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## CLIO'S AUSTRALIAN ACCENT : MAIN TRENDS OF RECENT HISTORICAL WRITING IN AUSTRALIA

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The pioneer writers of history in Australia were confronted with an awkward problem. They were aware of what made good history from their knowledge of the European classics, but the Australian community had omitted certain phases in its development which were stressed in conventional histories. How, for instance, can one write a good drum-and-bugle history about the one continent on which no formal war has been fought? There were skirmishes with the natives, but the aboriginal inhabitants were unable to offer as effective resistance to the settlers as did those of New Zealand, North America, or southern Africa. Many settlers believed that the only good aborigine was a dead aborigine, but formal military campaigns were rarely required to bring about this reformation. Relations with foreign powers provide a fair portion of material to most national histories. Imagine a history of Canada without the United States in the villain's role! With Australia insulated by the Royal Navy from hostile contact with the outside world during the periods of the continent's settlement and development, Australians have also been denied this aspect of history until recently. Thus a homogeneous community evolved, boasting of its 98% Britishness — a boast which was neither British nor strictly factual. Some Scots and a larger number of Irish are included in the "British". These have enlivened proceedings, but with the O'Reillys and the McDonalds achieving fame as test cricketers it would seem that even Celts undergo a sea change in the long voyage out, losing some of their resistance to assimilation. With no "Conquest", and with the Australian variant of the English language used throughout the entire continent, the country has avoided some of the factors which have divided Briton from Boer in South Africa, or the French and English-speaking communities in Canada.

There remains the constitutional theme, ever a respectable approach, and one which Canadians have made much of as the "Struggle for Responsible Government". Although Canadian priority has sapped the subject of some of its interest for Australians, Edward Sweetman in 1925<sup>1</sup> and A. C. V. Melbourne in 1934<sup>2</sup> produced studies of Australian constitu-

<sup>1</sup> *Australian Constitutional Development* (Melbourne, Macmillan in association with Melbourne University Press).

<sup>2</sup> *Early Constitutional Development in Australia; New South Wales, 1788-1856* (London, Oxford University Press).

tional development down to the implementation of responsible government in 1856. The latter's book was intended to be the first volume of a projected, but uncompleted, three-volume survey of the constitutional history of the various Australian colonies to the establishment of the Australian Commonwealth in 1901. At the time it was the most ambitious project undertaken by a single Australian professional historian. Reviewing the work for the *English Historical Review* the expatriate Australian, W. K. Hancock, suggested that other aspects of the country's history might prove more rewarding:

Even for the Australian student interested primarily in his own country, the most important of modern constitutional documents is the Durham Report. Because the central issues were decided elsewhere, it is not necessary for the majority of Australian students to study at great length the detail of constitutional development in Australia. They may, therefore, keep free a fairly large proportion of their time for those economic and geographic aspects which chiefly constitute the individuality of Australian history.<sup>3</sup>

As Hancock suggests in the phrase, "the economic and geographic aspects", the Australian story contains an important element of conflict — the struggle of man to adapt himself and his domesticated plants and livestock to a strange, dry continent, and to discover, and wrest from the land, its mineral treasures. So far this story has been most effectively related by novelists or by journalists,<sup>4</sup> though historians are now becoming aware of the dramatic possibilities of this approach.<sup>5</sup>

The record of discovery and exploration provided one of the first topics to be investigated by Australian scholars. Here was a theme that was common to all new lands, one which contained obvious elements of adventure and interest, and one which was particularly attractive to scholars in Australia as many of the leading explorers of that country had left full accounts of their activities. With the absence of other themes, however, Australian history was presented to the school children of that country largely as a chronicle of exploration. This emphasis is apparent in Ernest Scott's *Short History of Australia* brought out in 1916<sup>6</sup> as a school textbook. This book was destined to remain the standard one-volume history of Australia until the 1950's, to run through seven editions, and eleven additional reprintings.

Scott had been a journalist-turned-Hansard reporter who was appointed Professor of History in the University of Melbourne in 1914, when a special chair in that subject was created. He had had no university training. The appointment's justification lay in the fact that his published works on early Australian exploration<sup>7</sup> had demonstrated

<sup>3</sup> LI (1936), 372.

<sup>4</sup> E.g., C. E. W. Bean, *On the Wool Track* (London, Rivers, 1910).

<sup>5</sup> A. G. L. Shaw, *The Story of Australia* (London, Faber and Faber, 1955), 17.

<sup>6</sup> London, Oxford University Press.

<sup>7</sup> *Terre Napoléon; A History of French Exploration and Projects in Australia* (London, Methuen, 1910); *Life of Lapérouse* (Sydney, 1912); *Life of Captain Matthew Flinders, R.N.* (London, Milford, 1914).

his primacy among active research scholars in Australian history. History had been taught at Melbourne prior to Scott's appointment. A chair of Modern History and Literature, Political Economy and Logic, was among the four authorized when the University of Melbourne commenced operations in 1855,<sup>8</sup> but "history" was considered to be primarily a study of past happenings in Europe. Not until 1927, when Professor Scott inaugurated a full course in Australian history, did that subject obtain serious consideration at the university level.

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It was the evening classes of the Workers' Educational Association, with which the universities were associated through their departments of tutorial classes, which first provided a demand for books on Australian historical themes. Such topics were made the centre of interest in the tutorial classes before they achieved similar recognition in the regular classrooms. The decision of the Federal Council of the W.E.A. to sponsor the publication of a series of textbooks—made shortly after its own foundation in 1918—provided an incentive to their production.<sup>9</sup>

\* \* \*

The generation of Australian academics who served their apprenticeship with the W.E.A. might not have had much time to prepare material for production, but their writings often display a clarity of exposition and vitality frequently missing from works of later scholars whose nearest approach to contact with the non-academic world is obtained in their lectures to "pass" students. Of course, as knowledge increases, books have to be written by specialists for specialists, but productive scholars who profess indifference (or more hostile sentiments) toward extension work should consider the value of the training it affords in developing ability to communicate with the non-academic world.

Though undergraduate courses in Australian history were not given until the late 1920's some graduate students had been working in the field earlier, often in competition for prizes offered by the universities for essays on Australian themes. The manuscript of one of the most useful of the W.E.A. texts, J. T. Sutcliffe's *History of Trade Unionism in Australia*,<sup>10</sup> was awarded the Harbison-Higginbotham scholarship by

<sup>8</sup> History was not among the subjects offered by the University of Sydney when it commenced operations in 1852. That university appointed the first professor of history *solus* in Australia, however, when it named George Arnold Wood to the Challis chair in 1891.

<sup>9</sup> I am indebted to Professor Herbert Heaton for calling my attention to the importance of the W.E.A. in Australian historiography in his review article, "The Progress of Historical Studies in Australia", in *The Journal of Modern History*, XV (Dec., 1943), 303-10. His own *Modern Economic History With Special Reference to Australia* (Adelaide, W.E.A. of South Australia, 1921) was one of the most popular of the series.

