

10

Australian Historians Networking, 1914–1973

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The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines networking as ‘the action or process of making use of a network of people for the exchange of information, etc., or for professional or other advantage’.² Although recently prominent in management theory, the art of networking has been practised over many centuries in many societies, but its role in the Australian academic community has been little explored. This essay represents a preliminary excursion into the field, raising questions that more systematic researchers may follow in time, and drawing unashamedly on the resources of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Beginning on the eve of the First World War, the essay is bounded by the formation of the Australian Historical Association in 1973, at which date the profession provided itself with

1 This essay is a lightly edited version of the paper prepared by Geoffrey Bolton for the ‘Workshop on Biographies and Autobiographies of Historians’ held at The Australian National University in July 2015. Professor Bolton had intended to make further revisions, which included adding some analysis of the social origins of the Australian historians who participated in the networks he had defined. In all essential respects, however, we believe that the essay as presented here would have met with his approval, and we are very grateful to Carol Bolton for giving permission to make the modest editorial changes that we have incorporated.

For biographical information and insights, see Stuart Macintyre, Lenore Layman and Jenny Gregory, eds, *A Historian for all Seasons: Essays for Geoffrey Bolton* (Melbourne: Monash University Publishing, 2017).

2 *Oxford English Dictionary*, www.oed.com/view/Entry/235272?redirectedFrom=networking#eid.

a formal structure for the creation and nurturing of networks that would benefit the scholarly advancement of individuals and the coherence of the discipline as a whole.

By 1914, each of the Australian states had established a university in its capital city, and all had made some provision for the teaching of modern history. Melbourne at its foundation in 1856 included modern history among the disciplinary responsibilities of one of its first foundation professors, the protean W.E. Hearn (1826–1922).³ When Hearn became dean of law in 1879, he was followed by John Elkington (1841–88) as professor of history and political economy with tenure for life.⁴ An entertaining lecturer but a cantankerous colleague, Elkington was no dynamo. When a royal commission in 1903 inquired about his research, he replied disarmingly: ‘I have work in hand, but I have not committed myself to anything very extensive in book form so far.’⁵ After Elkington was persuaded to retire in 1913, he was succeeded by Ernest Scott (1867–1939), who although lacking a university degree of any kind possessed a convincing record of publication, largely in the field of European maritime exploration in eastern Australia and the Pacific.⁶ He would prove a much more energetic networker than Elkington.

At the University of Sydney, the standing of modern history was assured in 1889 when the discipline became one of the chairs created by the Challis bequest, although at first it was advertised at a lower salary than the others, and was only increased when no credible applicants came forward. The chair was awarded in 1891 to the 26-year-old G. Arnold Wood

3 Most of the individuals mentioned in this chapter have entries in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Readers are also referred to Stuart Macintyre and Julian Thomas, eds, *The Discovery of Australian History, 1890–1939* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1995), which contains separate chapters on several of the *dramatis personae*.

4 Geoffrey Blainey, *A Centenary History of the University of Melbourne* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1957).

5 Quoted in Norman Harper, ‘Elkington, John Simeon (1841–1922)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography (ADB)*, National Centre of Biography, The Australian National University, adb.anu.edu.au/biography/elkington-john-simeon-6100/text10451, published first in hardcopy 1981 (accessed 19 December 2015). These years in the life of the Melbourne history department are recounted by Richard Sellick, ‘Empires and Empiricism: The Teaching of History at the University of Melbourne, 1855–1936’, in Fay Anderson and Stuart Macintyre, eds, *The Life of the Past: The Discipline of History at the University of Melbourne, 1855–2005* (Melbourne: Department of History, University of Melbourne, 2005), 3–38.

6 Stuart Macintyre, *A History for a Nation: Ernest Scott and the Making of Australian History* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1994). Scott’s works included *Terre Napoleon: A History of French Explorations and Projects in Australia* (London: Methuen, 1910); *Laperouse* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1912); and *The Life of Captain Matthew Flinders, R.N.* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1914).

(1856–1928).⁷ He was to be a significant influence. Appointees at other Australian universities, most of them equally youthful, were expected to combine the teaching of history with other disciplines. Thus the University of Tasmania in 1893 appointed the 25-year-old William Jethro Brown (1868–1930) as one of its three foundation professors with responsibility for history and law, followed in 1906 by Robert Dunbabin (1869–1949) as lecturer in history and classics.⁸ George Henderson (1870–1944), at the age of 32, became professor of history and English language at the University of Adelaide in 1902.⁹ The two newest universities, Queensland (1911) and Western Australia (1913), made foundation appointments in the field. The University of Queensland appointed the 27-year-old Edward Shann (1872–1935) to a lectureship in 1911, but by 1913 he was poached as professor of economics and history by the University of Western Australia.¹⁰ Queensland then appointed two lecturers, Henry Alcock (1886–1947) and Alexander Melbourne (1888–1943). Both were still in their 20s, but Alcock was to be the senior; he had graduated from Oxford with first-class honours, whereas Melbourne was entirely Australian-educated.¹¹

By 1914, there were enough academic historians in Australian universities to call for some structured means of professional communication, but they were still too few to support a dedicated disciplinary association. A convenient umbrella existed in the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science.¹² Established in 1888, largely on the initiative of the University of Sydney mineralogist and chemist Archibald Liversidge (1846–1927), the association conducted congresses at different cities in Australia and New Zealand every year or two, and soon established itself as a valued meeting place for the exchange of scholarly ideas as well

7 R.M. Crawford, *A Bit of a Rebel: The Life and Work of George Arnold Wood* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1975), 108; see also John A. Moses, *Prussian-German Militarism 1914–18 in Australian Perspective: The Thought of George Arnold Wood* (Bern: P. Lang, 2001).

