From Dream to Reality: A study of British migration to Western Australia in the 1960s, with special emphasis on those who travelled on the SS Castel Felice

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CHAPTER ONE

Migration and the Building of the Nation

The migration story is as old as time. Steve Olsen asserts that we are all each other’s brothers and that ‘all 6 billion people on the planet descended from a single ancestor’. Migration is a fact of humanity. The current emigrations from developing nations and the influx into Australia of Asian and African peoples is similar to the situation in Europe during the Industrial Revolutions when more than 17 million people left Europe for North America. The British immigrants who forged new worlds in the Americas and Australia were already a multinational race descended from Picts and Celts, Romans and Jutes, Saxons and Vikings, Normans and colonials, with some French and Russian émigrés added to the mix. They found in Australia inhabitants who were also descendents of a range of peoples, a complex mix of nations. They called these people ‘Aborigines’, though that was not a name used by these indigenous people themselves. When the first fleet landed in New South Wales in 1788 it has been estimated that there were about 275,000 Aborigines in Australia. They were divided into approximately 680 tribes, each of which occupied a separate territory and spoke a different dialect. Modern Australia has been populated by more than 70 different ethnic groups, with different languages and cultures.

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6 Fraser, p. 4.
The Aborigines

If Australia is a ‘nation of migrants’ then, as Terrill suggests, the Aborigines were the first boat people to land on its shores. According to some historians the indigenous population had been in Australia for over 40,000 years at the time of British colonisation. The Aborigines were nomadic for the most part and had no need to develop houses and towns, roads or a civic infrastructure. The origin of our indigenous people is a matter of speculation. There have been diverse claims that their ancestors came from the hill tribes of southern India, from Sri Lanka or from Malaysia. Archaeological research has shown the presence of people similar to the Aborigines in Celebes, New Guinea and Java. The peoples of Tasmania, however, are thought to have come from other areas, possibly Melanesia. Hence the Aborigines are descended from waves of people who came across the ancient land bridge or by sea over the centuries and gradually spread across the continent. Their environment was altered by natural forces and by such practices as firestick farming, all of which led to changes in the landscape: forests shrank in size, the seas rose and Tasmania became separated from the mainland.

Geoffrey Blainey writes in his seminal book, *Triumph of the Nomads*, that the Aborigines had a good lifestyle and a plentiful diet which consisted mainly of vegetables, roots, fruit and seeds. They lived in family groups as hunter gatherers, moving from place to place according to the season and the availability of food. The population growth of indigenous Australians was contained by such natural conditions as plague, wars, drought,
floods, and the occasional volcanic eruption. The Aborigines developed a calendar based on the constellations, the flowering of vegetation and the migration of birds. Food was shared. Their appearance of poverty was deceptive. Though the British colonisers regarded the Aborigines as uncivilised because they did not weave cloth, make pottery or employ beasts of burden, their simple lifestyle allowed the Aborigines to inhabit all parts of this inhospitable continent. Despite their long history of occupation and land use the British government ignored Australia’s indigenous peoples’ ownership of the land—a policy which was only remedied by the High Court in the 1992 Mabo decision.

**Early visitors**

The British were not the first non-Aboriginal people to visit Australia. There is evidence that Phoenician/Egyptian ships landed in Australia as early as 2,700 BC, while it is has been suggested that there were Chinese visits from around 2,500 BC. Much later there were visits from the Spanish, Dutch, Portuguese, Danes and French, as well as traders from Japan, Indonesia and Macassar. In 1616 the Dutchman, Dirk Hartog, landed near Shark Bay in Western Australia and other Dutch ships are recorded as having landed on Australia’s west coast, including the ill-fated *Batavia*. Abel Tasman, who claimed Van Dieman’s Land (Tasmania) for the Dutch also visited the north-west of Western Australia, giving it the name New Holland. The first recorded visit to these shores by an Englishman was in 1688 by William Dampier on the *Cygnet*. French explorers were very active in the charting of Western Australia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; many Australian landmarks still have French names evidencing this.

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15 Cigler, p. 7
17 *Western Australian Yearbook*, no. 6, 1967, p. 1.
**British settlement**

There is argument as to why Australia was chosen as a place of settlement by the British in the 1780s. The most accepted reason is that there was need for a penal settlement to ease the overcrowded conditions of British prisons after the American War of Independence meant that Britain could no longer despatch its unwanted criminals to the American colonies. Others, such as Blainey, argue that a port of call was necessary to preserve British naval strength in the Pacific region and the convicts provided an affordable workforce to make this happen. He and others also point to Australia’s rich resource of raw materials required by ships, such as flax for ropes and sails, and tall timbers for masts, as the incentive to form a settlement in Australia. Few free migrants were keen to make the long, hazardous journey to the antipodes at first. The transportation of convicts was therefore a forced immigration of people necessary to populate the new colony as a naval base and trading outpost.

Some 100,000 British convicts, including about 800 women, arrived in eastern Australia between 1788 and 1852. Though most were tried and sentenced in England it is also true that many came from other parts of the British Empire or Europe. Stasiuk says the convicts included ‘Irish, Italians, Spaniards, Polish, Sri Lankans and African Americans’. They also included court martialled soldiers and seamen from all parts of the world, as well as Irish political prisoners.

Britain was already a multicultural collection of peoples when the first convicts were sent to Australia in the eighteenth century. In the distinct countries of England, Scotland and Wales as well as Ireland, different cultures, social and economic conditions flourished. There were readily identifiable differences in social status, religion, dialect, class and land.

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20 Wilson, p. 27.
ownership. Indeed it was not until the passing of the Education Act (UK) of 1870 that the language of the British Isles was standardised.\textsuperscript{23} Religion was one of the most important social divisions when the British colonised Australia. The majority of Irish migrants were Catholics which produced some tension with the Protestant ascendancy. The distinctiveness of the Irish—and particularly the Irish-Catholic—experience in Australia was evident up until at least the mid-twentieth century, and to some extent beyond.\textsuperscript{24} Jupp argues that these migrant peoples, although they may have had difficulty in understanding each others’ dialects, nevertheless had much more in common in Australia than they did in Britain because they were coping together in a land which was alien to all of them.\textsuperscript{25}

The colonisation of New South Wales in 1788 began a process which ultimately saw the British take possession of the whole of the Australian continent. The convicts were followed in the nineteenth century by free settlers and assisted passengers from Britain and various other countries to swell the labour force. Britain was the preferred source of migrants—but Australia was at a disadvantage in this respect because of the distance separating the two countries. Most prospective British emigrants preferred to go to the United States or Canada because the fare was cheaper and the distance less.\textsuperscript{26} Various schemes had to be put in place to encourage migrants to come to the other side of the world. Jupp proposes that assisted migrants came because they were paid to do so and Blainey says it was Edward Gibbon Wakefield who suggested that the immigration of poor British labourers and farm workers could be financed by the sale of government land in Australia.\textsuperscript{27} Many assisted migrants, who came to work on established holdings, moved off and took up their own land or left for other parts of Australia.

