

4.1

Aboriginal wars

Black armband view of history

View that highlights negative aspects of Australia's past, such as brutal treatment of Aborigines.

Genocide Deliberate destruction of a people or a race.

History wars Opposing views of history.

Did you know?

As Europeans occupied Australia after 1788, there were numerous skirmishes with the original inhabitants. Today, there is considerable controversy about these: many conflicts were covered up or barely recorded and it is extremely difficult to know how many Indigenous Australians were killed. For the first 200 years, this aspect of Australian warfare was rarely acknowledged, so many histories did not even mention wars between Aborigines and European settlers. Since about 1990, the writing of Australian history has increasingly recognised 'frontier wars', that is, those settlers moving into their lands. The issues relating to the frontier wars have led to a wide public debate, involving historians and their supporters or detractors. This debate is often called the 'history wars'.

If you pick up a history of Australia's involvements in war, you will almost certainly find that 'war' did not start until the mid-19th century and that it involved colonial troops fighting outside Australia for the British Empire.

There is no written record and almost no material evidence of the first wars fought on the Australian continent. Prior to 1788, there were over 500 different tribes, who fought tribal battles and carried out raids that we might define as 'war'. Some early European settlers recorded details of inter-tribal battles, often the result of the settlers' pressure on tribal lands. In 1790, Pemulwuy and his followers killed 17 European settlers in the Sydney-Parramatta area.

The fact that colonial troops stationed in Australia fought Indigenous Australians has only recently been part of popular history in Australia. Conflict between white settlers and the indigenous inhabitants has often been seen as not war at all.

Until the 1970s, there had been little historical research into the total numbers of Aborigines killed by white settlers after 1788. Regional and local histories recorded individual battles and skirmishes, and significant major conflicts were described in histories and textbooks. For white Australians, educated about European battles involving thousands killed, the stated numbers of deaths seemed relatively small – conflict at Broken River (now Benalla, Victoria) in April 1836, resulted in seven Aborigines killed.

On the other hand, a commonly held belief from the latter half of the 20th century was that there had been genocide – deliberate government policy to destroy a race – practised in Tasmania.

The last full-blood Tasmanian Aborigine, Truganini, died in 1876. Australian histories generally concluded that Tasmanian Aborigines had been destroyed by a combination of disease and frontier violence. Similarly, mainland Aborigines had suffered decimation through the same means.

In 1981, historian Henry Reynolds estimated that 20 000 Aborigines were killed before 1901. For some years, this figure was broadly accepted. But in the late 1990s, another historian, Keith Windschuttle, challenged Reynolds' estimate. He argued that Reynolds, and several other historians, were not finding real evidence of numbers of Aborigines killed by whites, but were estimating and extrapolating.

Since about 2000, there has been considerable debate about this issue, the debate becoming known as the history wars.

In 2002, Windschuttle published the first of three intended volumes, *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History*. The first volume deals with Tasmania. In it, he disputes many of the conclusions reached by previous historians about Aboriginal deaths in Tasmania.

The Prime Minister, John Howard, also publicly criticised the 'black armband view of history'. This view highlights the negative aspects of our past, including brutal treatment of the indigenous inhabitants. Mr Howard argued that Australia has much to be proud of – it has been a strong liberal democracy with a record of justice and positive social values.

George Mackay, an early settler on the Ovens River, wrote of his experiences:

Source 1

The blacks were not very numerous, but very hostile. They murdered a number of white men and destroyed a great many cattle and horses. In May 1840, 21 of them, all armed with guns, beside their native weapons, attacked my station in my absence. They murdered one of my servants and burned my huts and stores, and all my wheat.

Source: Quoted in Richard Broome & Alan Frost, eds, *The Colonial Experience: The Port Phillip District 1834–1850*, *La Trobe University Studies in History*, 1999, p 45.

This monument was erected by C J Brockman; the original inscription dedicates it as follows:

Source 2

A fellow bush wanderer's tribute to the memories of Panter, Harding and Goldwyer earliest explorers after Grey and Gregory of 'this Terra Incognita' attacked at night by treacherous natives were murdered at Boola Boola, near La Grange Bay on 13 November 1864.

Also as an appreciative token of remembrance of Maitland Brown, one of the pioneer pastoralists and premier politicians of this state, intrepid leader of the government search and punitive party. His remains, together with the sad relics of the ill fated three recovered at great risk and danger from the lone wilds repose under a public monument in the East Perth Cemetery.

Lest we forget.

A more recent plaque was added, which reads:

This plaque was erected by people who found the monument before you offensive. The monument describes events at La Grange from one perspective only: The viewpoint of the White 'settlers'. No mention is made of the right of Aboriginal people to defend their land or of the history of provocation which led to the explorers' deaths. The 'Punitive Party' mentioned here ended in the deaths of somewhere around twenty Aboriginal people.

The Whites were well armed and equipped and none of their party was killed or wounded. This plaque is in memory of the Aboriginal people killed at La Grange. It also commemorates all other Aboriginal people who died during the invasion of their country.

Lest we forget

Mapa Jarriya-Nyalaku.

Source: *Monument in Perth, Western Australia* (see Figure 4.2).



Figure 4.2

Monument in Perth, Western Australia.

