
AUSTRALIAN DICTIONARY OF BIOGRAPHY

VOLUME 17 1981-1990

A-K



GENERAL EDITOR

DIANE LANGMORE

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PREFACE

Six hundred and seventy individuals with surnames from Abdullah to Kyle are included in Volume 17 of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. The first entry in the volume is George Henry Abdullah, an Aboriginal community leader. The last is Sir Wallace Kyle, air chief marshal and governor. Between them is a host of men and women from all walks of life who died in the years from 1981 to 1990. It is the first of two volumes for this period. Work has begun on the second volume (L-Z), which will complete the decade.

Volume 17 illustrates such vast topics in Australian history as immigration, accelerating industrialisation, urbanisation and suburbanisation, and war (World War II, Korea, Malaya and Vietnam). While other themes are also illuminated—material progress, increasing cultural maturity, conservative and progressive politics, conflict and harmony, loss of isolation—the emphasis of the biographies is on the individuals. The entries throw light on the complexity of the human situation, and on the greatness and the littleness of moral response and actual behaviour that this can evoke.

The longest-lived subjects of Volume 17 are two centenarians: Leslie Claude Hunkin, a public servant born in 1884, and Harry Jacobs, a musician born in 1888 who, immaculately dressed in bow-tie and tails, led an orchestra that played light classics before film screenings at the Palais Theatre, Melbourne. The briefest life is that of Barry Goldsmith (1946-84), a swimmer and an early AIDS victim. While a minority of the subjects in the volume were born in the late nineteenth century, most of those included lived their lives in step with the twentieth century, being born in its early decades, experiencing the Depression, often serving in World War II, and leading lives that reached fulfilment in the prosperous postwar decades.

The two volumes of the 1788-1850 section of the *ADB*, the four of the 1851-1890 section and the six of the 1891-1939 section were published between 1966 and 1990. Volumes 13-16, covering the 1940-1980 section, were published in 1993-2002. Douglas Pike was editor for Volumes 1 to 5, Bede Nairn for Volume 6, Nairn and Geoffrey Serle for Volumes 7 to 10, Serle for Volume 11, and John Ritchie for Volumes 12 to 15 and, with Diane Langmore, Volume 16. The chronological division was designed to simplify production. In Volumes 1-12 the placing of each individual's name was determined by when he/she did his/her most important work (*floruit*). In contrast, the 1940-1980 and the 1981-1990 sections include only individuals who died in this period. The 'date of death' principle will be maintained in future volumes. An Index to Volumes 1-12 was published in 1991 and a *Supplement* of 'missing persons' in 2004.

In 2006 the *ADB Online* was launched. It is a free, illustrated and searchable electronic database containing the articles on all 11 244 individuals included in the *ADB*. Entries from Volume 17 will be added to it in 2008.

The choice of subjects for inclusion in this volume required prolonged consultation. After quotas were estimated, working parties in each State together with the Armed Services and Commonwealth working parties prepared provisional lists that were widely circulated and carefully amended. Many individuals were obviously significant and worthy of inclusion as leaders in politics, business, the armed services, the church, the professions, the arts and the labour movement. Some have been included as representatives of ethnic and social minorities, and of a wide range of occupations; others have found a place as innovators, notoriety or eccentrics. As in previous

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volumes a number have had to be omitted through pressure of space or lack of material. Thousands of these names, and information about them, have been gathered in the biographical register at the *ADB*'s headquarters at the Australian National University.

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

The *ADB* is a collaborative project based on consultation and co-operation. The Research School of Social Sciences at the ANU has borne the cost of the headquarters staff, of much research and of occasional special contingencies, while other Australian universities have supported the project in numerous ways. The *ADB*'s editorial board, comprising distinguished historians and other academics, determines policy. The board and the staff keep in touch with historians at many universities, and with working parties, librarians, archivists and other local experts, as well as with research assistants in each Australian capital city and correspondents abroad. With such widespread support, the *ADB* is truly a national project.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Australian Dictionary of Biography is a program fully supported by the Research School of Social Sciences at the Australian National University. Special thanks are due to the vice-chancellor, Professor Ian Chubb, to Professor Frank Jackson and Professor Rod Rhodes, retired and current directors of the RASS, and to Professor Jill Roe and Professor Tom Griffiths, as successive chairs of the editorial board. Those who helped in planning the shape of the work have been acknowledged in earlier volumes.