\textsuperscript{25} James Jupp (ed), \textit{The Australian People: An encyclopaedia of the nation, its peoples and their origins}, Angus & Robertson, Melbourne, 1988, p. 44.
\textsuperscript{26} Derry, p. 136.
The gender imbalance in colonial Australia remained acute. By 1833 men outnumbered women three to one and females, including Aborigines, were exploited and deemed to be dependent on the protection of white men. Assisted passages were offered to women as a means to address the gender imbalance. At first those targeted were poor women from Ireland in the hope they would swell the colonial work force. Later, under the influence of Caroline Chisholm, genteel English women were encouraged to migrate on assisted passages. Chisholm also started a family colonisation program in an attempt to address the problem of the overwhelming population of single men. White says that Australia was a ‘dustbin of the unwanted and the unsuccessful’. The male population again increased in the second half of the nineteenth century when thousands of prospective miners rushed to Australia in the hunt for gold.

**Western Australia in the early years**

The British Government was not initially interested in founding a penal colony in Western Australia. But there was concern raised when the French proposed to establish a convict settlement in the south west of Western Australia. In response the brig *Amity* was sent to establish a colony around Albany in 1826. It was abandoned after only 5 years. The first permanent British settlement of Western Australia commenced in 1829 along the Swan River. Reports of good soil, safe anchorage and a navigable river brought free settlers to its shores in 1829, led by the ambitious James Stirling and his supporters. The lure was the picture painted of the ‘land of promise’. These settlers were people with money looking for somewhere to make an investment. Wealthy settlers brought capital, seeds, tools, furniture and livestock as

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33 White, p. 47.
well as employees.\textsuperscript{34} Thomas Peel had a grandiose scheme to settle 100,000 persons in the colony, over a period of four years, in return for a government land grant of four million acres.\textsuperscript{35} If the settlement in Botany Bay was established to create a British outpost in the Pacific, the Swan River Colony was valued as the British outpost on the western side of the continent, because of its proximity to existing trade routes in Asia.\textsuperscript{36} The new Western Australian community was permeated by British values for the next century or more and there were numbers of schemes to attract British migrants as free or assisted settlers in that time. At first the colony was faced with stunted growth, owing to a small population and the enduring attraction of the eastern colonies to prospective migrants and settled Western Australians.\textsuperscript{37} The distance between the new colony and Britain (and New South Wales) even then plagued the settlers.\textsuperscript{38}

When the development of the colony continued to falter it was agreed to accept convict labour, thereby increasing productivity and assisting in the development of civic infrastructure. Western Australia used convicts for this purpose from 1850 to 1868. The colonists stipulated that the convicts they received should be males under 45 years of age, and should include juvenile offenders who could be recruited as apprentices. Not all the convicts were common criminals. On the last convict ship to Western Australia in 1868, the \textit{Hougoumont}, there were 62 political prisoners, Irish Fenians, from a failed 1867 uprising in Ireland in support of an Irish Republic. The Fenians were an Irish-American revolutionary secret society founded in 1858 and the group achieved fame of a sort when some of their number escaped from Western Australia on the \textit{Catalpa} in 1875\textsuperscript{39}.

The influx of male convicts again increased the imbalance of the sexes in the colony.

\textsuperscript{34} Jupp, \textit{The Australian People}, pp. 29-30.
\textsuperscript{36} Blainey, \textit{Tyranny of Distance}, p. 93.
\textsuperscript{38} Blainey, \textit{Tyranny of Distance}, p. 95.
\textsuperscript{39} Crowley F.K., \textit{A Short History of Western Australia}, (1959), Macmillan, Melbourne, 1961, p. 24.
so the British government agreed to subsidise an equal number of free settlers including some women and girls from workhouses.⁴⁰ Many of the immigrant women sent to Western Australia on the so called ‘bride ships’ were of Irish descent. Unlike the sons of gentry and middle class Irish, who had come to take up land, these girls were poor and often barefoot. They were sent as servants and although mainly of the Catholic faith they were married indiscriminately, it would seem, to Protestant men.⁴¹ The values of the Swan River Colony with respect to women reflected that of the situation in Britain. The place of women was considered to be in the home, to support their menfolk, bear children and also in many cases to help clear and work the land.⁴² According to White, prospective migrants from the United Kingdom in the 1800s were ‘assured of wealth and happiness in a garden of Eden’; though this promise reflected little of the reality they encountered.⁴³

The early settlers that arrived in Australia were soon followed by other people who saw the prospect of advancement in the newly developing country. Prospective settlers had to provide their own provisions for the voyage, some food, their own bedding and a water jug. The long voyage (from 3 to 6 months) meant the food they had brought with them often went bad before the voyage was completed. They then had to exist on ship’s biscuit, salted meat and dried fish.⁴⁴ Passages to Australia improved over the nineteenth century with the achievements in the steam technology and the opening of the Suez Canal. In October 1897 the new harbour Fremantle was opened, steam ships were able to run to strict schedules, some carrying refrigerated cargo, and this enabled a revolution in the state’s overseas trade.⁴⁵

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⁴¹ Jean Chetkovich, “‘There would seem to be a wonderful freedom out here’: The Irish in Western Australia’, in Wilding and Tilbury, A Changing People: Diverse contributions to the State of Western Australia, pp. 222–235.
⁴³ White, pp. 34–35.
Asian labour

Australia changed further in the mid-nineteenth century with the gold rushes and the expansion of the pastoral regions: cities grew and investment increased.\(^{46}\) Despite the assisted passages offered to British migrants there was never enough labour to work the developing land. Although schemes to encourage permanent settlers were in place, such as a grant of land for those staying more than two years, most newcomers still drifted east. Shiploads of Chinese men were brought from Hong Kong as labourers or to act as domestic servants. In Queensland Indians and Pacific Islanders were imported to work in the sugar and cotton industries. The influx of these non-white races was not encouraged though they remained an important part of the colonial workforce. In the north of Western Australia, Filipinos, Chinese, Japanese and Malays became indentured workers in the pearling industry. They were not required to leave the country when the indenture was complete. Some Chinese became market gardeners to supply the metropolitan region or worked as cooks on pastoral stations. Soon antagonism grew; most of the former Australian colonies had banned immigration from Asia by the 1870s.\(^{47}\) Asian immigration to Western Australia was severely restricted when the *Chinese Immigration Restriction Act* of 1889 came in to force.\(^{48}\)