<sup>10</sup> W.E.A. Series, No. 3 (Melbourne, Macmillan, 1921).

the University of Melbourne in 1919.<sup>11</sup> The conditions of the Tinline Scholarships, established in 1908 at the University of Adelaide, required that each Tinline scholar "prepare a thesis on a historical subject, the work to be based on a study of original documents".<sup>12</sup> Few of these studies would be acceptable to commercial publishers, but the establishment of the Melbourne University Press provided a means of publication for the more worthy. This new Australian venture was initiated in 1923 with the publication of Myra Willard's *History of the White Australia Policy*, an appropriately distinctive theme.

By the outbreak of the second world war Australia could boast of a small but competent body of professional historians. Heavy lecture loads limited their opportunities to engage in research. No extensive historical series had been produced comparable to the *Makers of Canada*,<sup>13</sup> *Canada and its Provinces*,<sup>14</sup> *The Chronicles of Canada*,<sup>15</sup> *Canadian Frontiers of Settlement*,<sup>16</sup> or the *Relations of Canada and the United States*.<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, a twelve-volume *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918*<sup>18</sup> was completed in 1942, while its Canadian counterpart remains unfinished business. Most historical research in the interwar era had been concentrated in the early colonial period. Rich documentary material from this era was readily available in the two ambitious, but uncompleted government-sponsored series, *The Historical Records of New South Wales*<sup>19</sup> and *The Historical Records of Australia*.<sup>20</sup> Land settlement was added to discovery as a respectable research topic.<sup>21</sup> In fact the university approach to Australian history threatened to become a commentary upon a calendar of land acts, a change, if not a change for the better, from the saga of exploration to which the students had been exposed in their more tender years. Some preliminary work had been done in economic history, but less than might have been expected. An outspoken defender of private enterprise, Professor E. O. G. Shann of the University of Western Australia, published his pioneer *Economic History of Australia*<sup>22</sup> in 1930. The reissue of the lively study in 1948 testifies to its continuing popularity. Brian Fitz-

<sup>11</sup> Sutcliffe, *History of Trade Unionism*, author's Preface.

<sup>12</sup> G. H. Pitt, "South Australia Archives", in *Historical Studies*, I (No. 1, Apr., 1940), 46.

<sup>13</sup> Toronto, 21 v., 1910-11.

<sup>14</sup> Toronto, 23 v., 1913-17.

<sup>15</sup> Toronto, 32 v., 1914-16.

<sup>16</sup> Toronto, 9 v., 1934-40.

<sup>17</sup> Toronto and New Haven, 25 v., 1936-45.

<sup>18</sup> Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1921-42.

<sup>19</sup> Sydney, Government Printer, 7 v., 1892-1902.

<sup>20</sup> Melbourne, Library Committee of the Commonwealth Parliament, 33 v., 1914-25.

<sup>21</sup> E.g., S. H. Roberts, *History of Australian Land Settlement, 1788-1920* (Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1924); and his *The Squatting Age in Australia, 1835-1847* (Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1935). The former work particularly is not standing up under later investigations.

<sup>22</sup> Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1930.

patrick subjected the economic development to a far more thorough study, this time from a leftist vantage point, in two volumes, *British Imperialism and Australia, 1783-1833*,<sup>23</sup> and *The British Empire in Australia: An Economic History, 1834-1939*,<sup>24</sup> which appeared in 1939 and 1941 respectively. These volumes have been described by authorities who do not share their author's political and economic views as the greatest contribution yet made by an individual scholar to Australian historical literature.<sup>25</sup> It is a tragedy that no permanent acceptable place in the Australian academic world could be found for this brilliant, though somewhat undisciplined, mind. Tangible evidence of the tragedy appeared in 1956 with the publication of his *Australian Commonwealth: A Picture of the Community, 1901-1955*.<sup>26</sup> The weakness in organization and the readiness to be carried astray by personal bias apparent in his earlier work—unchecked in the interval by the salutary discipline of preparing lectures or conducting discussion groups with bright young minds—have been exaggerated in the more recent publication. An interpretive study of the development of the Australian community since the establishment of the Commonwealth would be a major contribution to Australian historical literature. This series of essays, brilliantly written in spots, provides not a "Picture of the Community" but a series of out-of-focus snapshots. Australia is still too small a community to afford to waste a brilliant intellect.

Fitzpatrick's earlier work represented some of the first fruits of a growing maturity in Australian historical studies which was marked by a more sophisticated use of primary material, and by the realization of the interdependence of developments in Australia and abroad. These characteristics were also evident in the publication in 1937 of the Rev. Eris O'Brien's *The Foundation of Australia (1786-1800): A Study of English Criminal Procedure and Penal Colonization in the Eighteenth Century*,<sup>27</sup> called by A. G. L. Shaw, himself a student in this theme, "one of the few real masterpieces among books on the history of Australia".<sup>28</sup> Here obviously was a person who recognized the importance of setting Australian events in proper relationship to their Old World background, and who could combine the patience required in a meticulous search for and examination of the source material with a literary artist's ability to tell a story. His church also recognized his abilities. With his elevation to the office of auxiliary bishop to the Roman Catholic archbishop of Sydney in 1948 his ecclesiastical duties became too onerous to expect

<sup>23</sup> London, Allen and Unwin, 1939.

<sup>24</sup> Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1941.

<sup>25</sup> R. M. Crawford and G. F. James in H. Grattan, ed., *Australia* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1947), 421; Shaw, *Story of Australia*, 289.

<sup>26</sup> Melbourne, Cheshire, 1956.

<sup>27</sup> London, Sheed and Ward, 1937. Second edition, Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1956.

<sup>28</sup> Shaw, *Story of Australia*, 291.

further major historical studies from his pen. He is now Archbishop of Canberra and Goulbourn.

The bench now provides more leisure for the writing of history than does the episcopal palace. During his sojourn as a justice of the High Court of Australia from 1930 to 1940 Dr. H. V. Evatt produced a number of notable works on legal or constitutional themes, including his *The King and his Dominion Governors*.<sup>29</sup> Of greater interest to the general historian, however, were his *Rum Rebellion: The Story of the Overthrow of Governor Bligh by John Macarthur and the New South Wales Corps*<sup>30</sup> and his *Australian Labour Leader: The Story of W. A. Holman and the Labour Movement*.<sup>31</sup> In the *Rum Rebellion* Mr. Justice Evatt demonstrated to students of history the value of court records in dealing with a controversial event in early Australian history, the arrest and deposition of Captain William Bligh of *H.M.S. Bounty* fame and Hollywood notoriety. The book was based on the John Murtagh Macrossan lectures which Dr. Evatt gave in 1937 at the University of Queensland. I can think of no lectureship in Canada which has enriched the historical literature of this country to the extent that the Macrossan foundation has that of Australia.<sup>32</sup> The trustees of some Canadian lectureship might try to discover the secret of its success. One point might be noted. The lecturers are Australians giving their best in return for the honour, not imports who might be tempted to pass off warmed-over material.

