

**DICTIONARY OF
WORLD
PLACE NAMES
DERIVED FROM BRITISH NAMES**

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*DICTIONARY OF WORLD
PLACE NAMES
DERIVED FROM BRITISH
NAMES*

Adrian Room

ROUTLEDGE
London and New York

First published in 1989 by
Routledge
11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 4EE
29 West 35th Street, New York NY 10001

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Typeset in 9/10pt Baskerville Linotron 202 by Input Typesetting Ltd, London
Printed in Great Britain by T. J. Press (Padstow) Ltd, Cornwall

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Room, Adrian

Dictionary of world place-names derived
from British names.

1. British place names. Etymology

I. Title

910'.01'4

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication Data

Room, Adrian

Dictionary of world place-names derived from
British names

Bibliography p

1 Gazetteers 2 English language—Etymology
Names—Dictionaries 3 Great Britain—Gazetteers
4 English language—Influence on foreign languages—
Dictionaries 5 Civilization Modern—20th century—
English influences—Dictionaries I Title
G103 5 R65 1989 910' 01'4 88-18192

ISBN 0-415-02811-6

**Sed nunc terminus Britanniae patet ('But now the bounds of
Britain open wide'), Tacitus, *Agricola***

INTRODUCTION

One has merely to glance at a map of the world to see that, especially in English-speaking countries, there is a liberal distribution of place-names of British origin. That is, not merely names such as Cape Town and Northwest Territories that are composed of English words, but names that are based on, and sometimes exactly the same as, British names. Moreover, it is not simply British place-names that have been 'exported' to other countries in this way, but personal names, too.

Let us take a brief survey of this world map. Across the Atlantic, we can see that many place-names in the United States and Canada are derived from British names in this manner. The names of states are conspicuous here, such as New York (from York), New Hampshire (Hampshire), Pennsylvania (Penn), West Virginia (Virginia, or 'Virgin'), Carolina (Charles), Georgia (George), and so on, while north of the border, we find the Canadian provinces of New Brunswick (Brunswick, the royal house), Nova Scotia ('New Scotland'), Alberta (Albert), British Columbia (Britain) and, in major natural features, Hudson Bay, Mackenzie River, Baffin Island, Foxe Basin, Beaufort Sea, M'Clintock Channel, and many more. And this is to say nothing of the names of major cities in North America, such as Boston, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, Birmingham, Halifax, Regina ('Queen'), Edmonton, Vancouver, Victoria, and many others.

This pattern is repeated in the newer 'New World'. In Australia, for instance, we instantly notice New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria, Adelaide, Sydney, Perth, Darwin and Melbourne, while New Zealand easily reveals such names as Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin ('Edinburgh'), Auckland, Nelson and Napier, with Stewart Island to the south. Then there is South Africa, or indeed Southern Africa, with Durban, East London, Port Elizabeth, Kimberley, Livingstone, and, further north, Lake Victoria, Lake Albert and Lake Edward. Nor was it all that long ago, historically speaking, that names such as Rhodesia, Salisbury, and Fort Victoria were familiar and in the news as much as Zimbabwe, Harare and Gwelo are today.

Elsewhere in the world, there are still many island territories with British names, such as the Falkland Islands, Gambier Islands, South Georgia, South Sandwich Islands, Pitcairn Island, New Caledonia, New Britain, New Ireland, Cook Islands, Society Islands and Prince Edward Islands.

Down in Antarctica, that unique and complex continent, names of British origin are almost embarrassingly prolific. We note Graham Land, Coats Land, Enderby Land, Princess Elizabeth Land, Queen Mary Land, George V Land, Victoria Land, Ross Sea, Prince Albert Mountains, Scott Coast, Beardmore Glacier, Cape Crozier, and many, many more. At the other end of the world, similarly, British names can be found without much difficulty inside the Arctic Circle, such as Scoresby Sound (in Greenland), George Land (Franz Josef Land), Herald Island (eastern Siberia), and the many islands and other features with British names in northern Canada.

