal son* went through. From a conservation point of view, ultimately it would be good to try and stabilise the panels, make them lighter and more easily transportable. From a curatorial point of view, the desire is to display them together and in context.

As part of the discussion surrounding the display of the one fragment in the Boyd exhibition, an initial concept was proposed for the conservation treatment of all remaining fragments. It involved cutting away the concrete shell, removing the plaster and paint layer from the old wall bricks and then reattaching it to a lighter supporting panel made from modern composite materials. The restored fragments could then be displayed together, perhaps in their own space, hinting at the grandeur of the original idea. Obviously, the scale of this project makes it not one to undertake lightly, there are a number of significant new challenges to be faced and solved, as well as the associated costs financially, in human resources, materials and space. It is hoped that with continued discussion and planning we will, in time, see the Harkaway mural fragments out of storage and able to be put on open display for all to enjoy.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE OF WORKS



Above **Emma Minnie Boyd**
An afternoon nap 1874
watercolour on paper
17.0 x 22.5 cm (sheet)
Private collection, Victoria
Photography: Viki Petherbridge

Above right **Emma Minnie Boyd**
Interior with figures, The Grange 1875
watercolour over pencil on paper on cardboard
24.7 x 35.5 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
The Joseph Brown Collection. Presented through the NGV
Foundation by Dr Joseph Brown AO OBE, Honorary Life
Benefactor, 2004





Above **Penleigh Boyd**
Back paddock, The Grange c.1910
 oil on board
 30.0 x 40.0 cm
 Private collection, Melbourne
 Photography: Viki Petherbridge

Right **J. Charley**
The Grange 1925
 watercolour on paper
 38.0 x 48.5 cm (sight)
 Private collection, Victoria
 Photography: Viki Petherbridge





Above left **Merric Boyd**
At the Harkaway Grange Recollection 1952
 drawing in coloured pencils
 24.0 x 18.0 cm (sheet)
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 Gift of Arthur, David and Guy Boyd, Lucy Beck and Mary Nolan
 in honour of their father, Merric Boyd, 1975

Below left **Merric Boyd**
Birds on fence between 1940 and 1964
 drawing in coloured pencils and black pencil
 25.0 x 27.0 cm (sheet)
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 Gift of Arthur, David and Guy Boyd, Lucy Beck and Mary Nolan
 in honour of their father, Merric Boyd, 1975

Above **Arthur Boyd**
Berwick landscape c.1943
 oil on canvas on board
 48.0 x 58.0 cm
 Private collection, Victoria
 Photography: Viki Petherbridge
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Left **Arthur Boyd**
Kneeling figure watching embracing figures 1947
 drawing in charcoal
 26.5 x 37.3 cm (image); 27.9 x 37.6 cm (sheet)
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 The Arthur Boyd gift, 1975
 © National Gallery of Australia

Below **Arthur Boyd**
Horse and cart on a lane: Berwick between 1947 and 1949
 drawing in reed-pen and black ink and brush and black ink wash
 37.5 x 50.9 cm
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 The Arthur Boyd gift, 1975
 © National Gallery of Australia



Arthur Boyd
Wooded hillside with goats between 1944 and 1947
 brush and black ink and black ink wash
 44 x 50.8 cm
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 The Arthur Boyd gift, 1975
 © National Gallery of Australia



Above left **Arthur Boyd**
Berwick landscape c.1948
oil on canvas on board
60.0 x 80.5 cm
Private collection, Melbourne
Photography courtesy of Menzies Art Brands
© Reproduced with permission of Bundanon Trust

Above right **Arthur Boyd**
Landscape c.1948
oil on canvas on composition board
65.5 x 79.0 cm
Collection of Lauraine Diggins, courtesy of Lauraine Diggins
Fine Art
Photography courtesy of Menzies Art Brands
© Reproduced with permission of Bundanon Trust





Above **Arthur Boyd**
Landscape near Berwick 1948
 Also known as *Victorian bush*
 oil on canvas
 50.9 x 73.2 cm
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
 Purchased 1959
 © National Gallery of Australia

