CHAPTER 9

RELIGION AND EDUCATION

Schoolchildren with teachers, bus driver and school bus, Roxby Downs, SA. Photograph by Gunther Deichmann. WELDON TRANNIES

FOLLOWING THE FAILURE of energetic efforts to impose English educational institutions and customs on colonial society, including a role for the Church of England as the 'official church', the principle of religious freedom was adopted in the 1830s. This cleared the way for the development of systems of secular education in the colonies.

Education continued to be provided by private schools, some run by churches and others without specific religious affiliation. From the middle of the nineteenth century state intervention in education increased in all colonies. Governments were stimulated by the goal of universal literacy, and by the need to provide opportunities for effective and equal education in rural areas. This chapter examines the states' part in providing those opportunities.

As they succeeded, the educational ladder extended. Secondary education was considered a right in the twentieth century, and more children stayed at school beyond the age of sixteen. Tertiary education, established in the nineteenth century for a privileged elite, became more widely available.
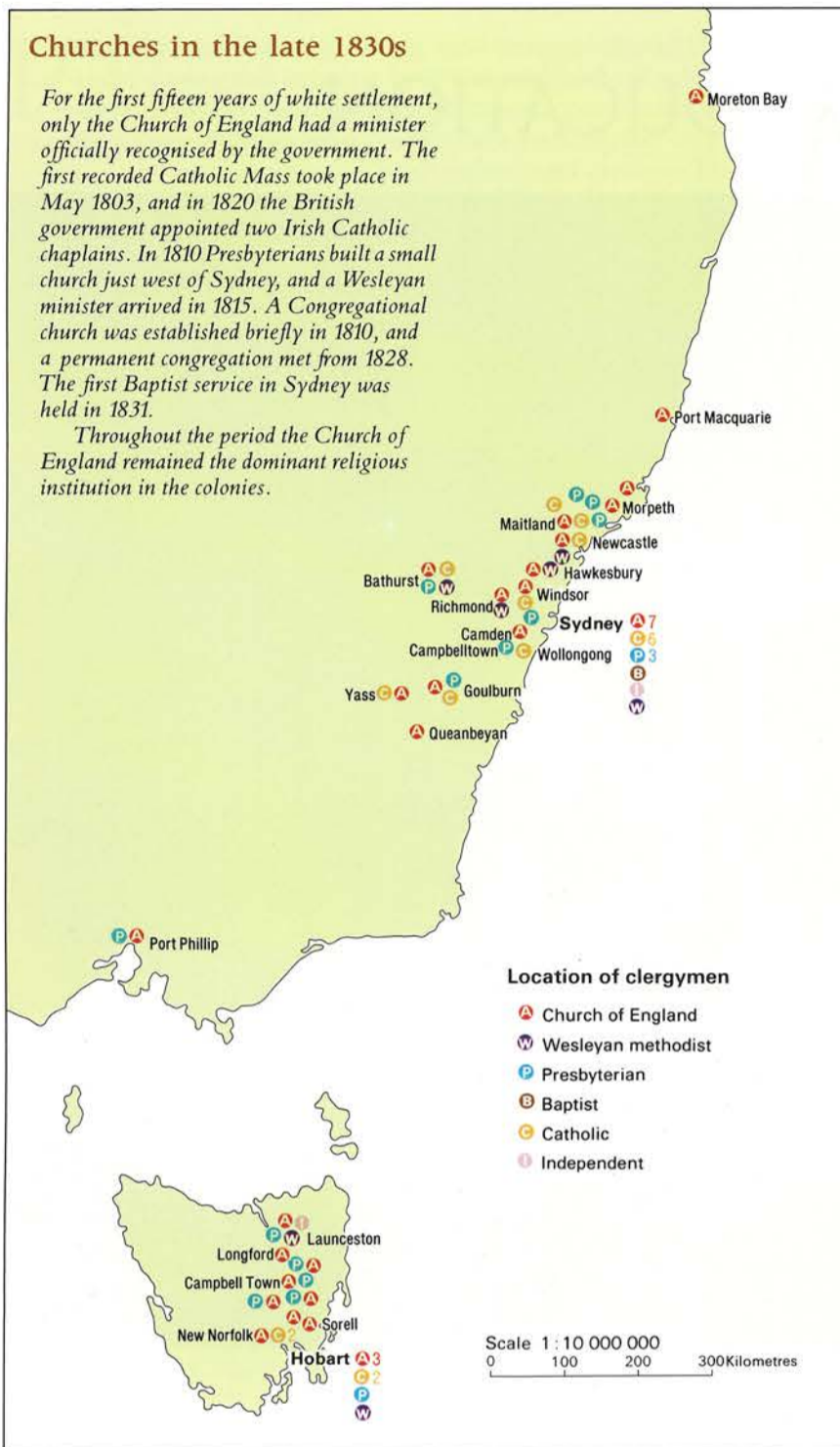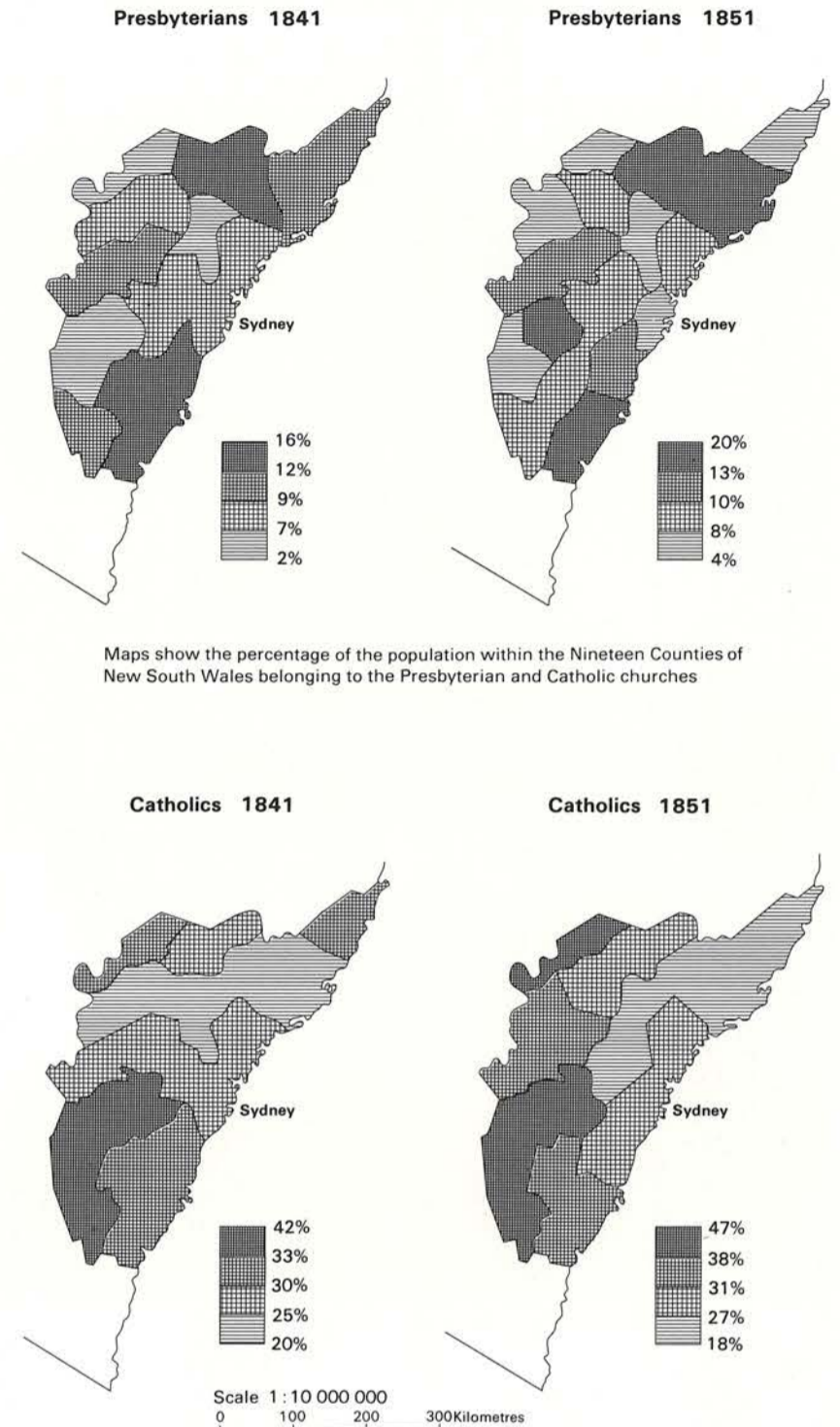
Religious denominations

Churches in the late 1830s

For the first fifteen years of white settlement, only the Church of England had a minister officially recognised by the government. The first recorded Catholic Mass took place in May 1803, and in 1820 the British government appointed two Irish Catholic chaplains. In 1810 Presbyterians built a small church just west of Sydney, and a Wesleyan minister arrived in 1815. A Congregational church was established briefly in 1810, and a permanent congregation met from 1828. The first Baptist service in Sydney was held in 1831.

Throughout the period the Church of England remained the dominant religious institution in the colonies.
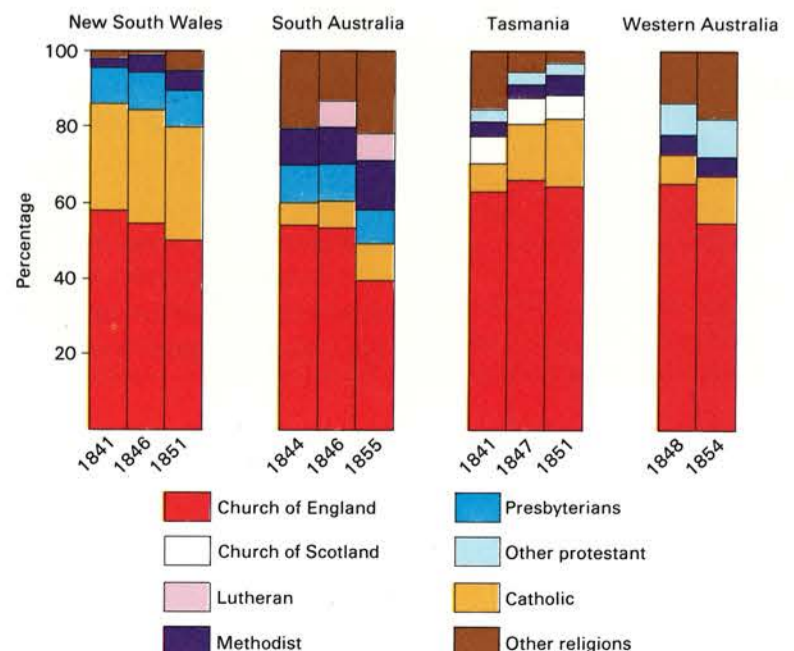
Moreton Bay

Port Macquarie

Morpeth
Maitland
Newcastle
Bathurst
Hawkesbury
Windsor
Richmond
Camden
Sydney
Campbelltown
Wollongong
Yass
Goulburn
Queanbeyan

Port Phillip

Location of clergymen

- A Church of England
- W Wesleyan methodist
- P Presbyterian
- B Baptist
- C Catholic
- I Independent

Launceston
Longford
Campbell Town
New Norfolk
Sorell
Hobart

Scale 1 : 10 000 000
0   100   200   300 Kilometres

Distribution of Presbyterians and Catholics 1841 and 1851

Presbyterians 1841

Sydney

16%
12%
9%
7%
2%

Presbyterians 1851

Sydney

20%
13%
10%
8%
4%

Maps show the percentage of the population within the Nineteen Counties of New South Wales belonging to the Presbyterian and Catholic churches

Catholics 1841

Sydney

42%
33%
30%
25%
20%

Catholics 1851

Sydney

47%
38%
31%
27%
18%

Scale 1 : 10 000 000
0   100   200   300 Kilometres

I N THE 1840s the religious character of the colonies was dominated by the traditions which settlers had brought with them. The Church of England had not become the established religion in the colonies, as it was in England, Wales and Ireland, but it had the largest membership. In Tasmania about two-thirds of the population were Church of England. The relative proportion of Catholics varied from nearly 30 per cent in New South Wales to less than 10 per cent in South Australia. Other denominations varied in strength from colony to colony.

Just as there were differences between the colonies in their religious composition, there were also differences within them. Regional patterns developed, as the distribution of Catholics and Presbyterians in New South Wales from 1841 to 1851 illustrates. Within the settled parts of the colony at this time, Catholics were underrepresented in the north and central areas, and overrepresented in the southwest. In contrast, Presbyterians were well represented in the north and northwest, where their presence influenced the pastoral occupancy of the New England region. Many of these regional patterns became permanent features of colonial society.

Religious denominations

New South Wales   South Australia   Tasmania   Western Australia

Percentage

1841 1846 1851   1844 1846 1855   1841 1847 1851   1848 1854

- Church of England
- Church of Scotland
- Lutheran
- Methodist
- Presbyterians
- Other protestant
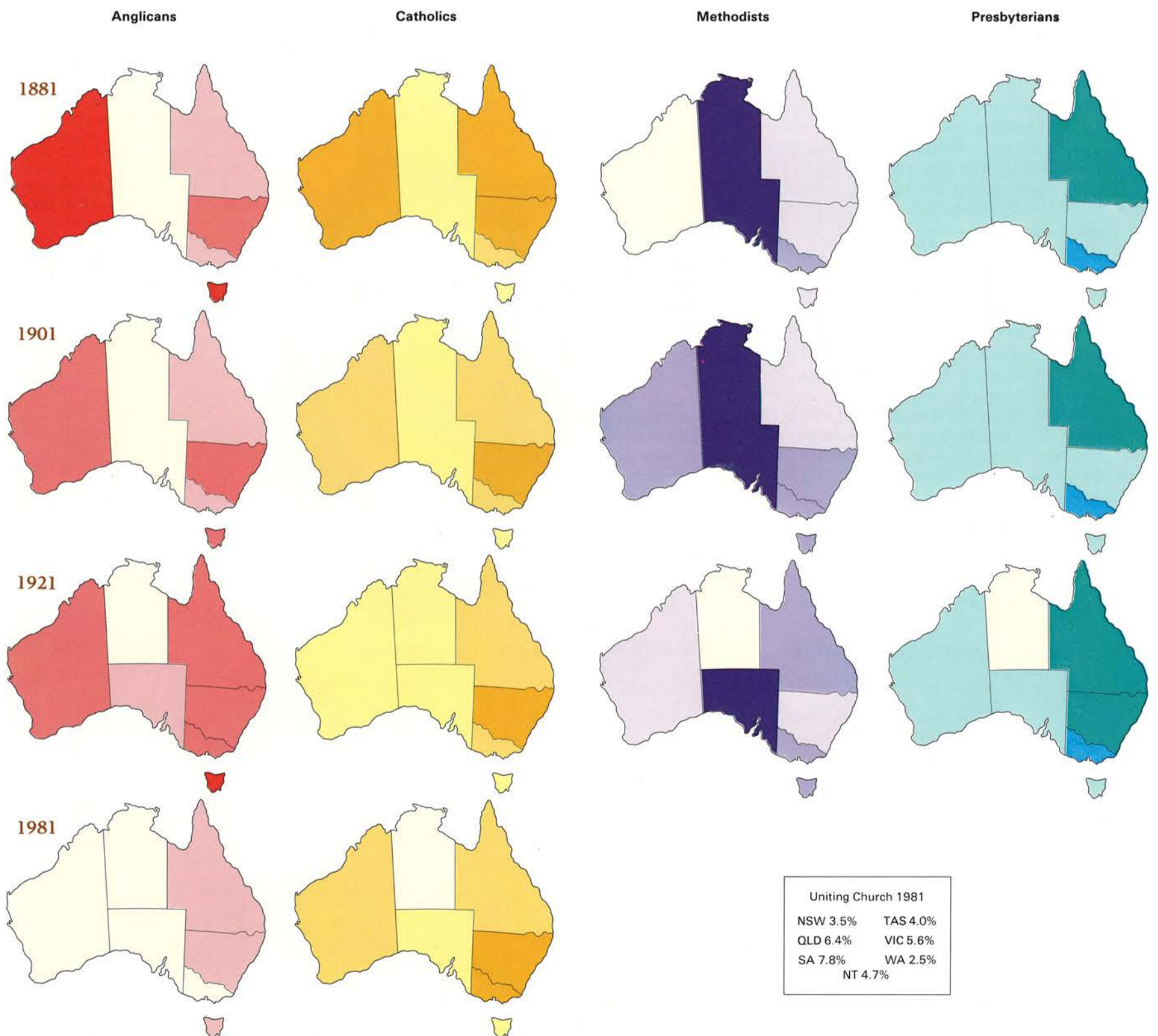- Catholic
- Other religions

This series of maps shows the percentage of each state's population claiming to belong to the Church of England, Catholic, Methodist and Presbyterian churches at different dates.

Census returns suggest that the Church of England has always been the dominant religion in Australia, though nominal adherence of the kind recorded in the census can be misleading. For, while about 46 per cent of the Catholics in Australia attended church at least monthly in the early 1980s, only about 16 per cent of Anglicans did so. In terms of active participation Catholicism had become the stronger denomination, with almost three times as many monthly churchgoers as the Anglican Church. The relative strength of Catholic church membership in each state has varied, although in New South Wales it has been consistently greater than 25 per cent and in South Australia it has not exceeded 20 per cent. Since World War II, the Catholic Church has received an influx of immigrants from Catholic countries in Europe.

From 1881 to 1977 the percentage of Methodists and Presbyterians in each state changed very little. South Australia had the highest proportion of Methodists in its population, Victoria the highest proportion of Presbyterians. In 1977 the Uniting Church was formed by a union of most members of the Methodist, Congregational and Presbyterian churches, although some people still registered themselves as Presbyterians or Methodists.

Although these maps deal only with the four major religious groups, there have been many others. Jewish worship dates back to 1828, and before the end of the nineteenth century, the Salvation Army, Christian Scientists and Plymouth Brethren had established places of worship. More recently, there has been a growth of sectarian forms of Christianity associated with the Pentecostal or 'charismatic' movement, and the introduction of small but vigorous non-Christian communities, notably Islam.

Major religious denominations

Anglicans	Catholics	Methodists	Presbyterians

1881

1901

1921

1981

Uniting Church 1981	
NSW 3.5%	TAS 4.0%
QLD 6.4%	VIC 5.6%
SA 7.8%	WA 2.5%
NT 4.7%	

Percentage of colony/state populations (excluding Aborigines)

Greater than 50%	Greater than 25%	Greater than 15%	Greater than 15%
40-50%	20-25%	10-15%	10-15%
30-40%	15-20%	5-10%	5-10%
Less than 30%	Less than 15%	Less than 5%	Less than 5%

Australian Inland Mission

THE AUSTRALIA INLAND MISSION (AIM) is the best-known example of a church's efforts to overcome the tyranny of distance. Because of the remoteness of its scattered settlements, the outback had been largely neglected by the churches in colonial Australia.