8 Alison Alexander, 'History', in Alison Alexander, ed., *The Companion to Tasmanian History* (Hobart: Centre for Tasmanian Historical Studies, University of Tasmania, 2005), www.utas.edu.au/library/companion_to_tasmanian_history/H/History.htm.

9 Tamson Pietsch, 'Imperium and Libertas: G.C. Henderson and "Colonial Historical Research" at Adelaide', in Wilfrid Prest, ed., *Pasts Present: History at Australia's Third University* (Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 2014), 77–85.

10 C.B. Schedvin and J.E. Carr, 'Edward Shann: A Radical Liberal Before his Time', in Macintyre and Thomas, *The Discovery of Australian History*, 55.

11 Geoffrey Bolton, 'A.C.V. Melbourne: Prophet without Honour', in Macintyre and Thomas, *The Discovery of Australian History*, 111, 114.

12 The association changed its name to Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science (ANZAAS) in 1930.

as outreach to a wider public.¹³ The association in its early decades was a broad church, accommodating many subjects from the social sciences and, even for a time, the humanities. Geography was a foundation participant, forming Section E, and in those years of fluid boundaries between disciplines it was easy for historians to take part in its proceedings. By the years preceding the First World War, the association was providing historians with a pulpit for expounding their ideas; at the 1911 Sydney congress, for example, Henderson was able to exhort his colleagues to use Australian materials as a means of training their students in research skills.¹⁴ Eventually, in 1928, History was to take over Section E, leaving Geography and Oceanography to re-establish themselves further down the alphabet as Section P.¹⁵

Even with the contacts provided by Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science (ANZAAS), the number of historians at Australian universities was still limited, and their teaching responsibilities so demanding that the discipline could benefit from the stimulus of ideas imported from a wider world. At that time, the United Kingdom was the predominant source of such ideas, and the universities of Oxford and Cambridge were seen as the intellectual powerhouses. It was perhaps an unforeseen result of G. Arnold Wood's 37 years in the Sydney chair that Balliol College, Oxford, was to become for several decades a highly significant influence on many historians in Australia.

Balliol was one of the oldest colleges at Oxford, founded in 1263 by the widow of a nobleman with estates in Scotland and the north of England as penance for her husband's role in the highway robbery of the Bishop of Durham's treasury.¹⁶ After some centuries of mediocrity, enlivened at intervals by the production of alumni such as Adam Smith, Balliol came to the fore in the second half of the nineteenth century in the wake of reforms at Oxford University. These confirmed the arrangements by which the university served as the examining body that awarded degrees, but in its constituent colleges undergraduates lived communally and received most or all of their tuition. The BA in modern history took three years, a preliminary first year followed by six terms without written

13 Roy MacLeod, ed., *The Commonwealth of Science: ANZAAS and the Scientific Enterprise in Australia, 1888–1988* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1988), ch. 1.

14 Elizabeth Kwan, 'G.C. Henderson: Advocate of "Systematic and Scientific" Research in Australian History', in Macintyre and Thomas, *The Discovery of Australian History*, 37.

15 MacLeod, *The Commonwealth of Science*, 365–6.

16 John Jones, *Balliol College: A History, 1263–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 2–3.

examinations until a week-long marathon at their conclusion. Graduates from other universities in the United Kingdom, the United States or the British Empire were excused the preliminary first year. A compulsory ingredient of the course for nearly a century was the study of a sequence of mediaeval charters, edited by Bishop William Stubbs (1872) and tracing the development of early English constitutional history; it became an influential model for the use of documents in undergraduate teaching.

Balliol had never lost its original connection with Scotland and the north of England, and under a notable Master, Benjamin Jowett (1870–93), and his successors, the college extended its outreach. If some Oxford colleges seemed like sheltered workshops for the privileged classes, Balliol placed its emphasis on intellectual excellence: the hallmark of a Balliol man, it was said, was his tranquil consciousness of effortless superiority. But it was not a socially snobbish college. Balliol, in Jim Davidson's words, 'had the reputation of requiring ability from its entrants rather than good connections. It led the way in taking Indians and later Africans'.¹⁷ For Australians and other 'colonials', Balliol provided a more hospitable environment than most. It was not surprising that in the heyday of the British Empire, Balliol was well to the fore in producing Imperial statesmen such as Lord Milner and Lord Curzon, nor that when the South African millionaire Alfred Beit endowed a chair of imperial and Commonwealth history at Oxford it was located at Balliol.

But Balliol's sense of imperial mission was tempered by a strong sense of social conscience. This went beyond a belief in the civilising and humanitarian missions of Empire to an abiding concern with issues of inequality and poverty. The young G. Arnold Wood, who came up to Balliol in 1885, was remembered by his tutors as 'dyed in the wool in Puritan Nonconformity, Cobdenism, Gladstonian Liberalism, the humanitarian ideals of John Bright and the political philosophy of John Morley'.¹⁸ Concern for Empire could tilt into anti-imperialism, and Wood famously took a lot of criticism in Sydney for his opposition to the South African war of 1899–1902. His values had been nurtured at Balliol and he integrated them into his teaching in Australia.

17 Jim Davidson, *A Three-Cornered Life: The Historian WK Hancock* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2010), 50.

