



# THE OXFORD COMPANION TO AUSTRALIAN HISTORY

REVISED EDITION

*Edited by*

GRAEME DAVISON

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WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF  
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# PREFACE

This *Companion* offers a comprehensive, authoritative and lively guide to Australian history. It covers all periods and aspects of Australian history. It rests on the most recent and significant scholarship. And it is written, as far as possible, in clear, vivid, non-technical language. We hope that it will become the book of first reference for academic and general historians, students of Australian history, journalists and politicians, and readers here and overseas.

It draws on a large body of specialist scholarship, including work done by historians inside and outside the academy, as well as by other researchers and writers. Thirty years ago a keen student could claim a reading knowledge of almost all the significant writing on Australian history; but the volume of new work has so grown in range and specialisation that even professional historians can hope to remain in command of only a fraction of what is published. The *Companion* aims to make the fruit of this work available to a general readership in a form that summarises its findings and points the way towards a more detailed understanding of the topic. Some of this work is available in books, journals, and other forms of publication, but much of it is specialised and not easily accessible. The *Companion* draws also on key reference works such as the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, the *Australian National Dictionary*, *Australians: A Historical Dictionary*, and other publications listed in the entry for **reference works**; but complements these as a systematic guide to Australian history.

The *Companion* consists of entries varying in length from 100 to 2000 words on a wide range of subjects: events, persons, topics, themes, catchphrases, and allusions. The significance of the subject has been a fundamental criterion for selection of the entries and determination of their length, but at a time when the understanding of Australian history is keenly contested, this criterion is itself open to challenge. The new understandings of Australia's past conveyed by feminist and Aboriginal scholarship, for example, call for different emphases from the older treatments that stressed national events and the achievement of notable public figures. Our approach has been to assess significance according to the changing balance of historical scholarship. Thus the reader will find an explanation of the **Ripon Regulations** and other such staple fare of colonial history; but there is also recognition of **Aboriginal resistance** leaders and **femininity** as important areas of recent attention.

The *Companion* aims to show how Australia's history has been interpreted as well as how it has been made. There are major entries on branches of history, such as **environmental history** and **religious history**, which offer both a survey of the field and a commentary on the changing approaches and methods of those who have worked in it. Other entries on institutions, individuals, and aspects of Australian life also identify and comment on the way their subjects have been understood and assessed. This dimension of historical recording and commentary extends beyond academic study to take in popular writing, fiction, art, public display, film, and television, and these forms are also considered where appropriate.

In the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Australians already have at their disposal one of the world's outstanding biographical dictionaries. By including biographical entries in the *Companion* we have sought not to duplicate it but to select those individuals who because of their influence, representative character, or claim upon the attention of historians have assumed special significance in Australian history. Thus while all prime ministers and most governors prior to the introduction of representative government are



## Preface

included, only a selection of colonial and state premiers and religious and business leaders have entries. The *Companion* departs from the convention of biographical dictionaries that provide systematic details of parentage, education, appointments and offices, marriage and descendants. We have instead selected the most important aspect of each subject's career for discussion and evaluation. Similarly, we have listed honours and distinctions only when these are relevant to the entry.

The *Companion* pays particular attention to the interpreters of Australia history. It includes entries on a large number of writers and scholars, past and present, who have contributed to the understanding of the subject. Most, but by no means all, are historians: the principle for inclusion of novelists, dramatists, poets, artists, film-makers, and other cultural creators has been their role in shaping historical consciousness. The entries for living historians are generally confined to those who have completed their professional careers, though a few exceptions are made for younger historians who have exerted a particular influence.

The editorial group has written a significant proportion of the longer entries and the great bulk of the shorter ones. In commissioning entries we have invited leading scholars in the field, but—in conformity with the principle that the entry should assess the published work on that subject—have generally sought to ensure that contributors write on subjects in which their own work is not central. An effort was made to include contributors from different parts of the country, and to achieve some gender balance: the inability of some to accept our invitation to contribute has modified, but we hope not compromised, this intention.

Since the first publication of the *Companion* in 1998 we have been pleased to receive many appreciative comments from readers and reviewers. It is clear that the book is already fulfilling our hope of bringing the fruit of recent Australian historical scholarship to a wide audience of journalists, museum professionals, teachers, and general readers. Our correspondents have also offered criticisms, corrections, and suggestions for new entries. In due course, we hope to produce a new and expanded edition incorporating many of these suggestions as well as our own new thinking. In the meantime, this revised edition enables us to make a number of additions designed to bring the *Companion* up to date and to correct a small number of errors in the first printing. We have expanded some entries, such as those on John Howard and Olympic Games, to take account of significant events since 1998. We have revised the references to include important new publications. And in some instances, such as entries on Aboriginal topics, we have taken account of new developments in historiography. Among the many who have assisted us in this revision, we wish to make special mention of Kim Torney, for whom *The Oxford Companion to Australian History* has become almost a constant companion.