The AIM was created after a survey undertaken by the Reverend John Flynn in 1912 and the adoption of his report, *Northern Territory and central Australia: a call to the Church*, by the Presbyterian Church of Australia. Flynn described how vast areas of inland Australia had previously been ignored or neglected by church and government alike. The report outlined a sweeping program of action aimed at 'making Christ known throughout the Australian Bush: of fighting the forces of evil, and of improving the conditions of life across half a continent'. Flynn envisaged bringing hospitals, libraries and missionaries to an immense area extending from Charleville, Longreach and Cloncurry in Queensland, across the Northern Territory and inland South Australia to the Western Australian coast northwards from Geraldton. His plan was to establish patrol padres with bases at Oodnadatta in South Australia, at Pine Creek in the Northern Territory and at Port Hedland in Western Australia, and to have them use camel or packhorse teams to serve vast distances. The purpose of these ministries was not simply to bring the 'word of God to the outback' but also to bring basic improvements in medical services and meet the social needs of solitary workers and families in isolated outback stations and townships.

With state and federal governments reluctant to establish uneconomic hospitals and medical services in such sparsely settled areas, Flynn set about establishing hostels or nursing homes even before the Presbyterian Church began to act on his proposals in 1916. A nursing home was opened at Oodnadatta in December 1912, and a hostel at Port Hedland, 1700 kilometres north of Perth, in 1915. With the establishment of the AIM, other hostels soon followed. Maranboy south of Katherine in the Northern Territory opened in 1917, Halls Creek in the Kimberleys in 1918 and Beltana in the Flinders Ranges of South Australia in 1919. Further nursing homes were opened subsequently at Lake Grace, Marble Bar and Fitzroy Crossing in Western Australia, Innamincka in South Australia, Birdsville in Queensland and at Alice Springs.

Early in 1928 the AIM established an experimental aerial medical service with its headquarters at Cloncurry, the first service of its kind in the world. The scheme had grown from the idea first proposed in 1917 by Clifford Peel, a young medical student and pilot in the Flying Corps during World War I. In an article entitled 'A Young Australian's Vision — Aeroplanes for the Inland', written for the *Inlander Journal*, Peel described the way in which planes based at Oodnadatta, Cloncurry and Katherine could serve an area within a 500-kilometre radius, covering about 750 000 square kilometres. Such aircraft could quickly bring pastoral and medical care to isolated communities and homesteads. Throughout the early 1920s Flynn took every opportunity to further the idea of a Flying Doctor service, but nearly a decade elapsed before sufficient money, improvements in wireless communications and knowledge of flying allowed the experimental service from Cloncurry to start. The experiment succeeded. By 1936 two new Flying Doctor bases were opened, one at Port Hedland and the other at Wyndham. In 1939 the service established by the AIM under Flynn's guidance became the Flying Doctor service. When Flynn died in 1951 a network of Royal Flying Doctor bases criss-crossed the inland.
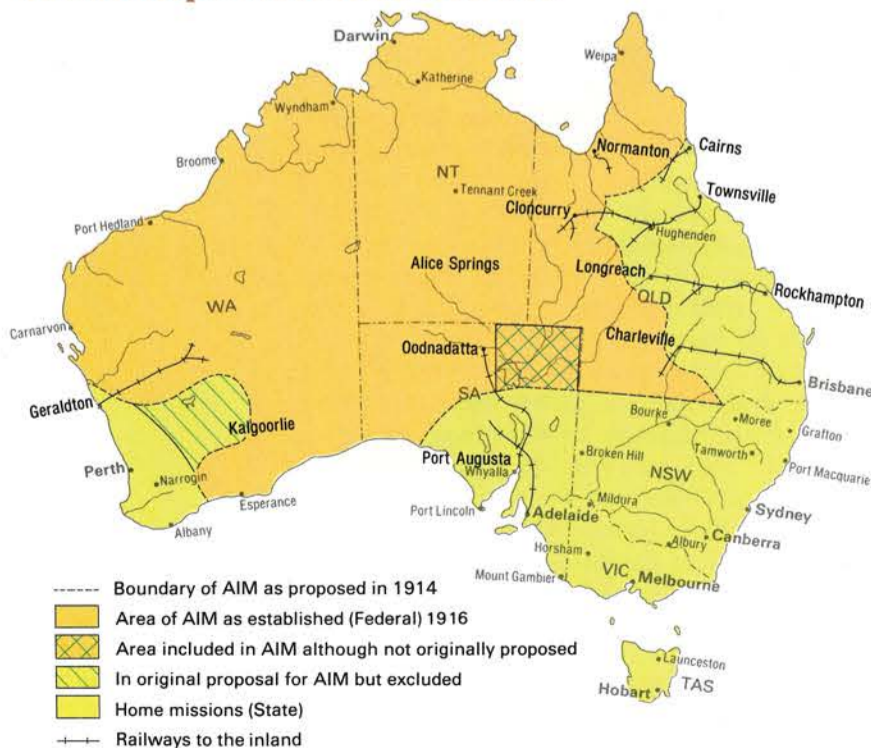
Other developments soon followed. The AIM midget pedal wireless set developed by Alfred Traeger quickly became the basis of an expanding inland communications network. By mid-1929 the AIM had produced and installed five pedal transceivers in the Gulf country of northern Queensland and by 1933 the inland pedal wireless set had been issued to patrol padres. Efficient radio communications made the success of the Flying Doctor service possible.

Although the establishment of the Flying Doctor service is the most widely appreciated aspect of the AIM's work in inland Australia, the AIM also provided welfare services, centres for the aged, mission centres, pre-school education and, for those who sought it, involvement in an active Christian community. The AIM was incorporated with the Uniting Church of Australia in 1977 and renamed the Uniting Church National Mission.
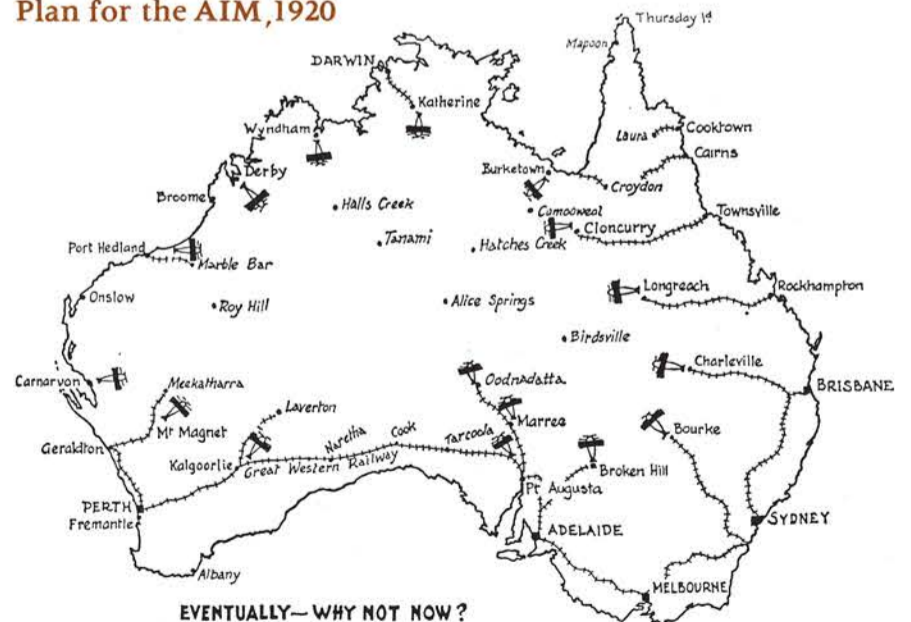

Rev John Flynn (1880–1951). John Flynn, a Presbyterian minister, founded the Royal Flying Doctor service and pioneered the use of the pedal wireless in outback Australia. He also established the Australian Inland Mission to minister to the needs of Australians living in the outback.
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The development of AIM 1914-1916

------ Boundary of AIM as proposed in 1914
▨ Area of AIM as established (Federal) 1916
▧ Area included in AIM although not originally proposed
▨ In original proposal for AIM but excluded
▨ Home missions (State)
+-+-+ Railways to the inland

Scale 1:40 000 000
0   500   1000 Kilometres

Plan for the AIM, 1920

EVENTUALLY— WHY NOT NOW?

Barely four years after the Presbyterian Church began to act upon Flynn's recommendations, the Inlander *printed this map showing the planned extent of the AIM. Flynn pointed out that setting up the bases as quickly as possible would not seriously affect Australia's overall budget but would be of inestimable value for those living in the interior.*

The Royal Flying Doctor service was honoured with the issue of a commemorative stamp in 1957. Its logo combines the traditional physician's staff with wings and radio waves.
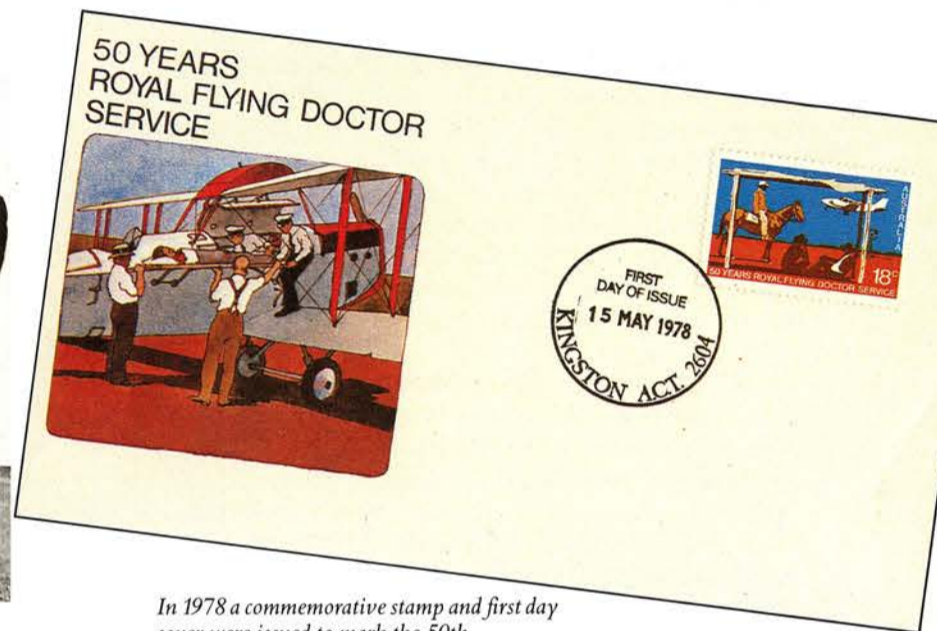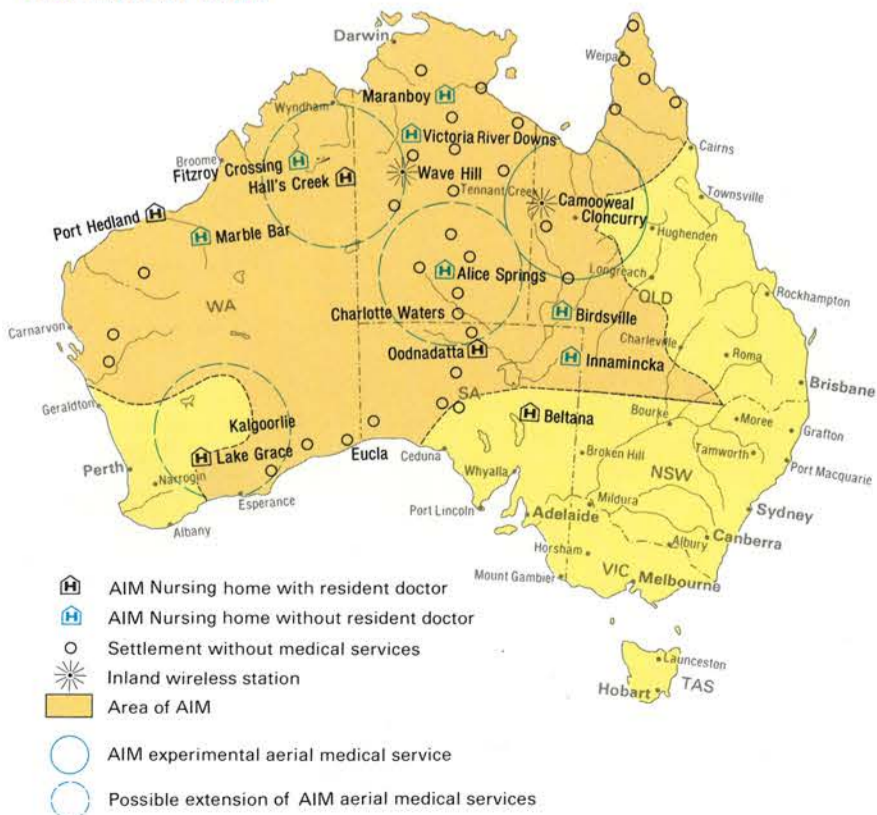AUSTRALIA POST

The Royal Flying Doctor service brought medical treatment to outback Australia where none had existed before. Seriously ill patients, like this child, were flown to base hospitals scattered across the inland. Photograph Pix, 1941.
MAGAZINE PROMOTIONS

Alfred Traeger with the baby wireless transmitter that enabled the AIM to extend its links with the inland. Photograph from Ion L. Idriess, Flynn of the Inland, 1932.
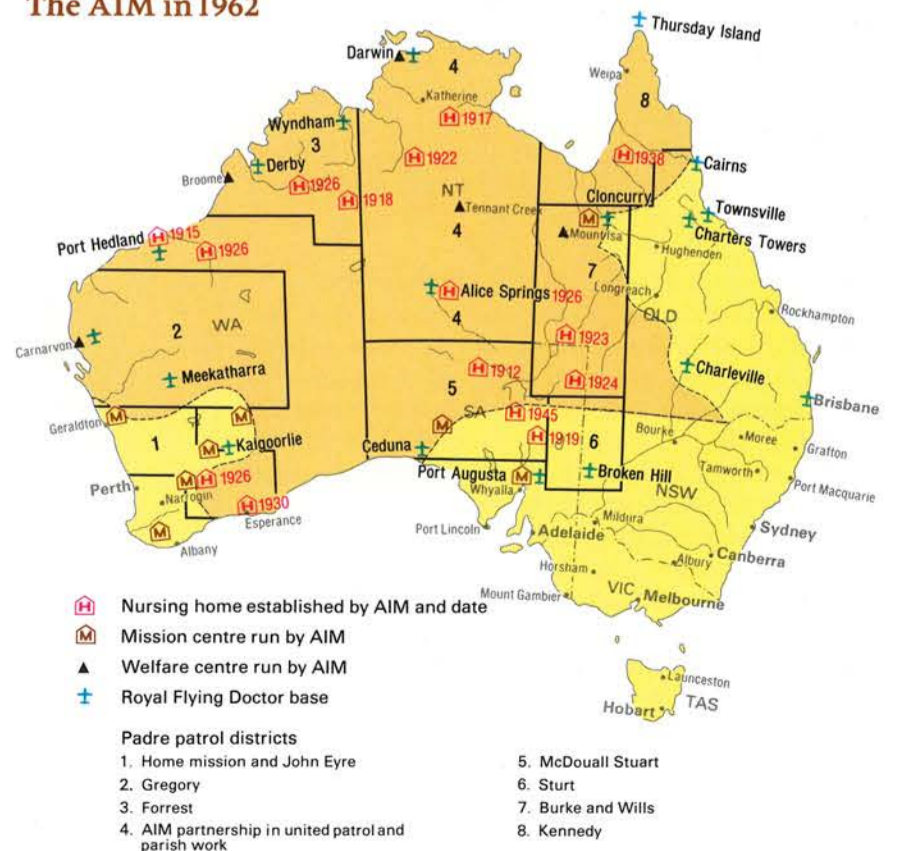NATIONAL LIBRARY

In 1978 a commemorative stamp and first day cover were issued to mark the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Royal Flying Doctor Service.
AUSTRALIA POST

The AIM in 1928

Ⓗ	AIM Nursing home with resident doctor
Ⓗ	AIM Nursing home without resident doctor
○	Settlement without medical services
✳	Inland wireless station
▨	Area of AIM
◯	AIM experimental aerial medical service
◯	Possible extension of AIM aerial medical services

The AIM in 1962

Ⓗ	Nursing home established by AIM and date
Ⓜ	Mission centre run by AIM
▲	Welfare centre run by AIM
✝	Royal Flying Doctor base

Padre patrol districts
1. Home mission and John Eyre
2. Gregory
3. Forrest
4. AIM partnership in united patrol and parish work
5. McDouall Stuart
6. Sturt
7. Burke and Wills
8. Kennedy

Schools — church and state

NO SCHOOLS were envisaged in the plans for the convict settlement at Sydney, but despite government inaction they were established. The first church school was opened in 1793 and by 1797 there were six Church of England schools, subsidised by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. During the next twenty years the government and religious denominations argued bitterly over the best methods of providing schools. The development of colonial educational systems was thus accompanied by sectarian controversy, fierce competition for scarce finances and often poor-quality education.

In New South Wales the Church of England was treated initially as an established church. The governor supported the colony's first chaplain in appointing convict teachers and establishing schools. In 1826 the Church and Schools Corporation, based on the Church of England, reinforced that church's role as the colony's educator.