Settlers from interstate and overseas were attracted to Western Australia after the major discoveries of gold in the 1890’s. The colony’s economic and social fortunes were soon on the mend. Conditions improved for workers too, as they began to organise trade unions. With the formation of the Australian Labour Party (ALP) workplace bargaining power increased.\(^{49}\) While settlers from the east and overseas were fully accepted, those who were from Asia were less welcome than ever before.\(^{50}\)

\(^{46}\) Wilson, pp. 90–106.
\(^{47}\) Jupp, *Immigration*, 2\(^{nd}\) edn, p.70.
\(^{49}\) Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance*, pp. 169, 328.
\(^{50}\) Appleyard and Baldassar, p. 41.
Migration and the Building of the Nation

Federation

The Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act, 1900, was an act of the British parliament which came into force in Australia on 1 January 1901. Based on American federalism and the British parliamentary system the constitution did not give Australia independence as a nation in its own right. Indeed, Australian independence was not even on the agenda.51 Members of the Australian Parliament came from all levels of society and voting in parliamentary elections was soon compulsory for those who had the right to vote. Women first gained the right to vote in South Australia in 1887 and in Western Australia in 1899. It was not until after federation however, that they gained the vote in other states, the last being Victoria in 1909.52 But Dixson says that even after women won the right to vote they were ‘ignored in any serious discussion of national identity’.53 Responsibility for Australia’s foreign affairs remained with the British colonial office. The governor general acted to protect the interests of the British government in Australia.54 The Australian monetary system was based on British currency and Britain retained the right to annul any Australian law within one year of it being proclaimed.55 While Australians were claiming their uniqueness they were still noted for their ‘Britishness’.56 This was understandable because most white Australians were recent migrants from the British Isles or had British ancestry.

Individual Australian colonies each had in place laws restricting Asian immigration but at federation the responsibility for immigration control fell to the federal government. The new nation’s first piece of legislation was the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901 which formed the basis of the White Australia Policy. There were no explicit barriers on race or

52 Clark, p. 181.
56 Clark, p. 190.
colour in this Act, because Australia was under pressure from Britain whose empire was composed of mainly coloured nations. But a dictation test was introduced under the Act requiring prospective immigrants to pass a short dictation test in any European language (though from 1905 this was changed to any language, to placate Japan). This exclusionist immigration policy reflected the attitude which many white, western nations of the early twentieth century practiced, as Marilyn Lake recently explored. In 1895 John W. Burgess, founder of the School of Political Science at the University of Columbia, had already put forward the ideal of homogeneity and, more specifically Teutonic racial homogeneity, as being fundamental to the American state. The ideal of a ‘pure’ race is still in existence in Japan today according to Chris Burgess who says:

Because it is no longer tenable to maintain (national) identities through processes of overt exclusion, the maintenance of Japanese identity often manifests itself in rather sophisticated forms.

The fear of Asian invasion by infiltration and its perceived negative influence on the ‘pure white’ culture of Australia was increased when an outbreak of the Bubonic plague, raging through the eastern states of Australia in the late 1800s and early 1900s, was blamed on the Chinese. The Quarantine Act of 1908 was to meet the threat of invasion by disease and infestation which was blamed on the Chinese and the ‘Queen’s Nigger Empire’. This and the Immigration Restriction Act were intended to keep Australia ‘pure, healthy and white’. They brought the power of law to the policy of keeping Australia a white nation, if necessary by ‘restriction, deportation and discrimination’.

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62 Souter, p. 47.
63 Clark, pp. 197–198.
preference to British immigrants and racial discrimination was used covertly to exclude many non-Europeans until the 1970s.\textsuperscript{64} According to Brauer the settlement of Australia was based on the ‘AWESOME (Assist White English Speakers Other Migrants Exclude) principle’.\textsuperscript{65} Aborigines were victims of this same discrimination after federation, politically, legally, economically and socially excluded from full citizenship for many decades.\textsuperscript{66}

Dread of the ‘yellow peril’—of invasion from the north by Asia—dogged Australia for much of the nineteenth century. When Britain entered into an alliance with Japan during the Sino-Russian War in the early 1900s and the Japanese fleet became active in the Pacific, these fears increased. Australia formed an early alliance with the United States and petitioned Britain for its own navy when the protection of the British fleet seemed to be diminishing.\textsuperscript{67} Macintyre says the Australian nation was ‘shaped by the fear of invasion and the concern for the purity of the race’.\textsuperscript{68} But from 1905 there was strong support to allow the immigration of Anglo Saxons, including Scandinavians,\textsuperscript{69} and from 1901 to 1914 many Italians, Greeks, Jews and other European peoples also came to Australia.\textsuperscript{70} The estimated number of British migrants during the period from 1903 to 1914 exceeded 55,000. Bolton suggests many were under the misapprehension that they would become landowners when Australia only wanted labourers.\textsuperscript{71} This influx of British migrants helped create an anti-British feeling among Australians who feared their conditions of employment and standards of living would deteriorate because of the increase in available labour. By 1912 British migrants were no

\textsuperscript{66} Clark, pp. 198–199.
\textsuperscript{67} Souter, p. 78.
\textsuperscript{68} Stuart MacIntyre, \textit{A Concise History of Australia}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} edn, Cambridge University Press, Port Melbourne, 2004, p. 148.
\textsuperscript{70} Geoffrey Blainey, \textit{Shorter History of Australia}, Heinemann, Port Melbourne, 1994, p. 137.
\textsuperscript{71} Geoffrey Bolton, \textit{A fine Country to Starve In}, (1972), University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1994, pp. 31-38.
longer called ‘new chums’ but ‘Pommies’.\textsuperscript{72} Despite the attitude to the new arrivals, working men and women were still encouraged to come, and schemes were introduced for child migration.\textsuperscript{73} The sponsorship schemes by various institutions to bring numbers of children to Australia were increased in the early twentieth century when similar schemes in Canada declined. The idea was to ‘save’ working class children, who were thought to be deprived and neglected, and to provide a pool of rural and domestic workers. This practice continued into the 1960s and has since been the subject of many claims of abuse and loss of identity.\textsuperscript{74}

During the early 1900s responsibility for recruiting migrants lay with the Commonwealth, on advice from state governments as to the numbers and classes of immigrants that were required. Thus Western Australia retained the right to approve specific migrants needed to fill the labour requirements of male agricultural workers and female domestics.\textsuperscript{75}