Graeme Davison  
John Hirst  
Stuart Macintyre  
May 2001



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A *Companion* should be companionable, and this one testifies to the generosity and good nature of a large number of people who were prepared to share their expertise in and appreciation of Australian history.

The project was made possible by a large grant from the Australian Research Council. It commenced with assistance from La Trobe, Melbourne and Monash Universities, and throughout its preparation benefited from the support of our colleagues. The secretariat at the University of Melbourne was supported by Lynne Wrout, Martine Walsh, and other administrative staff of the history department, while Rosemary Johnston facilitated our work at Monash.

At Oxford University Press we were assisted by Felicity Edge and Geraldine Corridon. Our publisher Peter Rose was as patient as a production schedule allows, and unfailingly encouraging. Janet Mackenzie's editorial skills were greatly appreciated.

Many scholars offered advice, made suggestions, and answered queries. We give particular thanks to Bain Attwood, the late John Barrett, Jan Bassett, Warren Bebbington, Geoffrey Bolton, Tim Bonyhady, Barbara Caine, Joy Damousi, Brian Fletcher, Stephen Garton, Jenny Gregory, Patricia Grimshaw, Beverley Kingston, Noeleen Kyle, Marilyn Lake, Peter McGregor, Campbell Macknight, Andrew Markus, David Merrett, Bruce Moore, Michael Piggott, Marian Quartly, John Rickard, Sue Rickard, Jill Roe, Michael Roe, Tim Rowse, Peter Spearritt, Jennifer Stock, John Thompson, James Walter, and Patrick Wolfe. John Ritchie, the general editor of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, kindly allowed us to draw on the riches of that indispensable reference work. Reference staff at the National Library of Australia and the state and university libraries provided bibliographical guidance.

Mandy Paul provided a very helpful evaluation of reference works in the early stages of our planning. Damien Cash wrote a number of entries at short notice on a wide range of subjects, and turned gaps into strengths. Michael Adcock, Doug Scobie, and James Bennett assisted with the verification of references.

Our overriding obligation is to Kim Torney and Helen Doyle. Both were employed as research assistants, but they quickly assumed much greater responsibilities than that role suggests. They established the secretariat, set up the database, conducted correspondence, smoothed difficulties, undertook research, and drafted a large number of short entries. At times when the attention of the three editors wavered, they maintained the momentum of the *Companion*. Its completion is testimony to their skill, efficiency, and goodwill.

Graeme Davison  
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# HOW TO USE THE COMPANION

Entries are arranged in alphabetical order.

A word in bold within the text (e.g. 'Ned **Kelly** was eventually hanged') indicates a cross-reference to another relevant headword. An item appears in bold only at its first appearance in an individual entry; if the reference is merely incidental, it has not been marked. Within entries covering notable families, such as the Boyds and the Sutherlands, the names of individual family members not given separate entries of their own appear in capitals.

In some cases, the word in bold differs slightly from the headword. For example, the term '**Communist** Party of Australia' appears thus in some entries while the actual headword is **Communism**; '**Constitutional crisis**' appears thus although the headword of the relevant entry is **Constitutional crises**. These variations are made for reasons of euphony and only where the actual headword will be found in correct alphabetical order.

In biographical entries where the subject has a pseudonym, the headword uses the name by which the subject is best known. Thus the entry for Joseph **Furphy** appears under that headword and not that of his nom-de-plume, Tom Collins; but the entry for A.H. Davis appears under Steele **Rudd**, and Nellie **Melba** appears thus rather than under her natal name, Helen Porter Mitchell.

'See also' at the end of an entry indicates that there is another substantial entry with a bearing on the subject.

The subject index at the back of the book is intended to reinforce the system of cross-references and to make it easier for readers to identify entries of kindred interest.

The authors of all longer entries are identified. A number of short entries were written in-house and involved substantial collaboration; accordingly they are identified by the initials of the member of the editorial team who drafted the entry:

DC Damien Cash  
GD Graeme Davison  
HD Helen Doyle  
JH John Hirst  
SM Stuart Macintyre  
PR Peter Rose  
KT Kim Torney

The *Companion* guides the reader to the relevant literature. The method of citation is kept as spare as possible. A book is usually identified by author, short title, and date of publication; sometimes one of the first two items is omitted, but the details are sufficient to find an item through an author or title entry in a library catalogue. Journal articles are usually identified by the name of the journal and the year in which it was published. Unpublished theses are identified by title, institution, and date of completion, and the cumulative guide to higher degree theses that enables them to be located is included in the entry on **reference works**. Films are dated by the year of release.

Maps are to be found at the end of the book, preceding the index.

