

**Erard, Bochsá and their impact on harp  
music-making in Australia (1830-1866):  
An early history from documents**

Rosemary Margaret Hallo

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Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences  
The University of Adelaide

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## Abstract

This study traces the emergence of the pedal harp in colonial Australia between 1830 and 1866 through the examination of primary source documents in the form of archival and newspaper resources. It does so by focussing on the dynamic that existed between the harpist Nicolas-Charles Bochsa (1789-1856) and the makers of the double action Erard harp, demonstrating how that relationship had an impact on harp music and music-making in the period under review. The study pursues three intersecting lines of investigation. The first details Sébastien Erard's ground-breaking development of his double action harp, and the social status it enjoyed in Europe, which was subsequently transplanted to Australia. The second area of investigation outlines Bochsa's role in raising the profile of the Erard harp. This in turn leads to the third and most pivotal line of enquiry that of the distribution of Erard instruments in Australia, Bochsa's visit to Sydney, and the role of his disciples in sustaining Bochsa's legacy in Australia. The performance culture that coalesced around Bochsa and his disciples – incorporating as it did harp pedagogy, performance practice, repertoire, and commercial considerations – is shown to be a significant component of the social and cultural life of colonial Australia.

# Declaration

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution to Rosemary Margaret Hallo and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

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## Note on the text

The newspaper references are placed in the footnotes as follows:

*Newspaper name in italics*, (date and year) (trove reference number), page number, online hyper link (accessed date).

For example: *Sydney Morning Herald* (5 December 1855) (Trove 12978656), 1, <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/12978656> (accessed 10/01/2011).

The online link takes the reader to the correct newspaper page. To find the article, the reader must scroll down the page.

Identification of ship name is in italics, for example: *Bank of England*

Music titles in the text are noted for a name of composition as ‘name’, with the large works such as an opera in italics.

Identification of Erard harps from the *Harp Stock Books for the Erard Firm in London* are noted by volume and page number.

All French translations were kindly supplied by Marylene Westley, of Alliance Francaise d’Adelaide Inc., and received on 22 June 2012. The original French text is placed in the footnotes, with the translation placed in the body of the text.