Within Australia the ADB is indebted to many librarians and archivists, schools, colleges, universities, institutes, historical and genealogical societies, and numerous other organisations; to the National Library of Australia, the Australian War Memorial, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and the National Archives of Australia; to the archives and public records offices in the various States and Territories, and to registrars of probates and of the Supreme and Family courts, whose co-operation has solved many problems; to various town and shire clerks; to the Australian Department of Defence and State education departments.

Other national institutions that have assisted our research include the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, the Australian Medical Association, the Australian Red Cross, the Australian Psychological Society, the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, the Australasian section of the International College of Dentists, the Royal Life Saving Society, the Australian College of Theology, the Australian College of Education, the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, the Australian Institute of International Affairs, the Institute of Public Administration Australia, the Australian Institute of Librarians, the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering, the Australian Society of Veterinary Scientists, the Society of Automotive Engineers Australasia, the Australian Speleological Federation, the Australian Music Examinations Board, the National Trust of Australia, the Fellowship of Australian Composers, the Australian Writers' Guild, the Australian Film Institute, Chartered Secretaries Australia, CPA Australia, the Reserve Bank of Australia, the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, Westpac, the Keep Australia Beautiful Council and the Sport Australia Hall of Fame.

The ADB is also indebted to the Royal Humane Society of New South Wales, the Air Ambulance Service of New South Wales, the Sydney Water Corporation, the Sydney Opera House, the Clarinet Society of Sydney, the Children's Hospital, Westmead, the Sir Moses Montefiore Jewish Home, Hunters Hill, the Coogee Surf Lifesaving Club, all in Sydney, and to the Dubbo Museum and Historical Centre, New South Wales; to the Royal Commonwealth Society (Victoria), the Royal Society of Victoria, the Royal Melbourne Zoological Gardens, the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, the United Grand Lodge of Victoria, and the Rotary Club of Aspendale, all in Melbourne, and History House, Glenelg, Victoria; to the Queensland Clarinet and Saxophone Society, Brisbane, and the Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame, Longreach, Queensland; and to the Berndt Museum of Anthropology, Perth.

Warm thanks for the free gift of their time and talents are due to contributors, to members of the editorial board and to the working parties. For particular advice the ADB owes much to Matthew Ciolek, Bob Douglas, Bill Gammage, Ian Hancock, Ken Inglis, Elisabeth Lebensaft, John Molony, Hank Nelson and F. B. Smith.

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The ADB deeply regrets the deaths of such notable contributors as Patsy Adam-Smith, N. W. Archbold, Allan Ashbolt, H. D. Attwood, D. W. A. Baker, Peter Balmford, Geoffrey Barnes, John Behr, A. L. Bennett, J. H. W. Birrell, Andrew Bisset, John B. Blanden, Keith Macrae Bowden, F. Maxwell Bradshaw, Cecil J. Broome, Rodger S. Brown, Ken Buckley, K. J. Cable, A. E. Cahill, Frank Callaway, Margaret Carnegie, L. T. Carron, Alex C. Castles, C. B. Christesen, Nina Christesen, Beryl Cigler, Eric G. Clancy, Axel Clark, Joan Clarke, K. W. Cleland, James H. Coleman, Gordon D. Combe, Margaret H. Connah, W. F. Connell, Frank Cranston, W. R. Crocker, C. J. Cummins, Greg Curnow, W. J. Cuthill, Alison M. Dolling, Austin Dowling, Ian Downs, Sophie C. Ducker, Mary Durack, Robin Eaden, V. A. Edgeloe, David F. Elder, Ann Elias, Ronald Elmslie, R. Else-Mitchell, Susan E. Emilsen, Frank Engel, Lloyd Evans, Kevin Fahy, Frank Farrell, Marcus de Laune Faunce, H. A. Finlay, Philippa L. Fletcher, Alan Fraser, Eric L. French, Bryan Gandevia, R. O. Giles, Aline Gillespie, Lyall Gillespie, Douglas Gordon, Noel Goss, Donald Grant, David Griffin, C. M. Gurner, J. P. Haldane-Stevenson, Rupert Hamer, Ralph Harry, A. Heatley, Ursula Hoff, Vic Honour, K. A. R. Horn, J. C. Horner, Patricia Horner, W. M. Horton, Keith Issacs, Barbara James, Alex Jelinek,