18 Crawford, 'A Bit of a Rebel', 1.

It was not surprising that when Wood's teaching produced a promising history graduate in James Fawthrop Bruce (1888–1978), who sought further study in Britain, he directed the young man to Oxford, and specifically to Balliol College, but the decision was not based merely on collegial loyalty. Balliol had built up one of the strongest and longest-lasting teams of history tutors of any college in Oxford. Foremost among them was Arthur Lionel Smith (1850–1924), tutor from 1882, dean from 1907 and master from 1916 until his death in 1924. A.L. Smith was a firm upholder of archival research as the foundation for sound historical writing, and he combined this approach with an insistence on the academic's responsibility for outreach into the wider community. He was a role model for many of his students. No doubt it helped that he was among the first generation of Oxford dons who were permitted to marry, and of his nine children, seven were daughters.¹⁹ The Smiths were a hospitable couple who frequently invited undergraduates to their house, especially those from overseas. One daughter married the Australian medical researcher who later became Sir Hugh Cairns. The young Australians who went to Balliol remembered Smith with respect and affection.²⁰

James Bruce returned from Balliol to Sydney in 1915 to take up an appointment as lecturer and deputy to Wood (associate professor from 1924).²¹ One of his strengths was in the history of Renaissance Italy, where his teaching stimulated, among others, the young Max Crawford (1906–91), who, together with Wood's son F.L.W. (Fred) Wood (1903–89), was among the Sydney graduates to find their way to Balliol in the 1920s. An earlier example of the Sydney–Balliol axis was Hessel Duncan Hall (1891–1976). After taking a master's degree at Sydney, Hall studied under A.L. Smith between 1915 and 1918, and wrote a thesis that became his first publication on *The British Commonwealth of Nations* (1920). Oxford's only postgraduate degree at that time was the Bachelor of Letters, while the newfangled doctorate of philosophy arrived a few years later. But Duncan Hall, after working in adult education in England for a few years, failed to find secure academic employment in Australia and from 1926 he lived and worked overseas, producing in retirement a massive

19 Jones, *Balliol College*, 235.

20 See, for instance, his influence on Keith Hancock in Davidson, *A Three-Cornered Life*, 52–3.

21 B.H. Fletcher, 'Founding a Tradition: G.A. Wood and J.F. Bruce, 1891–1930', in B. Caine, B. Fletcher, M. Miller, R. Pesman and D. Schreuder, eds, *History at Sydney: Centenary Reflections* (Sydney: History Department, University of Sydney, 1992), 1–21.

history of imperial constitutional development entitled *Commonwealth* (1971). When the University of Queensland sent a history graduate to Oxford in 1916, Bevil Molesworth (1891–1971), he also gravitated to A.L. Smith and Balliol, and became a tutor in adult education, but in his case it became a lifetime career in Australia, leading to appointment as the Australian Broadcasting Commission's first director of talks.

Meanwhile, the Balliol tradition spread to Melbourne after Ernest Scott became professor of history in 1913. Aware of his lack of Oxford connections, Scott no doubt took advice from Wood in the matter of sending Melbourne graduates to the United Kingdom. In the years immediately after the First World War, Melbourne alumni admitted to Balliol included the philosophy graduates Clement Leslie (1898–1980) and Boyce Gibson (1900–72) and the history students Esmonde Higgins (1897–1960), Fred Alexander (1899–1996) and William Keith Hancock (1898–1988).²² Leslie, after a short period lecturing in British universities, moved into industry and the public service. Higgins embraced radical politics, almost certainly to the detriment of his career prospects, but devoted himself to adult education, thus replicating one of A.L. Smith's abiding interests. Boyce Gibson was also involved in adult education for a few years before returning to a lifetime of teaching philosophy at the University of Melbourne, and Fred Alexander was to pursue what almost became a second career as director of adult education in Western Australia from 1941 to 1954. However, Alexander's main trajectory began as assistant lecturer to Shann at the University of Western Australia in 1924, where he remained until his retirement as professor in 1966. Hancock, after becoming the first Australian elected to a fellowship at All Souls, Oxford's ancient and prestigious graduate college, was offered the chair of history at Adelaide in 1924 in succession to Henderson – who was retiring after periodic bouts of depression – and took up the position in 1926. Hancock and Alexander maintained a lifelong contact in which old friendship was mingled with a competitive element.

Of course women who aspired to become historians did not participate in the Oxbridge networks, apart from Kathleen Fitzpatrick (1905–90),²³ and had to look elsewhere for stimulus and support. Jessie Stobo Webb

22 For particulars, see Elsie Lemon, ed., *The Balliol College Register, Fourth E, 1916–1967* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969).

23 Elizabeth Kleinmetz, *A Brimming Cup: The Life of Kathleen Fitzpatrick* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2013), 66–72.

(1880–1944), who at the age of 28 was appointed lecturer in ancient history at the University of Melbourne in 1908, and who spent three decades as deputy to Scott and Crawford, did much to mobilise the resources in Melbourne for intellectual companionship.²⁴ An important source of such support was created in 1910 with the establishment of the Catalyst Club, a monthly discussion group bringing together professional women, writers, artists and academics.²⁵ This group found a home in the Lyceum Club, founded in 1912 on the model of a London initiative eight years earlier. Its membership was drawn from the same cohort as the Catalyst Club, with the addition of women notable in philanthropy and public service.²⁶ This soon became, and has remained for a century, an important meeting place for women of active intellectual and cultural interests. Jessie Webb's career illustrates the kind of enterprise that might be fostered by membership of such a group. With one friend from the Lyceum Club, she traversed Africa from Cape Town to Cairo; with another she went travelling in central Australia in an Austin Seven in 1928 – all this besides the intellectual companionship.