Introduction

Nor should the rest of the world be overlooked, for there is Abbottabad in Pakistan, English Bazar in India, Wingate in Israel, Victoria in Hong Kong, Kingston in Jamaica, Londres in Argentina and, until recently, there was Port Arthur in China. (The Dictionary contains a few 'recept' names of this type.)

Thus despite the fact that the heady (and in many cases bloody) days of the British Empire are long past, there remain hundreds of place-names of British origin round the world to testify to the former influence of the English-speaking mother country and to the worldwide dissemination of the English language itself.

This new Dictionary thus aims to present a fairly wide selection of such names, and to give their origins, where they are known, as they mostly are, for Britain's colonial history is relatively recent and fairly well documented.

It should perhaps be stated here, at this point, that many names that *seem* to be of British origin are not in fact so. For this reason, many well-known names are absent from the pages that follow, and there will be no further mention, except incidentally, of Washington (the state), Lincoln (the mountain) or Nashville (the city), for example, all in the United States, for these names honour two American presidents and a Revolutionary officer, not Britons. Other apparent omissions, such as South Africa's Johannesburg, Australia's Tasmania, and Oceania's Caroline Islands will also not be represented, for they are the wrong nationalities (respectively Dutch for the first two, and Spanish for the third).

So it is on the British names pure and simple that we must concentrate and like all place-names, they will be found to be very much a creation of their time. That is, the sort of British names one finds will have been inspired by one (or more) of a number of motives, ranging from the patriotic to the political, and the religious to the military.

A very little history therefore cannot be avoided, for the earliest British place-names of a country will date from the time of its original colonisation and possibly even discovery.

Bearing in mind, therefore, that all countries with British names will have had indigenous names before the arrival of the British, and in many cases names given by other colonising peoples, such as the Dutch and the Spanish, we can present a simplified picture as follows for the six major lands involved: the United States, Canada, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Antarctica.

Seventeenth century

English settle in Virginia, USA (1607); Hudson Bay, Canada, entered by Hudson (1610); English settle in Massachusetts, USA (1620) and Virginia (1624); English settle in Maryland, USA (1634); Hudson's Bay Company formed (1670) to trade and find Northwest passage; English settle in Pennsylvania, USA (1681); West coast of Australia navigated by Dampier (1688)

Eighteenth century

Hudson Bay region and Newfoundland pass from French to English (1713); Cook visits New Zealand (1769), makes first landing in Australia (1770); American Revolution (1775-83), Declaration of Independence (1776); British occupy Cape, South Africa (from 1795)

Nineteenth century

Australia circumnavigated by Flinders (1801-3); Cape, South Africa, ceded to British by Dutch (1814); 50000 Britons emigrate to South Africa ('1820 Settlers');

Entire Australian continent claimed by British (1829); New Zealand colonised at Port Nicholson by New Zealand Company (1840); Expansion to American Midwest after gold discovered in California (1848); 2nd Maori War, New Zealand (1860); Dominion of Canada established (1867); British annexe South African republic (1877); 1st Boer War, South Africa (1880-1); 2nd Boer War, South Africa (1899-1902)

Twentieth century

Scott's 1st expedition to Antarctic (1902-4); Union of South Africa formed (1910); Mawson's land expeditions in Antarctica (1911-14, 1929-31); American Richard Byrd explores and maps Antarctic in 1930s and 1940s; by 1940 Britain, USA and Norway have own named territories in Antarctic; Commonwealth Transantarctic Expedition (1955-8); Zambia proclaimed a republic (1964), followed by Botswana (1966); Independence of Tuvalu (1978), Kiribati (1979), Vanuatu (1980); Zimbabwe proclaimed a republic (1980), Salisbury renamed (1982)

- The above basic outline contains several 'firsts', but is obviously not comprehensive in this respect, and does not include, for example, James Ross's discoveries in the Antarctic of the early 1840s, nor the achievement of the South Pole by Scott (but after Amundsen) in 1912. Even so, it does give an overview of the period and place of the various discoveries, settlements, annexations, conflicts and reorganisations that occurred in the main countries of the English-speaking world, and will thus serve as a guide to the introduction of British place-names in those countries, and to the reversal or abolition of those names (e.g. in Southern Africa) in recent times.