Increasingly, English dissenters, Scottish Presbyterians and Irish Catholics voiced opposition to the assumed right of the Church of England to be sole educator. New ideas on education emerged and the pre-eminence of the Anglican clergy and their faith was challenged. The Church and Schools Corporation was dissolved in 1833 and from this date funds for schooling were provided on a proportional basis to all religious denominations.
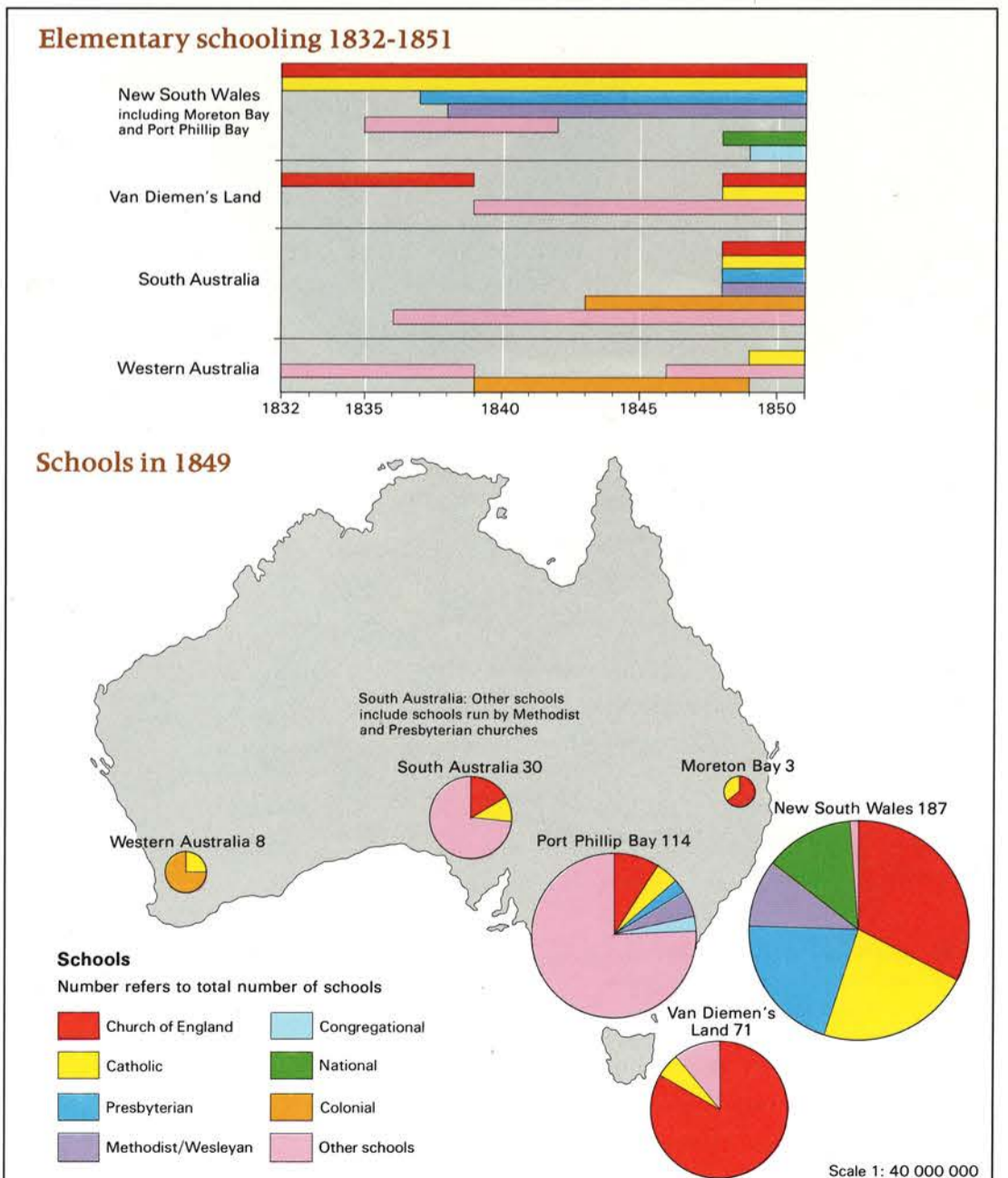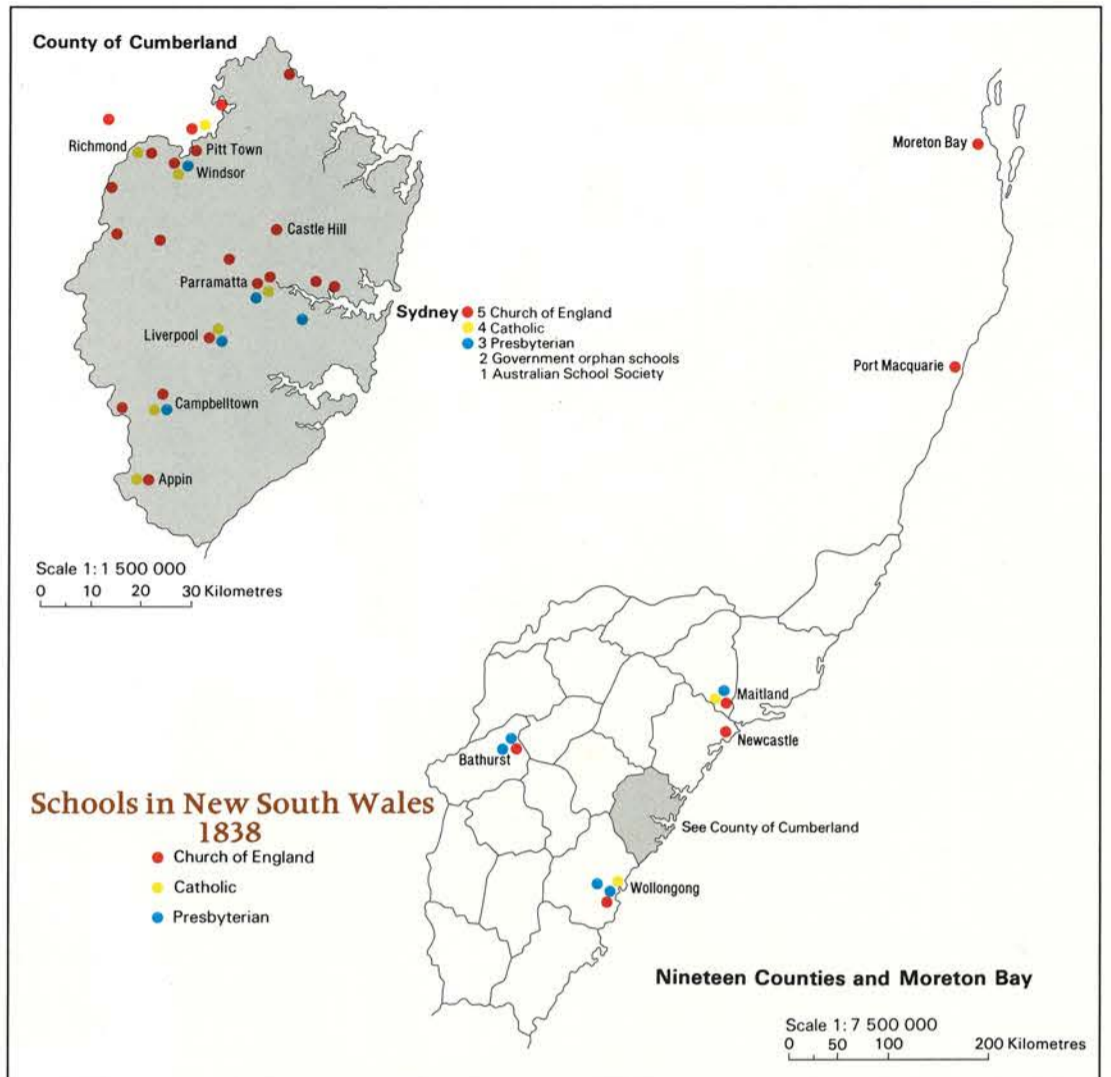
Distribution of schools in New South Wales

Reflecting both the religious composition of the population and its favoured start, the Church of England ran most schools in 1838, 30 in all, and provided schooling in Sydney, the Cumberland Plain and the distant settlements of Port Macquarie and Moreton Bay. The Church of England had also opened the King's Schools at Parramatta and Sydney. A dozen schools, the first established at Parramatta in 1821, served the Catholic community and both Maitland and Wollongong had Catholic schools by 1838. Presbyterian schools were found in the newly settled districts of Bathurst, Maitland and Berrima, as well as in Sydney and the Cumberland Plain. The Australian School Society, founded in 1834, ran one school. It received little support and, facing opposition from Governor Bourke who favoured the Irish national system, was closed in 1843. Gradually more schools were built and by 1849 there were 187 in the colony. They included 25 national or government schools established by Governor FitzRoy in 1848. Based on the Irish national system, they attempted to solve sectarian problems by separating children for religious instruction by ministers of their own faith. They served the poor.

Education in the other colonies before 1850

The philosophical and religious debates that had marked the early development of education in New South Wales were mirrored in the other colonies. In Van Diemen's Land the first schools were run by the Anglican clergy, who were responsible for 59 schools in 1849. Private schools dominated education in the Port Phillip district. In Western Australia the small school population in 1849 was served by eight schools, two run by the Catholic Church. Attempts to start schools in South Australia faced many difficulties. The establishment and subsequent failure of the South Australian School Society highlighted the problems of providing education in a newly settled colony. Governments became increasingly involved with providing basic schooling.
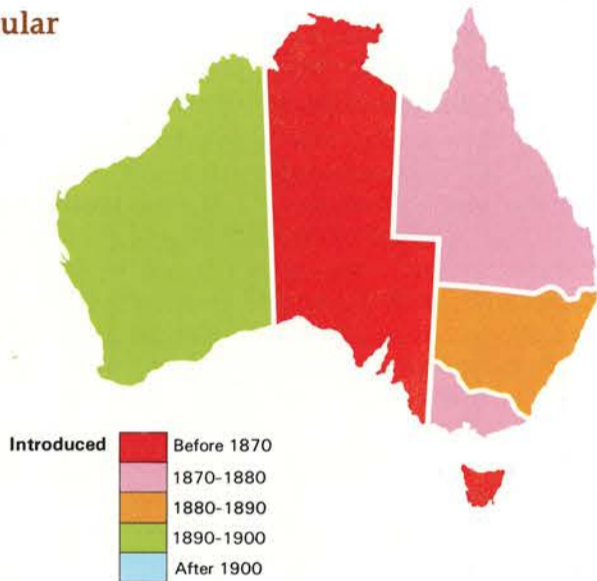
Four major elements in the later history of state education are mapped on the opposite page.

County of Cumberland

Richmond · Pitt Town · Windsor · Castle Hill · Parramatta · Liverpool · Campbelltown · Appin

Moreton Bay · Port Macquarie

Sydney ● 5 Church of England
● 4 Catholic
● 3 Presbyterian
2 Government orphan schools
1 Australian School Society

Scale 1 : 1 500 000
0   10   20   30 Kilometres

Schools in New South Wales 1838
● Church of England
● Catholic
● Presbyterian

Maitland · Newcastle · Bathurst · Wollongong · See County of Cumberland

Nineteen Counties and Moreton Bay

Scale 1 : 7 500 000
0   50   100   200 Kilometres

Elementary schooling 1832-1851

New South Wales including Moreton Bay and Port Phillip Bay

Van Diemen's Land

South Australia

Western Australia

1832   1835   1840   1845   1850

Schools in 1849

South Australia: Other schools include schools run by Methodist and Presbyterian churches

South Australia 30   Moreton Bay 3   New South Wales 187

Western Australia 8   Port Phillip Bay 114

Van Diemen's Land 71

Schools
Number refers to total number of schools

● Church of England
● Catholic
● Presbyterian
● Methodist/Wesleyan
● Congregational
● National
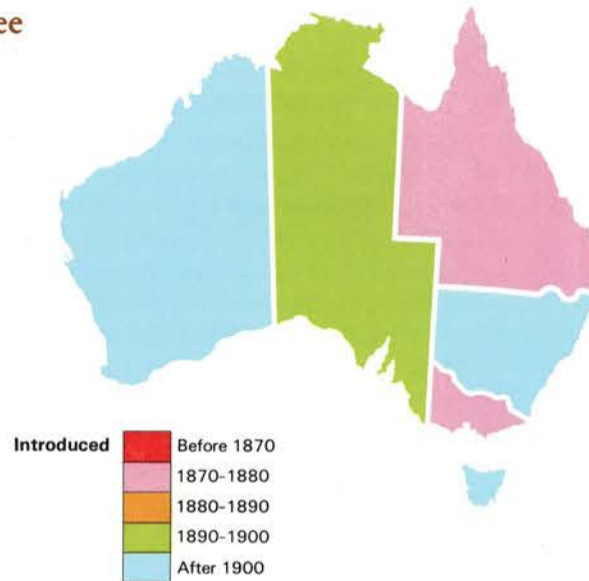● Colonial
● Other schools

Scale 1 : 40 000 000

In 1793, the colonial chaplain, Reverend Johnson, built a church as a place of worship on Sundays. For the rest of the week it served as a school. Staffed by three teachers, it held about one hundred and fifty students and was open to all in colonial society. Students, however, had to pay for their schooling and were expected to attend church on Sundays. World's News, *18 November 1905.*
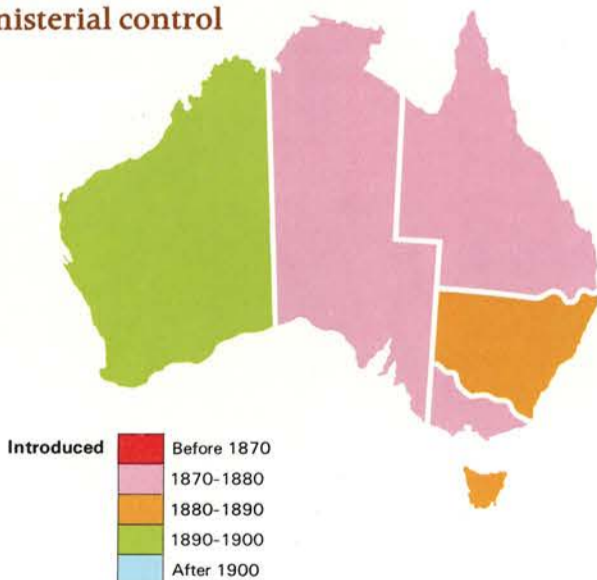
Secular

Introduced	
	Before 1870
	1870-1880
	1880-1890
	1890-1900
	After 1900

Free

Introduced	
	Before 1870
	1870-1880
	1880-1890
	1890-1900
	After 1900

Secular

Secular education was a controversial issue. Despite vigorous opposition led by the Catholic Church, before the end of the nineteenth century secular education systems had been established in all colonies. South Australia was first to legislate for secular education in 1852, giving state aid only to schools which provided non-denominational religious instruction. When in 1893 Western Australia passed its secular education act, education funded by the central government under ministerial control became a feature common to all the colonies.

Free

Education designed for all children had to be cheap. People argued that high school-fees defeated the purpose of providing a school system open to both rich and poor. Others responded that free education would increase taxes and sap the moral fibre of those accepting such charity. The compromise reached was to charge a small fee to help defray the cost of education otherwise borne wholly by the government. Queensland was the first to abolish fees in 1870; Tasmania was last, in 1908.

Ministerial control

Introduced	
	Before 1870
	1870-1880
	1880-1890
	1890-1900
	After 1900

Compulsory

Introduced	
	Before 1870
	1870-1880
	1880-1890
	1890-1900
	After 1900
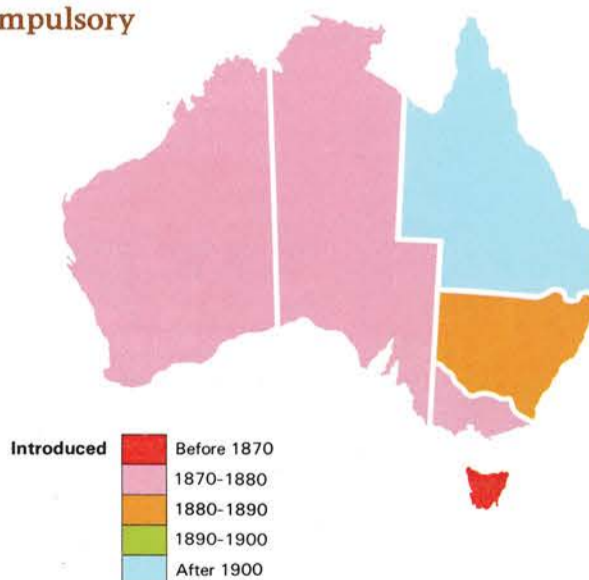
Ministerial control

Following trends in Britain and Germany, colonial governments in Australia after about 1870 assumed increasing responsibility for the social welfare and education of their citizens. Politicians believed that not only should the state assume responsibility for educating its children, being the only institution with sufficient resources for the task, but it should also place education systems and policy firmly under the authority of an elected minister. By 1900, departments of education under ministerial control had been established in all colonies and were responsible for providing secular and compulsory education.

Compulsory

As long as parents could please themselves whether or not their children attended school, the basic aim of providing free, secular education to all children in the state would never be reached. Compulsory attendance was seen to be the answer. Tasmania was the first colony to introduce compulsory education, in 1869. Many were opposed to compulsion; factory owners as well as farmers were reluctant to lose child labour. The machinery for enforcing compulsory attendance was weak and no colony had an effective system by the time of federation. School absenteeism was never fully eradicated.

Schools, scholars and teachers

WHEN THE EDUCATION acts came into force, the overriding task for all colonial ministers of education was providing schools. Many factors contributed to the growing number of children attending government schools: population increase, the introduction of compulsory attendance and the withdrawal of state aid to denominational schools. The school population increased by 60 per cent in New South Wales in the three years after the introduction of the education act in 1880, and continued to increase during the next twenty years. To meet this demand, the number of schools more than doubled. In Queensland more than 700 government schools were opened between 1875 and 1900. By the turn of the century, Victoria had more than 1900 government schools. Overall, Australian colonial governments provided nearly 7000 schools. A large number of these were poorly equipped and staffed by one teacher. However, they provided basic education.

During the first three decades of the twentieth century the number of schools and enrolments continued to rise. However, from the 1930s the number of schools began to decline. Schools were consolidated, and isolated one-teacher schools were gradually closed.

The greatest problem facing the new government education departments was supplying suitable teachers. The general shortage of properly qualified teachers is reflected in the ratio of teachers to pupils. Before 1900, more than 40 pupils per teacher was the norm all over Australia. In New South Wales the rapid provision of schools in the last 20 years of the nineteenth century saw the number of pupils per teacher rise from about 30 to more than 40. South Australia, Victoria and Queensland still had about 50 pupils per teacher in 1900.

The background and training of teachers before 1900 were variable. Only Victoria had established a teachers' training college and other colonies relied on the monitor system (a method of pupil-teacher training) and training schools conducted over a period of a few months.
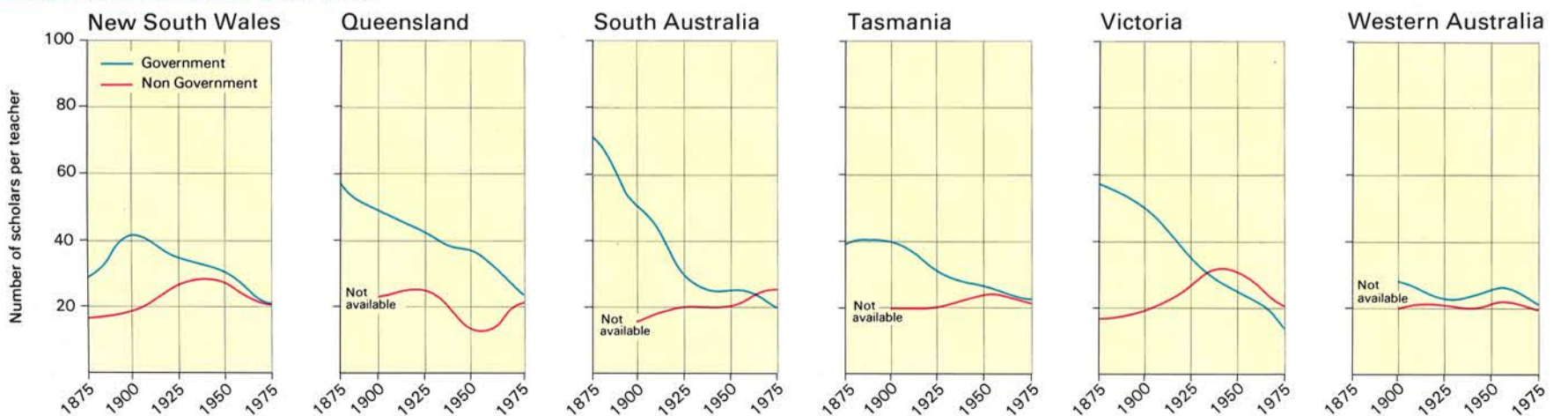
After 1900, all states followed Victoria's lead and opened teachers' colleges. Claremont in Western Australia in 1902 and Sydney in 1906 were the first. As the teachers' colleges turned out an increasing number of graduates, the pupil-teacher ratio improved. Today, a century after the departments of education were established, the number of teachers averages about one per twenty pupils. In broad terms these figures are comparable to those of the private system of education.