Curiously, the Lyceum Club did not strike such deep roots in Sydney. Wood's school of history produced several graduates with distinguished scholarly potential, whose careers followed varying trajectories. In 1920, Marjorie Barnard (1897–1987) was awarded an overseas scholarship, but her father did not allow her to take it up, and she worked as a librarian in Sydney before entering into the literary partnership with Flora Eldershaw (1897–1956) that produced several works of historical fiction and history based on colonial New South Wales. Barnard's older colleague Myra Willard (1887–1971) received a postgraduate scholarship in 1920 that enabled her, under Wood's supervision, to conduct research leading to the publication of her *History of the White Australia Policy* in 1923. It was the first book published by the Melbourne University Press and remained the standard authority on the subject for almost half a century.²⁷ Unfortunately, Willard wrote no more history, spending the rest of her working life as a teacher and educational administrator. The one that

24 Ronald T. Ridley, *Jessie Webb: A Memoir* (Melbourne: History Department, University of Melbourne, 1994).

25 Anne Longmire, *The Catalysts: Change and Continuity 1910–2010* (Melbourne: Anne Longmire and the Catalysts, 2011).

26 Joan M. Gillison, *A History of the Lyceum Club, Melbourne* (Melbourne: Lyceum Club, 1975).

27 See Sharon M. Harrison, 'Myra Willard, 1887–1971', in *The Encyclopedia of Women and Leadership in Twentieth-Century Australia*, www.womenaustralia.info/leaders/biogs/WLE0730b.htm (accessed 19 December 2015).

got away was Persia Campbell (1898–1974), whose scholarship to the London School of Economics enabled her to write and publish *Chinese Coolie Immigration* in 1923. She returned to Sydney for a few years but married an American in 1930 and spent the rest of her life as an academic in the United States, becoming an early and respected authority on consumer protection. In their choice of research topics, both Willard and Campbell foreshadowed an outreach towards East and Southeast Asia and the Pacific that would become one of the characteristics of the Sydney school of history, but initially they were lone pioneers.

The rising interest in Australia's place in international affairs following the end of the First World War led to the formation of a number of organisations in which university staff found themselves networking with likeminded individuals from the professional and business world. First in point of time was the Round Table movement, which had prewar origins. It followed a visit from a tireless publicist for the British Empire, Lionel Curtis, in 1910–11 and was intended to mobilise influential public opinion in the major centres of the Empire with a view to fostering closer ties between the member nations, perhaps ultimately leading to some form of imperial federation. Groups were formed in Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide and Brisbane (though after a few years the Brisbane group faded out of existence). The Australians were not keen on the concept of imperial federation, but they saw value in monthly meetings among interested citizens who would then forward essays based on their proceedings to a central London publication, the *Round Table*. The movement flourished during the interwar period, and provided a model of intellectual cooperation between the universities and the wider community. Its historian, Leonie Foster, estimated that 26 per cent of the membership was drawn from an academic background, 42 per cent from other professions and 32 per cent from business or primary production.²⁸

The Round Table provided a model for the League of Nations Union, which originated in the United Kingdom. Its aim was similar: the mobilisation of support among influential public opinion in the league's member nations. A Melbourne chapter was set up in 1921, its promoters including the lawyer John Latham (1877–1964), the constitutional lawyer Sir Harrison Moore (1867–1935), and the geologist and stockbroker E.C.

28 Leonie Foster, *High Hopes: The Men and Motives of the Australian Round Table* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1986); D.A. Low, 'Australians and the Round Table, 1910–2010' (paper read at seminar, 'Preparing for Perth: An Action Agenda for 2011', Canberra, 6 November 2010).

Dyason (1886–1949), whose constructive role in forging links between town and gown would repay further study. For three decades, Dyason was a successful businessman, a respected economic advisor to governments, a student of international relations with pacifist leanings, and, as Ernest Scott's brother-in-law, someone with good contacts at the University of Melbourne.

In 1924, Archibald Charteris (1874–1940), professor of international law and jurisprudence at the University of Sydney and formerly associated with the Royal Institute of International Affairs at Chatham House, London, founded the Australian Institute of International Affairs in Sydney.²⁹ Dyason was among those who within a few months started a Victorian branch, and in 1925 he helped to promote an Australian affiliate of the Institute of Pacific Relations, an American initiative designed 'to study the conditions of the Pacific people with a view to the improvement of their mutual relationships'.³⁰ The Victorian chapter of the institute merged with the local branch of the Australian Institute of International Affairs in 1932, but its Sydney counterpart in its early years was more robust. Duncan Hall led the Australian delegation to the first international conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations at Honolulu in 1925 (where he seems to have scored a chair at a reputable American university; another aspect of networking).³¹ Persia Campbell, G.V. Portus (1883–1954) and the economist Richard Mills (1886–1952) published in 1928, on behalf of the Institute of Pacific Relations, *Studies in Australian Affairs*. Gradually from the 1930s, the Australian Institute of International Affairs and the Institute of Pacific Relations came to concentrate on foreign policy, while the study of current affairs in Australia was taken over by the Australian Institute of Political Science,³² publishers since 1929 of the *Australian Quarterly*. This was another medium linking public intellectuals from within and outside the universities.

29 J.D. Legge, *Australian Outlook: A History of the Australian Institute of International Affairs* (Canberra: Department of International Relations, The Australian National University, 1999).