The kind of names that were given at any period will have depended, as mentioned, on the aspirations and credos of the colonists and settlers. It was not enough to colonise a country; it had to be done in a cause. Often as not the motive was a religious one, and moreover a Protestant or at any rate non-Catholic one, for it was the French and the Spanish who were the great introducers of Catholic names. There are exceptions, of course, but broadly speaking the British naming pattern was Protestant, even Puritan, and the famous 'Pilgrim Fathers' who founded the first permanent European settlement in North America (at Plymouth, New England, in 1620) were careful not to give 'saintly' names. It has to be said, however, that they did not give noticeably religious names, either, and one might have expected biblical names to have been bestowed. The same applies to the many Quakers who settled later in Pennsylvania, and in that state, too, biblical names are not common.

But just as the 'Catholic' names are conspicuous by their absence, so in this part of America are the 'royal' names, for the Puritans were hardly royalists! Again, there are exceptions, but such royal names as there are will usually have been given at a later date, and one of the most famous of them all, New York, honouring the Duke of York, was not given until 1664, after it had been captured by the English from the Dutch (who had called it New Amsterdam, in a rather stolid way). By this date, the monarchy had been restored (in the person of the Catholic-sympathising Charles II), and royal names were the fashion of the day.

This latter fact explains the wealth of royal names in Canada, where colonisation by the English occurred rather later than it did in America. In Canada,

Introduction

too, all the 'saintly' names will have been given by the French Roman Catholics, and can still be found prominently in Quebec and Newfoundland.

If it was the Puritans and the Quakers who were predominant in colonial America, it was the Church of England that played a similar influential role, although much later, in New Zealand. Hence such well-known names there as Canterbury and Christchurch. In Australia there had been a Scottish Presbyterian influence, especially in Tasmania, while in South Africa the Presbyterians and Nonconformists generally were also strong. (In the latter country the Presbyterians had much in common with the Dutch Reformed Church, and many of the new settlements there were named after local ministers of either church.)

Royal names can be found in reasonable representation in Australia (for example in the names Victoria and Queensland, relating to one and the same monarch), but to rather a lesser extent in New Zealand and South Africa, although the latter does have its King William's Town, and Port Elizabeth there, although not itself of royal origin, was formerly known as Port Rex. (For the story of this name, which is not quite straightforward, see its entry in the Dictionary.)

After religion and royalty, there next comes politics and statesmanship, taking in military heroes on the way. All English-speaking countries thus without exception contain many names based on those of 'great Britons', from prime ministers to colonial governors, and from admirals and generals to local leaders and administrators of all kinds. New Zealand is heavy on the 'heroes', and has many names familiar from the history books, such as Wellington, Clive, Nelson, Palmerston and Napier. This particular country was colonised at a time of considerable patriotic fervour, when the Indian Mutiny had occurred and when, rather earlier, there had been the still fresh memories of the Napoleonic victories of Trafalgar and Waterloo. The battle names themselves were not so much transferred as the names of those who had been victorious. Hence such names as those just mentioned.

The considerable Scottish contribution to British naming cannot be overlooked. The Scots were great pioneers and missionaries, even if not always in a strictly religious sense, so that many transferred Scottish names will be found among the more conventionally English. This is particularly so in Tasmania, as mentioned, and in New Zealand's South Island, where the Scottish Presbyterian names match the Anglican ones further to the north. The southern half of South Island thus has names such as Dunedin, Balclutha, Invercargill, and (on Stewart Island) Oban.

Another important source of names can be found in those of the original discoverers and explorers, especially in the more 'adventurous' or hazardous parts of the world, such as the polar regions. The Antarctic is thus almost a fifty-fifty blend of the royal and the reconnaissance, that is, of the men who first came here and the monarchs and their families that they honoured.