In *Australian Labour Leader* Evatt examined the career of William Holman, one of the founders of the Australian Labour Party. He became Premier of New South Wales in 1913. Like Hughes on the national level, Holman was unable to carry his party along with him on his stand favouring conscription in the first world war. Like Hughes he was forced out of the party, and continued in office with the suspicious support of his former political opponents. The study would be valuable if it were only a first-rate political biography, a rare product in Australia (as in Canada), but it is more than this. It is a study of the problem of leadership within that unique institution, the Australian Labour Party. In all Australian parties outstanding ability is suspect, as the early career of Prime Minister Robert Menzies<sup>33</sup> demonstrates. By raising this

<sup>29</sup> London, Oxford University Press, 1936.

<sup>30</sup> Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1938.

<sup>31</sup> Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1940.

<sup>32</sup> Some notable series include: 1928 (inauguration), J. G. Latham, *Australia and the British Commonwealth* (published London, Macmillan, 1929); 1930, A. G. Price, *The History and Problems of the Northern Territory* (Adelaide, Acott, 1930); 1932, A. C. V. Melbourne, *The Life and Times of William Charles Wentworth* (Brisbane, Biggs, 1934); 1934, D. B. Copland, *W. E. Hearn, First Australian Economist* (Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1935); 1936, H. V. Evatt, "The Overthrow of Governor Bligh" (published as *Rum Rebellion*, *vide supra*, n. 35); 1942, M. H. Ellis, *Lachlan Macquarie; Some Aspects of his Life* (Brisbane, University of Queensland, 1942).

<sup>33</sup> M.L.A. (State of Victoria), 1929-34; State Attorney General, 1929-34; Deputy Premier, 1932-34; M.H.R. (Commonwealth) since 1934; Attorney General, 1934-39;

suspicion to a higher level of intensity the Labour Party confirms its claim to be the most truly Australian of the country's political organizations. Since his return from the High Court bench to the political arena, and especially since his assumption of the leadership of the federal Labour Party in 1951, Dr. Evatt has been wrestling with the type of problem about which he wrote in the peaceful, judicial phase of his career — a phase for which all students of Australian history should be grateful.

At least one other major contribution to Australian historical studies has been made in recent years by a judge. John Alexander Ferguson of the New South Wales bench completed a monumental task in 1955 with the publication of the fourth volume of his bibliography of all matter published separately relating to Australia printed between 1784 and 1850.<sup>34</sup> He has announced his intention to produce a fifth volume giving selective coverage to 1900. All future historians of Australia will be indebted to this dedicated amateur.

It is noteworthy that Australian historians have not formed a national body akin to the Canadian Historical Association. Section E, the history section,<sup>35</sup> of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science (popularly known as "ANZAAS") sponsors regular conventions similar to the meetings of our learned societies, but the fact that no professional historical journal appeared in Australia before 1940 can be attributed in part to the absence of a national organization that would sponsor such a venture. The economists' *Economic Record* has appeared regularly since the formation of the Economic Society of Australia and New Zealand in 1925. *Historical Studies : Australia and New Zealand* was launched in 1940. Two issues a year appeared until 1944. Only two issues appeared between that date and 1949 when the Department of History of the University of Melbourne assumed full responsibility for the journal. They have maintained a regular two-issue-a-year output, bringing out a supplement in 1954 to mark the centenary of the Eureka Stokade, Australia's closest approach to an armed rebellion. Another periodical, *The Australian Journal of Politics and History*, sponsored by the University of Queensland, made its debut in November, 1955.

As the gestation period for an article is normally far shorter than that of a book, the analysis of articles on historical topics by Australian residents appearing in these journals, as set forth in the table accompanying this article, should provide a guide to trends in historical research in that country. Attention should be drawn to the fact that a number of

Prime Minister, 1939-41; replaced as result of internal dissensions within the coalition; effected political comeback through the organization of the Liberal Party which superseded the disintegrating United Australia Party; Leader of the Opposition, 1943-49; Prime Minister since 1949.

<sup>34</sup> *Bibliography of Australia* (Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1941-55), 4 v.

<sup>35</sup> Section E was originally devoted to Geography. In 1911 historians joined the section. The geographers later withdrew to form Section P.



ANALYSIS OF SUBJECT MATTER OF HISTORICAL ARTICLES BY AUSTRALIAN RESIDENTS APPEARING  
IN LEADING AUSTRALIAN SCHOLARLY JOURNALS, 1940-1957

84

|   | Australian internal |          |           |           |       |                |          | Australian external relations |          |           |           |      |      |      | Non-Australian |           |           |        |         |           |      |      |      |            | General<br>Historiography |
|---|---------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-------|----------------|----------|-------------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|------|------|------|----------------|-----------|-----------|--------|---------|-----------|------|------|------|------------|---------------------------|
|   | TOTAL               | pre-1788 | 1788-1860 | 1861-1900 | 1901- | 19th & 20th C. | Archival | TOTAL                         | Imperial | Gt. Brit. | N. Guinea | N.Z. | U.S. | Asia | TOTAL          | Classical | Gt. Brit. | Europe | Pacific | N. Guinea | N.Z. | U.S. | Asia | Internat'l |                           |
| <i>Historical Studies</i><br>Nos. 1-10<br>Apr. '40-July '45 |                     |          |           |           |       |                |          |                               |          |           |           |      |      |      |                |           |           |        |         |           |      |      |      |            |                           |
| TOTAL   | 21                  | —        | 9         | 2         | 1     | 2              | 7        | 5                             | —        | 2         | —         | —    | 2    | 1    | 6              | 4         | —         | —      | 1       | —         | —    | —    | —    | 1          | 1                         |
| Political   | 3                   | —        | 2         | 1         | —     | —              | —        | 2                             | —        | 1         | —         | —    | 1    | —    | 2              | 2         | —         | —      | —       | —         | —    | —    | —    | —          | —                         |
| Social  | 5                   | —        | 4         | —         | —     | 1              | —        | 1                             | —        | 1         | —         | —    | —    | —    | 2              | 1         | —         | —      | —       | —         | —    | —    | —    | 1          | —                         |
| Economic  | 4                   | —        | 3         | 1         | —     | —              | —        | 2                             | —        | —         | —         | —    | 1    | 1    | —              | —         | —         | —      | —       | —         | —    | —    | —    | —          | —                         |
| Historiographic   | 2                   | —        | —         | —         | 1     | 1              | —        | —                             | —        | —         | —         | —    | —    | —    | 2              | 1         | —         | —      | 1       | —         | —    | —    | —    | —          | 1                         |
| <br>Nos. 11-19<br>Nov. '47-Nov. '52                         |                     |          |           |           |       |                |          |                               |          |           |           |      |      |      |                |           |           |        |         |           |      |      |      |            |                           |
| TOTAL   | 23                  | —        | 7         | 8         | 3     | 2              | 3        | 6                             | —        | 1         | 1         | 1    | 3    | —    | 6              | —         | 1         | 1      | —       | 2         | —    | 1    | 1    | —          | 4                         |
| Political   | 6                   | —        | 1         | 5         | —     | —              | —        | 3                             | —        | 1         | 1         | 1    | —    | —    | 3              | —         | —         | —      | —       | 2         | —    | —    | 1    | —          | —                         |
| Social  | 1                   | —        | 1         | —         | —     | —              | —        | 1                             | —        | —         | —         | —    | 1    | —    | 2              | —         | 1         | 1      | —       | —         | —    | —    | —    | —          | —                         |
| Economic  | 11                  | —        | 5         | 3         | 2     | 1              | —        | 2                             | —        | —         | —         | —    | 2    | —    | —              | —         | —         | —      | —       | —         | —    | —    | —    | —          | 1                         |
| Historiographic   | 2                   | —        | —         | —         | 1     | 1              | —        | —                             | —        | —         | —         | —    | —    | —    | 1              | —         | —         | —      | —       | —         | 1    | —    | —    | —          | 3                         |