30 Quoted in Susan Hogan and Heather Radi, 'Campbell, Persia Gwendoline Crawford (1898–1974)', *ADB*, adb.anu.edu.au/biography/campbell-persia-gwendoline-crawford-9682/text17087, published first in hardcopy 1993 (accessed 19 December 2015).

31 Hall was professor of international relations at Syracuse University, in New York State, during the 1926–27 academic year.

32 Since 2006, the Australian Institute of Policy and Science.

By 1928, then, networking among Australian historians was facilitated by three different lines of access. Participation in the regular meetings of ANZAAS was consolidated by the recognition of history as a discipline deserving a section of its own. The institutes specialising in aspects of foreign and domestic policy brought together academics and members of the business and professional communities. And, less measurable but no less pervasive, the shared experience of overseas study, especially at Balliol College and, to a lesser extent, the London School of Economics, shaped the thinking of a significant number of historians and political scientists. But then the unexpected and tragic death of G. Arnold Wood in 1928 led to lasting change in the character of the Sydney and Melbourne departments of history.

In choosing Wood's successor in the Challis chair, the selectors made a bold decision, appointing the 28-year-old Melbourne graduate Stephen Henry Roberts (1901–71).³³ This meant passing over the two remaining members of Wood's staff, James Bruce and Fred Wood, both Balliol alumni. Bruce soon left to take an appointment as foundation professor of history at the University of the Punjab, which was to become one of the leading schools in the Indian subcontinent. Fred Wood left in 1935 to become professor of history at Victoria University College, New Zealand. From that time on, the Sydney connection with Balliol College weakened, although during the 1930s the economic historian R.B. Madgwick (1905–79) enrolled there as a postgraduate between 1933 and 1935. His doctoral thesis saw publication as *Immigration to Eastern Australia, 1788–1851* (1937). Maintaining a tradition, in his subsequent career 'he pioneered a massive scheme of adult education' as director of army education during the Second World War.³⁴

The University of Sydney acquired in Stephen Roberts a young dynamo with a record of research productivity unequalled until Geoffrey Blainey in the 1950s. From a rural background, Roberts took a swag of prizes at the University of Melbourne, where he was then appointed assistant lecturer under Scott. His pioneering *History of Australian Land Settlement* (1924) was followed by *Population Problems in the Pacific* (1927), a work

33 For Roberts, I draw on D.M. Schreuder, 'An Unconventional Founder: Stephen Roberts and the Professionalisation of the Historical Discipline', in Macintyre and Thomas, *The Discovery of Australian History*, 125–45; Schreuder, 'A "Second Foundation": S.H. Roberts as Challis Professor, 1929–47', in Caine et al., *History at Sydney*, 27–45.

34 Andrew Spaul, 'Madgwick, Sir Robert Bowden (1905–1979)', *ADB*, adb.anu.edu.au/biography/madgwick-sir-robert-bowden-11032, published first in hardcopy 2000 (accessed 3 October 2016).

stimulated by attending the Institute of Pacific Relations conference at Honolulu in 1925. Awarded an overseas scholarship, he preferred instead of Oxford or Cambridge to enrol at the London School of Economics between 1927 and 1929, where his supervisors included Harold Laski (1893–1950). His doctoral thesis was published in 1929 as the two-volume *History of French Colonial Policy, 1870–1925*. The theme built on Scott's early interest in French exploration but also harmonised with the growing tendency of historians based at the University of Sydney to look to the Pacific and East Asia for their subject matter. This tendency was strengthened when G.C. Henderson, after his resignation from the University of Adelaide, devoted his energies to research on the history of Fiji using materials in the Mitchell Library; he was eventually appointed an honorary research professor in Roberts's department and participated in the creation of a fourth-year honours class in Australian and Pacific history.³⁵

Roberts himself during the 1930s consolidated his reputation in international studies with *Australia and the Far East* (1935) and *The House that Hitler Built* (1937).³⁶ After the Australian Broadcasting Commission was formed in 1932, he was one of its first and most prominent news commentators. He involved himself with the Australian Institute for International Affairs, the Institute for Pacific Relations and the Round Table, but did not take the initiative in creating new networks. When the 150th anniversary of the founding of New South Wales was celebrated in 1938, he does not seem to have reached out to the Aboriginal counter-narrative of a day of invasion. Some of the most creative work was achieved by women writers working outside the academy, most of them identified with the fledgling Fellowship of Australian Writers. Flora Eldershaw, with Marjorie Barnard, Miles Franklin (1879–1954) and Dame Mary Gilmore (1865–1962) produced *The Peaceful Army* (1938), which recovered much useful material about pioneer women in New South Wales. Marjorie Barnard, with Flora Eldershaw, also wrote *Phillip of Australia* (1938), an account of the first four years of settlement, which was to find its counterpart three years later in Eleanor Dark's (1901–85) fictional reconstruction of the same period from an Aboriginal perspective, *The Timeless Land* (1941). It is evident that women writers moving across the borders of history and historical fiction experienced an

35 Kwan, 'G.C. Henderson', 44–6.

36 See Andrew Bonnell, 'Stephen Roberts as a Commentator on Fascism and the Road to War in Europe', *History Australia*, 11:3 (2014), 9–30.

enriching contact in Sydney in those years, though this was not always appreciated by the men who had hitherto dominated the writing of early colonial history such as C.H. Currey (1890–1970) and Malcolm Ellis (1890–1969). Ellis directed a particularly nasty accusation of plagiarism against Barnard when she published *Macquarie's World* in 1941, and the experience seems to have discouraged her for a time from major historical research.³⁷

At the University of Melbourne, Crawford's arrival as professor in succession to Scott in 1937 was a more distinct harbinger of change, as he injected into his department's honours courses ingredients in the philosophy and theory of history that had not previously been prominent in university teaching. But Crawford's department also showed national leadership, since it was responsible in 1940 for the establishment of the journal *Historical Studies: Australia and New Zealand*, which under various changes of name has survived to this day as a forum for the publication of new research of a quality to meet international scholarly standards.³⁸ Previously, the most accessible outlets for academic and amateur alike had been the journals of the various state historical societies, of which probably the most substantial was Sydney's *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, but the pages of all of them combined somewhat uneasily the monographs of the scholar with the effusions of the enthusiastic amateur.