Right **Arthur Boyd**
Harkaway, view from The Grange 1948
 oil on canvas
 63.0 x 77.5 cm
 Bastiaan Collection, Melbourne
 Image courtesy of Bonhams
 © Reproduced with permission of Bundanon Trust





Above **Arthur Boyd**
Landscape with Poddy c.1948
 oil and tempera on composition board
 100.0 x 90.0 cm
 Private collection, Melbourne
 Photography courtesy of Menzies Art Brands
 © Reproduced with permission of Bundanon Trust

Right **Arthur Boyd**
The drover 1948
 oil on canvas laid down on hardboard
 75.9 x 95.1 cm
 Kerry Stokes Collection, Perth
 © Reproduced with permission of Bundanon Trust





Arthur Boyd
The assumption of the Virgin (Harkaway mural) 1948-49
tempera, powder colours on plaster on mortar
200.0 x 195.0 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Gift of Arthur Boyd 1969
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Above **Arthur Boyd**
Landscape (Harkaway mural) 1948-49
tempera, powder colours on plaster on mortar
163.0 x 140.0 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Gift of Arthur Boyd 1969
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Right **Arthur Boyd**
Background landscape from The prodigal son (Harkaway mural)
1948-49
tempera, powder colours on plaster on mortar
230.0 x 227.0 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Gift of Arthur Boyd 1969
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Above **Arthur Boyd**
Four fragments from Harkaway mural 1948–49
casein tempera, powder colour on plaster on mortar
37.0 x 36.8 cm, 17.0 x 14.0 cm, 32.3 x 31.5 cm, 34.5 x 22.2 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Gift of Joseph Brown 1975
© Reproduced with permission of Bundanon Trust

Above right **Arthur Boyd**
A Beckett Road, Harkaway 1949
oil and tempera on composition board
45.7 x 55.9 cm
Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart
Purchased 1953
© Reproduced with permission of Bundanon Trust

Below right **Arthur Boyd**
(Harkaway, farmer and black crows) (1950)
oil and tempera on composition board
20.0 x 31.5 cm
Private collection, courtesy of Sotheby's Australia
Photography courtesy of Sotheby's Australia
© Reproduced with permission of Bundanon Trust





LIST OF WORKS

Arthur Boyd
The storm, Berwick 1958
oil on canvas on board
47.2 x 58.2 cm
Private collection, Melbourne
© Reproduced with permission of Bundanon Trust

Dimensions of works are given in centimetres (cm), height preceding width, followed by depth. Descriptive and attributive titles are in parenthesis.

CONSTANCE MATILDA À BECKETT

BORN AUSTRALIA, 1860–1944

Untitled (Kangaroo, kookaburras, a robin and The Grange) 1872

oil on gum leaf
9.5 x 20.0 cm
Australian National University Collection, Canberra
Gift of Mr and Mrs Brett, 1970

Untitled (Two kookaburras, one with snake) 1872

oil on gum leaf
12.5 x 17.5 cm
Australian National University Collection, Canberra
Gift of Mr and Mrs Brett, 1970

Untitled (Emu, kookaburras, a robin and The Grange) 1872

oil on gum leaf
10.0 x 14.0 cm
Australian National University Collection, Canberra
Gift of Mr and Mrs Brett, 1970

EMMA À BECKETT (NEE MILLS)

BORN AUSTRALIA, 1838–1906

Diary 1885

pen and ink
11.6 x 7.8 x 0.8 cm; 11.6 x 16.6 cm (open)
Bundanon Trust Archive

WILLIAM ARTHUR CALLANDER À BECKETT (DESIGNER)

BORN ENGLAND, 1833–1901; ARRIVED AUSTRALIA 1837

Leadlight at The Grange with coat of arms 1866

stained glass
106.1 x 57.2 cm
Private collection, South Australia

WILLIAM GILBERT À BECKETT

BORN AUSTRALIA, 1864–1941

The Grange, Harkaway 1927

watercolour on paper
22.4 x 33.3 cm
Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of the à Beckett Estate under the Cultural Gifts Program, 2007