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valuable historical articles, especially relating to events in this century, have appeared in the *Australian Quarterly*, an important journal, the complete files of which are very rare on this continent. Other significant material has been published in the journals of the various state historical societies, one of which, the Royal Australian Historical Society (of Sydney), has been publishing its journals and proceedings regularly since 1901. Finally, although it is a policy of the journals investigated to publish work of resident scholars in all fields of history, Australian scholars working on non-Australian topics do publish in overseas specialist journals.

Thus the emphasis on research on Australian themes indicated in the table is slightly exaggerated, but such emphasis is understandable. Interest in the history of one's own land is natural. Australian source material is at hand and is becoming increasingly available as the archival divisions of the Commonwealth and state libraries improve their facilities and add to their staffs. You may note in the table under the general heading "Australia internal" that a special category designated "Archival" was tacked at the end of the chronological divisions. Many of the articles noted thereunder were written on the invitation of the editors of *Historical Studies* by archivists outlining the facilities offered by their institutions. In addition to the entries recorded on the table, *Historical Studies* regularly reports the acquisitions of new source material as these are reported by the various repositories. Although Sydney's Mitchell Library, the wealthiest research library in Australia and the unofficial custodian of the archives of the state of New South Wales,<sup>36</sup> remains the leading research centre for the prefederation period, useful material is available in all other state capital cities. The Archives Division of the Commonwealth National Library at Canberra, though it still lacks an adequate building, has the best collection of twentieth century material relating to the national scene. Backed by the resources of the federal treasury, it seems destined to replace the Mitchell as the Mecca of historians as interest moves from research in the earlier colonial period to later times. Recently reported acquisitions of microfilms of the Japanese archival records concerning the relations of that country with Australia from 1860 to 1945,<sup>37</sup> and microfilms of the United States consular reports from the Pacific islands in the second half of the nineteenth century,<sup>38</sup> indicate new fields of research interest to which the Commonwealth National Library is catering.

Returning to the analysis of periodical articles we might note the number of entries under the various categories of historiography. These reflect a tradition, particularly strong in the Melbourne history school,

<sup>36</sup> I. E. Leeson, "Archives in New South Wales", in *Historical Studies*, I (No. 2, Oct., 1940), 96.

<sup>37</sup> *Historical Studies*, VII (No. 26, May, 1956), 225.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 226.

of stressing historical method even in the earliest undergraduate courses. In his obituary to Sir Ernest Scott (he was knighted shortly before his death) Professor R. M. Crawford wrote of the success achieved by his predecessor in the Melbourne chair of transmitting his "love of the historical document" to his students.<sup>39</sup> To a later visitor to Australia it seemed that in every history course other than Australian, a Melbourne student had a book of select documents as a constant companion. Although Scott himself edited collections of journals of the principal sea and land explorers of Australia,<sup>40</sup> not until the present decade has an adequate collection of documents covering other aspects of the country's history been made available. One of Scott's pupils, Professor C. M. H. Clark of Canberra University College, has covered the period down to 1900 in two volumes of *Select Documents in Australian History*.<sup>41</sup>

Clark did not spare his colleagues in the introductory passages to the various sections of his *Documents*. Critical re-examination of cherished illusions is a characteristic of recent historical investigation. In a paper read before Section E of ANZAAS in 1951, and subsequently published in *Historical Studies*,<sup>42</sup> Professor Clark reported on his investigation into the background of convicts transported into eastern Australia from the inauguration of the practice in 1787 to its termination in 1852. He suggested that most of these people had not been the harmless victims of a harsh criminal code or of political reaction, but hardened and habitual lawbreakers. At its original presentation this charge provoked at least one impassioned defence of the older, more pleasant interpretation by one of the older auditors.

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Another cherished myth that has been subjected to re-evaluation concerns the events which culminated in the storming of the Eureka Stockade on December 3, 1854. An armed uprising seems to be a prerequisite for the formation of a satisfactory myth to stimulate national self-consciousness, be the immediate cause a disinclination of Australian diggers to pay for miners' licences or of American colonists to pay stamp duties or tea taxes. The shots at Ballarat were not heard round the world, and recent writers, including the authors of the articles in the Eureka Supplement of *Historical Studies*, have tended to deflate the importance of Eureka as a causal factor in shaping the political destinies of mid-nineteenth century Australia, while recognizing that the myth itself has

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, I (No. 1, Apr., 1940), 3. On Scott's interest in historiography see his *History and Historical Problems* (Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1925).

<sup>40</sup> *Australian Discovery* . . . (London, Dent, 1929), 2 v.

<sup>41</sup> Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 2 v., 1950, 1955. In 1957 his single volume *Sources of Australian History*, covering the broader period from the beginning of settlement to 1919, came out in the Oxford University Press's World's Classics Series.

<sup>42</sup> C. M. H. Clark, "The Origins of Convicts Transported to Eastern Australia, 1787-1852", *Historical Studies*, VII (No. 26, May, 1956), 121-135; (No. 27, Nov., 1956), 314-327.

become a historical fact that must be taken into account. A growing national maturity is indicated in the readiness to accept re-evaluations of cherished beliefs regarding both the convict and the goldrush eras, and the recognition of a continuity in the formation of the Australian community throughout the whole period.

The years between the Victorian gold rush of the 1850's and the federation movement of the 1890's have remained comparatively neglected by Australian historians until recently. As yet there is no sharp upswing in the production of books on the period. The indication of growing interest in the era, as revealed in the larger number of journal articles appearing recently, is gratifying. The number falling into the political category is significant. The field is still so unworked as to require narratives clarifying the political scene in the various colonies. Some revision is being attempted. A notable example is R. S. Parker's "Australian Federation, The Influence of Economic Interests and Political Pressures".<sup>43</sup> It inspired, or provoked, three further articles stressing the economic aspect of the movement.<sup>44</sup> The publicity which surrounded the public discussion leading up to the acceptance of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia by the colonists through referenda has created the impression that the constitution was an "open covenant, openly arrived at". Recognition of the need to reappraise the admirable contemporary accounts of the federal movement was thus slow in developing. With attention being redirected to the subject, a fuller story is now emerging.