The onset of the Second World War thrust many historians into new and often unexpected company. Probably the most bizarre experience of all fell to Max Crawford when he found himself in a remote Russian provincial city as first secretary in the new Australian embassy to the Soviet Union. Robert Madgwick and Fred Alexander more predictably found service in army education, which led to an expansion of their interest in adult education nationally. The young political scientist and historian Fin Crisp (1917–84) worked in the Department of Post-War Reconstruction, often in cooperation with Paul Hasluck at the new Department of External Affairs. Alf Conlon's (1908–61) Directorate of Research and Civil Affairs, with its emphasis on postwar colonial policy, included a number of anthropologists such as Ian Hogbin (1904–89), Bill Stanner (1905–81)

37 Jill Roe, 'Barnard, Marjorie Faith (Marjory) (1897–1987)', *ADB*, adb.anu.edu.au/biography/barnard-marjorie-faith-marjory-12176/text21821, published first in hardcopy 2007 (accessed 19 December 2015).

38 Fay Anderson, *An Historian's Life: Max Crawford and the Politics of Academic Freedom* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2005), 68–72, 81–5; see also Stuart Macintyre and Peter McPhee, *Max Crawford's School of History* (Melbourne: History Department, University of Melbourne, 2000).

and Camilla Wedgwood (1901–55), but no historians, except for the youthful John Legge (1921–2016), subsequently a leading authority on the Pacific and Southeast Asia.³⁹

It was only with the establishment of the Department of Post-War Reconstruction, and the establishment in 1945 of the Universities Commission and the Commonwealth Office of Education, that a renewed potential for networking among historians became feasible, though none could foresee the extent to which these instrumentalities might survive and wield influence in the postwar years.⁴⁰ Of greater consequence was the decision to establish The Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra as a research and postgraduate institution that might coordinate initiatives in scholarship on a nationwide basis. Even though unforeseen delays in the appointment of senior professors in the social sciences meant that it was to be well into the 1950s before this promise was fully implemented, nevertheless during that time at least two ANU postgraduates, Russel Ward (1914–95) and Allan Martin (1926–2002), produced work of national importance.⁴¹

With the arrival in 1957 of Sir Keith Hancock as professor of history and director of the Research School of Social Sciences, the pace accelerated. Hancock was conscious of ANU being The Australian *National* University, encouraging cooperation and major research endeavours throughout Australia. This sense of mission was evident not only in such ventures as the wool seminar, bringing together a wide cross-disciplinary group to consider Australia's major primary industry, but also in a project of continuing importance today: the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*.⁴² Building on the biographical data collections that Laurie Fitzhardinge (1908–93) had put together, Hancock oversaw the development of Australia's largest scholarly network. Working parties were set up in each

39 There are essays on Conlon and his directorate colleagues in Geoffrey Gray, Doug Munro and Christine Winter, eds, *Scholars at War: Australasian Social Scientists, 1939–1945* (Canberra: ANU E Press, 2012).

40 Stuart Macintyre, *Australia's Boldest Experiment: War and Reconstruction in the 1940s* (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2015), 304–8.

41 Russel Ward, *The Australian Legend* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1958). Martin published a number of important journal articles during the 1950s, culminating in Peter Loveday and A.W. Martin, *Parliament Factions and Parties: The First Thirty Years of Responsible Government in New South Wales, 1856–1889* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1966).

42 D.A. Low, ed., *Keith Hancock: The Legacies of an Historian* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2001), including Geoffrey Bolton, 'Rediscovering Australia: Hancock and the Wool Seminar', 180–200, and Libby Robin, 'Woolly Identities', 201–12.

Australian state and territory, connected on a federal basis with Canberra and reinforced by regular meetings of a representative committee; academic historians cooperated with hundreds of contributors from many walks of life to produce articles that could be edited to a sterling standard; new research questions were identified and materials discovered that might not otherwise have received attention. It was a classic model of networking to add value to existing scholarly resources. If Hancock's intention of involving historians from outside the universities led to a long and stormy interaction with Malcolm Ellis, the diplomacy of the first general editor, Douglas Pike (1908–74), ensured that the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* would be quickly acknowledged as genuinely nationwide and participatory.⁴³

More generally, during the 1950s, networking among the state universities tended to build on the lines laid down before the Second World War. Perhaps the most surprising phenomenon was the persistence of the Balliol College nexus at Melbourne, Adelaide and Western Australia, probably through the influence of academic staff who had gone through Balliol before the war. During the 1930s, the Australians who gravitated to Balliol College included John La Nauze (1911–90), Fin Crisp and Manning Clark (1915–93). I may digress here to comment on the later idea that the anti-British sentiment sometimes evident in the six volumes of Clark's *History* was due to the coldness and lack of appreciation that he met with at Oxford.⁴⁴ In 1956, when he was embarking on the first volume of this great project, he and his family spent their study leave attached to Balliol College. Some of the dons, including the mediaevalist Richard Southern (1912–2001), thought highly of him, and I experienced proof of this. In the term before the Finals examination in history, it was customary for the candidates to receive extra tuition and grooming from the senior fellow at Balliol. This man unfortunately fell ill, and it was to Manning Clark that the college entrusted the coaching of their undergraduates. Their confidence was well placed. Almost immediately he had them eating out of his hand. They long remembered the tutor who, when challenged by an American undergraduate as to what he knew