Number of schools 1875-1975

New South Wales / Queensland / South Australia / Tasmania / Victoria / Western Australia
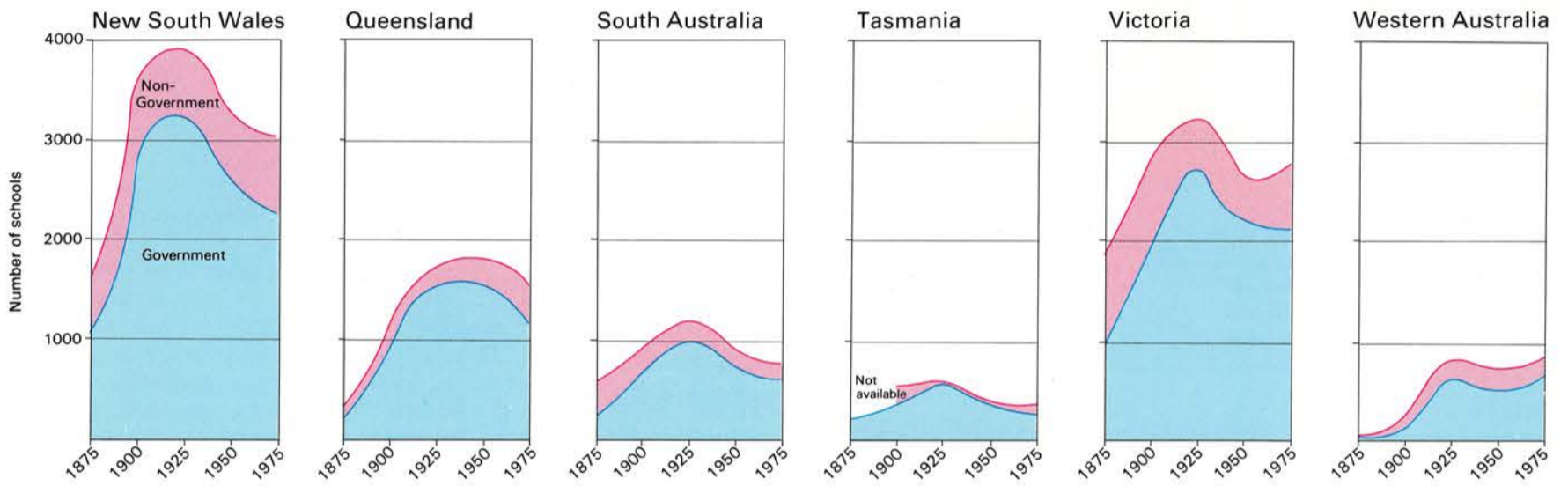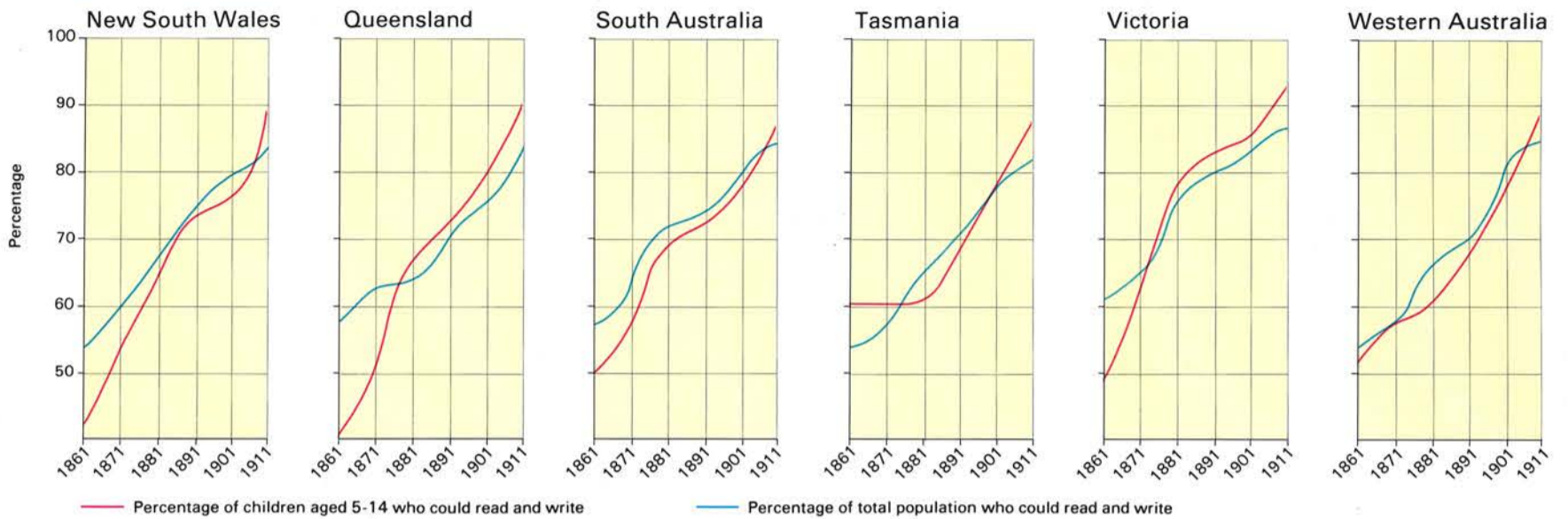
Pupils and teacher at Budgee Budgee Public School in New South Wales. The school began as a 'provisional school' but by 1913 when this photograph was taken, enrolments had increased beyond the 20 pupils required to justify the establishment of a 'public school'.
NEW SOUTH WALES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Scholar teacher ratio 1875-1975

New South Wales / Queensland / South Australia / Tasmania / Victoria / Western Australia

Literacy

Literacy rate 1861-1911

New South Wales   Queensland   South Australia   Tasmania   Victoria   Western Australia

━━ Percentage of children aged 5-14 who could read and write   ━━ Percentage of total population who could read and write

BEFORE 1900, schooling was generally limited to elementary education. The underlying assumption was that 'a little education was good for all children, but much education was only good for a few'. The teaching of three skills, reading, writing and arithmetic — the three Rs — was the main task. Three-quarters of the time in school could be spent on reading and writing. Rote learning and repetitive copying were the order of the school day. By these means the state hoped to produce a literate population, one given the grounding for further self-education, and informed citizens who could exercise the right to vote sensibly.

In 1861, Victoria was the only colony in which more than 60 per cent of the population could read and write. For children of school age, the percentage able to read and write was lower, generally less than 50 per cent. As education became established in the colonies, the level of literacy improved. By 1901 nearly 80 per cent of schoolchildren could read and write, with literacy highest in Victoria at 85 per cent. Literacy levels were lower in Tasmania for school-age children and in Queensland for the overall population. By 1911 the literacy rate of the population was about 90 per cent: in all states literacy was more common among children aged between 5 and 14 than it was among the population in general. The success of an education system based on the three Rs was obvious.
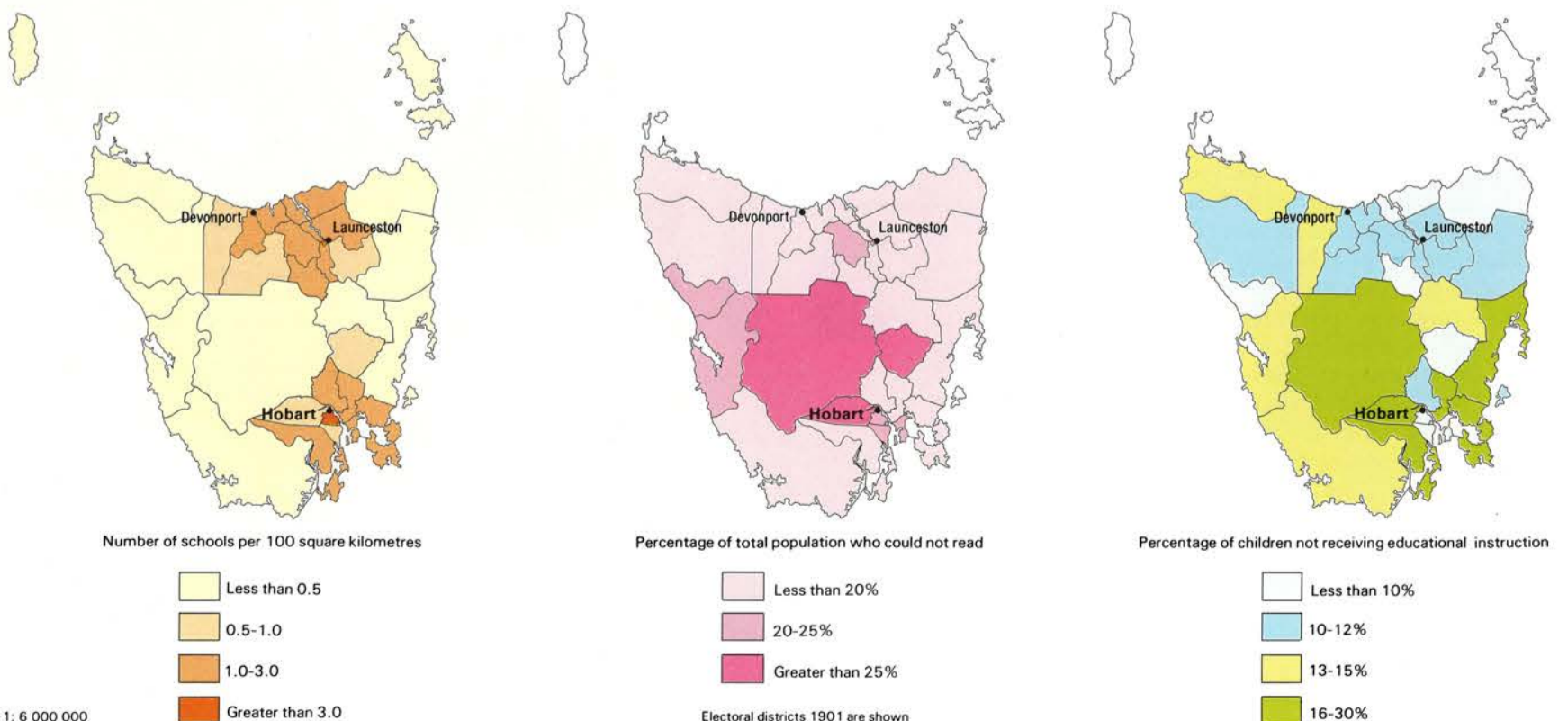
As long as education was equated with literacy and no more was demanded, much had been achieved. However, the early years of the twentieth century saw demands for a broadening of school curricula to bring education closer to life outside the classroom. Time spent on the three Rs declined and more time was devoted to history, geography, nature study, art, woodwork and needlework. By the 1920s, in some states, not much more than half of school time was spent on the three Rs.

Tasmania — schools, attendance and literacy, 1901

The graphs demonstrate overall trends in the state's provision of schools and teachers and the development of literacy in the school population and in the population at large. They show the advances that took place in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but do not reveal the inequalities in educational opportunities and the subsequent lower levels of educational achievement in the more isolated and sparsely settled regions. The maps of Tasmania show the lack of uniformity in availability of schools and achievements in education.
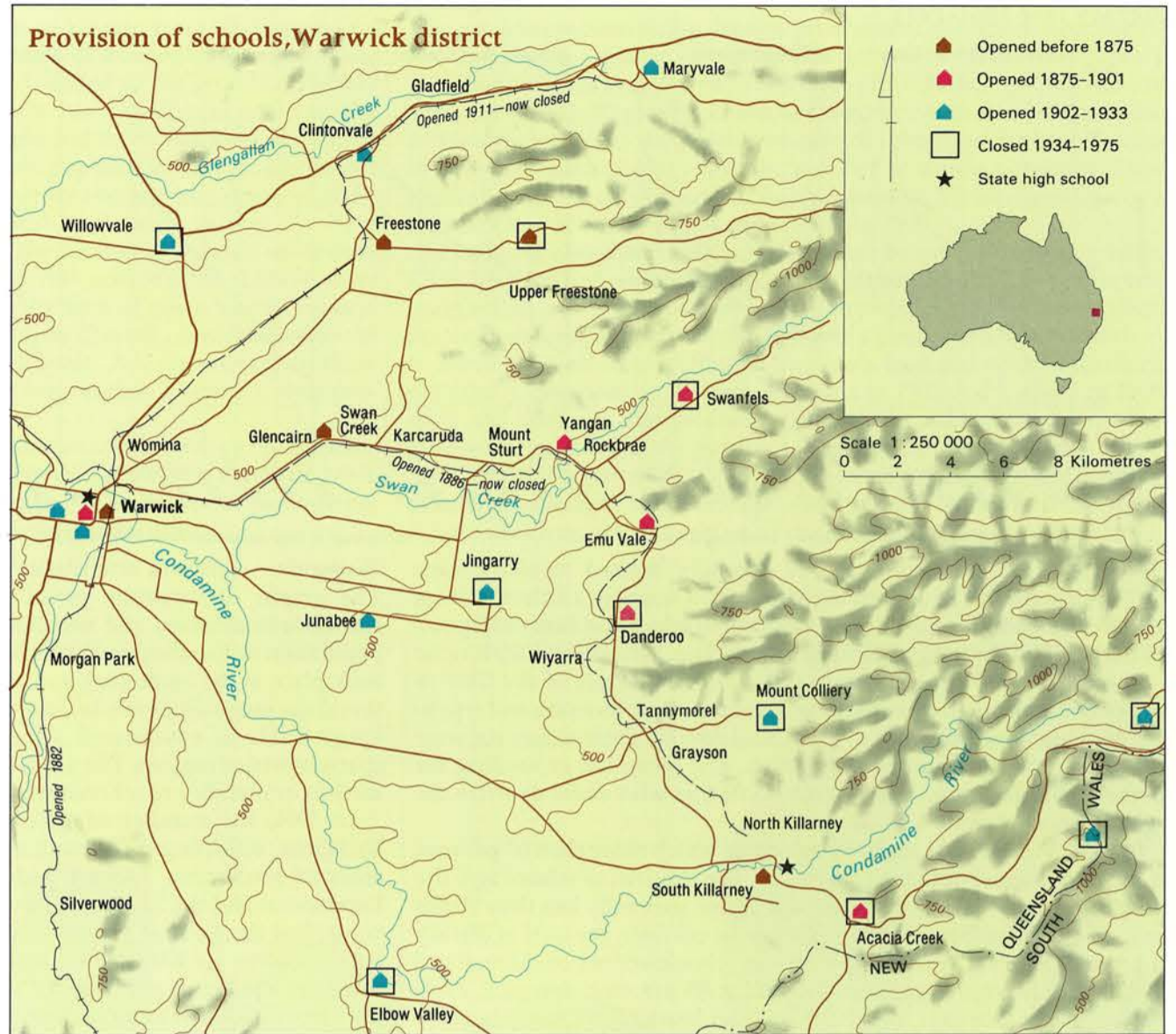
In 1901, the number of state schools varied greatly throughout Tasmania, reflecting differences in population distribution. The core areas of settlement, Hobart and the Derwent and Jordan valleys, Launceston and the Tamar valley and the Devonport area of the north coast, had the greatest density of schools. In these areas there were at least 3 schools per 100 square kilometres. The level of school attendance mirrored the better provision of schools and in general more than 85 per cent of children in these districts had received some schooling. By contrast, in the central plateau and along the central east coast districts, where schools were few, non-attendance rates were as high as 30 per cent. High non-attendance rates also characterised the southwest corner of Tasmania. Illiteracy was correspondingly high in the central plateau and on the west coast. In the sparsely settled and poorly served central plateau region, more than one-quarter of the population still could not read or write in 1901. By contrast, in the more closely settled districts of Hobart and Launceston, literacy within the population was at least 80 per cent. Attempts to achieve equality in the provision of education and to cater for isolated and sparsely settled communities are discussed in the following pages.

Literacy in Tasmania 1901

Number of schools per 100 square kilometres

- Less than 0.5
- 0.5-1.0
- 1.0-3.0
- Greater than 3.0

Scale 1: 6 000 000

Percentage of total population who could not read

- Less than 20%
- 20-25%
- Greater than 25%

Electoral districts 1901 are shown

Percentage of children not receiving educational instruction

- Less than 10%
- 10-12%
- 13-15%
- 16-30%

Local schooling

Provision of schools, Warwick district

The Warwick district in southern Queensland was first settled by squatters in the 1840s. Large sheep grazing runs dominated the region until the 1880s, when selection began to transform the district from 'one magnificent sheep run' into a landscape 'with hundreds of acres under crop, farmhouses, milking sheds, state schools and a numerous population'. To serve the selectors, railways were built and small settlements grew. Most settlements supported a hotel, a state school, a post office and a store. The selectors drew many of their supplies from the store, the local hotel was a social focus and the selectors' children attended a small one-teacher school, farmwork permitting. These communities prospered until World War I and the arrival of the Model T Ford. Since the 1930s, railway branch lines have been closed and small settlements have declined. Some schools have been closed.

Legend:
- Opened before 1875
- Opened 1875–1901
- Opened 1902–1933
- Closed 1934–1975
- ★ State high school

Scale 1 : 250 000
0 2 4 6 8 Kilometres

E QUALITY IN EDUCATION was possible only if schooling was available for all children, irrespective of where they lived. As settlement spread, particularly as closer agricultural settlement developed after about 1880, providing schools in rural areas became a matter of concern for all colonial education departments.

The Warwick district of southeastern Queensland provides an example. In 1869 the Queensland government made its first attempt to bring education to the sparsely settled parts of the colony. It made grants in the form of a small salary for a teacher and a stock of books to establish 'provisional' schools built by the local community. With the introduction of compulsory schooling in 1875 the number of state-provided schools and provisional schools rapidly increased. New schools in the Warwick district were part of this growth. Many were provisionally established while the Department of Education appraised the best possible locations for more permanent schools.
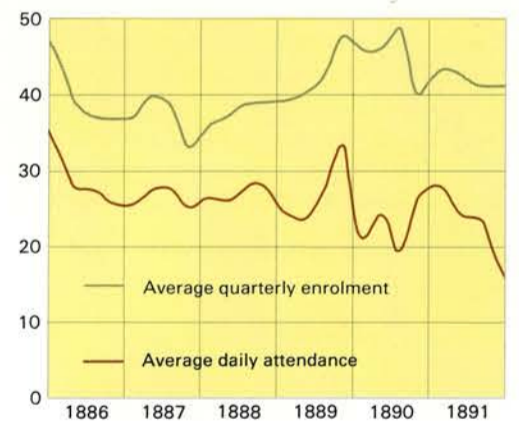
The coming of schooling to Elbow Valley was typical of relations between local communities and state education authorities in hundreds of rural districts throughout Queensland. Before a school was built, the Department of Education determined the number of farms and children within a ten-kilometre radius of the proposed site. In 1890 the district inspector recommended that the school should remain a provisional school because the number of children was insufficient.