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The ADB expresses its deep appreciation of generous contributions of the late Mrs Caroline Simpson and the Myer Foundation, Melbourne, which helped in the production of this volume.

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THE ADB'S SECOND GENERAL EDITOR

Bede Nairn (1917-2006) was born on 6 August 1917 at Turill, near Mudgee, New South Wales, youngest of six children of Robert John (Jack) Nairn, labourer, and his wife Rose Ann, née Hopkins. He was baptised Noel Bede but was known by his second Christian name—reputedly his parents' intention to name him Lloyd George had been foiled by the officiating priest. In 1923 the Nairns moved to Sydney where Jack worked as a council watchman and cleaner and the family lived in Bathurst Street. 'We were still poor, damned poor', Bede later said, but 'one step up from real poverty'; Rose probably financed the piano she purchased and Bede's music lessons by taking in boarders. Educated at St John's Poor School, in Kent Street, and by the Christian Brothers at St Mary's Cathedral School, after completing the Intermediate certificate (1934) he took a job with the New South Wales Electoral Office. His poor eyesight meant that he wore glasses for the rest of his life and was rejected for service in World War II. While studying for matriculation part time he worked as a clerk at the Sydney Technical College; later he was an evening student at the University of Sydney (BA Hons 1945; MA 1955). He married Jean Hayward on Australia Day 1943 at St Mary's Cathedral.

In 1948 Nairn taught at the Sydney Technical College, Ultimo, then from 1949 lectured in history at the newly founded New South Wales University of Technology (later University of New South Wales). He became senior lecturer and head of the school of history at UNSW in 1956 and in 1961 associate professor of history. In 1957, on a Rockefeller grant, he went with the family to Balliol College, Oxford, England, where he researched British trade unions. From 1959 to 1976 he was a trustee (councillor) of the Public (State) Library of New South Wales and in 1971-82 represented it on the New South Wales Archives Authority.

An influential figure in the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History from its foundation in 1961, Nairn was a member of its executive and of the editorial board of *Labour History*. In Gerry Walsh's words, 'he wrote history according to the evidence and not according to an ideology: his canons were integrity and common sense'. In 1963 his article 'Writing Australian History' in the journal *Manna* was both an insightful review of Volume 1 of Manning Clark's *History of Australia* and a refutation of attacks by critics such as Malcolm Ellis; it was praised in *The Times* of London as 'one of the first great essays in historical criticism in Australia'. With G. J. Abbott, Nairn co-edited *Economic Growth of Australia 1788-1921* (1969). His groundbreaking *Civilising Capitalism: The Labor Movement in NSW 1870-1900* (1973) stressed, as John Merritt has written, 'the pragmatic reform agendas of men and women seeking independence and security within a capitalist society'. He followed this in 1986 with *The Big Fella*, a biography of Jack Lang and an account of the Labor Party in New South Wales to 1949.

In 1962 Nairn had become chairman of the New South Wales working party of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. In 1965 he moved to Canberra to join the ADB staff at the Australian National University. When Douglas Pike fell ill in 1973 Nairn became ADB general editor for volume 6. In a significantly harmonious partnership, he and Geoffrey Serle were joint general editors for Volumes 7 to 10.

