AUSTRALIAN DICTIONARY OF BIOGRAPHY

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Nes-Smi

GENERAL EDITOR

GEOFFREY SERLE
This volume of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, containing 691 entries by 488 authors, is the fifth of six for the 1891-1939 section. The two volumes of the 1788-1850 section and the four of the 1851-1890 section were published from 1966 to 1976. The late Douglas Pike was general editor for volumes 1 to 5, Bede Nairn for volume 6, and Nairn and Geoffrey Serle for volumes 7 to 10. Nairn retired as joint general editor on 31 January 1984 and John Ritchie succeeded Serle on 1 March 1988. The chronological division was designed to simplify production, for more than 7200 entries will be included in volumes 1-12. (Volumes 1-2, for 1788-1850, had 1116 entries; volumes 3-6, for 1851-1890, 2053; and volumes 7-12 will include about 4060). The placing of each individual’s name in the appropriate section has been determined by when he/she did his/her most important work (*floruit*). An index will be published after the three sections are completed and volumes covering those whose *floruit* was after 1939 will follow in the 1990s.

The selection of names for inclusion required prolonged consultation. After quotas were estimated, working parties in each State and the armed services working party prepared provisional lists, which were widely circulated and carefully amended. Many of the names were obviously significant and worthy of inclusion as leaders in politics, business, the armed services, the professions, the arts, the labour movement, etc. Many others have been included as representatives of ethnic and social minorities and of a wide range of occupations, or as innovators, notorieties or eccentrics. Many had to be omitted through pressure of space or lack of material, and thereby joined the great mass whose members richly deserve a more honoured place; however, many thousands of these names, and information about them, have accumulated in the biographical register at the *Dictionary* headquarters in the Australian National University. A selection of 8100 of them was published in 1987 as *A Biographical Register 1788-1939*.

Most authors were nominated by working parties. The burden of writing has been shared almost equally by the staff of universities and other tertiary institutions and by a wide variety of other specialists.

The *Australian Dictionary of Biography* is a project based on consultation and cooperation. The Australian National University has borne the cost of the headquarters staff, of much research and of some special contingencies, while other Australian universities have supported the project in various ways. Its policies were originally determined by a national committee, composed mainly of representatives from the departments of history in each Australian university. In Canberra the editorial board has kept in touch with all these representatives, and with the working parties, librarians, archivists and other local experts, as well as overseas correspondents and research assistants in each Australian capital. With such varied support the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* can truly be called a national project.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks are due to Professor K. S. Inglis and Dr A. Barnard for their guidance as chairman and acting chairman of the editorial board and to Professor P. F. Bourke, director of the Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University, and Mr P. Grimshaw, business manager of the research school. Those who helped in planning the shape of the work have been mentioned in earlier volumes.

Within Australia the Dictionary is greatly indebted to many librarians and archivists in Canberra and in each State; to the secretaries of many historical and genealogical societies; to the Australian War Memorial, Australian National Gallery and Department of Veterans’ Affairs, in Canberra; to the registrars of probates in the various States, and of Supreme and Family Courts, whose generous co-operation has solved many problems; to various town and shire clerks; to the Royal Australasian College of Physicians, Sydney; to the State Rail and Urban Transit authorities, Sydney; and to the Australian Department of Defence for authenticating many details. Warm thanks for the free gift of their time and talents are due to all contributors and to all members of the editorial board and the working parties. For particular advice the Dictionary owes much to Brigadier M. Austin (deceased), B. Gandevia, Bernard Smith, F. B. Smith, John McPhee, and to the staff of the Petherick Room, National Library of Australia.

Essential assistance with birth, death and marriage certificates has been provided by the generous co-operation of registrars in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, Western Australia, the Northern Territory, the Australian Capital Territory and Norfolk Island; by the General Register Offices in Edinburgh and in London; by Bureaux of Vital Statistics in State Health departments in Massachusetts, Washington and Wisconsin, in the United States of America; by the registrar-general, Suva, Fiji; by the Ministry of Health, British Columbia, and the registrar-general, Ontario, Canada; by the master of the Supreme Court, Cape Town, and the director-general, Home Affairs, South Africa; by the registrar general, Georgetown, Guyana, West Indies; by the mayors of Belle Ile, Lyons, Marseilles and Signy l’Abbaye in France and of Noumea, New Caledonia; by the civil status officers, Bergamo, Bisceglie, Bologna, Florence, Livorno, Naples, Padua, Pontelongo, Rome, Siena and Trapani, Italy; and by the Royal Danish, South African and Federal Republic of Germany’s embassies, Canberra.

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The Dictionary’s founding chairman, Sir Keith Hancock, died on 13 August 1988. A tribute to him will appear in volume 12, which will complete the project over which he first presided.

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