43 Melanie Nolan and Christine Fernon, eds, *The ADB's Story* (Canberra: ANU E Press, 2013), esp. Ann Moyal, 'Sir Keith Hancock: Laying the Foundations', 49–92; and John D. Calvert, "'Born to do this work": Douglas Pike and the *ADB*, 1962–1973', 101–19.

44 Manning Clark, *A History of Australia* (6 vols; Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1962–1987). Clark recounts his treatment at Oxford in those terms – *The Quest for Grace* (Ringwood: Viking, 1991), ch. 3 – but as Mark McKenna (in this volume) points out, his diaries during this time present 'very little if any evidence of these sentiments'.

about baseball, replied that it was a game occasionally played as a warm-up before minor Australian Rules games in Melbourne. Four of the 10 who sat the examination got first-class honours.

In the decade after 1945, the intake of Australian historians at Balliol reached a peak. They included Hugh Stretton (1924–2015), Max Hartwell (1921–2009), C.M. (Mick) Williams (1923–87), John Legge, Frank Crowley (1924–2013), Peter Phillips (1920–2010), Bede Nairn (1917–2006), and myself. My choice was no doubt affected by the fact that the four teaching staff at the University of Western Australia – Fred Alexander, ‘Josh’ Reynolds (1905–81), John Legge, and Frank Crowley – were all Balliol products, though too much should not be read into that; a senior don at Balliol once confessed to me sorrowfully that Crowley was the only Australian for whom Oxford and Balliol seemed to have done nothing. But the Balliol influence must have been pervasive. As late as January 1966, when I took the chair of modern history at the University of Western Australia, half of the 20 professors of history in Australia had either read the undergraduate course or completed a doctoral thesis at Balliol.

During the 1950s, the foremost school of history in Australia was probably Melbourne, where two Balliol alumni, Max Crawford and John La Nauze, each formal in suits, presided over dutiful departmental afternoon teas, but managed to coexist with a lively radical and Marxist subculture that included Alan McBriar (1918–2004) and Ian Turner (1922–78). Moreover, the loudest barracker for Melbourne’s pre-eminence was the Balliol man Manning Clark, nostalgic in exile at the Canberra University College. When challenge came it was from two Balliol alumni, Stretton at Adelaide and Legge at Monash. Stretton’s career at Balliol was remarkable. Arriving as a Rhodes Scholar in 1946, he was appointed as a fellow two years later, and this even before he graduated with first-class honours in 1948. At the age of 29, he became the college’s dean, an office usually held by dons of much greater seniority. In 1954, at 30, he returned to Adelaide to take the chair of history, and there, despite the interventions of a reactionary vice-chancellor,⁴⁵ built up an array of talent including George Rudé (1910–93), the young Ken Inglis and Allan Martin. By the early 1960s, Adelaide was arguably the most dynamic department in

45 Evidence of Vice-Chancellor A.P. Rowe’s antipathy towards Stretton can be found in Hugh Stretton, interviewed by Rob Linn, 14 November 2006, J.D. Somerville Oral History Collection, interview no. 760/4, State Library of South Australia, Adelaide (pages 12–13 of transcript).

the country.⁴⁶ At Monash, meanwhile, Legge managed not only to entice Geoffrey Serle (1922–98) and Alan McBriar to join him as senior members of staff, but also several of the brightest honours students from Melbourne.⁴⁷ The networks were expanding.

Sydney and Queensland remained largely immune to the Balliol network, favouring if anything the London School of Economics. In 1948, Stephen Roberts was promoted to the vice-chancellorship of the University of Sydney, and the succession lay between two members of his departmental staff, Gordon Greenwood (1913–86) and John Manning Ward (1919–90). Both of their areas of research built upon Sydney's established interests in Asia and the Pacific. Greenwood was the senior of the two. He had taken his doctorate at the London School of Economics in 1939, whereas Ward had not seen overseas experience. In 1948, however, he had published *British Policy in the South Pacific (1786–1893)*, in which his legal expertise enabled him to offer new interpretations about British imperialism in the region. Once again, the selectors went for the younger man and Ward, not yet 30, was appointed to the Challis chair.⁴⁸

Greenwood took himself off to the McCaughey chair of history at the University of Queensland, where for more than 30 years he was a baronial presence. With him, he brought an entrepreneurial energy that during the next decade resulted in a number of initiatives. He edited a history of Australia, which became standard fare for high schools and universities until the 1970s. In 1955, he launched the *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, the title of which indicated a different emphasis to Melbourne's *Historical Studies*.⁴⁹ Using his contacts with the Australian Institute of International Affairs, he launched a series of five-year surveys of Australia in international relations, forming a partnership with Norman Harper, and thus bringing the University of Queensland into a closer relationship than hitherto with the University of Melbourne.