Alfred Deakin was one of the leading figures in the federation movement. He later served as Prime Minister of the Commonwealth on three occasions during its critical first decade, and died in 1919. His own account of the federation movement, written in 1900, was published in 1944 under the title, *The Federal Story; The Inner History of the Federal Cause*.<sup>45</sup> Another autobiographic fragment telling of his first two years in public life in the colony of Victoria was published last year.<sup>46</sup> These publications are particularly significant as Australian political figures have been notably reticent in the matter of memoirs. After fifty-seven years of federation only three Commonwealth cabinet ministers have produced autobiographies. All are anecdotal and disappointing. Sir George Reid, leader of the conservative Free traders in the

<sup>43</sup> *Historical Studies*, IV (No. 13, Nov., 1949), 1-24.

<sup>44</sup> G. Blainey, "The Role of Economic Interest in Australian Federation — A Reply to Professor R. S. Parker", in *Historical Studies*, IV (No. 15, Nov., 1950), 224-37; J. Bastin, "Federation and Western Australia; A Contribution to the Parker-Blainey Discussion", in *ibid.*, V (No. 17, Nov., 1951), 47-58; A. W. Martin, "Economic Influences in the 'New Federation Movement'", in *ibid.*, VI (No. 21, Nov., 1953), 64-71.

<sup>45</sup> H. Brookes, ed., Melbourne, Robertson and Mullens. The editor is Deakin's son-in-law.

<sup>46</sup> J. A. La Nauze and R. M. Crawford, eds., *The Crisis in Victorian Politics, 1879-1881* (Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1957).

early Commonwealth Parliaments, and Prime Minister for eleven months following August, 1904, was removed from the political scene through his appointment as the first Australian High Commissioner to London in 1910. In January 1916 he made way for another expended former Prime Minister. By 1917 his *Reminiscences* were published.<sup>47</sup> The two other autobiographies are of more recent vintage. In 1948 the South Australian representative in the anti-Labour cabinets of the 'Twenties and 'Thirties, A. J. McLachlan, epitomized his life in *McLachlan; an F.A.Q. Australian*.<sup>48</sup> Sir George Pearce was high in the councils of the Labour Party until the split in 1916, and equally high in those of anti-Labour groups thereafter until his defeat in the general election of 1937. He should have been able to tell much, but he told very little in his *Carpenter to Cabinet*,<sup>49</sup> published in 1951. "Billy" Hughes produced a number of useful books throughout his long career, *Splendid Adventure*<sup>50</sup> (1929) possibly being the one most consulted by historians. Remaining an active political figure until his death he did not have an opportunity to write a full autobiography.

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Biography has been a field almost as barren as autobiography in Australia. One able and productive craftsman is M. H. Ellis, a working journalist, now an editor with the *Sydney Bulletin*.<sup>51</sup> Since 1947 he has published full biographies of Lachlan Macquarie,<sup>52</sup> the autocrat under whose governorship the seeds of the future prosperous colony germinated within the penal settlement; John Macarthur, the bane of early governors, first successful colonial capitalist, and founder of the Australian wool industry;<sup>53</sup> and a briefer study of Macquarie's protégé, Francis Greenway,<sup>54</sup> crude forger and skilled architect. He is now working on a study of W. C. Wentworth, the leading figure in the Australian phase of the struggle for responsible government. All his works reveal patient research and a sure handling of his material. His subjects and their times come to life. It is true that Ellis' sympathetic identification of himself with his subject (not fully achieved in his *Greenway*) frequently results in the author espousing his subject's quarrels. The protagonists of his studies were all men who made enemies easily.

<sup>47</sup> *My Reminiscences* (London, Cassell), 1917.

<sup>48</sup> Adelaide, Lothian, 1948.

<sup>49</sup> London, Hutchinson, 1951.

<sup>50</sup> London, E. Benn. Among his other writings, more properly classifiable as reminiscences, are: *Crusts and Crusades*; *Tales of Bygone Days* (Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1947), and *Policies and Potentates* (Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1950).

<sup>51</sup> His own views on the problems of the craft are outlined in his article, "The Writing of Australian Biography", in *Historical Studies*, VI (No. 24, May 1955), 432-46.

<sup>52</sup> *Lachlan Macquarie; His Life, Adventures and Times* (Sydney, Dymock's Book Arcade, 1947).

<sup>53</sup> *John Macarthur* (Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1955).

<sup>54</sup> *Francis Greenway; His Life and Times* (Sydney, Shepherd Press, 1949; 2nd ed., revised, Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1953).

When contrasted with the work of Ellis most biographical efforts of Australian academics seem dull and two-dimensional — scholarly reports rather than biographies. Considering the rather harsh treatment the qualities of imagination and sympathy frequently receive at the hands of graduate-assistant markers of undergraduate essays, it might be suggested that academic historical training stultifies rather than develops the qualities required in a successful biographer. The clever student soon learns how to hedge every statement. He learns that conformity pays off in the grade book. He learns the technique of impressive documentation. With imagination quashed rather than disciplined, the delicate task of recreating as individuals the subject of the biography and those with whom he dealt is frequently beyond his ability.

As the analysis of journal articles shows, only the economic historians have displayed great interest in the twentieth century. With some significant exceptions the same tendency prevails in the production of larger works. The official war histories have provided a thorough coverage of certain periods of this century. These remain the only periods so covered. Sir Ernest Scott recounted and commented upon the activities on the home front in the first war in one volume.<sup>55</sup> A "Civil Series" of five volumes is scheduled to deal with the more complicated administration of the second war. Two of these volumes have been published: Paul Hasluck's *The Government and the People, 1939-1941*,<sup>56</sup> and S. J. Butlin's *The War Economy, 1939-1942*.<sup>57</sup>

Until recently an inquirer who sought an interpretation of Australian political life in this century had to depend on rather superficial political chronicles such as Arthur Norman Smith's *Thirty Years; The Commonwealth of Australia, 1901-1931*,<sup>58</sup> or go to the rare political biographies. The most satisfactory for his purpose would be Evatt's *Australian Labour Leader* or L. F. Fitzhardinge's section in *Nation-building in Australia*,<sup>59</sup> a life of Sir Littleton Groom, a statesman who brought about the defeat of his party in 1929, and ruined his own career, by entertaining exalted views of the impartiality of the Speakership that are not generally accepted outside of Westminster. No really satisfactory life exists of any other of the major political figures of this century. The two best biographies were written by people too close to their subjects to obtain perspective. The authors recognized this point in their modest subtitles: Walter Murdoch's tribute to his friend, *Alfred Deakin; A Sketch*,<sup>60</sup> and Nettie Palmer's life of her uncle, *Henry Bournes Higgins; A Memoir*.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>55</sup> *Australia During the War* (Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1936) being volume 11 of *The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918*.

<sup>56</sup> Canberra, Australian War Memorial, 1952.