\textit{The Great War}

In 1914 the young Commonwealth demonstrated its loyalty to the motherland and its empire by committing its people to the war in Europe. At the cessation of hostilities in 1918, in an effort to increase international markets for British goods and to alleviate the problem of finding employment for returning servicemen in the United Kingdom, the British government encouraged the emigration of its ex-service men to the Dominions, including Australia. To further this high level of emigration the British government put capital into colonial development projects. Australia was ready to subsidise immigration to increase its population at minimal cost. In 1923 the Western Australian government began a group settlement scheme which granted land to people who would co-operatively develop their land allotment.\textsuperscript{76} Monetary incentives to settle on the 6,000 dairy and pig-raising holdings to be established for assisted British migrants were impressive for the time. The Commonwealth

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\textsuperscript{72} Blainey, \textit{Shorter History of Australia}, p. 151.
\textsuperscript{73} Geoffrey Sherington, \textit{Australia’s Immigrants 1788–1978}, Allen & Unwin, North Sydney, 1980, p. 94.
\textsuperscript{74} Geoffrey Sherington, ‘Child Migration’, in Jupp (ed.) \textit{The Australian People}, p. 60.
\textsuperscript{75} Roe, pp. 21–22.
\textsuperscript{76} Roe, p. 42.
\end{flushright}
government loaned $1000 per settler, which was later increased to $1,250, plus $750 towards the cost of land. Over 5,000 soldier settlers were attracted to Western Australia but some had war related disabilities and many lacked farming knowledge. This, added to the poor production levels of the soil, meant the scheme largely failed and much of the land was eventually returned to the state government.\textsuperscript{77} Knightley says the soldier settlers were:

\begin{quote}
Promised land, housing, tools and advice, but when they arrived they found the promised homestead a shed, the tools a pick and shovel, and the land covered in trees.\textsuperscript{78}
\end{quote}

This wave of migration continued until the late 1920s when complaints by the new settlers of poor land and development problems invoked hostile feelings towards the influx of migrants into a country where employment was increasingly difficult to obtain.\textsuperscript{79} There were more schemes for child migration but with the onslaught of the Great Depression there was again an outcry that Pommies were ‘taking Australian jobs’, and there was therefore no assisted British immigration during the period 1929 to 1932.\textsuperscript{80} However there was at this time an increase in the numbers of (un-assisted) refugees fleeing from the increasing unrest in Europe coming to Australia.\textsuperscript{81} By 1936 there was a renewed interest in population growth. Robert Menzies, then federal Attorney General, believed that new migrants were needed to increase Australia’s population to 20 million. In 1938 a general fare subsidy was introduced in the place of assistance to individuals. There was an agreement between the British and Australian governments to subsidise the passage for relatives and friends nominated by Australian residents and by various organisations.\textsuperscript{82} It would appear, as Roe says, that the United Kingdom wanted a high level of emigration to offset the threat to social stability by unemployment and at the same time Australia generally wanted more people.\textsuperscript{83}

\textsuperscript{77} \textit{Western Australian Yearbook, No 6, 1967}, pp. 243–244.
\textsuperscript{78} Knightley, p. 12.
\textsuperscript{79} Roe, p. 166.
\textsuperscript{81} Sherington, \textit{Australia’s Immigrants}, p. 112.
\textsuperscript{82} Roe, p. 175
\textsuperscript{83} Roe, p. 35.
The Second World War

In 1939 war threatened Europe, and Japan invaded China. When Britain asked for support to fight Germany, Prime Minister Robert Menzies accepted automatically that Australia would support the war effort. Influenced by New Zealand, and assured that Japan could not invade Southeast Asia, Australia sent troops to the Mediterranean region. The ALP actively opposed re-armament and conscription, yet called for willing volunteers to serve anywhere in the world. After a series of debacles Menzies was attacked for ‘slavishly’ following Britain. The ALP assumed power in 1941 and major disputes arose between the Australian political leaders and Britain’s Prime Minister, Winston Churchill. Australia was alarmed at signs that Britain regarded the Pacific region as dispensable until victory was achieved in Europe. After the fall of Singapore in February 1942 Australia was left largely defenceless, having so far relied on Britain’s naval base there as its first line of defence. The full extent of the Japanese threat was withheld from the Australian public as Darwin and the north-west of Western Australia were bombed and Japanese submarine attacks occurred in and around Sydney Harbour. Britain’s apparent disregard for Australian security left the Australian...

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85 Souter, p. 407.
86 Andrews, p. 90–94.
87 Knightley, pp. 180,189–204.
people feeling betrayed; the Australian government had little choice but to turn to the United States for military support. The Australian Prime Minister, John Curtin, distrusted Churchill’s schemes and promises, while others appeared unaware that Britain was no longer a powerful naval force, unable to defend Australia. When the United States sent General Douglas Macarthur to set up headquarters in Darwin in 1942 he criticised Britain for not returning the assistance that Australia had rendered to them and demanded that the experienced Australian troops be recalled from the Middle East. After the Japanese had invaded New Guinea, the decision was made to fight them in the Pacific rather than try to defend the Australian mainland. Yet the assistance of the United States was not without its problems. For example the arrival of African-American troops in Australia was perceived by some to be contrary to Australia’s White Australia Policy and gave rise to much disquiet. Some Australians complained that the government was replacing the ‘Mother Country’ with ‘Uncle Sam’.

There was a new awareness of Australian national identity after the Second World War and, if temporarily, a new independence in its foreign policy. The Australian Prime Minister, Ben Chifley, was not in favour of sending troops to Malaysia to support Britain in what he thought was a fight for independence rather than a communist takeover. However, when the Liberal Party coalition came to power in 1949, Menzies sought to establish Australia’s international role through the traditional ties with Britain, and Australia became involved in the conflict in Malaya. There was pressure to supply Britain with whatever support was needed to contain the communist insurgents. This support was recognised by the United States as part of the western alliance against communism. The ‘domino theory’, which predicted the successive collapse of the Southeast Asian nations to communism, and

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90 Souter, p. 390.
92 Lowe, p. 17.
93 Knightley, pp. 87–97.
the fear that Australia would be forced to defend itself, caused Menzies to introduce
compulsory military training in 1950.\textsuperscript{94} Despite the success of Australia’s new wartime
alliance with the United States, Australia’s loyalty to Britain was confirmed when Menzies
was sent to Egypt as a negotiator in the ‘Suez Crisis’ of 1956. However, the cracks in the
imperial British-Australian relationships that had been developing over a number of years
were becoming more visible.\textsuperscript{95}

\textit{Post-war migration}

Recognition of Australia’s vulnerability to invasion while the population was so small had
been the impetus to the post-war ALP government’s new migration slogan ‘populate or
perish’. Although immigration was often seen as a means to provide for the defence of
Australia, Rickard says the real reason for increased post-war immigration was the
government’s commitment to economic growth.\textsuperscript{96} The early intention that the thousands of
new Australians would come from Britain was not realised. The lack of suitable shipping and
the need for the United Kingdom to rebuild its own country after the ravages of war meant
that it was difficult to fill the desired migration quotas. In Britain there was a dichotomy of
opinion on the subject of migration. Lord Bernard Law Montgomery, a former British Field
Marshall famous for the action during the Second World War at El Alamein, said Britain
could not support the British population after the war; and that to give the soldiers homes and
work, as had been promised, emigration was the answer. Yet Winston Churchill, ever the
pessimist, said migrants were simply ‘leaving the sinking ship’.\textsuperscript{97} To satisfy the need for an
increased population refugees and displaced persons from Europe were brought into Australia
from the late 1940s and in the 1950s.