By 1912, the system of provisional schools had been abandoned and the state paid for the building of schools and their upkeep. Small schools such as Elbow Valley continued to grow in numbers until the 1930s, when a policy of consolidating smaller schools into larger ones at central locations began to reverse this trend.

Elbow Valley provisional school 1880-1891

1880 — Children 44, Families 12

1885 — Children 68, Families 15

1890 — Children 54, Families 19

Distance from school in kilometres

Enrolments 1886-1891

- Average quarterly enrolment
- Average daily attendance
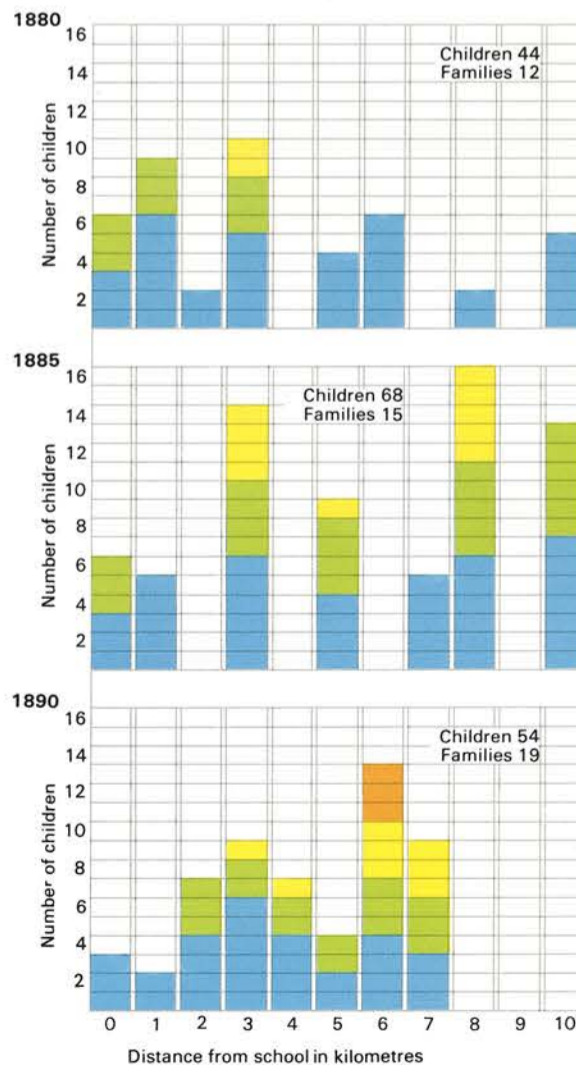
The graphs show the number of families and school-aged children living within a 10-kilometre radius of the Elbow Valley school. In 1880 there were 12 families with a total of 44 school-aged children. Six of these school-aged children, in two families, lived less than one kilometre from the school (the different colours of bars within each one-kilometre radius indicate the number of families). In 1885 there were 68 school-aged children and in 1890 there were 54, none of whom lived further than seven kilometres from Elbow Valley.

Enrolments and average daily attendances were important in assessing the viability of a school. Attendance rarely, if ever, matched enrolment, and was subject to marked seasonal variation associated with difficulty of travel in wet weather and patterns of farmwork.
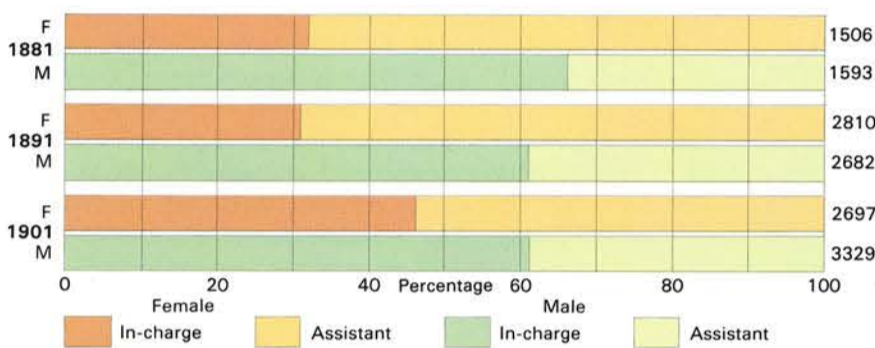
Women in teaching

FEMALE TEACHERS played an important role in the development of education during the nineteenth century, at times outnumbering male teachers. A woman teacher, however, was much less likely to be a teacher-in-charge, as distinct from an assistant teacher. Female teachers were also paid less for the same work and their promotional opportunities were fewer than those of men. In 1881 they received three-quarters of the wage of male teachers, and were also more likely than men to be appointed to remote one-teacher bush schools. Women teachers were also subject to stricter moral codes, as is clearly shown in the rules for a country school in Queensland.

In 1906, there were more female teachers than male teachers in all states except New South Wales, and in some states female teachers outnumbered males by two to one. During World War I the dependence on female teachers grew in all states. Some states had more than 250 female teachers for every 100 male teachers. Yet despite the large number of women in the teaching profession, female principals usually remained a minority. World War I temporarily reversed this position but in 1920 the prewar pattern re-established itself, except in Tasmania and the Northern Territory.

Especially at preschool and primary levels women have continued to play an important role. In 1963, 52 per cent of teachers throughout Australia were women, and by the early 1980s the proportion had risen to over 56 per cent. Equal pay provisions have improved the status of women in the profession since 1975, and pressure from teachers' federations has reduced discrimination against women teachers in matters of seniority and promotion.

Women in the teaching profession, NSW 1881-1901

	Percentage	
F 1881		1506
M		1593
F 1891		2810
M		2682
F 1901		2697
M		3329

Female: In-charge, Assistant   Male: In-charge, Assistant

Comparative payment of teachers

Dollars per annum

Teaching staff in state schools

Female teachers per 100 male teachers

1906   1914   1920   1933

Greater than 250   250-201   200-151   150-126   125-101   Less than 100

Female principals per 100 male principals

1906   1914   1920   1933

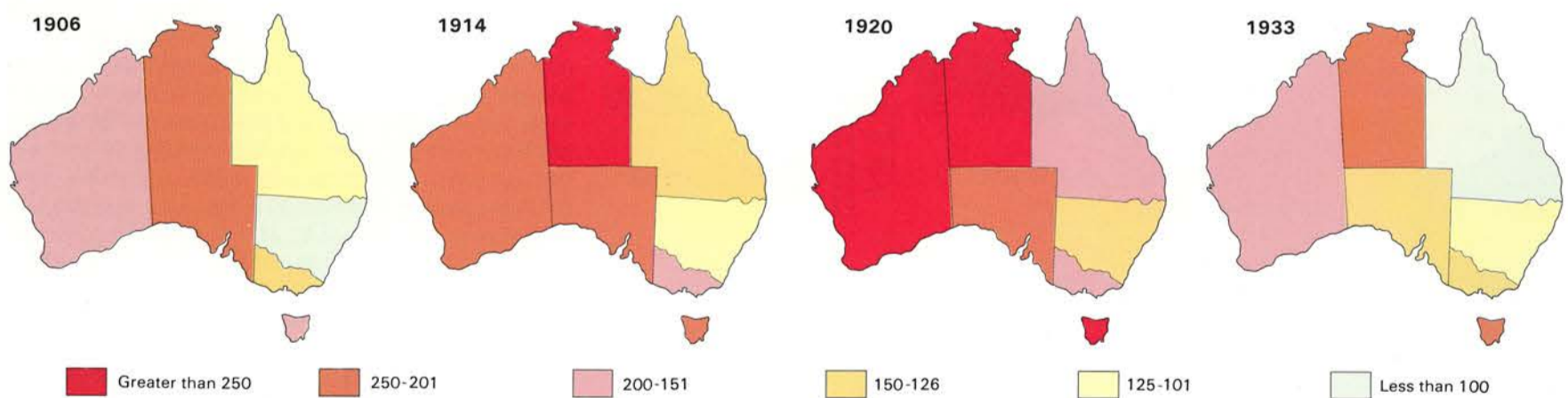Greater than 125   125-101   Equality (100)   99-75   74-50   49-25   Less than 25
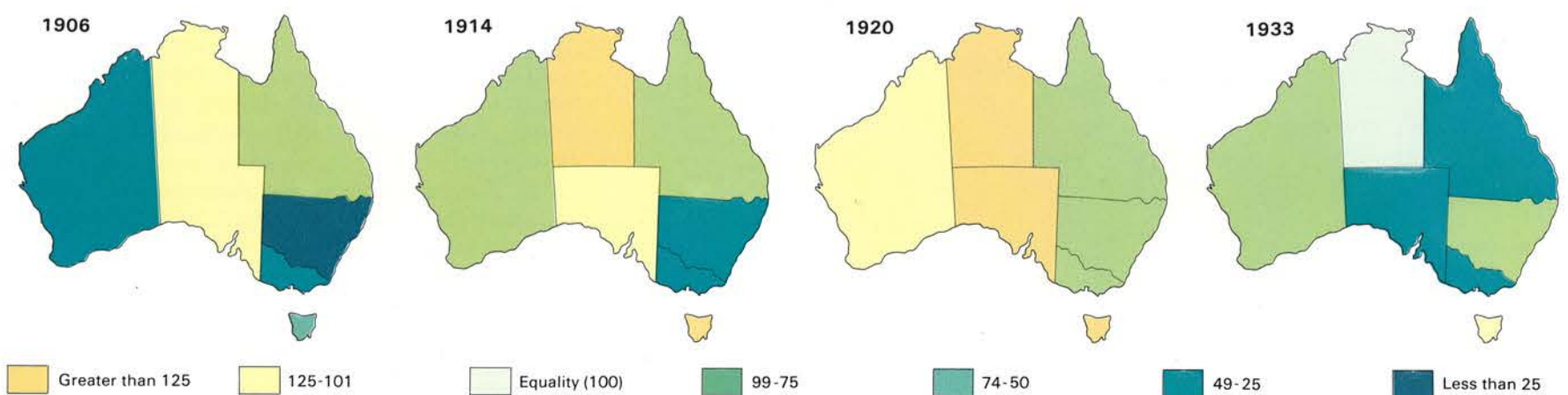
RULES FOR TEACHERS 1879

1. Teachers each day will fill lamps, clean chimneys before beginning work.

2. Each teacher will bring a bucket of water and scuttle of coal for the day's session.

3. Make your pens carefully. You may whittle nibs to the individual taste of the children.

4. Men teachers may take one evening a week for courting purposes or two evenings to attend church regularly.

5. After ten hours in school, you may spend the remaining time reading the Bible or other good books.

6. Women teachers who marry or engage in unseemly conduct will be dismissed.

7. Every teacher should lay aside, from each pay, a goodly sum for his benefit during his declining years so that he will not become a burden on society.

8. Any teacher who smokes, uses liquor in any form, frequents pool and public halls, or gets shaved in a barber shop, will give good reason to suspect his worth, intention, integrity and honesty.
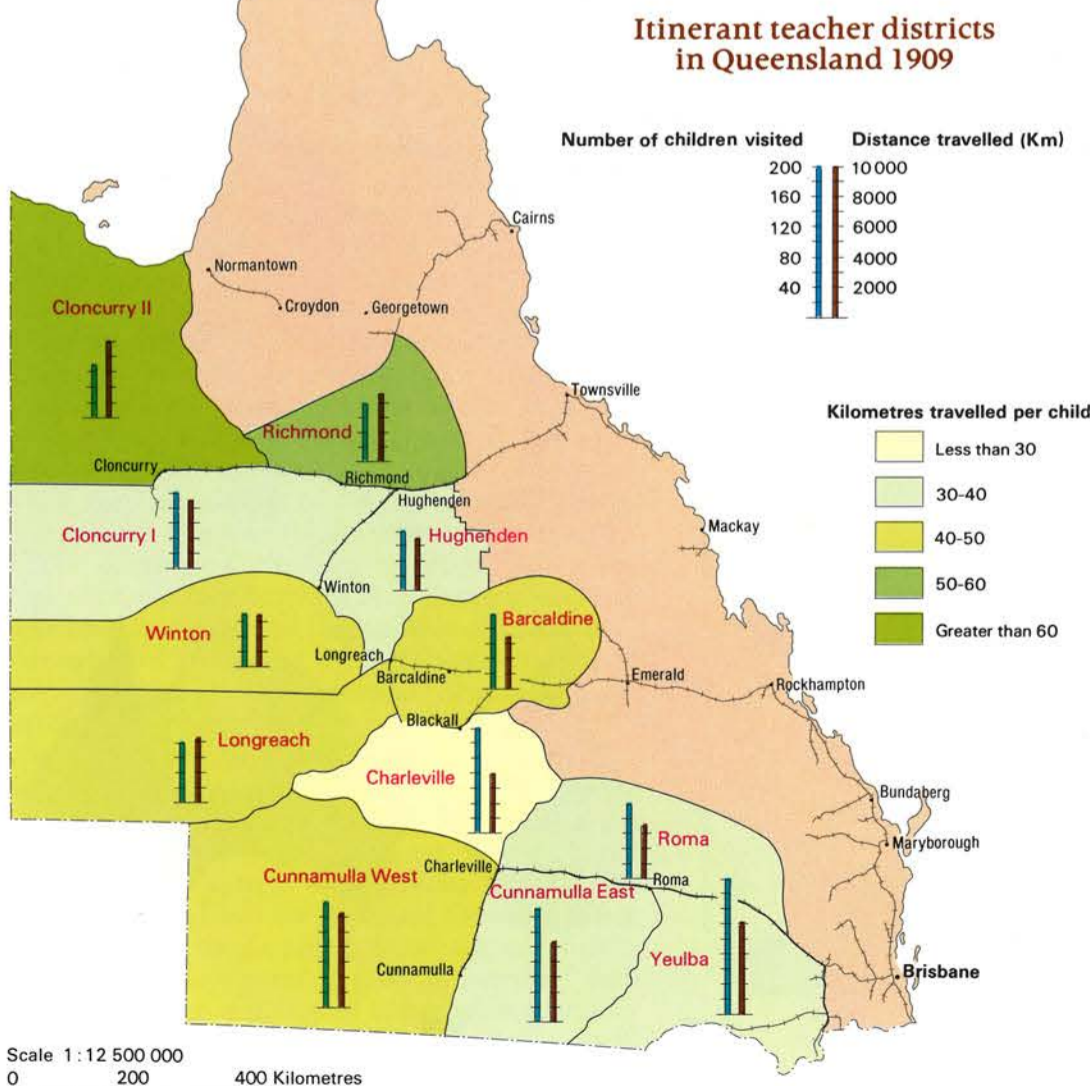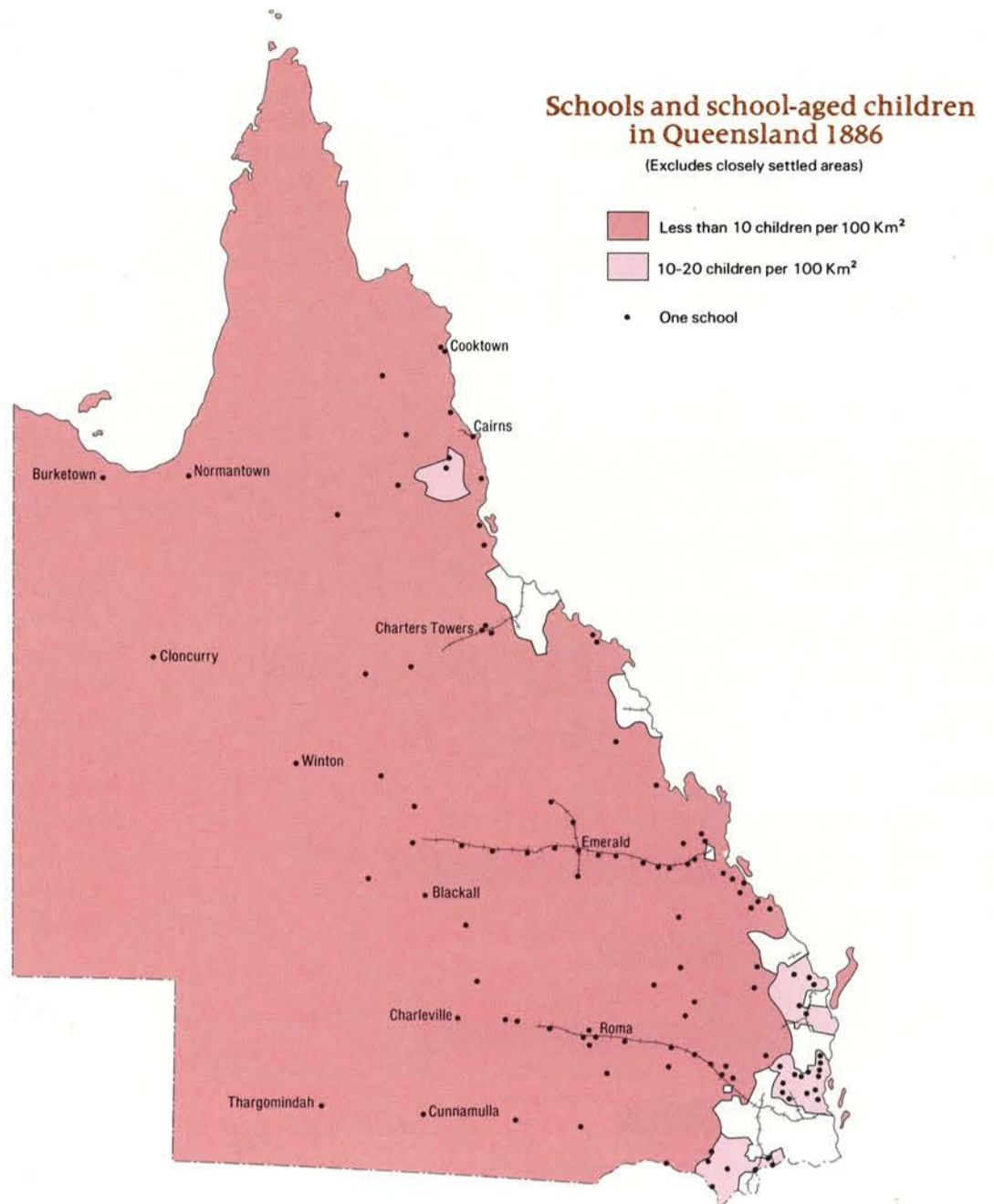
Isolation and rural schooling

COMPULSORY EDUCATION gave the state an obligation to provide schooling for all its children. This was no easy task; to many a colonial minister of education it appeared almost impossible 'to equalize the advantages of people situated so differently as are the inhabitants of this country'.

Children in the sparsely populated outback were always likely to be deprived of schooling. The provisional school, the one-teacher school, half-time school, the itinerant teacher and travelling school, lessons by correspondence and the school of the air were all means by which education was brought to isolated rural children. They were solutions to the problems posed by a sparse and isolated outback population.

