

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This is a study of the ideas held by an intelligent, dedicated, somewhat eccentric visionary, and of his attempts to shape the young Australian nation.

It challenges, I hope convincingly, misconceptions about Earle Page. It sets him in wide context, both in terms of what was happening around him and of trying to interpret the implications his career has for Australia's history. It contributes to filling a gap in perceptions of the Australian past and may also have relevance for today's political environment surrounding national development policy.

Thanks foremost and immensely to Professor Nicholas Brown of The Australian National University School of History, my supervisor for the thesis that formed the basis for this book. Thanks also to Frank Bongiorno, Peter Stanley, Linda Botterill, James Walter, A.J. Brown and Brian Costar; staff and students of the School of History, ANU, including those in the National Centre of Biography; and Kent Fedorowich of the University of the West of England.

Also staff of the National Library of Australia; the University of New England and Regional Archives; the University of Melbourne Archives; the National Archives of Australia; Wesley and St Aidan's Uniting Church; ANU Archives; the University of Sydney Archives; Hardie Grant Travel; and of the Museum of Australian Democracy, notably David Jolliffe. Louise Graul searched for traces of Page in the archives of Sydney Boys High School. Paul Davey, historian of the Country Party and its later incarnations, also provided assistance. Patrick Robertson volunteered to recatalogue the Page papers in the National Library of Australia, undertaken well after I had conducted most of my research but still a signal development that will ease the path for future researchers of Page's rich life. I am also very grateful to friend and neighbour Peter

Stevens for his personal generosity in volunteering his time to comment on early drafts. Geoff Hunt was not only a highly skilled copyeditor, but also a valued source of wider advice.

I met several people who encountered Page in person, including the late Ann Moyal who undertook the formidable task of editing the draft of his *Truant Surgeon*. In doing so, she turned this memoir into Australia's foremost prime ministerial autobiography. Helen Snyders and Geoff Page, members of the inestimable Page clan, were both immensely helpful with documents and personal recollections. Thanks too to Jim and Philippa Page and all the residents of Heifer Station: Earle Page's attachment to his home base and the gloriously fertile Clarence River region is eminently understandable. And to Max Ellis, son of the highly observant pioneering chronicler of the Country Party and the new state cause. I alone am responsible for opinions and errors.

Lastly and most importantly, my very special thanks to Jenni for her tolerance over years of my incessant tapping and self-imposed seclusion. No one could have been more loving and supportive. And of course Jim, inevitably.

This research was supported by an Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship.

Some of the capitalisation and spelling of common terms appearing in quotes has been made consistent with usage in the rest of this volume. Units of electricity replicate the original usage employed in each quote and source.

Stephen Wilks,
The Australian National University,
Canberra

This text is taken from *'Now is the Psychological Moment': Earle Page and the Imagining of Australia*, by Stephen Wilks, published 2020 by ANU Press, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.