Warm and approachable as leader of the ADB team in Canberra, Nairn had a firm commitment to continuing the high standards set by Pike. A fine administrator,

sensitive to human frailties and fiercely devoted to the project, Nairn consolidated the dictionary's achievements. He was a skilful editor, as adept at cutting a superfluous phrase as in summarising a wordy paragraph. His own writing was clear and graceful (with occasionally a Beethovenian deliberate discord). He retired as general editor in 1984. Among the most notable of the eighty *ADB* entries he wrote himself are those on Sir John Robertson, Jack Lang, Jack Beasley and Chris Watson, politicians, Frank Dickson, trade unionist, Archie Jackson and Victor Trumper, cricketers, and Jimmie and 'Darby' Munro, jockeys.

Nairn had joined the Royal Australian Historical Society in 1964, and was elected a fellow in 1987. In the society's *Journal* he chose to publish major articles such as 'The Political Mastery of Sir Henry Parkes' (March 1967). His last publication in the *JRAHS* was 'The Governor, the Bushranger and the Premier' (December 2000). Throughout his career he supported young scholars, and was much in demand as a sympathetic examiner, and a generous adviser on manuscripts. He had a world-wide circle of friends and correspondents. In 1988 he was appointed AO for service to education as an historian and a biographer. The History Council of New South Wales presented a citation to him in 2000 in recognition of his contribution to Australian biography and history.

A tall, gentle man, with a neat moustache and a good head of hair, Nairn spoke softly but held his opinions firmly. His Catholic faith was a lifelong commitment. Politics were also an abiding interest—he had joined the Australian Labor Party at the age of 16 and though he ceased his membership when he moved to Canberra, he remained strongly committed to the party and scornful of the failings of 'the conservatives' who opposed it. He was a devoted and loving family man. Nairn combined a keen interest in philosophy and religion with a passion for sport and music. He had an enduring love for Beethoven's piano works. A good cricketer in his youth, he played regularly before moving to Canberra, and occasionally after. He was a combative New South Wales patriot in sport (and in other matters as well) and both a practical and theoretical devotee of horse-racing, which he saw as a metaphor for life. Nairn died in Canberra on 21 April 2006 and after a Requiem Mass was buried in Gungahlin Lawn Cemetery. His wife, their three sons and three daughters, seventeen grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren survived him; he was also close to his niece who lived in Canberra.

Rugby League had been an abiding enthusiasm. South Sydney was his team and his last entry for the *ADB* was an article on the 'Little Master' Clive Churchill; it appears in this volume. For Bede Nairn, as for his colleagues and friends Pike, Serle and Ritchie, it can be said: for his memorial, turn these pages.

Chris Cunneen

THE ADB'S FOURTH GENERAL EDITOR

John Ritchie (1941-2006), son of John and Evelyn Ritchie, was born on 4 April 1941 in East Melbourne and educated at Northcote High School and Trinity College, University of Melbourne (BA Hons). He was a middle distance runner of some distinction, once competing against the great athlete Herb Elliott. After graduating with honours in history, he obtained a Dip.Ed. and then in 1964 became a teaching fellow at Monash University. When he had completed a Ph.D. at the Australian National University, Manning Clark appointed him to a lectureship in history in 1969. On 20 December that year he married Joan McDermott.

Ritchie became a legendary teacher, first in British history. Then for many years he taught first-year students a survey course in Australian history that for scores of them became the foundation of their later knowledge, even through to doctoral level. From the 1970s he was a key member of the team of teachers of Australian history that flourished at the ANU around Manning Clark and included Don Baker, Bob Gollan, Barbara Penny, Eric Fry, Ian Hancock, John Merritt and John Molony. They were inspiring times and the ANU's history department became a leader in the field.

Ritchie, attired in his old university gown, gave meticulously prepared lectures to an ever growing number of students. His lectures were a model of presentation. Structure and the development of an argument emerged through a flowing narrative, which became a form of high entertainment in itself. In that way he attracted a multitude of students to the discipline of history. His tutorials were tightly controlled exercises designed to encourage the first steps in the systematic use of primary sources. The students' essays, rigorously marked both as to content and structure, were employed by Ritchie not merely to develop their knowledge of the subject but also to ensure that they carried into later life a conviction that to write English with clarity, correct spelling, proper punctuation and a sense of direction was a hallmark of an educated person. Later-year teachers only had to look at the bibliography in an essay to recognise Ritchie's share in the making of the student. He ensured that students went to their sources and made a proper record of their use.