The difficult conditions in Britain in the immediate post-war years, where food

\textsuperscript{95} Lowe, p. 112.
rationing and shortages of housing and other materials persisted into the 1950s, encouraged the emigration by British people to Australia which seemed to promise an abundance of food and a better, sunny lifestyle.\textsuperscript{98} The War Service Land Settlement Scheme a cooperative venture between the Commonwealth and Western Australia\textsuperscript{99} saw monies being made available as loans to benefit those men who had served in the Second World War, and later in Korea and Malaya. It would seem more thought went into this scheme than into previous plans to develop the Western Australian agricultural areas because not only was guidance and technical advice made available through the Department of Agriculture, but also the land was provided cleared and fenced, and an assessment was taken of the applicant and the suitability of the land for the proposed development. Initially allotments of land were held on perpetual lease, but in 1951 the settlers were allowed to purchase land after they had occupied it for more than ten years.\textsuperscript{100}

By the 1960s the situation in Britain and Europe had vastly improved. Housing and employment were more readily available and rationing had ended. The ‘swinging 60s’ had arrived and for some it was a ‘golden age’. The culture was dominated by young people with money to spend. It was a time of Hippies, ‘flower power’, recreational drugs, rock and roll, and sexual liberation. The British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, told the British people they had ‘never had it so good’.\textsuperscript{101} While most of England enjoyed the good times, in the industrial north there remained a fear of the return of unemployment.\textsuperscript{102} Much of the shipbuilding industry was in decline as Japan became the world leader in that field. The wool and cotton industries were gradually being replaced by synthetic materials and coal mines were becoming mechanised.\textsuperscript{103} The population began to drift south, especially younger

\textsuperscript{98} Jupp, \textit{Immigration}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} edn, p. 134.
\textsuperscript{99} \textit{War Service Land Settlement Agreement Act} of 1945 (Commonwealth); \textit{War Service Settlement Agreement Act} of 1945 (Western Australia).
\textsuperscript{100} \textit{Western Australian Yearbook}, no. 6, 1967, pp. 244–245.
\textsuperscript{101} Jupp, \textit{The English in Australia}, p. 93.
\textsuperscript{102} Jupp, \textit{Immigration}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} edn, p. 134.
\textsuperscript{103} Derry, p. 225.
people who were attracted by employment opportunities and the bright lights of London.\textsuperscript{104}

For a short time in 1961, as deflationary measures and unemployment increased, ‘people thought they were entitled to something better’.\textsuperscript{105}

By this time it was also the height of the Cold-War. Europeans were intensely afraid of an attack by the Soviet Union and a war involving atomic bombs. In the early 1960s pamphlets were circulated in Britain with information on the precautions necessary to prepare for a nuclear attack. In Britain Neville Shute’s book, \textit{On the Beach}, was popular literature. It told of the extermination of the human race as the outcome of nuclear warfare, with Australia being the last place where people survived. I saw films in British cinemas depicting the effects of nuclear war, and the end of civilisation as we know it, such as an adaptation of Shute’s novel, and the famous Stanley Kubrick 1964 classic, \textit{Dr Strangelove: Or how I came to love the bomb}. In 1961 the Berlin Wall was built and the United States and the Soviet Union were seen to be on the brink of a real war when an American reconnaissance plane was shot down over the Soviet Union. The Soviets were soon reported to be erecting atomic missile stations in Cuba. The American President, J. F. Kennedy, was said to have won a war of nerves in the crisis which followed, and the Soviets were forced to take back their missiles to the Soviet Union. In the light of such frightening brinkmanship many believed a third world war was almost inevitable.\textsuperscript{106} It was in this climate of uncertainty that many of my respondents left Britain. Whatever their fears or motivation, my respondents turned their back on the social security and increasing affluence of the United Kingdom to come to a country which they thought was a safer, healthier place to bring up their children.

\textit{Bringing in the migrants}

In 1947 in an effort to increase the number of British migrants coming to Australia, Arthur Calwell, the then Australian immigration minister, introduced an assisted migration scheme

\textsuperscript{104} Jupp, \textit{Immigration}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} edn, p. 85.
\textsuperscript{105} Lloyd, p. 378.
\textsuperscript{106} Marwick, p. 247.
offering passage to British citizens at reduced rates. The assisted fare was £10 for adults over

19 years, travellers between the ages of 14 and 19 years travelled for £5 and younger children travelled free. These migrants were the ‘Ten Pound Poms’. Assisted passages agreements were also signed at the same time with countries such as Malta and the Netherlands.  

Appleyard points out that the apparent cost to Australia of an assisted passage was recouped within the first year by the tax on migrant wages.  

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109 Appleyard, Ray and Segal, p. 149.
scheme was at its zenith in the 1960s’. During that period, of the 676,000 British migrants who came to Western Australia, 79.4% were assisted. They were solicited by advertisements in the media, interviewed, given medical checks and offered a passage to Australia. Some came because they were sponsored by organisations or friends and relatives, but Murphy put forward the theory that selection according to the skills needed in Australia was the preferred way to obtain migrants because nominations put forward by friends or relatives were less specific in the choice of occupation. Whatever motivated the migrants to leave the United Kingdom they brought to Australia many skills, but they also brought with them expectations that their life in Australia would be better than the life they were leading in Britain. The social, political and economic changes of the 1960s both in Britain and in Australia, encouraged a cheerful optimism among the migrants, but in many cases, they found Australia was not all that they had expected.