The Grange, Harkaway - rear view 1927

watercolour on paper
23.9 x 32.8 cm
Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of the à Beckett Estate under the Cultural Gifts Program, 2007

ARTHUR BOYD

BORN AUSTRALIA, 1920–99; LIVED ENGLAND AND AUSTRALIA 1959–99

Berwick landscape c.1943

oil on canvas on board
48.0 x 58.0 cm
Private collection, Victoria

Wooded hillside with goats between 1944 and 1947

brush and black ink and black ink wash
44.0 x 50.8 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
The Arthur Boyd gift, 1975

Susannah with the Elders 1945

oil on canvas mounted on composition board
66.6 x 96.8 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
The Arthur Boyd gift, 1975

Berwick landscape 1946

oil on canvas
50.6 x 60.7 cm
Private collection, Sydney

Kneeling figure watching embracing figures 1947

drawing in charcoal
26.5 x 37.3 cm (image); 27.9 x 37.6 cm (sheet)
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
The Arthur Boyd gift, 1975

Harkaway, view from The Grange 1948

oil on canvas
63.0 x 77.5 cm
Bastiaan Collection, Melbourne

Landscape near Berwick 1948

Also known as *Victorian bush*
oil on canvas
50.9 x 73.2 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Purchased 1959

The drover 1948

oil on canvas laid down on hardboard
75.9 x 95.1 cm
Kerry Stokes Collection, Perth

Stone crusher, Berwick 1948

tempera and oil on board
59.5 x 59.5 cm
Collection of Peter Moran

HOME OF THE BOYDS:
HARKAWAY AND THE GRANGE

The wheatfield (1948)

oil on composition board
70.4 x 70.5 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
The Joseph Brown Collection, presented through the NGV Foundation by Dr Joseph Brown AO OBE, Honorary Life Benefactor, 2004

Berwick landscape c.1948

watercolour on paper
24.0 x 34.0 cm
The Estate of Arthur Boyd and Australian Galleries, Melbourne and Sydney

Landscape c.1948

oil on canvas on composition board
65.5 x 79.0 cm
Collection of Lauraine Diggins, courtesy of Lauraine Diggins Fine Art

Landscape with Poddy c.1948

oil and tempera on composition board
100.0 x 90.0 cm
Private collection, Melbourne

Berwick landscape c.1948

oil on canvas on board
60.0 x 80.5 cm
Private collection, Melbourne

Harkaway landscape c.1948

oil on canvas mounted on board
76.0 x 86.5 cm
Private collection

Jacob's dream 1946–49

tempera on composition board
107.0 x 127.0 cm
The Wesfarmers Collection, Perth

Horse and cart on a lane: Berwick between 1947 and 1949

brush and black ink and black ink wash
37.5 x 50.9 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
The Arthur Boyd gift, 1975

Study for the mural at Harkaway, Victoria [1948–49]

ink and wash on paper
36.0 x 55.0 cm
Private collection, Victoria

Possum from 'The assumption of the Virgin' (Harkaway mural) 1948–49

casein tempera, powder colours on plaster on mortar
2 fragments: 37.0 x 36.8 cm; 17.0 x 14.0 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Gift of Joseph Brown, 1975

Fragments showing a head and hand from 'The assumption of the Virgin' (Harkaway mural) 1948–49

casein tempera, powder colours on plaster on mortar
2 fragments: 32.3 x 31.5 cm; 34.5 x 22.2 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Gift of Joseph Brown, 1975

The dam 1948–49

oil on canvas on composition board
69.1 x 80.8 cm
TarraWarra Museum of Art
Gift of Eva Besen and Marc Besen AO, 2001

(Harkaway, farmer and black crows) (1950)

oil and tempera on composition board
20.0 x 31.5 cm
Private collection, courtesy of Sotheby's Australia