Queensland well illustrates the attempts to overcome problems in providing elementary education for isolated children. The outback had few children of school age; there were generally fewer than 10 school-aged children per 100 square kilometres. The schools were to be found in the tiny bush towns of the inland. Children who did not live in town but who were brought up on the outback pastoral stations and in the isolated and temporary mining and timber camps had little opportunity of obtaining an education. It was decided that if the child could not get to school, the teacher should visit the child. Thus as an auxiliary to ordinary elementary schools a system of travelling teachers, part-time schools and camp schools was developed.

Schools and school-aged children in Queensland 1886

(Excludes closely settled areas)

- Less than 10 children per 100 Km²
- 10-20 children per 100 Km²
- • One school

Itinerant teacher districts in Queensland 1909

Number of children visited
200 / 160 / 120 / 80 / 40

Distance travelled (Km)
10 000 / 8000 / 6000 / 4000 / 2000

Kilometres travelled per child
- Less than 30
- 30-40
- 40-50
- 50-60
- Greater than 60

Scale 1 : 12 500 000
0   200   400 Kilometres

Itinerant teachers

A solution to the problem of providing schooling in the million square kilometres beyond the western and southern railheads of Queensland was the itinerant teacher system. In 1901, a teacher was appointed to travel the southwest. Two more teachers were appointed in 1907, one for central Queensland and one for the northwest. In 1909, a further nine teachers were appointed and the state was divided into twelve districts. The area covered by a teacher was vast: in 1909 districts ranged in size from 44 000 square kilometres to 155 000 square kilometres. Teachers travelled great distances to see the children in their care. The teacher in charge of the Cloncurry No II district travelled over 5000 kilometres in 1909 to teach fewer than 70 children. In the southwest the teacher travelled more than 6000 kilometres by horse and buggy to instruct the children of graziers, stockmen, boundary riders and fencers.

The services of the itinerant teacher were sorely needed and greatly appreciated. Reports of travelling teachers indicate the deprivation and educational disadvantages that many bush pioneer families suffered.

> . . . this is a pitiful case, as the husband and wife are unable to help the children on account that neither are able to write or cipher . . .

> . . . these children, unfortunately, have no instructor; their father is unable to assist them as he is almost blind. They were at one time given a little instruction by their mother, but she has now been dead for some time. A neighbour, five miles [eight kilometres] away, has promised to look at their work about once a week . . .

Transport and the itinerant teacher

To visit the isolated children of outback Queensland, the pioneer itinerant teachers relied on specially equipped horse buggies with four to six horses. As they travelled they camped. Each teacher had the help of a youth who looked after the horses and established the campsites. Drought conditions frequently made journeys very difficult particularly in 1910 and 1911, when some itinerant teachers found it impossible to visit families. As an experiment, the Queensland Department of Public Instruction used the motor car as a means of transport for its itinerant teachers.

A car was specially equipped to enable sufficient supplies of school requisites, petrol and other equipment to be carried. It was tested in the southwest of the state in a round trip from Cunnamulla. To give the experiment a fair trial, and to teach the itinerant teacher, Mr Wilkins, to drive and maintain a car, an experienced driver-mechanic accompanied him.

The use of the car and later the motorcycle gave the teacher a greater chance of meeting the departmental goal of seeing each pupil four times a year. But these vehicles were not as successful as had been hoped. Floods and mechanical breakdowns caused many problems. The tyranny of distance in education had to be overcome by other means. Lessons by correspondence were one method of bringing education to the children of the outback.

Lessons by post

Victoria and New South Wales were the first states to send elementary lessons by post. In 1914 the Victorian Department of Education established experimental correspondence lessons for five boys. By 1916, due mainly to the experiment's success, the number of children enrolled for 'lessons by post' had increased and it had become necessary to recruit additional staff. Similar correspondence lessons for primary students started in New South Wales in 1916. As in Victoria, success was rapid.

By 1922, all states had started correspondence schools for isolated rural children. The number of enrolments increased to the point at which a special building staffed by experienced teachers was necessary in each capital city. In 1922, over 1600 children were enrolled in the New South Wales correspondence school. Those who received lessons usually lived more than fifteen kilometres from some form of school and came from all areas of the state, though few lived in the coastal region of New South Wales. The exception to this was the newly settled region of the Dorrigo plateau where schools were few. West of the Darling River and beyond the reach of regular postal services, the small number of children on outback properties continued to rely on the state's travelling teachers or on a privately employed tutor or governess. New South Wales numbers at correspondence school rose to over 3000 by the mid-1920s and similar enrolment increases occurred in the other states, with the largest number in Queensland, where, by the mid-1930s, more than 5000 isolated rural children received lessons by post in the state.

Correspondence study was so successful with primary pupils that it was gradually extended to include secondary and technical subjects. However, this did not develop until the 1940s, when members of the armed forces needed education by correspondence. Later rehabilitation programs for ex-servicemen further increased the demand.
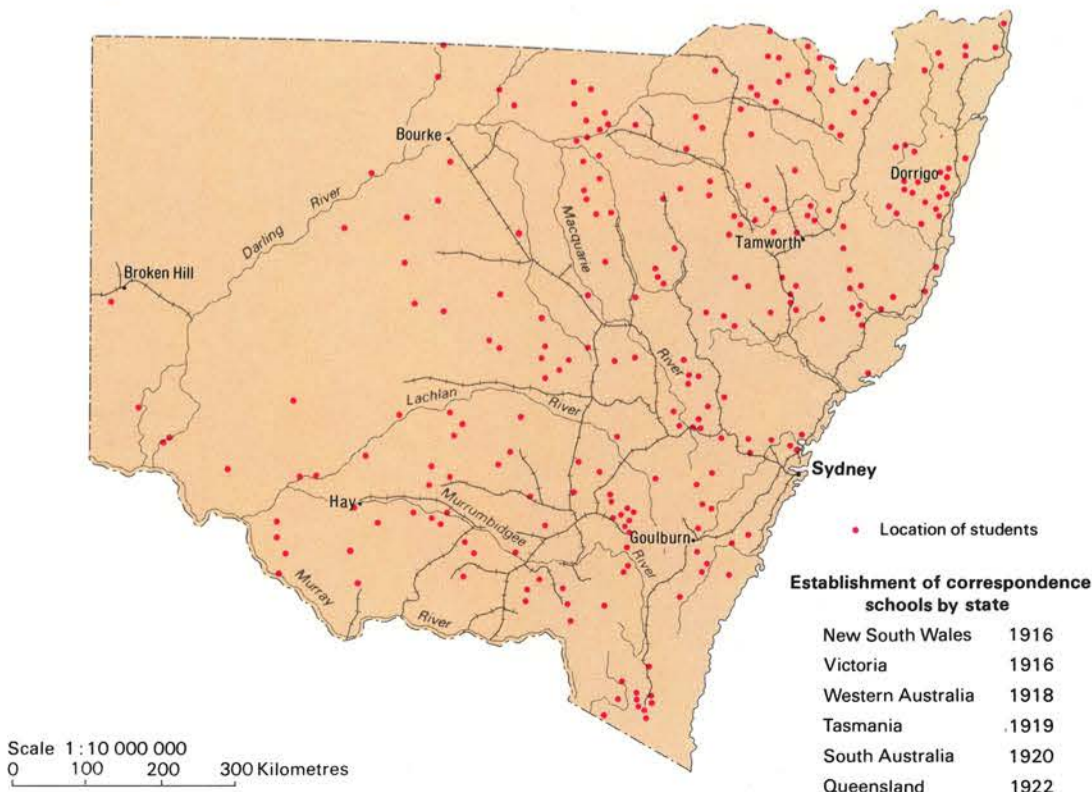
The success of correspondence schools in all states also paved the way for the abandonment of other means of teaching isolated rural children. Provisional schools, half-time schools, camp schools and travelling schools were gradually discontinued, and buses were introduced for the transport of children to school each day.

Itinerant teacher route 1911

Scale 1 : 3 000 000
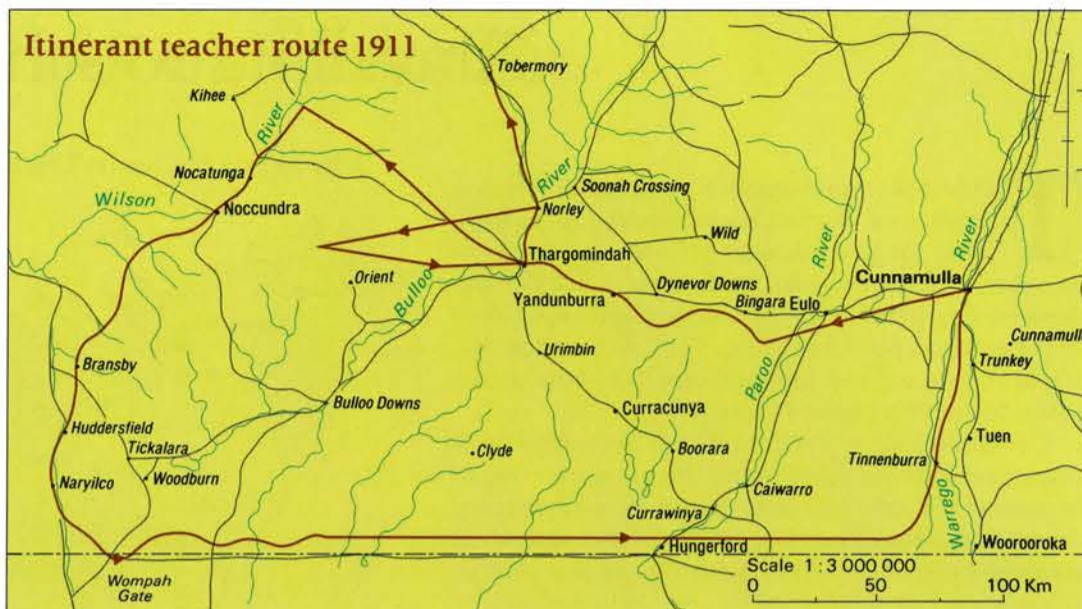
Above.
An official photograph of the itinerant teacher, Wilkins. In 1911 the Queensland Department of Public Instruction decided that Wilkins would be able to cover his district in the southwest of the state more quickly by car. On 25 April Wilkins and his driver left Cunnamulla and during the next 43 days drove 1700 kilometres across sand and rough country. Wilkins taught for 27 of the 43 days. Most of the country had never been crossed by car and matting and a shovel were frequently needed.

Left.
A family in Braidwood, NSW, receive their weekly correspondence lessons. By 1946 over 6000 students were enrolled in the New South Wales correspondence school. Postal lessons could be supplemented by radio broadcasts, which had developed from early experiments in the 1920s.

Correspondence students in New South Wales 1922

Scale 1 : 10 000 000
0 100 200 300 Kilometres

• Location of students

Establishment of correspondence schools by state

New South Wales	1916
Victoria	1916
Western Australia	1918
Tasmania	1919
South Australia	1920
Queensland	1922

Travelling to school

THE SMALL one-teacher rural school was a feature of Australian education for a long time. In general, such schools had from ten to about forty pupils, and their effectiveness depended largely on the personality and experience of the teachers posted to them. They were frequently staffed by young and inexperienced teachers, many at the beginning of their careers.

Concerned about the unevenness of the quality of education in these schools and the growing costs of maintaining them, education departments investigated the idea of subsidising the cost of travel to school. In country districts served by a number of one-teacher schools, free or subsidised travel was introduced to transport children to larger, better-equipped and better-staffed district schools. Such travel was normally on a daily return basis, although some children from more remote areas were offered weekend trips only, and had to board near the district school during the week. At first parents were reluctant to co-operate, but improved roads and buses made travel to these schools easier. From the 1940s, with educational expectations higher and improved opportunities for children to pursue post-primary schooling, the larger, consolidated primary schools provided better opportunities than the one-teacher school.

Tasmania provides a good example of the closure of small schools and the transport of pupils to centralised schools. In 1936 the Tasmanian Department of Education started the first systematic program of school consolidation in Australia. The outcome is shown on the graph: until the mid-1930s the number of schools in Tasmania exceeded 500 and the average enrolment was about eighty. Within a decade the number of schools had fallen to 350 and the average number of pupils at each school had increased to one hundred. In 1955, there were, on average, 200 children per school enrolled at the 300 schools in the state, and by 1975 the average enrolment stood at two-hundred and ninety.

School consolidation was possible only with the simultaneous development of a school bus system. By 1978 there were 472 separate school bus services in Tasmania, carrying over 19 000 pupils to school each day. A total distance of more than 24 000 kilometres was travelled daily. Elsewhere in Australia school bus systems similar to that of Tasmania were established. By the late 1970s more than 5000 school bus services covered a distance of over 500 000 kilometres and carried 250 000 pupils daily. The mean distance travelled by the most remote pupil to reach school each day ranged from 56 kilometres in Western Australia to 26 kilometres in Tasmania.

Schools and students in Tasmania

Number of state schools

Average number of students enrolled per school

1915 1925 1935 1945 1955 1965 1975

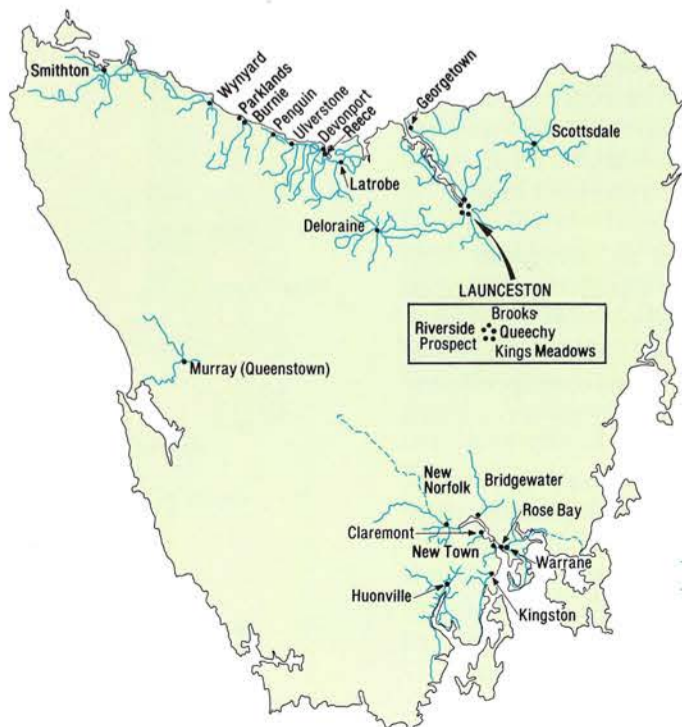## School bus routes in Tasmania 1978

The pattern produced is fairly simple and most services cover small rural and agricultural areas. The few services to primary schools in large urban areas collect children from low-density rural residential areas nearby.

— **Bus services to primary schools**

District schools providing primary and some secondary grades have larger catchment areas than centralised primary schools. They mainly serve rural populations.

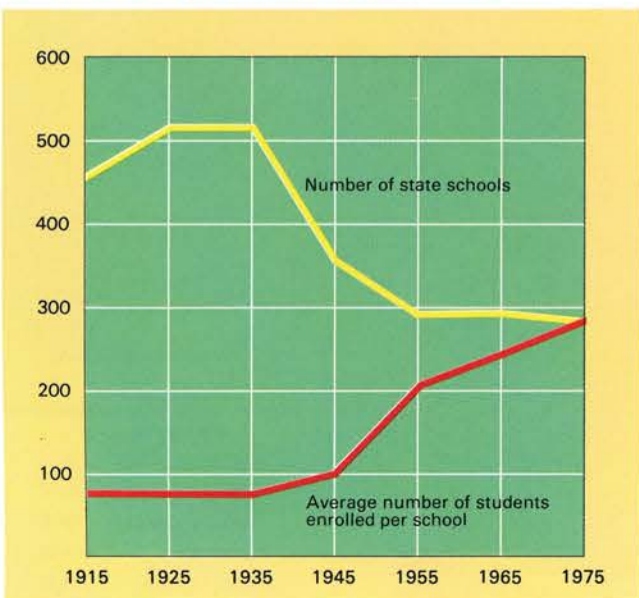— **Bus services to district and district high schools**

The network of buses serving high schools can be complex and services to large urban high schools can require the use of more than one vehicle. Feeder bus services are quite common.

— **Bus services to high schools**
---- **Weekend trips only**

Scale 1 : 3 500 000
0   50   100 Kilometres

The Schools of the Air

THE SCHOOL OF THE AIR is an educational idea unique to Australia. Children in remote areas were able to obtain lessons by post as early as 1916, but these were often inadequate at first. Children had no contact with their teachers or with other pupils. The word 'classmate' was meaningless. To help overcome many of these educational and social problems of isolation, plans were made for children to talk to their teachers by two-way radio. Experimental lessons started in mid-1950 and in 1951 the first School of the Air was opened at Alice Springs. It served children in central Australia who had been receiving correspondence lessons from the South Australian Department of Education, and was so successful that the idea was quickly adopted by other states. In 1956 the New South Wales Department of Education opened its School of the Air at Broken Hill. Before the end of the 1950s the Port Augusta and Ceduna schools were transmitting in South Australia, and Western Australia had opened the first of five Schools of the Air at Meekatharra. The School of the Air at Mount Isa in Queensland opened in 1960.

Each School of the Air covers a vast area. The Alice Springs school, for example, serves between 100 and 130 children within an area of about 1.3 million square kilometres. The Katherine School of the Air, opened in 1966, serves about two hundred students who live in an 800 000-square-kilometre area in the top end of the Northern Territory.