My thesis uses the voices of over 100 British migrants who came to Western Australia in the 1960s to tell a unique story of their decision to leave Britain, the reactions of friends and family and the formalities engaged in before departure. Stories of the journey from home to the ship and the sometimes emotional partings are told in the migrants’ own words, in most cases for the first time. Experiences on the voyage, considered ‘a rite of passage’, were an important part of the respondents’ memories and the section which tells these stories is one of the largest chapters in this thesis. While the arrival in Australia and the settlement period were traumatic for some, others said it was far better than they could have imagined. Although many met with plenty of difficulties initially most of my respondents overcame these and, through struggle, gained success. James Hammerton and Alistair Thomson used research conducted by Sussex University in England and La Trobe University

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111 John Jackson, ‘Changing Patterns of migration to Western Australia’, in Ruth Johnson (ed.), *Immigrants in Western Australia*, University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1979, p. 20.
in Australia to tell experiences of many British Migrants who ‘turned back’ to their homeland.\textsuperscript{114} This thesis also includes personal experiences from the six participants in my study who returned to live permanently in Britain and others whose return was merely a sojourn before they finally settled in Western Australia.

The participants in my study were asked why they decided to migrate to Western Australia. Both Murphy and Stalker state that the primary reason for migration was the idea that the migrants would be ‘better off’ in the country to which they sought access.\textsuperscript{115} However, other authors think more personal reasons affected the decision making.\textsuperscript{116} Zamoyska thinks that for some it was because of friends or relatives extolling the virtues of a new country, for others it was the sun, improved work opportunities or expectations for the future of their children.\textsuperscript{117} Richardson finds in his study that migrants came to Australia of their own free will and that few came from areas of high unemployment. Generally, he says, they had stereotyped ideas about Australia based on information received from the media. He also found immigrants had more outgoing personalities, fewer family ties and were more mobile in their employment and housing. On the down side he put forward the theory that once a decision was made to migrate they resisted any form of negative influence.\textsuperscript{118} Perhaps my participants also overlooked anything that might have been contrary to their views of a better life in the new country. This could help explain the dismay expressed by some of my respondents on the conditions they found on arrival in Australia.

Knightley thinks the Australian Government ‘offered bribes to lure British


\textsuperscript{115}Stalker, p. 20; Murphy, p. 167.

\textsuperscript{116}Betka Zamoyska, \textit{The Ten Pound Fare: Experiences of British people who immigrated to Australia in the 1950s}, Viking, London, 1988, p. xv.

\textsuperscript{117}Zamoyska, p. xix.

\textsuperscript{118}Alan Richardson, \textit{British Immigrants and Australia: A psycho-social study}, Australian National University, Canberra, 1974, pp. 13, 16, 19, 21.
migrants’. Indeed the £10 scheme was a powerful incentive, as one of my respondents said, ‘2 years for £10? Who wouldn’t for an adventure?’.

Promotional publications circulating for migrant information in the 1960s advertised sunny weather in Australia and lauded the continent’s wide open spaces, beaches and its British way of life; but there was little suggestion that wages and employment conditions were better than those in the United Kingdom. Appleyard writes that the typical British migrant believed Australia was always sunny and prosperous with a classless society. But the reality was often different to what had been anticipated. One migrant, Gwen Good, complained that there was ‘inadequate information about Western Australia provided to intending migrants’.

It was a common complaint. Yet Jupp argues that though such accusations were often made, and that migration officers may have been over enthusiastic in their efforts to attract migrants, accurate facts and figures were published. In 1961 and 1962 for example employment statistics and opportunities in Western Australia was an important feature of the films and other informational events presented when W. S. Lonnie led a government sponsored mission to Great Britain to encourage migration to the state. By 1965 four teams had been established in Britain to inform prospective migrants about Western Australia.

It has been difficult to verify statements with regard to the inaccuracy of information featured in government and other migrant publications because so few original copies are still available. Scholars I have spoken to remain unaware of the location or availability of such

119 Knightley, p. 224.
122 Appleyard, Ray and Segal, p. 145.
documents though it would be a valuable field for further research. Searches in the Battye Library, the State Records Office, the Victorian State Library and Immigration Museum, and the National Archives failed to locate much of this type of material. A further search by staff at the National Archives in Canberra was equally unsuccessful. Some items were still available in the National Library and made available on loan. I did approach the Australian Embassy in London without success, but I have not been able to pursue other possible holdings in Britain.

Individuals’ different expectations for their future in Australia may have influenced what information they obtained, how it was evaluated, and which state they considered most attractive. My respondents said they used many resources to aid in their decision to migrate to Australia including publications provided by Commonwealth and state governments, British and Australian newspapers, travel agents, books, films and the letters from friends and relatives. According to Richardson, who did a survey of people living in Medina, a suburb of Perth, in 1959, 72% of the immigrants he interviewed had only considered Australia when making their emigration decision and 90% were looking for more opportunities for themselves and their children. In my study few respondents had applied to migrate to other countries, except New Zealand, but often their perceptions of life in Australia were inaccurate or unrealistic. Many, as Zamoyska writes, ‘believed what they wanted to believe’. Among my participants it was rarely the women who made the decision to migrate. In one response to my survey I was told that although the wife made the decision to come to Australia, she also made the decision to return—the family left just two years and one day after they had arrived here.

Many of my respondents thought they would find jobs and housing as soon as they

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127 ‘Invisible Migrants?: Post-war British Immigration to Australia’, One day symposium held at the Immigration Museum, Melbourne, 1 July 2005.
129 Zamoyska, p. xx.
130 Hammerton and Colebourne. p. 93.
landed in Western Australia. Few expected the harshness of life in migrant hostels, and even fewer the lower standards of living that they found in some country areas. One participant was told by an immigration official in Britain that the Aborigines were a ‘dying race’. She was distressed when she saw their living conditions: ‘camping around the rubbish tip and drinking in the gutters of Collie’.\(^{132}\)

**Leaving home**

Blainey says there are a number of records written by early passengers to Australia. He gives a lengthy discourse on the conditions for migrants in the early nineteenth century. There were three classes of passenger: the wealthy migrants who paid three times the normal fare to enjoy the comfort of private cabins, another group of passengers enjoyed some privacy just below the main deck, but the bulk of immigrants travelled as steerage, sleeping in lower decks. Their accommodation was a long room divided to separate the men from the married couples and the single women who were chaperoned. There was no privacy. This dormitory accommodation was arranged so that the space could then be used to ship bales of wool to Britain more easily on the ship’s return voyage.\(^{133}\) In the 1800s, Blainey writes, the ship provided the bulk of the food for the voyage, but there were no dining tables, seats or eating utensils. My respondents travelling in the 1960s did enjoy dining tables, seats and eating utensils on the voyage, but there were many complaints about the quality of the food. Blainey says various acts of parliament in England tried to improve conditions by restricting the number of passengers according to a ship’s tonnage.\(^{134}\) A century later many of my participants still complained of overcrowded shipboard conditions on their voyage to Australia.