# CONVERSIONS

## Area

1 acre = 0.4 ha

1 square yard = 0.8 m<sup>2</sup>

1 square mile = 2.6 km<sup>2</sup>

## Currency

£1 was equal to 20 shillings (s.), and 1 shilling was equal to 12 pence (d.). When Australia changed to decimal currency in 1966, \$2 was equal to £1.

1 guinea = £1 1s.

## Length

1 inch = 25 mm

1 foot = 30 cm

1 yard = 0.9 m

1 mile = 1.6 km

## Mass

1 ounce = 28 g

1 pound = 454 g

1 stone = 6 kg

## Volume

1 bushel = 36.4 L

1 pint = 568 mL

1 gallon = 4.6 L



# ABBREVIATIONS

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation	CBE	Companion of the Order of the British Empire
AC	Companion of the Order of Australia	CLF	Commonwealth Literary Fund
ACH	<i>Australian Cultural History</i>	CMG	Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George
ACT	Australian Capital Territory	CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific Industrial and Research Organisation
ACTU	Australian Council of Trade Unions	DBE	Dame of the Order of the British Empire
ADB	<i>Australian Dictionary of Biography</i>	DLP	Democratic Labor Party
AEHR	<i>Australian Economic History Review</i>	DSO	Distinguished Service Order
AFL	Australian Football League	ed./eds	edited by
AFS	<i>Australian Feminist Studies</i>	et al.	and others
AHA	Australian Historical Association	FAW	Fellowship of Australian Writers
AHS	<i>Australian Historical Studies</i> (1988– ); formerly <i>HSANZ</i> , <i>HS</i>	FRGS	Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society
AJPH	<i>Australian Journal of Politics and History</i>	FRS	Fellow of the Royal Society
AIF	Australian Imperial Force	HMAS	His/Her Majesty's Australian Ship
ALP	Australian Labor Party	HMCS	His/Her Majesty's Colonial Ship
AM	Member of the Order of Australia	HMS	His/Her Majesty's Ship
ANA	Australian Natives Association	HSANZ	<i>Historical Studies: Australia and New Zealand</i> (1940–April 1967), later <i>HS</i>
AND	<i>Australian National Dictionary</i>	HS	<i>Historical Studies</i> (October 1967–88); later <i>AHS</i>
ANZAAS	Australia and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science	HRA	<i>Historical Records of Australia</i>
ANZAC	Australia and New Zealand Army Corps	JAPH	<i>Journal of Politics and History</i>
ANZUS	Australia, New Zealand, and the United States	JAS	<i>Journal of Australian Studies</i>
AO	Officer of the Order of Australia	JRAHS	<i>Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society</i>
APAIS	Australian Public Affairs Information Service	JRHSQ	<i>Journal of the Historical Society of Queensland</i>
ARL	Australian Rugby League	KBE	Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations	KC	King's Counsel
ASIO	Australian Security Intelligence Organisation	LH	<i>Labour History</i>
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission	LLB	Bachelor of Laws
AWU	Australian Workers Union	MA	Master of Arts
BA	Bachelor of Arts	MBE	Member of the Order of the British Empire
BBC	British Broadcasting Commission	MC	Military Cross
BEM	British Empire Medal	MHJ	<i>Melbourne Historical Journal</i>
BHP	Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited		
BSc	Bachelor of Science		
CAE	College of Advanced Education		



## Abbreviations

MHR	Member of the House of Representatives	RAN	Royal Australian Navy
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly	Rev.	Reverend
MLC	Member of the Legislative Council	RFC	Royal Flying Corps
MP	Member of Parliament	RHSV	Royal Historical Society of Victoria
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation	RN	Royal Navy
NSW	New South Wales	RSL	Returned and Services League
NT	Northern Territory	SA	South Australia
NZ	New Zealand	SBS	Special Broadcasting Service
OAM	Medal of the Order of Australia	SEATO	South-East Asia Treaty Organisation
OBE	Officer of the Order of the British Empire	SP	starting price
OM	Order of Merit (Britain)	TAFE	Technical and Further Education
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy	UAP	United Australia Party
PNG	Papua New Guinea	UK	United Kingdom
POW	prisoner of war	UN	United Nations
PPRAHS	<i>Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Australian Historical Society</i>	USA	United States of America
PPTHRA	<i>Papers and Proceedings of the Tasmanian Historical Research Association</i>	VC	Victoria Cross
QC	Queen's Counsel	VHJ	<i>Victorian Historical Journal</i> (1975– )
Qld	Queensland	VHM	<i>Victorian Historical Magazine</i> (1911–74)
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force	WA	Western Australia
RAF	Royal Air Force	WAAAF	Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force
RAHS	Royal Australian Historical Society	WEA	Workers Educational Association
		WRAAC	Women's Royal Australian Army Corps
		YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
		YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association



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