<sup>57</sup> Canberra, Australian War Memorial, 1955.

<sup>58</sup> Melbourne, Brown, Prior, 1933.

<sup>59</sup> Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1941.

<sup>60</sup> London, Constable, 1923.

<sup>61</sup> London, Harrop, 1931.

In our postwar period there has appeared a rather slim but scholarly biography of Sir Edmund Barton, the first Prime Minister of the Commonwealth,<sup>62</sup> and also two superficial biographies of W. M. Hughes.<sup>63</sup> Work is now underway on full-scale biographies of Deakin and Hughes. Canadians have learned that the production of definitive biographies of twentieth century statesmen takes time. The Australian biographers are at least giving the occasional progress report on their work. The novel arrangement whereby Deakin was employed as the regular, but anonymous, special Australian correspondent of the London *Morning Post* from 1900 to 1914 while holding high public office including the prime ministership has been made the subject of a journal article.<sup>64</sup>

Possibly the biography of greatest international interest now being written by a resident of Australia is the official life of Field Marshal Smuts.<sup>65</sup> Sir Keith Hancock was commissioned to undertake this project before he returned to his native land to accept the Directorship of the Research School of the Social Sciences and the chair of Australian History in the Australian National University. This institution was created in 1946 as a special research and graduate school to be located in Canberra and financed from the federal treasury. The establishment of the institution was viewed with misgivings in the established state universities. The faculty members feared that most research work and graduate instruction, with the stimulation and challenge these present, would be transferred to the new centre. These fears have not been substantiated. Staffs have expanded in the state universities. The 1937 volume of the *Commonwealth Universities Year Book*<sup>66</sup> showed the University of Melbourne with a history department consisting of a day staff of five, not all full-time, and two evening lecturers. The 1957 volume lists a staff of twenty-two.<sup>67</sup> New universities and colleges have been created.<sup>68</sup> Teaching loads have been lightened, allowing faculty members more time for research. As a result full-time academic teachers, as a class, are constituting a major

<sup>62</sup> John Reynolds, *Edmund Barton* (Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1948).

<sup>63</sup> Frank C. Browne, *They Called Him Billy* (Sydney, Huston, 1946); W. Farmer Whyte, *William Morris Hughes; His Life and Times* (Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1957).

<sup>64</sup> J. A. LaNauze, "Alfred Deakin and the *Morning Post*", in *Historical Studies*, VI (No. 24, May, 1955), 361-375. For a progress report on the Hughes biography see L. F. Fitzhardinge, "W. M. Hughes and the Waterside Workers", in *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, II (May, 1957), 169-180.

<sup>65</sup> Sir Keith Hancock, "Exploring the Life of Smuts", in *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, I (Nov., 1955), 27-37.

<sup>66</sup> 554.

<sup>67</sup> 1065.

<sup>68</sup> The New South Wales University of Technology (Sydney) incorporated, 1949; University of New England (Armidale, N.S.W.), established as a university college in association with the University of Sydney in 1938, raised to autonomous degree-granting status in 1953; Newcastle University College, established as branch of the N.S.W.U. of Technology in 1951, with Arts courses given since 1954 through co-operation with the U. of New England which acts as the examining body; University of Victoria, the second university for Melbourne, incorporated 1958.



contributing group to Australian historical publication for the first time. The number of graduate students has also increased. From reports of those completed, published in *Historical Studies*, it would seem that the state universities granted at least one hundred nineteen M.A.'s, seven Ph.D.'s, and three D.Litt.'s in history between 1946 and early 1957, while the three history departments of the A.N.U., Australian, Pacific, and Far Eastern, granted a total of seven Ph.D.'s in the same period.<sup>69</sup>

The creation of the chairs of Pacific and of Far Eastern history at the Australian National University indicates a broadening of the scope of historical research in Australia. The former is concerned with the relatively unexplored field of the history of what used to be called the "South Sea Islands".<sup>70</sup> Although its establishment has provided a centre for this study, some of the more outstanding works dealing with this area are products of authors associated with other Australian universities. John M. Ward, now professor of history at the University of Sydney, was a lecturer in that department when his *British Policy in the South Pacific, 1786-1893* was published in 1948.<sup>71</sup> Although concerned with British policy, the study was not London-centered. It showed that much of the pressure to create a British Oceania, to which British policy makers were subjected, came from Australia and New Zealand. Australians are now becoming aware of their own colonial empire. J. D. Legge's *Australian Colonial Policy*,<sup>72</sup> based on a University of Melbourne thesis, and published in 1956, tells the story of the Australian administration of the Papuan section of New Guinea, and is possibly the most satisfactory of a number of books which have recently appeared relating to this topic.<sup>73</sup>

One of the significant shifts in research interest which indicates the effect of the changing world situation on Australian scholarship is illustrated in the career of Dr. John Bastin. His early publications are concerned with Australian domestic affairs in the federation period.<sup>74</sup> He has shifted his attention to Indonesia and South-East Asia, lands now being recognized as Australia's northern neighbours, and has recently published *The Native Policies of Sir Stamford Raffles in Java and Sumatra*.<sup>75</sup> Although the establishment of a chair of Far Eastern History at the Australian National University can be cited as proof of awakened

<sup>69</sup> University of Melbourne, 53 M.A., 5 Ph.D.; Sydney, 25 M.A.; Adelaide, 18 M.A., 3 D.Litt.; Western Australia, 7 M.A.; Queensland, 5 M.A., 2 Ph.D.; Tasmania, 3 M.A.; New England, 6 M.A. (three granted while still a university college associated with Sydney). *Historical Studies*, VII (No. 27, Nov., 1956), 348-58; VIII (No. 29, Nov., 1957), 96-99.

<sup>70</sup> The policy of the department has been outlined in a belated inaugural lecture: J. W. Davidson, *The Study of Pacific History: An Inaugural Lecture delivered at Canberra on 25 November 1954* (Canberra, A.N.U., 1955).

<sup>71</sup> Sydney, Australasian Publishing Company, 1948.

<sup>72</sup> Sydney, Angus and Robertson for A.I.I.A., 1956.

<sup>73</sup> Others include, L. P. Mair, *Australia in New Guinea* (London, Christophers, 1948); and L. Lett, *Sir Hubert Murray of Papua* (London, Collins, 1949).

<sup>74</sup> *Vide supra*, n. 44.

<sup>75</sup> Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1957.

Australian interest in that region, the case would be stronger had the University of Sydney not suspended its programme of oriental studies in 1952,<sup>76</sup> leaving the newly-created department in the small Canberra University College as the only institution giving undergraduate instruction in the study of the languages prerequisite for the study of Far Eastern history. The Sydney chair was again filled in 1955. So far most of the Australian residents who have published books on oriental history, as distinct from current affairs, have been Britons, like Professor C. P. Fitzgerald<sup>77</sup> of the A.N.U., or A. L. Sadler,<sup>78</sup> Professor Emeritus of Oriental Studies at Sydney. We can look for more publications from Australian-born scholars in the future. Professor Macmahon Ball's *Nationalism and Communism in Southeast Asia*<sup>79</sup> and the late Sir Fredrick Eggleston's *Reflections on Australian Foreign Policy*<sup>80</sup> testify to the existence of Australians with expert knowledge of the area. So far this interest has not been directed into historical channels.