Carnarvon School of the Air

Opened in 1968, the Carnarvon School of the Air serves an area of about 150 000 square kilometres occupied by large pastoral stations devoted to growing wool. In the early 1980s children from 37 families were enrolled, 31 of whom lived on pastoral stations. The average distance between classmates was 42 kilometres, and the average distance of pupils from the School of the Air was 200 kilometres. By road, these average distances were even longer. Modern technology has thus helped overcome great isolation, but problems remain. Radios can be rendered useless by atmospheric conditions for hours, even days at a time. Satellite communications will in future help overcome such problems, but will not completely eliminate isolation. Yet the Schools of the Air, an educational innovation founded in order to minimise the educational disadvantages of geographical isolation, have been successful.
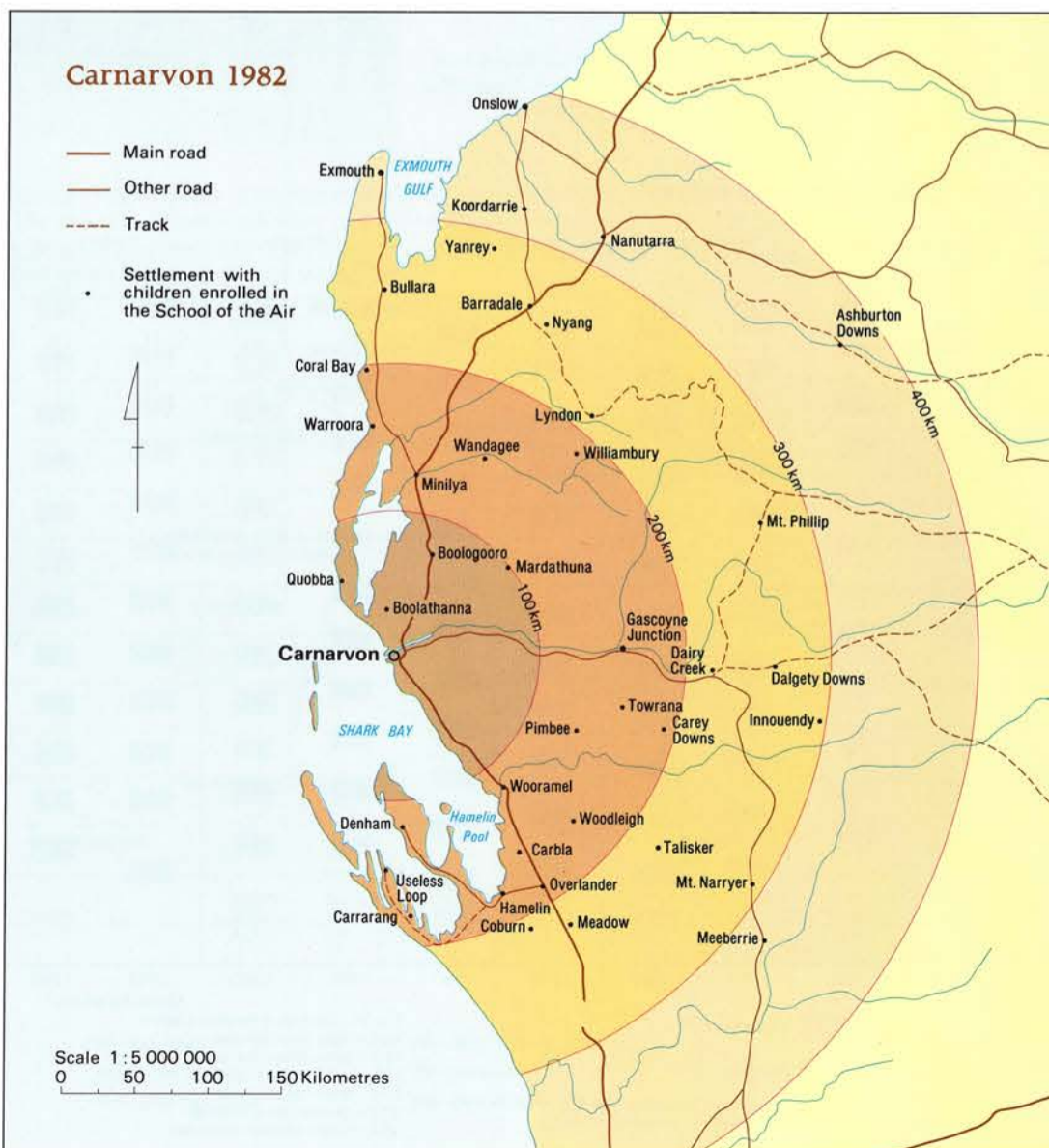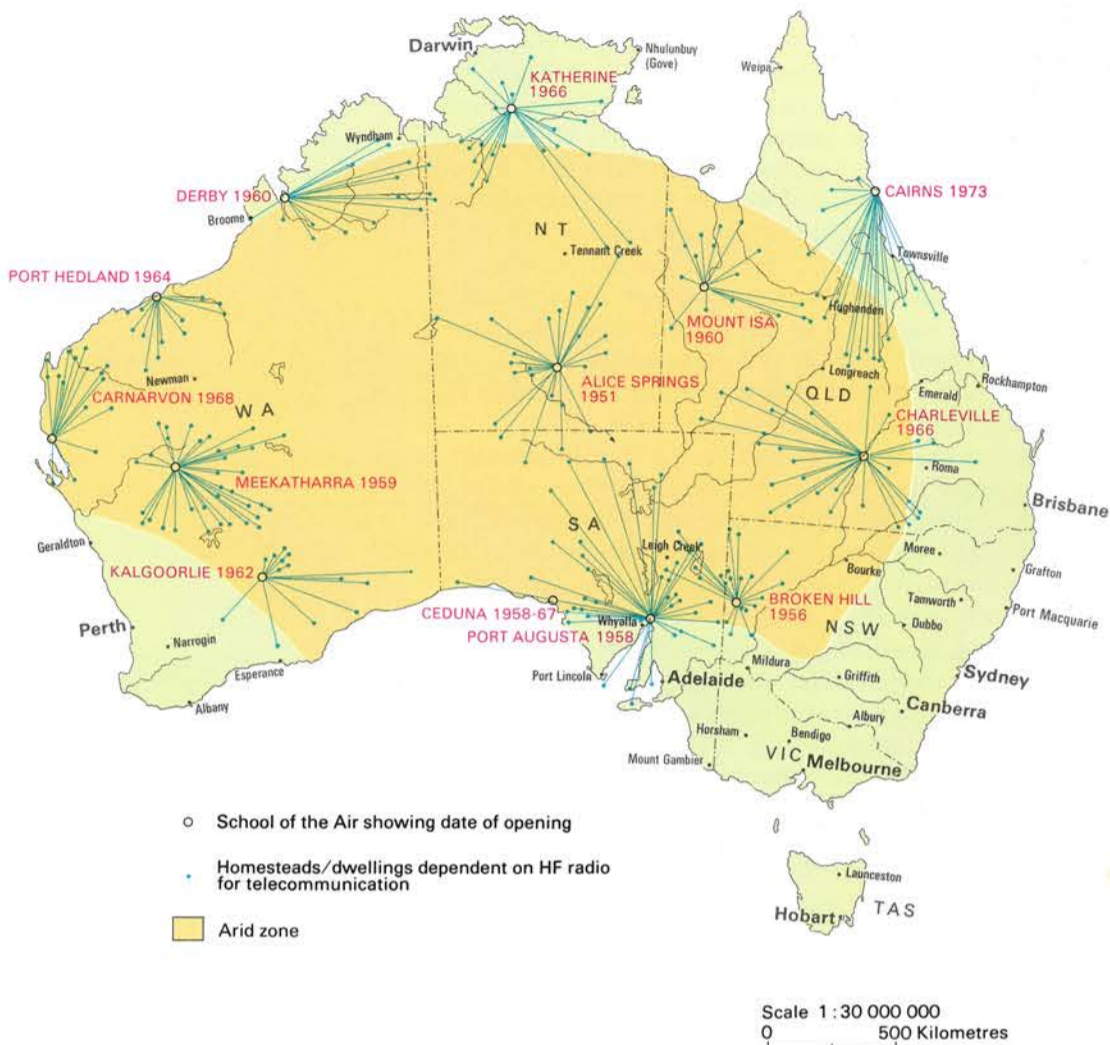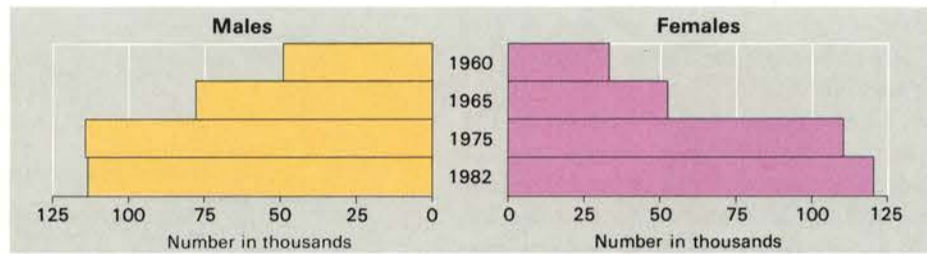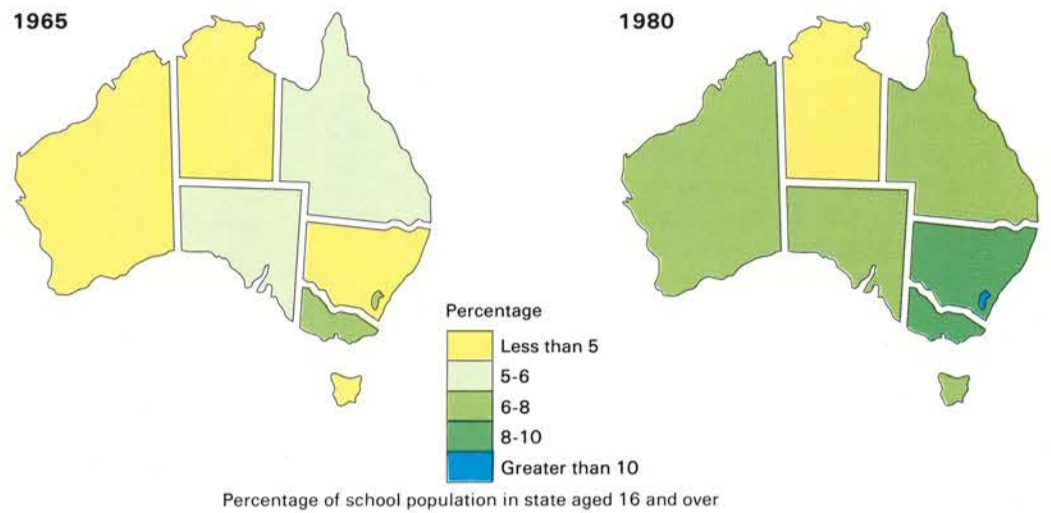

The world's first two-way School of the Air was established at Alice Springs in 1951. The school brought education to children living in the outback. Here, the child of an itinerant worker begins lessons for the day.
NATIONAL LIBRARY

- ○ School of the Air showing date of opening
- Homesteads/dwellings dependent on HF radio for telecommunication
- Arid zone

Scale 1 : 30 000 000
0   500 Kilometres

Carnarvon 1982

- Main road
- Other road
- Track
- Settlement with children enrolled in the School of the Air

Scale 1 : 5 000 000
0   50   100   150 Kilometres

Secondary education

ALTHOUGH THE FIRST fully-supported state secondary school was opened in Perth in 1876, systems of state-supported secondary education were not created until the early 1900s. The first was introduced in South Australia in 1907. New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia introduced state systems in 1910; Queensland followed in 1912 and Tasmania in 1913. Entry to secondary schools was restricted, and their object was to meet specific vocational needs. They provided professional and higher clerical training, industrial courses for technicians, commercial courses for ordinary clerical jobs and domestic training courses for girls.

During the late 1930s and World War II there was a significant change in public attitudes to secondary education: the principle of secondary education for all children was widely accepted. In the postwar years secondary school systems expanded rapidly in all states, initially because more children were remaining at school to complete their secondary education, then because the children of the postwar baby boom were reaching high school age. Many parents were encouraging children to complete a full twelve years of schooling to equip them for university or college. In 1960, a total of 83000 students aged sixteen years and over were at school, 50 000 of them boys. Victoria had the highest proportion of boys (65 per cent), but the tendency everywhere was for increasing numbers of girls to complete their secondary schooling at year 12. By 1982 the school population aged sixteen and over had increased to 240 000, of whom 121 000 were girls.

School population aged 16 and over

1965

1980

Percentage
- Less than 5
- 5-6
- 6-8
- 8-10
- Greater than 10

Percentage of school population in state aged 16 and over

Males / **Females**

| 1960 | 1965 | 1975 | 1982 |

125 100 75 50 25 0 0 25 50 75 100 125
Number in thousands   Number in thousands

Students from Whitebridge High School hold their sports day on Redhead Beach, Newcastle, NSW. Photograph by Reg Morrison.
WELDON TRANNIES

Grades in government schools

- Secondary
- Primary
- Pre-school (includes infants, kindergarten, preparatory etc.)

Qualifications

C. of S.E.—Certificate of Secondary Education
H.S.C.—Higher School Certificate
L.H.C.—Leaving Honours Certificate
L.T.C.—Leaving Technical Certificate
S.B.C.—School Board Certificate
S.S.C.—Secondary School Certificate
T.A.E.—Tertiary Admissions Examination

A.C.—Achievement Certificate
I.C.—Intermediate Certificate
Jun.C.—Junior Certificate
L.C.—Leaving Certificate
S.C.—School Certificate
Sen.C.—Senior Certificate
S.I.—School Intermediate
S.L.—School Leaving

CL—CLASS
FM—FORM
GDE—GRADE
(M)—Matriculation
YR—YEAR
*Average age of students in August

New South Wales showed broad trends common to all states in the development of schooling at secondary level. The Public Instruction Act of 1880 provided for the establishment of separate high schools for boys and girls. By 1884 segregated high schools had been opened in Sydney, Bathurst, Goulburn and Maitland. The schools in Goulburn and Bathurst were closed during the 1890s, but those in Sydney and Maitland remained open. In 1900, 524 pupils were enrolled at these four schools.
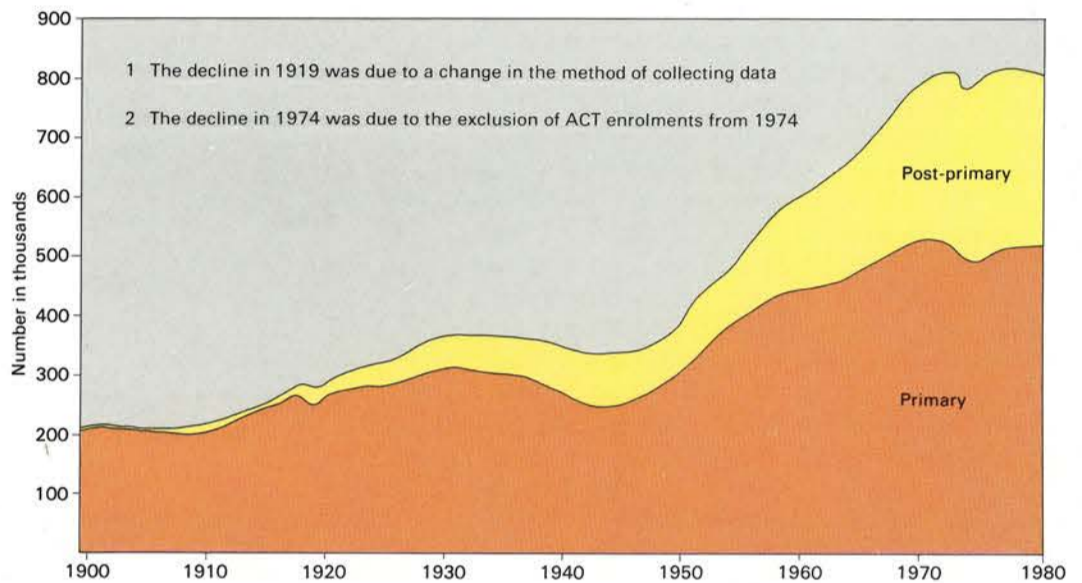
Thus, state secondary education before 1900 was minimal. Slow and limited development took place during the next fifty years. Student numbers were generally fewer than 10 000 before 1915, and although the number of high school students increased quite rapidly to almost 60 000 during the 1920s, the next twenty years saw the growth rate slow once more. By 1950 there were 86 000 high school students. The maps below show the chronological pattern of secondary school provision in the Hunter region of New South Wales, and reflect the general trends at state level.
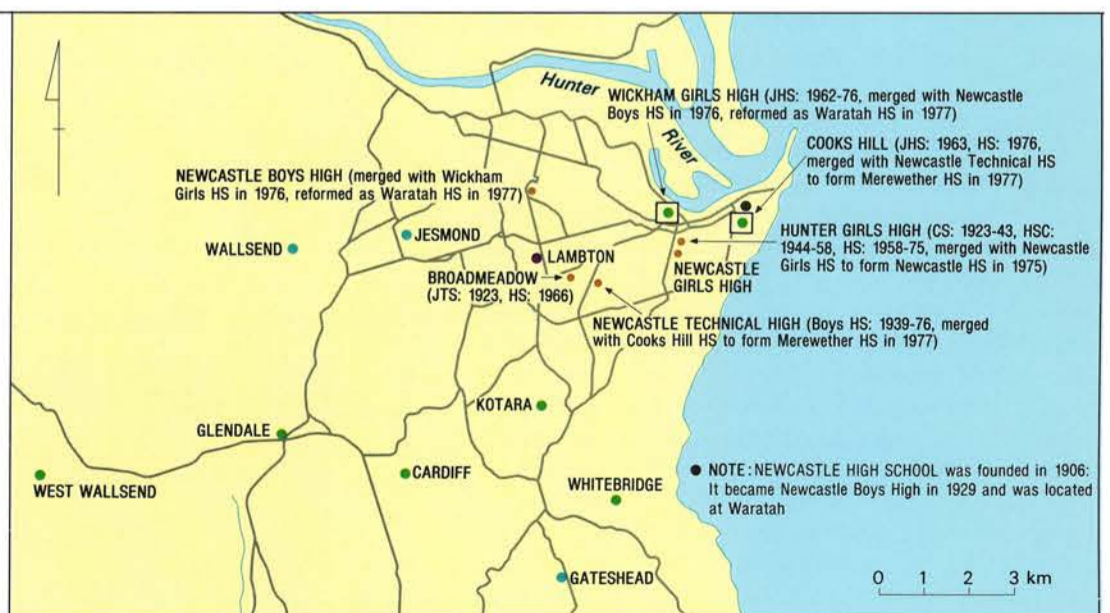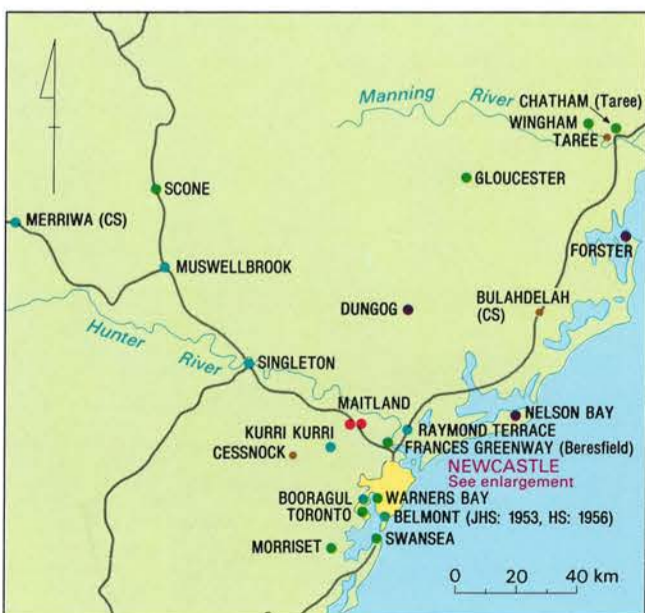
Number of high schools in New South Wales
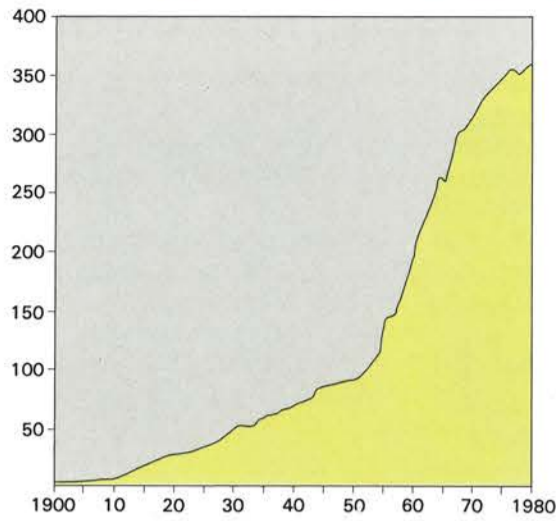
The number of high schools rapidly increased between 1950 and 1970, with enrolments reaching more than 260 000. By 1980 the state's 357 high schools provided secondary education for more than 280 000 pupils.