Some of the greatest explorers and discoverers were also the greatest namers, and James Cook must have given hundreds of names to the new places that he sighted and surveyed. (Sometimes, he seems to have been in such a hurry to press on his pioneer way that he failed to identify some features correctly, or simply noted an inlet or a bay without entering it.)

Cook was thus the man ultimately responsible for the naming of many familiar places in Australia and New Zealand, including Hawke Bay, Port Jackson (other-

wise Sydney Harbour), Botany Bay (which he initially noted as Stingray Bay) and, most significantly of all, New South Wales, as well as many island groups such as the Society Islands, New Hebrides, New Caledonia and Prince Edward Islands. One or two of his names have now been superseded by others, such as Davis Land, which is now known as Easter Island, and the Sandwich Islands, which are now better known as Hawaii. But many of his original names remain on the map, especially on the chart of the South Pacific, so that his epitaph there might be, like that of Christopher Wren before him, *Si monumentum requiris, circumspice*. His own name is preserved in that of New Zealand's highest mountain, Mount Cook, and also in the Cook Islands (South Pacific), the Cook Strait (between North and South Islands, New Zealand), Cooktown (Australia) and the Cook Inlet (Alaska); these representatively illustrating the worldwide range and scope of his travels.

The reader will encounter many other names in the Dictionary bestowed by Cook, as well as those given by other British explorers and namers, such as William Dampier, Francis Drake, Matthew Flinders, Arthur Phillip, John Smith and George Vancouver. (See their respective surnames in the main entries for examples of the creation, and for details about the less familiar among them.)

It will be noticed that for the larger landmasses, such as the continents of North America and Australia, and the southern portion of Africa, most of the British names are still to be found where they were originally planted on or near the coast. Many of these names are among the best known internationally, and include several cited at the beginning of this Introduction. The reason for this is obvious. Why go far inland when you lay out a new settlement? If conditions are favourable by the sea, preferably at the mouth of a river, then all-important communications will be favourable. Even in Europe this principle operates, so that unless a country is itself far inland and removed from the sea, its most important cities will be near the coast. This applies to a large number of capitals, and among those so situated are London, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Oslo, Stockholm, Helsinki, Lisbon, Rome, Athens and Istanbul. The former capital of Russia, Leningrad (then St Petersburg) is a port, and even Paris and Brussels are not too far from the sea. (It is a geographical mystery why Spain's capital should be inland Madrid, instead of coastland Barcelona or Málaga.)

The converse to this principle is thus broadly true, so that most of an English-speaking country's indigenous names will be in the hinterland: North America's Indian names, Australia's Aboriginal names, New Zealand's Maori names, and Southern Africa's African names.

It is perhaps rather surprising, in view of the worldwide dissemination and establishment of British-based names, that there are no major countries with a British name. Of the four chief English-speaking countries, America has a name that is probably of Italian origin (although the claim of Amerigo Vespucci as the source for the name has been challenged in recent years), Canada has an Indian name, Australia has a Latin name ('southern land') and New Zealand has effectively a Dutch name ('new sea land'), while South Africa's name is simply geographical. Even 'United States' is purely a title, rather than a name. This situation is all the more unexpected when one finds that names given by colonising countries apart from Britain have persisted for the lands colonised. Thus the Philippines remain named for the Spanish king Philip II, and Mauritius still

Introduction

bears the name of the Dutch prince Maurice of Orange (One can almost count Colombia here, named after Columbus, although he was Italian-born, if Spanish-serving.)

But the lack of any leading state with a British name is simply a matter of the breaking of colonial ties, and the achieving of independence, and until quite recently there was a country with a British name, Rhodesia (see the timechart above).