The United States was discovered by Australian scholars in the 1940's. It was rather difficult to ignore the United States in Australia after the G.I.'s arrived in early 1942. Gordon Greenwood demonstrated the significance of earlier contacts between the two countries in his *Early American-Australian Relations to 1830*,<sup>81</sup> published in 1944. As the table of journal articles shows, those concerned with Australian-American relations equalled in number those dealing with Anglo-Australian relations in the 1940-45 publication period, exceeded them in the 1946-52 category, and fell away in the post-1953 period. This seems to reflect the Australian honeymoon with the United States fairly accurately. The belated discovery of American history introduced Australian scholars to the Turner frontier hypothesis. In *Moving Frontiers — An American Theme and its Application to Australian History*<sup>82</sup> Professor Fred Alexander from the frontier state of Western Australia attempted, rather unsuccessfully, to apply the stimulating concept to local conditions. More serious studies of the Turner thesis have been published as articles by Norman Harper,<sup>83</sup> the initiator of American historical studies at the University of Melbourne.

Professors Alexander, Greenwood and Harper also participated in the production of *Australia in World Affairs, 1950-1955*.<sup>84</sup> Brought out by

<sup>76</sup> The history of the department and the circumstances surrounding its suspension are outlined in M. Jacobs, "Oriental Studies in the University of Sydney", in *Australian Quarterly*, XXV (June, 1953), 82-90.

<sup>77</sup> Recent publications include: *Revolution in China* (London, Crescent Press, 1952) and *The Empress Wu* (Melbourne, Cheshire, 1954).

<sup>78</sup> *A Short History of Japan* (Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1946).

<sup>79</sup> Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1952.

<sup>80</sup> N. D. Harper, ed., Melbourne University Press, 1952.

<sup>81</sup> Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1944.

<sup>82</sup> Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1947.

<sup>83</sup> E.g., "Frontier and Section, a Turner 'Myth'?" in *Historical Studies*, V (No. 18, May, 1952), 135-153.

<sup>84</sup> Melbourne, Cheshire for A.I.I.A., 1957.

the Australian Institute of International Affairs, it is planned to be the first of a series similar to that sponsored by its Canadian counterpart. Its appearance merely underlines the fact that a comprehensive history of Australian external relations has yet to be produced.<sup>85</sup> Australian scholars are looking abroad more anxiously in this postwar world. It must not be assumed, however, that Australian scholars were completely indifferent to foreign developments in the interwar period. A. L. Sadler's earlier Japanese studies<sup>86</sup> and S. H. Roberts' two-volume *History of French Colonial Policy*<sup>87</sup> and his more popular study of the background to the Nazi regime, *The House that Hitler Built*,<sup>88</sup> might be cited as evidence to the contrary.

Most Australian historians remain primarily concerned with reducing the large unexplored areas in the history of their own country. They are receiving help from practitioners of other disciplines. Geoffrey Sawer, Professor of Law at the A.N.U., is providing a most useful handbook in his *Australian Federal Politics and Law*, the first volume of which, covering the period 1901 to 1929, has appeared.<sup>89</sup> As the author admits, the work "has been written with a lawyer's bias towards the elements of formal organization in society".<sup>90</sup> It stands midway between a lawyer's reference book and a history. Each Commonwealth parliament is examined under the headings: "Parties", "The Government", "Acts and Bills", "Budgets", "Motions of Censure", and "Constitutional Issues". Any Canadian interested in political history who scans the book will wish that some industrious person or persons will do the same for the Canadian Parliaments. Spurred on, possibly, by the pioneer study of the Australian political parties made by the American, Louise Overaker,<sup>91</sup> L. F. Crisp, Professor of Political Science at Canberra University College, has published *The History of the Australian Federal Labour Party, 1901-1951*.<sup>92</sup> Ulrich Ellis' long awaited study of the Country Party is scheduled for publication this year.<sup>93</sup> No one has yet attempted to recount the story of the other anti-Labour party. Formed by the fusion of Freetraders and Protectionists after 1909 it has gone under the names of the Liberal, National, United Australia and, again, Liberal party. No adequate study has appeared on the state organization of the parties. Readers are dependent on incidental information supplied in such works as Evatt's *Australian Labour Leader*. With all major parties being federal organiz-

<sup>85</sup> A. G. Price probed the field in his *Australia Comes of Age* (Melbourne, Georgian House, 1945).

<sup>86</sup> E.g., *The Maker of Modern Japan; The Life of Tokugawa Ieyasu* (London, Allen and Unwin, 1937).

<sup>87</sup> London, King, 1929.

<sup>88</sup> New York, Harper, 1938.

<sup>89</sup> Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1956.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 322.

<sup>91</sup> *The Australian Party System* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1952).

<sup>92</sup> London, Longmans Green, 1955.

<sup>93</sup> By the Australian Country Party, Sydney.

ations, knowledge of the state structures is a prerequisite for proper understanding of the federal bodies.

The historians of the various states and colonies still tend to concentrate on the early colonial period. In recent years Tasmania has received more than its share of attention from historians (many of them mainlanders). The governorships of two men whose careers took them to British North America after their Tasmanian sojourns have been studied. Professor Kathleen Fitzpatrick justifies the stewardship of *Sir John Franklin in Tasmania, 1837-1843*<sup>94</sup> with sympathy and literary grace. M. C. I. Levy asserts, without carrying conviction, that Franklin's predecessor, Governor George Arthur, was a "Colonial Benevolent Despot".<sup>95</sup> Only the middle term is questioned. W. A. Townsley, now Professor of Political Science at the University of Tasmania, supplies a pedestrian account of *The Struggle for Self-Government in Tasmania, 1842-1856*.<sup>96</sup> Tasmania is the only state to mark the centenary of the achievement of responsible government with an officially-sponsored study. This is *A Century of Responsible Government in Tasmania, 1856-1956*,<sup>97</sup> a handy reference book from the pens of Professor Townsley, John Reynolds, and the clerks of the two houses of the legislature,<sup>98</sup> containing studies of political and constitutional developments over the past century, and sketches of political figures who have achieved some prominence during that period.

In *The Peaks of Lyell*<sup>99</sup> Geoffrey Blainey, a recent graduate of the University of Melbourne, recounts the history of the Mount Lyell Mining and Railway Company, since the 1880's the dominant concern in the copper fields of the Tasmanian West Coast. This work, sponsored by the company, might mark the opening of a new phase in Australian historiography. Australian industrial concerns have been reluctant in the past to open their records to historians, while the historians, confronted with no counterparts of the Hudson's Bay Company or the Canadian Pacific Railway, which could not be ignored, have displayed slight awareness of the importance of mercantile and industrial concerns as factors in the building of the nation.