The International Refugee Organisation (IRO) provided many of the ships bringing refugees and displaced persons from the aftermath of war in Europe to Australia. Peters says

\(^{133}\) Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance*, pp. 158–165.  
\(^{134}\) Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance*, pp. 58–62.
they were less luxurious than the ships used to transport the British migrant. The passengers on these IRO ships, apart from pregnant women or women with small children, had to perform duties such as ‘cleaning, cooking, washing and teaching English’. All passengers were strictly separated according to gender. Later ships provided by the International Committee for European Migration offered better quality travel, sometimes using luxury liners such as the SS *Himalaya*. On whichever ship they travelled some of my participants had private cabins, but others had to share dormitory accommodation which was not much better than that of Blainey’s nineteenth century migrants. These shared cabins were cramped, offered no privacy and were generally on the lowest deck. Families were sometimes separated on board, with women and children sharing one cabin and men sharing another together. To fit as many people as possible on the boat even newly married couples were often separated.

Overcrowded dining rooms led to meals being served at different times for children and adults, though generally despite comments to the contrary, the meals were good and varied. The shared laundry, toilet and bathing facilities also caused problems, and the ships’ hospitals were often fully occupied. Various forms of entertainment were provided. However, women with young children often found the voyage very tedious.  

Most of my participants travelled to Western Australia in the 1960s on the *Castel Felice*. The ship arrived at regular intervals throughout the year, disembarking passengers at Fremantle, before travelling to the eastern states. It then acted as a cruise liner, often taking disenchanted migrants back to Europe, there to pick up new emigrants for the return journey to Australia.

The first sight of their new country, for all the ship borne migrants, was the Western


Australian coastline. On arrival in Gage Roads, off the coast of Fremantle, an official party, comprising customs, immigration and quarantine officers, doctors and bank officials boarded the ship. Passports and medical records were checked and bank officers provided money exchange and advice on transferring accounts to Australia. Some of my respondents agree with Jupp who reported that many thought Fremantle ‘old fashioned’ and like a ‘Wild West town’. All new Australians, even those travelling on to interstate locations, were faced with the vagaries of Australian weather in Fremantle. One of the respondents was struck by the heat of the wharf. Others who came in the winter were surprised to find cold, wet weather. Many were astounded by the anti-British feeling they experienced including such remarks as ‘the only good pom is a dead pom’.

Some of the migrants were welcomed by friends, relatives. Those who had been sponsored by employers normally had accommodation waiting in hotels or apartments, but most were loaded onto a bus on the wharf to be taken to a migrant reception centre. They had been promised ‘temporary’ accommodation on arrival provided by the Commonwealth Government at Point Walter, Graylands or later Noalimba. For example we were told that our accommodation at Point Walter would be available for approximately six weeks. When the migrants arrived at a hostel they often found ‘old huts’ which seemed more like a concentration camp than the expected introduction to Australian life as portrayed in government publications. According to Peters many migrants felt that the hostels had been ‘glamorised’ and had they known of the isolation and the conditions in the Point Walter Hostel they would not have come to Australia. Sadly some of my respondents who disembarked in other states found the hostel conditions there just as depressing. The hostel at Broadmeadows in Melbourne was said to be ‘like a prison camp, no hot water, no TV, no

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137 Peters, Milk and Honey, p. 103.
140 Zamoyska, pp. 31, 92.
141 Zamoyska, p. 64.
142 Nonja Peters, Fiona Bush and Jenny Gregory, Point Walter Migrant Reception Centre: A heritage study, Centre for Western Australia History, University of Western Australia, Nedlands, 1996, p. 24.
carpet’. Appleyard reasoned that the shared facilities and meals were the cause of much discontent and unrest. He also says that rental accommodation away from the hostels was difficult to obtain.

His findings are confirmed by many of my respondents. The lack of public transport and the shortage of rental accommodation in the 1960s, especially for families with young children, could not have been visualised before leaving Britain. Generally, for incoming migrants, not only was rental accommodation difficult to find, but buying your own house, the ideal for many, was hard because banks and building societies were reluctant to lend money to migrants and charged a higher interest rate. This was not just in Western Australia; other writers have commented on this problem and Jupp says migrants felt isolated and as though ‘the rest of the world didn’t exist’. The migrants were surprised to find that here the ‘children went barefoot, [there were] fly wire doors, tin roofs, and sand everywhere’. According to Lack one of the major problems for British migrants was the difficulty in coming to terms with a culture that differed so surprisingly from that which they had known at home.

Life in Australia

The first priority for the migrant breadwinner was to find a job. Peters found in her studies that the principle government idea was to place migrants in jobs the Australians did not want to face, and that non-British immigrants were put to work in areas that would be of service to the rest of the community. My respondents did not report that they faced this situation but they often found the transition from the British workplace to the Australian job market

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144 Appleyard, Ray and Segal, p. 124.
147 Thomson, ‘Good migration’, p. 112.
149 Peters, Milk and Honey, p. 175.
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difficult. Although unemployment was low in the mid-to-late 1960s, finding the work for which the migrants had skills was sometimes very difficult, if not impossible, according to my respondents. British apprenticeships were not recognised; instead experience and union membership seem to have been the most important requirement in obtaining work. Australians were given the first preference for any job and some employers and unions expressed hostility, particularly towards British women workers.\footnote{Ruth Johnson (ed.), \textit{Immigrants in Western Australia}, University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1979, p. 47.} Zamoyska says that the migrant workers found poor working conditions and that it was the unsafe work practices that led them to become active in the trade union movement. Strikes became known as ‘the British Disease’.\footnote{Zamoyska, pp. xxv, 73, 84.} Unemployment was a particular problem for migrants with families to support.\footnote{Jupp, \textit{Arrivals and Departures}, p. 111.} Lack says the early hardships suffered by many British migrants were exacerbated by a sometimes vicious hostility that many encountered ‘though this has been largely forgotten today’.\footnote{Lack and Templeton, p. 79.} A letter to the \textit{Manjimup Times} in 1966 reported incidents which were upsetting to a migrant couple at Tone River. Stones had been thrown through their windows and malicious letters sent, including one which read ‘go home crawler Pommy, we don’t want you here’.\footnote{\textit{Manjimup Times}, 28 September 1966, p. 4.} But Jupp, writing in 1966, says he thinks that the British migrants were too sensitive and that the ‘mild hostility’ was resented by the British.\footnote{Jupp, \textit{Arrivals and Departures'}, p. 103.}