Convinced that a sense of place was fundamental to the study of history, Ritchie took great pains to organise for his students field trips to Sydney, the 'Macquarie towns' and Victoria's north-east. He also played a major role in offering weekend residential study sessions for teachers and pupils from local schools and the outlying country areas. The university, as well as his department, benefited from a subsequent growth in enrolments.

During the twenty years Ritchie gave to teaching he did not neglect his obligation to research and write. He first turned to the material of his Ph.D., from which two notable publications were drawn: *Punishment and Profit* (1970) and *The Evidence to the Bigge Reports* (1971). A popular history, *Australia as Once We Were*, followed in 1975. Enriched by several years of thought and research, some of it on sabbatical leave in the British Isles, his masterly work, *Lachlan Macquarie: A Biography*, appeared in 1986. He wrote the introduction to *A Charge of Mutiny* (1988). During those years Ritchie successfully edited the journal *Labour History* and helped thereby to establish it on a national footing as a scholarly publication. He made a wide contribution to the life of the university from 1971 to 1975 as deputy warden of Burton Hall and became acting warden in 1976. He undertook the responsible duties of acting dean

of the Faculty of Arts in 1986 and 1987 and remained mindful that his proper function was to serve the faculty rather than control it.

In the 1980s Ritchie taught a stimulating fourth-year honours course in the theory and practice of biography. This activity ceased when, in 1988, he was appointed a professorial fellow (professor 1992) in the Research School of Social Sciences and general editor of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, in succession to Geoffrey Serle. His experience as an author and editor had equipped him admirably for this task, but nothing could have prepared him for the rigours of a position that had contributed to the ill health of the three previous editors. Ritchie threw himself totally into the seemingly endless grind of seeing thousands of short biographies through the process of their development from draft manuscripts to polished entries in the *ADB*. By 2000 he had seen Serle's Volume 11 through the press and edited Volumes 12 to 15. He co-edited Volume 16 with Di Langmore.

After some years at the ADB Ritchie had decided to cease working on weekends, and in whatever spare time he could muster he researched and wrote *The Wentworths, Father and Son* (1997). The volume dealt thoroughly with the father, Darcy Wentworth, but was able to take the son, William Charles, only through his formative years and then touch lightly on the vast contribution to colonial Australia made by that lion of our early history. Volume 2 of this monumental work had not progressed far when, in 2001, Ritchie was forced to lay down his pen after a stroke. No man had come to know W. C. Wentworth as Ritchie had done and Wentworth stood fair to be highly honoured by his biographer.

Ritchie was a fellow of the Australian Academy of Humanities, the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia and the Royal Historical Society, and an honorary fellow of the Royal Australian Historical Society. Retiring in 2002, he was appointed AO that year and emeritus professor, ANU, in 2003. He died on 10 May 2006 at his home in Aranda, Canberra, and, after a Requiem Mass, was cremated.

Throughout his life John Ritchie was not one to play for popularity among his peers and even less towards those above him. Thus he stuck by his convictions and uttered them without fear. A man with a generally conservative outlook, he never cherished the past for its own sake or rejected its values when the prevailing wind blew against them. In his devotion to work and to what he saw as his duty, he spared neither himself nor others. A lover of good food and fine wine, of the opera and ballet, of literature (above all Dickens), and a creator rather than a teller of jokes, Ritchie was loyal to his God, to his friends, to his country and to his football club, Carlton. Before all else Ritchie preserved his private life in the sanctuary of his home. There, with his beloved wife and son, Joan and Christopher, John Ritchie, editor, historian and genuine Australian, lived out the roles he truly held dear on earth: those of husband and father.

John Molony