Professor R. M. Hartwell of the recently established New South Wales University of Technology also looked to Tasmania in his examination of the *Economic Development of Van Diemen's Land, 1820-1850*.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>94</sup> Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1949.

<sup>95</sup> *Governor George Arthur; A Colonial Benevolent Despot* (Melbourne, Georgian House, 1953). W. D. Forsyth's *Governor Arthur's Convict System* (London, Longmans Green, 1935) remains the standard work on the period.

<sup>96</sup> [Hobart] Tasmania, Government Printer, 1951.

<sup>97</sup> F. C. Green, ed., [Hobart] Government Printer, n.d.

<sup>98</sup> E. C. Briggs, Clerk of the Legislative Council, and C. K. Murphy, Clerk of the House of Assembly.

<sup>99</sup> Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1954.

<sup>100</sup> Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1954.

As the author explains in his preface, his studies in the Australian trade cycle before 1850 had been hampered by the lack of detailed material in existing economic histories. Hence he undertook this detailed study of a small unit over a short time. Economic historians have been active recently in probing technical problems of this type. N. G. Butlin of the Australian National University has been a leading spirit in the compilation of new series of statistical tables for the latter part of the nineteenth century,<sup>101</sup> checking, supplementing, and correcting those of the pioneer Australian statistician T. A. Coghlan,<sup>102</sup> whose figures had previously been accepted rather uncritically. At a conference of Australian historians held at Canberra in August 1957, Butlin presented a paper on "The Shape of the Australian Economy, 1861-1900" using the revised material. It implied a reinterpretation of Australian economic history for the period of such major importance that it was referred to in discussion as "The Butlin Revolution".<sup>103</sup>

Edgars Dunsdorfs' *The Australian Wheat-growing Industry, 1788-1948*<sup>104</sup> is significant not only because of its theme and treatment, but because it is one of the first major contributions to an Australian historical topic by a postwar emigrant scholar from the European continent. Dr. Dunsdorfs was at one time Professor of Economics at the University of Riga. He was brought to Australia in 1948 to join the department of economics of the University of Melbourne. The ambitious immigration programme undertaken by the Australian government since 1945 has stimulated interest in assimilation and related problems. Much of the work being done by the demographers of the Australian National University is historical in approach. A common topic, the assimilation of non-British groups in Australia, has been fairly well summarized in W. D. Borrie's *Italians and Germans in Australia; A Study in Assimilation*.<sup>105</sup> The importance of the European background of the emigrants becomes apparent to anyone who engages in such a study. The logical outcome can be seen in Dr. C. A. Price's *Malta and the Maltese; A Study in Nineteenth Century Migration*.<sup>106</sup> The centre of interest in this work was Malta itself. Although the Maltese now are contributing a significant number of migrants to Australia, in the nineteenth century their movements were practically restricted to the Mediterranean littoral. Here again Australians are finding it necessary to broaden their research

<sup>101</sup> E.g., N. G. Butlin and H. de Meel, *Public Capital Formation in Australia; Estimates, 1860-1900* (Canberra, A.N.U. Social Science Monograph No. 11, 1954).

<sup>102</sup> E.g., his *Labour and Industry in Australia from the First Settlement in 1788 to the Establishment of the Commonwealth in 1901* (London, Oxford University Press, 1918), 4 v.

<sup>103</sup> Robin Gollan, "Canberra History Conference", in *Historical Studies*, VIII (No. 29, Nov., 1957), 86.

<sup>104</sup> Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1956.

<sup>105</sup> Melbourne, Cheshire for A.N.U., 1954.

<sup>106</sup> Melbourne, Georgian House, 1954.

horizons if they are to understand the history of their own country, and the background of their fellow-countrymen.

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Suggestions that a new synthesis of Australian history was required, those by Scott and the contributors of the Australian volume of the *Cambridge History of the British Empire*<sup>107</sup> being outdated, were brushed aside until recently with the assertion that Australian history was still in the age of the monograph. Rarely has a nation been more in need of an up-to-date, clearly written and reasonably popular account of its past than Australia in the early postwar years. The flood of migrants included many with lively curiosity who wished to learn about the history of the new country with whose destiny they had committed their own. The Melbourne University Press published Brian Fitzpatrick's *The Australian People, 1788-1945* in 1946. This summary of his two large volumes of economic history presupposed a greater knowledge of the country's history than is warranted in a survey. That the demand has been adequately met is due largely to the enterprise of non-Australian publishing houses. The historical chapters of the Australian volume of the "United Nations Series"<sup>108</sup> published in 1947 provided a balanced synthesis. Professor Crawford's brief study for the Hutchinson's University Library series<sup>109</sup> came out in 1952. The most satisfactory of the new surveys, larger in scale, and one that demonstrates that an academic's book need not smell of the lamp, A. G. L. Shaw's *Story of Australia* in the Faber series, was published in 1955. A work of multiple authorship edited by Professor Gordon Greenwood of the University of Queensland, *Australia; A Social and Political History*,<sup>110</sup> was also published in 1955. This book is the first work to be produced for use primarily as a university textbook in the subject. As such it is a landmark in Australian historiography. Although the priority given to "Social" in the title is not maintained in the text, its contents reveal how the knowledge of Australia's past has broadened in the past two decades. Little space can now be found for the exploits of the explorers. Land acts occupy a less prominent position in the more balanced story of the development of the Australian community. Australian history has reached a point where the type of directed research achieved by editorial supervision of a large-scale co-operative series, similar to those which have played an important part in opening up neglected sections of Canadian history, would be desirable. In passing, it might be noted that Australian royal commissions have not sponsored historical studies in the manner of their Canadian counterparts.

<sup>107</sup> VII, pt. 1, 1933.

<sup>108</sup> C. H. Grattan, ed., *Australia* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1947).

<sup>109</sup> *Australia* (London).

<sup>110</sup> Sydney, Angus and Robertson.

Australians, at any rate, are no longer groping in a strange field in which imported precedents do not apply. An able community of scholars have been recruited. They have established a respectable tradition of scholarship. The importance of research is recognized, and facilities to further it are being made available. Isolation, which tended to distort Australian historical studies earlier, has been broken down both by the increasing awareness of the importance of the outside world, forced on Australians by recent events, and by the greater movement of scholars. Clio's devotees in Australia are no longer the mute readers of history of older societies, nor are they attempting to mould their country's story into patterns shaped for other lands. They are now commenting confidently on the past of their own and other communities in their own distinctive Australian accent.<sup>111</sup>

<sup>111</sup> It has been found necessary to cut this paper for publication, but no balanced survey of recent historical work in Australia can omit mention, if only in a footnote, of the following outstanding works: in history of ideas, J. A. LaNauze, *Political Economy in Australia; Historical Studies* (Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1949); in history of art, Bernard Smith, *Place, Taste and Tradition* (Sydney, Ure Smith, 1945); and in social history, Robin Boyd, *Australia's Home; Its Origins, Builders, and Occupiers* (Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1952).