Women probably found it the hardest to settle because their homes were often not up to the standard they had enjoyed in Britain.\footnote{K. L. Wallis, ‘British Immigration in Western Australia: A thesis’, presented as a 2\textsuperscript{nd} year Geography Major, Graylands Teachers College, November 1988, p. xxx.} In times of trouble they missed the security of the family and friends they had left behind; some migrant women experienced mental illnesses.\footnote{Zamoyska, p. 80.} In the early 1960s there was little work for married women and some of my respondents say they found this particularly difficult when families were trying to save money

\footnote{\textit{Immigrants in Western Australia}, University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1979, p. 47.} Zamoyska, pp. xxv, 73, 84.\footnote{\textit{Arrivals and Departures}, p. 111.} \footnote{Lack and Templeton, p. 79.} \footnote{\textit{Manjimup Times}, 28 September 1966, p. 4.} \footnote{\textit{Arrivals and Departures'}, p. 103.} \footnote{K. L. Wallis, ‘British Immigration in Western Australia: A thesis’, presented as a 2\textsuperscript{nd} year Geography Major, Graylands Teachers College, November 1988, p. xxx.} \footnote{Zamoyska, p. 80.}
to buy houses and re-establish their lives.

In Britain at this time the population had become used to a comprehensive welfare system—including free health and education—which protected people from birth to death. In Australia while some forms of medical insurance and benefits existed, all medical treatment had to be paid for at point of service. There were good public hospitals, but people were expected to join private medical insurance schemes (payments to which could be claimed against tax) for treatment in private hospitals. Australia also offered a safety net which included such benefits as maternity allowances, child endowments, sickness and unemployment benefits and old age pensions; but unlike the British welfare system all these benefits were means tested. Education was free at the primary and secondary levels, but in contrast to the British system, there were school administration fees, text books and other materials which had to be bought. Fees were also charged at universities.

There was a state housing scheme in Western Australia, and other states, but the waiting list for tenancy was often very long, especially in the later 1960s. Sponsorship for assisted migration was offered in Britain by Western Australian building companies such as the Realty Development Corporation (RDC). Under the agreement migrants paid a deposit in Britain on a house the family would occupy when they arrived in Western Australia. The sponsors also gave a promise of help to find employment in Australia. Many who came under the scheme found that the promised house was far from being finished and ready to move into; they often had to pay rental fees for many months while the dwelling was completed. This was often difficult as they had not allowed money for a long-term rental. New houses were often built in outer suburbs and people found they were living in an English community, remote and inconvenient, where there was little public transport. Many British migrants, whose social lives had revolved around the ‘pub’, found the drinking habits in Australia

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158 Western Australian Year Book, No 6, 1967, pp. 146–149; Western Australian Government, Immigration Department, What every migrant needs to know, Western Australian Government Printer, Wembley, c 1966, pp. 41, 43, 50.

strange. They were surprised at the exclusion of females from the hotels. Another peculiarity was the ‘session’. The session operated on Sundays when hotels were allowed to open only for short periods—except within 20 miles of the Perth Town Hall where no hotels opened at all on Sundays!\(^{160}\)

In the 1960s British migrants enjoyed most of the privileges of Australian citizenship, including the right to vote. The comment by Jupp that some Britons refused to become naturalised because they feared the prospect of being conscripted to fight in the war in Vietnam\(^{161}\) was supported by some of my respondents. Their allegiance to Australia did not extend to the sacrifice of their children. Richardson points out that they still felt essentially British:

> For the average adult British migrant no amount of reshaping will make them Australian. They have a different set of memories, personal experience and tradition.\(^{162}\)

In the late 1960s, because of the shortage of willing British migrants, people from Mediterranean countries were also given assisted passages to Australia.\(^{163}\) By the end of the 1970s ‘assimilation’ was replaced by ‘integration’. Australia had dismantled the remnants of the White Australia Policy and formally adopted multiculturism.

**Let’s go home**

Return migration in the 1960s by people born in the United Kingdom was probably not as high as the London newspapers reported, and was lower than that of people from other nations who had migrated to Australia. Jupp says that in 1963 one in every fifteen British migrants returned home, while the ‘ratio of Dutch departures to arrivals was one to two, and three in five Germans’.\(^{164}\) Nevertheless it was the displeasure of the Britons, often regarded as ‘pampered’, which was most heard; they were highly critical in their comparisons of what

\(^{160}\) *What Every Migrant Needs to Know*, p. 68.


\(^{162}\) Richardson, ‘British Immigrants in Western Australia’, p. 20.

\(^{163}\) Murphy, p. 9.

\(^{164}\) Jupp, *Arrivals and Departures*, p. 100.
they had left and what they found in Australia. No finite figures were recorded and estimates on the numbers of migrants leaving Australia vary; Murphy says 20%, Jupp, 23%, Sherington 25% and Appleyard 29%. Thompson suggests that 50% of single men and women migrants did not stay in Australia, and that some migrants came with no intention of staying beyond the obligatory two years. Whatever the true figure it is estimated that these departures cost Australia in the region of $480,000 per month. Thomson says only a minority of those returning complained about experiencing a reduced economic situation in Australia. Murphy agrees, saying there were several factors that led to the decision to return home, including homesickness and tragedy.

Jupp contends that much of the unhappiness and inability to settle migrants often experienced was provoked by unfounded expectations. Their decision to leave England had been based mainly on such hopes as improved opportunities for their children and a better climate, housing and employment. Some found that in Australia education seemed to be less effective and housing and jobs hard to find. There were frequent references to Australian unfriendliness, hostility and rudeness. Some migrants decried the greediness of shopkeepers and land sharks, the cruelty to animals and the apparent lack of respect for law and order. Yet the reasons that many returned were as varied as the reasons for first coming: some didn’t like Australia; others had to return for family and other reasons not of their making.

This thesis is mainly composed of the stories of British migrants of the 1960s who settled in Western Australia. Many were dissatisfied at first but overcame this initial discontent to make a comfortable home for their family. They speak of success in their personal lives and many are proud of the achievements since of their children. The following chapters tell of their motivation to come to Australia, their parting from the life they had

165 Lack and Templeton, p. 15.
166 Murphy, p. 6; Jupp, Immigration, 2nd edn, p. 75; Appleyard, Ray and Segal, p. 142; Sherington, Australia’s Immigrants, p.148; Thompson, ‘Voices we never hear’, p. 53.
167 Appleyard, British Emigration to Australia, p. 147.
168 Thomson, ‘Voices we never hear’, p. 54.
169 Murphy, p. 167.
known and sometimes, after a never to be forgotten journey, how they finally settled in Western Australia.