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GENERAL EDITORS

Bede Nairn
Geoffrey Serle
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This volume of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, containing 672 entries by 465 authors, is the second of six for the 1891-1939 section. The two volumes of the 1788-1850 section and the four of the 1851-1890 section have already been published. The late Douglas Pike was general editor for volumes 1 to 5 and Bede Nairn for volume 6 and Nairn and Geoffrey Serle for volume 7. The chronological division was designed to simplify production, for more than 7000 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 4000 are planned for volumes 7-12). 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*). A general index volume will be prepared when the three sections are completed.

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, are accumulating in the biographical register at the *Dictionary* headquarters in the Australian National University.

Most authors were nominated by working parties. The burden of writing has been shared almost equally by university staff and by a wide variety of specialists in other fields.

The *Australian Dictionary of Biography* is a project based on consultation and co-operation. 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 the national committee, composed mainly of representatives from the departments of history in each Australian university. At 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.
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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, Department of Transport library and Department of Veterans’ Affairs, in Canberra; to the Metropolitan Water Sewerage and Drainage Board, Public Trustee, New South Wales Police Department, East Sydney Technical College, Australian Broadcasting Commission Archives, and Commercial Banking Co. of Sydney Ltd, in Sydney; to Australian National Railways, central division in Adelaide, the Public Service Board in Queensland, and the history section, Education Department, in Melbourne; to the registrars of probates, in the various States, and of Supreme and Family Courts, whose generous co-operation has solved many problems; and to the 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 national committee, editorial board, and the working parties. For particular advice the Dictionary owes much to M. Austin, Sir Stanley Burbury, Eileen Duncan, B. Gandevia, A. C. Gray, A. J. and Nancy Gray, G. McKeown, H. S. Williams, M. Shaw, Sir Harold Wyndham and Sir John Young.

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