

Benjamin Wilkie, *The Scots in Australia, 1788–1938* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2017), ISBN 978-1-78327-256-3.

In announcing on his website (<https://thescottishaustralian.wordpress.com>) the launch of his new publication, author and academic Ben Wilkie wrote ‘I am proud to announce that *The Scots in Australia 1788–1938* has been published by Boydell Press, with the support of the Scottish Historical Review Trust, in November 2017. The book is the result of nearly eight years of research and writing on Scottish migrants in Australia, is thematically broad, and covers the convict period up until the outbreak of the Second World War.’ The book is a substantial reworking and expansion of Wilkie’s October 2013 PhD thesis at Monash University ‘Weaving the Tartan: Culture, Imperialism and Scottish Identities in Australia, 1788–1938’; he is currently a Lecturer in Australian Studies and Early Career Development Fellow at Deakin University, Australia and has published already a considerable amount of material on the subject of Scots in Australia.

The book is a useful addition to the existing body of work by a number of authors exploring the contribution made by Scots to the development of Australia as it has become in the twenty-first century. These works include, for example, David S. MacMillan’s 1967 *Scotland and Australia 1788–1850: Emigration, Commerce and Investment*; Don Watson’s 1984 (republished 2011) *Caledonia Australis*; and Malcolm Prentis’ 2008 *The Scots in Australia*, itself an update and expansion of his own 1983 *The Scots in Australia: a study of New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland, 1788–1900*. It adds also to the presentation by the Art Gallery of Ballarat’s 2014 exhibition ‘For Auld Lang Syne: Images of Scottish Australia from First Fleet to Federation’ and the collection of essays from speakers (including Wilkie) at the associated Scottish Symposium held in Ballarat on 9–11 May 2014 and published as *Scots under the Southern Cross* (editors Fred Cahir, Alison Inglis, and Anne Beggs-Sunter). Wilkie acknowledges Prentis as ‘a mentor throughout’, and notes that his own work takes place ‘very much in the shadow of [Prentis’] immense body of work on the Scots in Australia’. It adds also to the exploration of the Scottish diaspora by Scottish historians, most notably among them Professors (Sir) Tom Devine (University of Edinburgh), Marjory Harper (Aberdeen University) and James Hunter (University of the Highlands and Islands), as well as Australians writing about Scotland and the British Empire such as

Professor Eric Richards of Flinders University, and Wilkie quotes from all of these authorities.

Themes addressed in the book include both early free settlers and the convict years and the issues in identifying the Scots who came to the penal settlement as convicts, since some Scots were convicted and sentenced outside Scotland while some non-Scots (particularly from Ireland) were convicted by Scottish courts, under laws and sentencing regimes at variance with those of Scotland's southern neighbour. Wilkie has paid careful attention to analysing the statistics available to provide an accurate summary of the proportion of Scots among the settlers in the early colony of New South Wales which, at that time, included Van Dieman's Land. In looking at Scotland's contribution to the commercial expansion of the British Empire, he has identified the way in which the Scottish emigré Robert Campbell, for example, was able to link New South Wales into that commercial empire and ultimately by sending shipments of produce from Australia to Britain to undermine and end the East India Company monopolies on foreign trade from Australia in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

In his chapter 'Scottish Migrants and Indigenous Australians', Wilkie faces the difficult questions of the involvement of Scots in the inter-actions of European settlers, free and convict, with the indigenous custodians of the land. An important aspect of this involved the activities of missionaries, particularly Presbyterians, in areas as far flung as Moreton Bay and the Western Districts of Victoria and here again Wilkie has been able to draw on the work of others who have charted much of the work of the church throughout the Empire; he notes the failure of attempts at various missionary settlements by Scots, among whom were Governor Lachlan Macquarie, merchant Robert Campbell and the Rev. John Dunmore Lang who brought the Disruption in the Presbyterian Church from Scotland to Australia. An ongoing theme in any study of Scotland today is attempting to understand exactly what the image of that country is and how it came to be seen thus, as it were separating the tartan and bagpipes from the complex history of the nation, and in 'Imagining Home' Wilkie takes us on a journey which *inter alia* addresses the image of Scotland conveyed by statues of Scottish heroes, particularly Burns and Wallace, and particularly in Victoria. It is Victoria which provides the case study of the impact of formation of the Victorian Scottish Regiment and its ultimate assimilation into the Australian Army.

The twentieth century activities of Scots in Australia and the arrival of large numbers of migrants provide Wilkie with opportunities to explore in detail and from primary sources the attitudes of expatriates towards the land of their forebears. From the 1928 departure of a 600-strong delegation from Melbourne seeking to encourage migration, trade and investment opportunities to significant youth migration, Wilkie is able to demonstrate how the overwhelming majority of Scots arriving in Australia between the two World Wars were drawn from Scotland's Lowland urban industrial working class rather than conforming to the popular image of the Scot frequently met, for example, by tourists on the Royal Mile in Edinburgh. The involvement of Scots in the industrial movements in Australia, including those involved in the early Communist Party of Australia, also receives careful and detailed attention.

Overall, this book is a welcome addition to the existing studies of Scottish history and the history of its diaspora, particularly as it relates to the foundation and development of Australia. While occasionally the subject matter stretches beyond the book's claim to cover only until the start of World War II it does so to show the outcomes of earlier developments. It will be welcomed by those wanting a thoroughly researched single volume history of Scots' contributions to Australia. It is well presented, clear and easy to read. Its bibliography is extensive and it contains a useful index. Its cover image is a detail from the painting, *Ben Lomond*, by English artist John Glover. Painted in about 1840, it shows a romanticised vision of a tartan-clad family of Highlanders gathered around a fire. The Ben Lomond of the painting is not, however, in Scotland, but Tasmania, near Evandale in the north of the island. The transplanted nature of the culture is emphasised by the kangaroo which is being carried to the feast. This image perhaps best identifies the dilemma in trying to identify how Scots have become part of the Australian landscape and society.

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