The storm, Berwick 1958

oil on canvas on board
47.2 x 58.2 cm
Private Collection, Melbourne

Berwick landscape 1959

oil on board
14.5 x 24.5 cm
Private collection, Melbourne

ARTHUR MERRIC BOYD

BORN NEW ZEALAND, 1862–1940; ARRIVED AUSTRALIA 1886; LIVED ENGLAND 1890–93

Landscape with red farm building 1888

watercolour on paper
29.0 x 50.0 cm
Bundanon Trust Collection

Sheds and stables at The Grange, Harkaway

1889
watercolour on paper
22.0 x 44.0 cm
Private collection, Victoria

EMMA MINNIE BOYD

BORN AUSTRALIA, 1858–1936; LIVED ENGLAND 1890–93

An afternoon nap 1874

watercolour on paper
17.0 x 22.5 cm (sheet)
Private collection, Victoria

The Grange, Berwick 1874

watercolour on paper
16.0 x 25.5 cm
Private collection, Melbourne

Sketchbook mainly of portraits, domestic scenes, streetscapes and landscapes 1874–78

drawings in pen and black and coloured ink
13.5 x 19.0 cm (cover)
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Purchased 1970

(Young girl reading in the shed at The Grange, Harkaway) 1879

pen and ink on paper
12.0 x 9.0 cm (sight)
Private collection, Melbourne

The Grange, Harkaway, Victoria c.1870s

watercolour on paper
21.8 x 27.7 cm
Private collection, Victoria

(Minnie's house) 1880

watercolour on paper
18.2 x 26.7 cm (sheet)
Bundanon Trust Collection

(Sunset) c.1880

watercolour on paper
25.5 x 18.0 cm
Bundanon Trust Collection

Willie à Beckett at his desk in the Blue Room, The Grange 1883

watercolour on paper
24.7 x 34.5 cm (sight)
Private collection, Melbourne

(The quail shooter) 1884

watercolour
17.3 x 25.6 cm (sight)
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Purchased 2006

Seated woman in the landscape 1889

oil on wood
21.0 cm diameter
Private collection, Melbourne

MERRIC BOYD

BORN AUSTRALIA, 1888-1959; LIVED ENGLAND 1917-19

Harkaway Grange 1951

coloured pencil on paper (folded drawing)
25.4 x 19.2 cm; 25.4 x 38.4 cm (open)
Bundanon Trust Collection

The Harkaway Grange Sheep 1951

coloured pencil on paper (sketchbook)
18.3 x 25.0 x 0.6 cm; 18.3 x 50.0 cm (open)
Bundanon Trust Collection

Looking Down the Harkaway 1951

drawing in coloured pencil
27.5 x 25.0 cm (sheet)
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Gift of Arthur, David and Guy Boyd, Lucy Beck and Mary Nolan
in honour of their father, Merric Boyd, 1975

At the Harkaway Grange Recollection 1952

drawing in coloured pencil
24.0 x 18.0 cm (sheet)
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Gift of Arthur, David and Guy Boyd, Lucy Beck and Mary Nolan
in honour of their father, Merric Boyd, 1975

Birds on fence between 1940 and 1964

drawing in coloured pencil and black pencil
25.0 x 27.0 cm (sheet)
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Gift of Arthur, David and Guy Boyd, Lucy Beck and Mary Nolan
in honour of their father, Merric Boyd, 1975

PENLEIGH BOYD

BORN ENGLAND, 1890-1923; ARRIVED AUSTRALIA 1893; LIVED FRANCE AND ENGLAND 1911-12 AND 1915-18

Back paddock, The Grange c.1910

oil on board
30.0 x 40.0 cm
Private collection, Melbourne

LOUIS BUVELOT

BORN SWITZERLAND, 1814-88; LIVED BRAZIL 1835-52; ARRIVED AUSTRALIA 1865

Berwick 1874

drawing in black pencil
27.1 x 38.1 cm (sheet)
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Purchased 1959

J. CHARLEY

The Grange 1925

watercolour on paper
38.0 x 48.5 cm (sight)
Private collection, Victoria

JOHN PERCEVAL

BORN AUSTRALIA, 1923-2000; LIVED ENGLAND 1963-65

[Nudes on horseback] c.1951

pencil on paper
51.7 x 59.8 cm
Collection of National Trust Australia (Victoria), Mulberry Hill