A word needs to be said about British place-names in Antarctica. The situation there is complex, because different countries have come to claim different sectors, and in the process of discovering and naming, by different countries, some features have come to be named (and even 'discovered') twice. This means that one country can carry out an Antarctic exploration of a region and duly chart it with its own names, while another country can subsequently chart more or less the same region and give it its names. In other cases, due to a genuine misunderstanding, one country can 'discover' and name a feature that had, unbeknown to it, already been discovered and named. There are other factors that complicate things, too, so that a misidentity may lead to a 'Land' actually being an 'Island', or a 'Coast' actually an 'Ice Shelf'. Although there have been strenuous efforts in recent years to sort out such difficulties, and to regularise and coordinate naming procedures in the Antarctic, discrepancies remain, inasmuch as there are still rival claims to different regions. Argentina, for example, has claimed the Antarctic Peninsula since 1942, and given her own names there, just as she still calls the Falkland Islands *Las Malvinas* (and in the 'Falklands War' of 1982 renamed Port Stanley, first as Puerto Argentino, then as Puerto Rivero). But the place-name commissions of the different claimant countries, especially Britain, Australia, New Zealand, France and Norway, have largely resolved their problems, and the British names in Antarctica, even if not always official, are sufficiently well established to feature in this Dictionary.

Purists or pedants – of which you, reader, are unlikely to be either – may object to one small category of names included in the Dictionary that are not, strictly speaking, British names at all. I refer to the so-called 'battle-names'. Of the six such names entered (see Appendix I, List 9, p. 203), four are of battles fought outside Britain. They are those of Aliwal (India), Blenheim (Germany), Camperdown (Holland) and Waterloo (Belgium). But although these are indeed not British names, they are of battles fought and won by the British (sometimes with the aid of allies), and as such have become 'adopted' British names, with the second and last now even found in Britain itself. (Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire, is a familiar mansion and estate to tourists and visitors to Britain, and London's Waterloo Bridge and Waterloo Station are known to anyone who has been to the capital, and even to many who have not.)

It is thus almost as if, in winning the battle, the British 'won' the name. And it is certainly true that all six names have been transferred to places elsewhere in the world by British settlers and colonists. (For details, see the names in the Dictionary.) I therefore feel that the inclusion of such names is justified, for although they were imported to Britain, they were also exported from Britain, so are in the right category as far as the Dictionary is concerned.

Readers who are interested in this particular phenomenon, that is, the import of names to Britain from elsewhere in the world, may like to know that the

category is very small. There is the curiosity of Baldock, imported (in now almost unrecognisable form) from Baghdad, and there are a few American names, such as California and New York, used mostly for isolated locations, and occurring as recent borrowings, but otherwise there are few such names to be found. (Battle names are perhaps the most familiar type, and for a rather fuller consideration of the process, readers may like to refer to an article of mine on the subject, published in the irregular 'Place Names' series in the *Geographical Magazine* for June 1987, p. 274.)

On the whole, however, it is the names of the battle-winners, not the battles themselves, that have been transferred to countries outside Britain, and as far as these particular four battles are concerned that will mean the names of Harry Smith (as in South Africa's Harrismith and Ladysmith), Marlborough (for the Battle of Blenheim), Duncan (for Camperdown) and the famous Wellington (for Waterloo).

Finally, something needs to be said about the actual form of the names that were transferred from Britain to other countries.

As mentioned, many of them were taken over 'neat', just as they were, whether place-name or family name (or even first name). At the same time, it must be remembered that the earliest such transferrals took place in Shakespearean times, when many of the names were spelt differently and when spelling itself was irregular, even capricious. This is not perhaps so evident in personal names, but in place-names it is frequent. One striking example is the name of Lexington, USA. This was transferred from the Nottinghamshire village now known as Laxton. But in the early seventeenth century it was known as Lexington (or some variant spelling of this), so that there is no actual corruption here, as might be supposed. This historical factor will account for many other differences between a New World version of a name and its original in the mother country. The same can also apply to pronunciations, so that the present American pronunciation of a name corresponds to the English one at the time of settlement. This often results in a difference between the present American pronunciation of a name and the English one. Compare the American way of saying 'Derby' with the English: the former rhymes with 'Kirby', the latter with 'Tarby'. (But in the case of Hartford, the American spelling has been altered to reflect the English pronunciation of 'Hertford'.) The mention of the name Hertford is a reminder that the place-names of the Midlands and East Anglia are particularly well represented in the United States (Birmingham, Warwick, Bedford, Cambridge, Boston, Stamford, to name just a few).