46 Stretton's role as 'architect builder' and 'pathfinder' is stressed by several of the contributors to the recent history of the Adelaide history department. Prest, *Pasts Present*, 16, 46–7, 192, 210; see also Doug Munro, 'The House that Hugh Built: The Adelaide History Department during the Stretton Era, 1954–1966', *History of Education* 46:5 (2017), 631–52, dx.doi.org/10.1080/0046760X.2017.1318306.

47 John Thompson, *The Patrician and the Bloke: Geoffrey Serle and the Making of Australian History* (Canberra: Pandanus Books, 2006); Anderson, *An Historian's Life*, 347.

48 B.H. Fletcher and D.M. Schreuder, 'John Manning Ward', in Caine et al., *History at Sydney*, 83–7.

49 John A. Moses, 'Fifty Years of the *Australian Journal of Politics and History*', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 50:2 (2004), 155–62, doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8497.2004.00329.x.

At Sydney, Ward tended to explore Australian history as the offshoot of a wider British diaspora, adapting and modifying in response to a new environment, but needing to maintain contact with the metropolitan original. In this he was paralleling the approach of a section of the Department of English at the same university, including Leonie Kramer, but the approach could not satisfy the nationalist thrust embodied in works such as Russel Ward's *Australian Legend* or Manning Clark's *History*. If there was any risk that Sydney might find itself isolated from the mainstream currents of Australian historical thought, this was averted partly through Ward's assiduous participation in such ventures as the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, and also through the part played by Sydney academics in launching historical associations with specialist interests. In 1956, the Business Archives Council of Australia started its own *Bulletin*, renamed *Business Archives and History* in 1960, transforming into the *Australian Economic History Review* in 1967, and finally its ownership being transferred to the newly founded Economic History Society of Australasia. In the meantime, the Australian Society for the Study of Religious History was set up in 1959 and began publishing the *Journal of Religious History* in 1960, while a Sydney branch of the Australian Society for Labour History was established in 1962. The founding of the society had been discussed in Canberra some two years previously by Keith Hancock and the visiting British historian Asa Briggs, and formally launched in 1961 at the congress of the ANZAAS in Brisbane in May 1961. Its journal, *Labour History*, began publication in 1962.⁵⁰

The appearance of such specialisms, coinciding with the unprecedented expansion in universities and their funding that followed the Murray Report in 1957, raised questions about future networking among historians. The time had now come in the eyes of some for the creation of some umbrella organisation that might serve as a network for all historians and avert fragmentation. During the 1950s, the Social Sciences Research Council and its counterpart in the Humanities, both by-products of the era of postwar reconstruction, had struggled to find a purpose. By the

50 Stephen Morgan and Martin Shanahan, 'The Supply of Economic History in Australasia: The *Australian Economic History Review* at 50', *Australian Economic History Review*, 50:3 (2010), 217–39, doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8446.2010.00303.x; Bruce Mansfield, 'Sydney History and Religion: A Memoir', *Quadrant*, 49:11 (2005), 56–9; Eric Fry, 'The Labour History Society (ASSLH): A Memoir of its First Twenty Years', *Labour History*, 77 (1999), 83–96, doi.org/10.2307/27516671; Melanie Nolan, 'Entwined Associations: Labour History and its People in Canberra', in Melanie Nolan, ed., *Labour History and its People, Twelfth Biennial National Labour History Conference* (Canberra: Australian Society for the Study of Labour History, 2011), 1–15.

later 1960s, it became increasingly certain that both would become learned academies, along the lines of the Australian Academy of Science, and history would be represented in both, but this was hardly a substitute for a body entirely consecrated to history in its various forms.⁵¹

ANZAAS still provided a regular national meeting place at which seniors in the profession might lay down their notions of future directions for the discipline, juniors might find an audience and all participants exchange ideas and gossip (and who knows how much networking took place in the pubs and restaurants outside the formal hours of meeting?). Some historians enjoyed the opportunity of catching up with important new developments in other social sciences such as anthropology and geography, and saw value in remaining within ANZAAS. Others grew increasingly insistent that there should be a body, probably along the lines of the long-established American Historical Association, that could speak and exercise pressure on behalf of the discipline as a whole. During the later 1960s, the issue was regularly aired at Section E meetings of ANZAAS, among the strongest advocates of a new association being Frank Crowley and George Rudé.

Eventually the decision was taken at the ANZAAS conference in Perth in 1973 to create a new Australian Historical Association. A.G.L. Shaw (1916–2012), professor at Monash University and a historian with links to both the Melbourne and the Sydney schools, was to be the first president. For a few years, the new association would coexist with ANZAAS, with some historians attending both; however, by the 1980s, ANZAAS itself was facing decline because many scientific and medical scholars preferred to support the organisations representing their specialised interests.

The decision to form the Australian Historical Association was taken just in time, in the sense that new sub-branches of the discipline of history were proliferating. A number of women historians – Anne Summers, Beverley Kingston and Miriam Rechter prominent among them – were preparing the first major critiques of the neglected place of women in Australian history, supported by a lively growth of collectives and working parties keen to set the story straight. Environmental history was coming into view. Among younger historians there was a dawning realisation, growing in depth and conviction, that the history of Australia had not

51 Stuart Macintyre, *The Poor Relation: A History of Social Sciences in Australia* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2010).

begun in 1788 and had not subsequently been a story of the peaceful spread of flocks and herds across an empty land. Aboriginal history would have to be accommodated not only as a branch of the discipline but would also need to be integrated into the mainstream historical narratives. The conversations that enabled communication among historians from both the newer and the older fields of historical endeavour could best be conducted under the aegis of the Australian Historical Association. Such during the ensuing 40 years has proved to be the case.

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