Total enrolments in New South Wales

1 The decline in 1919 was due to a change in the method of collecting data

2 The decline in 1974 was due to the exclusion of ACT enrolments from 1974

Post-primary

Primary

Number in thousands

Demountable classrooms at Mosman High School, New South Wales. The ease of transporting and setting up these buildings led to their widespread use to meet short-term fluctuations in the school population. Photograph by Adriaan van der Weel, 1986.

WICKHAM GIRLS HIGH (JHS: 1962-76, merged with Newcastle Boys HS in 1976, reformed as Waratah HS in 1977)

COOKS HILL (JHS: 1963, HS: 1976, merged with Newcastle Technical HS to form Merewether HS in 1977)

NEWCASTLE BOYS HIGH (merged with Wickham Girls HS in 1976, reformed as Waratah HS in 1977)

HUNTER GIRLS HIGH (CS: 1923-43, HSC: 1944-58, HS: 1958-75, merged with Newcastle Girls HS to form Newcastle HS in 1975)

NEWCASTLE TECHNICAL HIGH (Boys HS: 1939-76, merged with Cooks Hill HS to form Merewether HS in 1977)

BROADMEADOW (JTS: 1923, HS: 1966)

NEWCASTLE GIRLS HIGH

● NOTE: NEWCASTLE HIGH SCHOOL was founded in 1906: It became Newcastle Boys High in 1929 and was located at Waratah

High schools in the Hunter region

Year of opening

● Before 1900
● 1900-1910
● 1911-1950
● 1951-1960
● 1961-1970
● 1971-1980

HS—High School
HSC—Higher Secondary College
JHS—Junior High School

JTS—Junior Technical School
CS—Central School
DSS—Domestic Science School
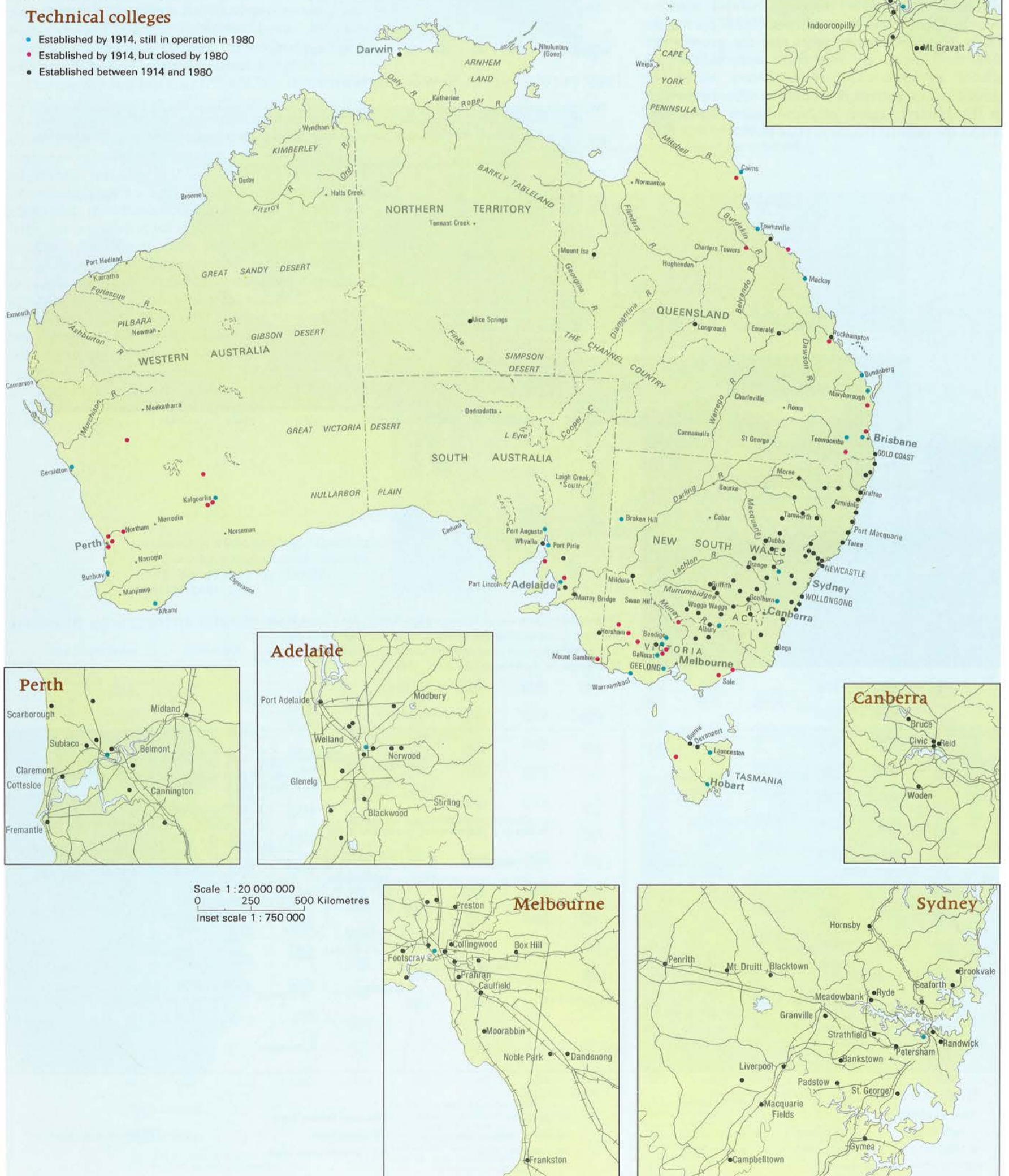
☐ School now closed

Technical education

U NTIL THE 1870s, the provision of technical education was haphazard. Mechanics' institutes and schools of art, founded throughout Australia from the late 1870s, failed to provide practical instruction. They developed into libraries and social clubs rather than places of technical training for working people.

Impetus for technical education came from the goldmining industry. Victoria led the way; in 1870 Australia's first technical college, the Ballarat School of Mines, was established. By 1873 a second college had opened at Bendigo to teach skills related to mining. Pressure from voluntary groups led to the opening of colleges in Sydney, Launceston, Hobart, Brisbane and Adelaide by the end of the 1880s. This encouraging start was cut short by the economic depression of the 1890s, and interest in technical education did not revive until the 1900s.
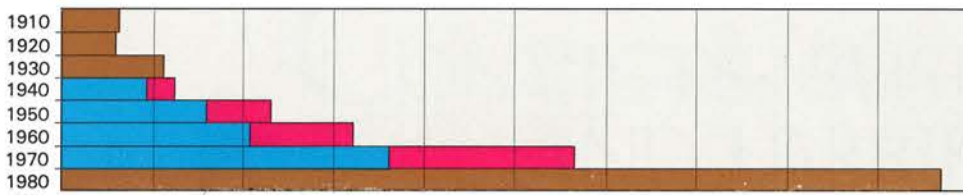
Technical colleges

- Established by 1914, still in operation in 1980
- Established by 1914, but closed by 1980
- Established between 1914 and 1980

Brisbane

Perth

Adelaide

Canberra

Melbourne

Sydney

Scale 1 : 20 000 000
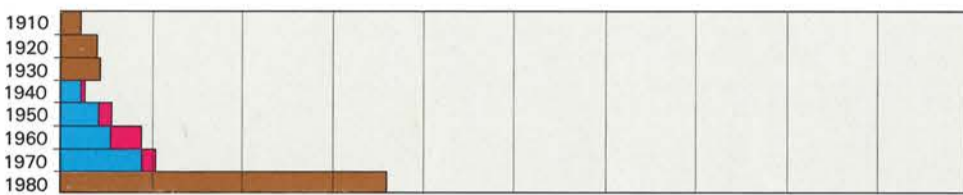0   250   500 Kilometres
Inset scale 1 : 750 000

Technical student numbers 1910-1980
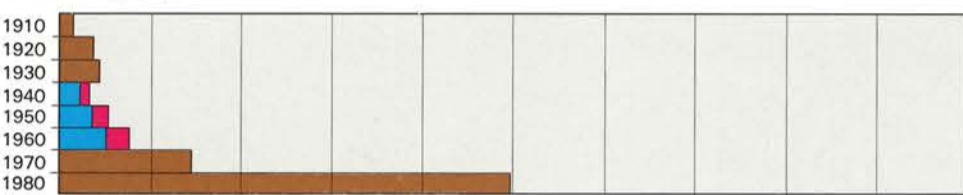

New South Wales

Queensland

South Australia

Tasmania
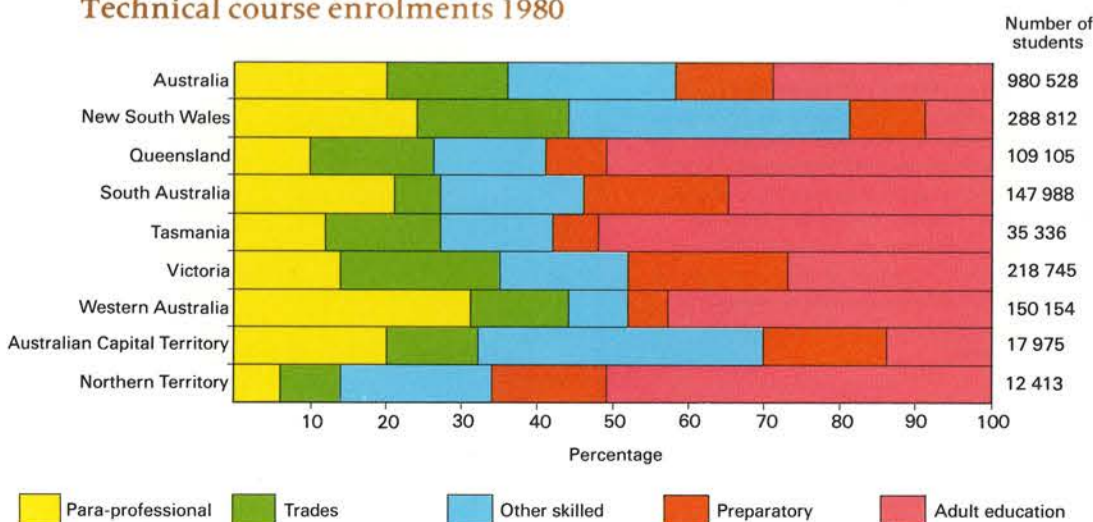
Victoria

Western Australia

Australian Capital Territory

Northern Territory

■ Male   ■ Female   ■ Persons

Technical course enrolments 1980

Number of students

Australia	980 528
New South Wales	288 812
Queensland	109 105
South Australia	147 988
Tasmania	35 336
Victoria	218 745
Western Australia	150 154
Australian Capital Territory	17 975
Northern Territory	12 413

Percentage

■ Para-professional   ■ Trades   ■ Other skilled   ■ Preparatory   ■ Adult education

By 1914 thirty-one technical colleges had been established; they were located in state capitals and major country towns. After World War I, technical education flourished briefly. The federal government made money available to train returned servicemen in industrial and agricultural trades, and day release of apprentices to attend technical colleges was introduced. The depression of the 1930s brought the development of technical education to a halt, but World War II set it moving again by creating a need for technicians in all fields. The training of returned servicemen for entry into the workforce after 1945 gave further impetus to technical education. New colleges were built in metropolitan areas and country towns. A Technical and Further Education (TAFE) sector was one of three elements in the Tertiary Education Commission established by the Labor government after 1972, and by 1982, 175 technical colleges were operating in Australia.

Enrolments and courses

In 1910 there were 40 000 students enrolled in technical colleges. The courses covered a range of subjects, including building, plumbing, science, woolclassing, technical drawing, dressmaking and domestic science, art and commerce. Enrolments, 62 000 in 1920, had risen to 98 000 by 1930. They remained relatively constant until the late 1930s, when day classes for unemployed youths were started. The outbreak of war brought marked increases in student numbers; the technical education resources of all states were mobilised under the Commonwealth Defence and Training Scheme. Skilled men and women were needed for aircraft production and munitions, and the pressure on colleges to make tools and machines for both military and civil purposes was great. By 1942 many college workshops operated twenty-four hours a day, in three shifts, to cope with the number of trainees in intensive courses. The following table shows the numbers involved in the scheme between 1939 and 1947.

COMMONWEALTH DEFENCE AND TECHNICAL & TRAINING SCHEME 1939–47

Service	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	ACT	TOTAL
Navy	17	325	–	199	–	–	–	541
Army	7 199	7 607	6 099	1 165	3 726	249	–	26 045
Air	21 391	24 055	51	15 644	3 215	300	5 223	69 879
Munitions & aircraft	6 223	9 819	2 609	2 433	1 321	533	314	23 252
TOTAL	34 830	41 806	8 759	19 441	8 262	1 082	5 537	119 717

After the war a Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme, designed to help returned servicemen re-establish themselves in civilian life, increased enrolment in technical education. By 1950 over 160 000 students were attending technical colleges.

In 1961 a commonwealth government committee suggested that technical colleges should provide courses in five main areas: general education courses at various levels up to matriculation; trade courses at sub-matriculation level; certificate courses for technicians covering both practice and theory; diploma courses in subjects such as accountancy, business administration, commerce and architecture; recreational and cultural courses. After 1972 commonwealth responsibility for such colleges and courses was taken over by the Tertiary Education Commission through its TAFE section.

By 1980 almost 1 million students attended technical colleges for a wide range of vocational and other subjects. Apprenticeships and related trades courses accounted for 20 per cent of the total enrolments. There were also large numbers of vocational courses for people not indentured in a trade, such as certificate courses for technicians and paraprofessionals, (hospital technicians, for example). Many other courses for personal interest were also offered; more than one-quarter of enrolments in 1980 were for courses of this type.

University education

THE DEVELOPMENT OF UNIVERSITIES falls into two phases: from 1850 to 1911, when all states developed universities in their capitals, and after 1946, when additional universities were opened in the metropolitan areas and selected regional centres.

Universities before 1911
In the 1840s influential people began to press for a university to be established in New South Wales, and in 1850 the University of Sydney was founded. The University of Melbourne was founded in 1853. Although both were funded primarily by the government, they also relied on endowments to build residential colleges and to help establish some disciplines. The University of Adelaide was founded in 1874.

Before the end of the nineteenth century, the main responsibility for founding universities had passed from individuals and private benefactors to governments. In 1890 the government of Tasmania set up a university; Queensland and Western Australia followed in 1909 and 1911 respectively. These were influenced by the new universities opened in England and the progressive universities in America. They offered a broader range of courses for students than either Sydney or Melbourne and allowed entry of women undergraduates from the outset. By the time they were founded, however, women were being admitted to Melbourne University (from 1874) and Sydney University (from 1881). A college was opened at Canberra in 1929, granting degrees from the University of Melbourne; another was opened at Armidale in 1938, and awarded degrees from the University of Sydney.

Universities since 1946
In the late 1940s, Australia was undersupplied with universities; since 1946, thirteen new ones have been founded. Sydney and Melbourne now have three universities each and Adelaide, Perth and Brisbane two. Five regional universities have been established and major developments in university education have occurred in Canberra. In 1946 the commonwealth government established the Australian National University as a centre for advanced research. In 1960 it incorporated the Canberra University College. In 1967 the University of New South Wales set up a Faculty of Military Studies at the Royal Military College, Duntroon, and in 1986 its University College was opened at the Australian Defence Force Academy.

Student numbers
Student numbers in early universities were very small. Sydney, for example, conferred only 239 degrees during its first twenty years and in the early 1900s there were fewer than 3000 students in universities. By 1939 enrolments had reached about 15 000.

From 1945 to 1950 the number of students doubled and in 1950 30000 were attending university. Population growth, rising educational standards, a greater number of children completing secondary education and increased funding by both the commonwealth and state governments for scholarships and allowances gave more school leavers the opportunity to study at university. The number of students per 100 000 of the population, which in 1900 had been less than 100, had risen in 1954 to at least 200, and by 1966 it had reached 620. By the 1980s over 160 000 students were enrolled.

Universities have not grown to any great extent during the 1980s. Lower levels of funding and a declining school and teenage population have seen the number of students remain fairly static.

Foundation of universities

Student enrolments
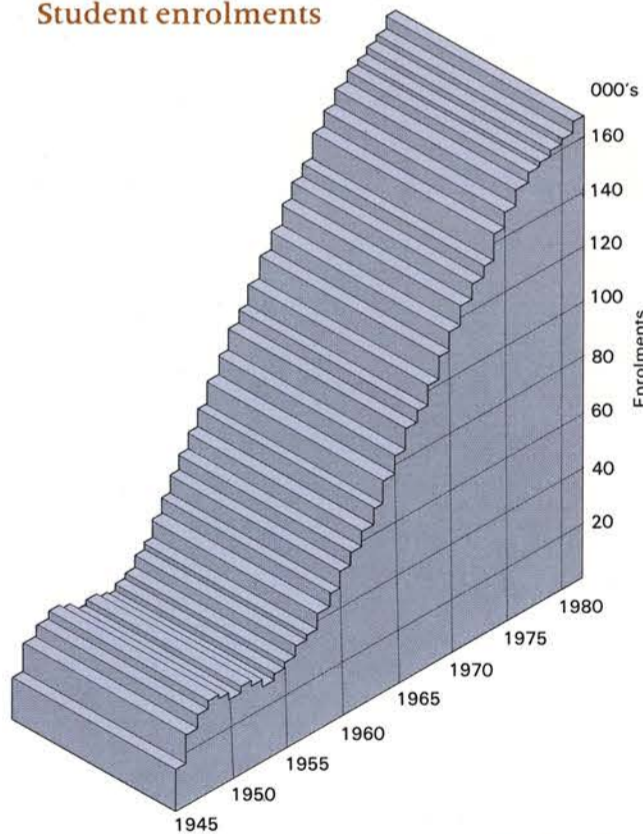
The number of enrolments in Australia's universities has grown and a larger proportion of the population is receiving university education. This graph shows the number of students per 100 000 of the population in selected years.

University students

At first, the number of students attending university was small. Sydney University, for example, conferred 239 degrees in its first twenty years. By 1939, about 15 000 students were enrolled in Australia's universities, but between 1945 and 1950 this number doubled. The most substantial growth in enrolments, however, occurred during the 1960s and 1970s. Population growth, availability of scholarships, increased funding and a greater number of children completing secondary education accounted for the increase in enrolments.