Where a name was not exported 'neat', it was frequently preceded by 'New' (as if 'reborn') or was given a suffix such as '-ton' or '-ville', the last mostly, but not exclusively, for transferred personal names (such as Canada's Drummondville). But 'Fort' and 'Port' were also popular prefix words, depending on the site and the purpose of the place, even though subsequently this first word was often dropped.

It goes without saying that the most popular names can be found in all kinds of varieties several times round the world, so that the basic 'George', for example, can turn up as Georgetown, St George, Georgia, and so on with further additions possible not only with 'New' and the other words mentioned but with 'North', 'South', and so on. *The Times Atlas of the World* (see Bibliography,

Introduction

p. 217) lists ten *lakes* named George alone.

The Dictionary, it should be noted, enters 'one-off' names in full, such as 'Fury and Hecla Strait', but for the more frequently found names, such as 'George', only the basic form of the name is usually given where a geographical term such as 'Lake' or 'Cape' normally accompanies it, or an administrative term such as 'County'.

The reader who is specially interested in the different categories of British place-name is recommended to consult Appendix I, pp. 196-207, where seventeen such categories are presented, together with brief analytical comments.

'British' names, it should be pointed out, means not just English and Scottish names, but Welsh and Irish. The last nationality is included because when all these names were first given, Ireland was itself a British colony: it was subdued by Cromwell after the rebellion of 1642 and then united legislatively with Great Britain in 1801 (as the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland), so that it was granted dominion status (as the Irish Free States) only in 1921. Northern Ireland is of course still part of the United Kingdom.

When deciding whether a 'nominee' (a person who gave his or her name to a place) is genuinely British or not, I have followed the principle that if his parentage was British, then he was, wherever he was born. On the whole, too, this means that a Briton is a Briton even if he emigrates as a child with his parents, and never returns to his native land. After all, his *name* is British, and that is what matters for our present purposes. Very occasionally, I have made a minor exception here; but always with a rider explaining why.

It will be seen from the entries that many names link up with many others, either for family reasons or simply because the name itself has been duplicated or multiplied. In other instances, a name turns up in different countries simply because its bearer did, and it was not unusual for a colonial governor or administrator to be appointed first to one country, then to another, and then even to a third or fourth. All such correspondences and interconnections are indicated by a simple cross-reference system, so that a name appearing in **bold** print in an entry will have its own entry in its appropriate alphabetical place.

Where a name does derive from a 'worthy' of some kind, I have always tried to give his dates and to explain who he was or what he did. Where dates are missing, it means that they were not readily obtainable. Otherwise, in general, the information is given as succinctly as possible, for there are over 1000 entries, and there is simply not the space to go into much detail.

For similar reasons the Bibliography (pp. 216-21) is likewise selective, as the introductory note to it explains.

And although the selection of names for the entries has itself had to be restricted, the reader will find that all the best-known ones are there, and perhaps a few lesser-known ones besides. Every entry tells its own British-based story, and the reader will soon build up a picture of the naming process, as it has occurred round the world over the past four centuries.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The few acknowledgments I have to make for help during the compilation of the Dictionary are none the less very real.

First, I would like to express my thanks to Dr G. Hattersley-Smith, Secretary of the Antarctic Place-Names Committee (Polar Regions Section, South American Department) at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London, who not only piloted me in the right direction for source books on Antarctic place-names but even kindly presented me with an original, unpublished document on the subject, which proved not only valuable but interesting in its own right. There cannot be many toponymists (place-name experts) employed by the Foreign Office for their speciality, but Dr Hattersley-Smith is one and I am pleased to have had the benefit of his professional advice.

Also in the world of place-names, I would like to thank Miss Aune Dunford, of the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names for British Official Use, who always efficiently and cheerfully (and promptly) answered the several queries I put to her over the months, and who enabled me to make the factual content of the Dictionary that much more accurate and reliable. Ever since I first took a close interest in place-names and their meanings, I have never ceased to thank my lucky stars that I came across the offices of the PCGN (as it is more conveniently known), whose members toil assiduously and devotedly for toponymical accuracy and consistency up in their fascinating premises over the august Royal Geographical Society's *domicile* in Kensington.

Third, I would like to give a special expression of thanks to Mrs Kate Musgrave, who kindly supplied me with much interesting private information about Midshipman Robert Pitcairn, who gave his name to Pitcairn Island. Robert Pitcairn's grandfather was a direct ancestor of Mrs Musgrave's husband, and the family tree supplied by Mrs Musgrave is conclusive in this respect, so that the reader can be assured that the entry for this particular place-name is as authentic and accurate as it could be!

Finally, I owe thanks to Mrs Elizabeth Murray, who is lucky enough to live on the doorstep of the British Library in London, and who kindly hunted down helpful titles there on my behalf, as well as pursuing other enquiries relating to 'colonial' names.

My acknowledgments are thus due to all four members of this quartet, who in their different ways have helped to make the present Dictionary a much better book than it would have been without them.

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Australian place-names derived from British personal names and titles

CONTENTS

Introduction	vii
Acknowledgments	xv
Maps	xvi-xvii
DICTIONARY	1
Appendix I : Categories of place-names	196
Appendix II : The naming process	208
Bibliography	216

A

Abbottabad (Pakistan)

The town, northeast of Rawalpindi, was founded in 1853 and named after General James Abbott (1807-1896), the first British deputy commissioner of the district of Hazara, annexed by the British in 1847. For his stand against the Sikhs and Afghans, Abbott received many awards and medals, culminating in a knighthood in 1894. In 1947, the town passed from India to Pakistan. '-abad' means 'town', as in the name Hyderabad. (Hyder is another name of Ali, son-in-law of the prophet Muhammad, or Mahomet.)

Abercorn (Swaziland)

The village, near Big Bend, was named after James Hamilton, 2nd Duke of Abercorn (1838-1913), who was a close associate of Cecil Rhodes, the founder of Rhodesia, and who became chairman of the British South Africa Company on its foundation in 1888. The Zambian town of Abercorn was also formerly named after him, until it was renamed (as Mbala) in 1968.

Aberdeen (USA, South Africa)

In Maryland, the town of Aberdeen was settled in about 1800 and was named after the Scottish city by settlers from there, while in South Dakota, the city of the same name was established in 1880 and was similarly named by Alexander Mitchell, the Scottish president of the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St Paul Railroad. Scottish emigrants also named Aberdeen, Missouri, and Aberdeen, Washington, after their native city (or possibly their native county, Aberdeenshire). In South Africa, the town of Aberdeen, Cape Province, was named after the birthplace of the

Rev. Andrew Murray, Scottish minister of the Dutch Reformed Church at the nearby town of Graaff-Reinet.

Abingdon (USA)

The town of Abingdon in southwest Virginia was named after the English town in Berkshire (now Oxfordshire), which was the home town of Mary Ball Washington, mother of George Washington. Some sources claim, however, that Abingdon was named for an English Lord Abingdon (his family name would have been Bertie), or that the name was transferred to Virginia from Abington, Pennsylvania. The latter town was the home of the legendary frontiersman Daniel Boone, whose English Quaker parents had ties with the English town. Hence the name in that state. Compare the next entry below.

Abington (USA)

The Massachusetts town, settled in 1668, was probably named for one or other of the villages of Great or Little Abington, Cambridgeshire, from which the settlers had come, unless the name is actually a spelling variation of **Abingdon**.

Acton (Canada, USA)

In Canada, the Ontario town of Acton was originally known as Adamsville; after early settlers there named Adams. In 1844, however, the name was changed to Acton after the Middlesex borough near London (now in London), and it was this same Acton that gave the name of the United States town in Massachusetts, which is itself in Middlesex County. In England, Acton was a centre of Puritan activity in Cromwell's time, and this doubtless served