Source 3

We do not know how many aborigines there were in Australia before the White People came, but some authorities think the number might have been about 300 000. Try to find out how many there are now. How do you account for the fact that their numbers have declined so greatly in less than 200 years? Finding out something about the way they were treated by the early settlers and convicts, and how they came into contact with alcohol and the White Man's diseases, will give you some clues to the answer.

Extract from a history textbook used in Victorian schools until the 1960s.

Source: P J Palmer, *The Past and Us*, Cheshire, Melbourne, 1963, p 6

Source 4

It would be fair to say that, for a generation, nothing has created such a stir in the tranquil dovecotes of the Australian humanities. Windschuttle's chargesheet is comprehensive: he argues that historians, anthropologists, cross-cultural studies gurus and their various followers have painted too bleak a picture of the frontier experience. Their consensus has created a new, genocidal version of the Australian past: a history full of massacres and killings.

Source: Nicholas Rothwell, 'Enemies needing each other', in *The Weekend Australian*, 1–2 March 2003, p 10

Source 5

The frontier in Australian History has of late been written as a story of the killing, massacre and dispossession of Aboriginal people. Historians disagree on the numbers of Aborigines killed in Victoria by whites. Beverley Nance, in her 1981 article, 'The Level of Violence' estimated from the records that about 400 Aborigines were killed by whites. In *Aborigines in Colonial Victoria* (1979), Michael Christie made a broad guess not closely based on the records, and believed that the Aboriginal death-toll at the hands of whites was more like 2000. For various reasons ... the number is likely to be somewhere in between these two figures. This is still a dreadful toll, representing a loss of perhaps ten per cent of the likely pre-contact population through white violence.

Source: Richard Broome and Alan Frost, eds, *The Colonial Experience: The Port Phillip District 1834–1850*, *La Trobe University Studies in History*, 1999, p 42

thinking historically

H Compare different perspectives about significant events**H Explain the historical foundations of contemporary issues**

1 Reading Sources 1 and 2 on page 79, what can you conclude was the reason for frontier violence?

Com

2 a What reasons does Source 3 on page 79 suggest for the significant decline in Indigenous Australians?

b Why do you think Source 3 avoids discussion of frontier wars?

3 Look at the photograph in Figure 4.2 and carefully study the text of the two plaques, given in Source 4.2.

TP

a Briefly describe what happened to Panter, Harding and Goldwyer as outlined in the first plaque.

b What does the addition of the second plaque tell us about how our views of Australia's early settlement by Europeans have changed over time?

4 Use Source 5 on this page and the text to explain why there is disagreement among historians on the number of Aborigines killed in frontier wars.

5 Richard Broome and Alan Frost state in Source 5 that Victorian Aborigines suffered 'a loss of perhaps ten per cent' of their pre-contact population. How does this figure compare to Australia's losses in 20th-century wars such as World War I?

C&C

6 Although the history wars have created arguments between historians, why, according to Nicholas Rothwell in Source 4, might this be a good thing?

TP

Understanding the topic

- 1 Why is there no history of pre-1788 wars in Australia?
- 2 What is genocide? Why might some people conclude that genocide was practised in Tasmania in the 19th century?
- 3 Name two historians in the history wars and explain which side they are on.
- 4 When is a black armband worn? How does this help explain the term 'black armband view of history'?

Conscription

4.2

All societies have had some form of forcing young men to fight to defend their territory. In modern history, conscription as we know it began in 1792, during the French Revolution. It was argued that 'the country was in danger' so men must be conscripted to save their country.

In most Western, democratic and liberal countries – including Britain, Canada and New Zealand – any proposal to introduce compulsory military service has raised deep debate. On the one hand, it goes against the individual rights of the citizen; on the other hand, it can be argued that, under certain circumstances, individuals must give up their liberties so that the nation's liberty as a whole can be preserved.

There have been two main periods when the 'conscription debate' has divided Australia: 1916–17 during World War I and 1964–72 during the Vietnam War. During World War II, the issue caused much less rancour.

Compulsory military training was introduced in Australia soon after Federation. The *Defence Act 1903* made it compulsory for all males aged 18 to 60 to serve in the defence of their country in time of war, but stipulated that only volunteers could be required to serve beyond Australia. The Act was amended in 1911 so that from age 12 to 25, males did some compulsory training every year. This meant that, when war was declared in 1914, most young Australian men had some military training.

Did you know?

Conscription is compulsory enlistment for military service. It is known by various names, such as *call up*, *the draft*, *national service* or *Nasho*. There may be a distinction between compulsory military training and compulsory service during wartime.

Did you know?

Conscientious objectors are those who, for religious or other reasons based on personal belief, believe they cannot fight. In the *Defence Act 1903*, exemption from compulsory military training was provided for those who could prove that religious conviction forbade them to bear arms. By 1911, however, the Act had been amended so that conscientious objectors could be exempt from combatant, but not non-combatant duties. They could be required to carry out medical duties, such as being a stretcher-bearer, or other duties such as assisting in kitchens. This did not satisfy those who had conscientious objections to war itself – a pacifist could still be required to support a war effort, even in a non-combatant role. Some young Australian men were imprisoned for refusing to attend military training: often, they were followers of the Society of Friends, or Quaker, religious sect.

Source 1

Our fathers came to Australia largely with a view to getting rid of the burdens and dangers of war which have oppressed the people of Europe for so many years, and we should be giving up the best part of our heritage in Australia if, remote from the centres of excitement, we were to start a military system in grotesque imitation of the military system on the continent of Europe. We ought to thank God for our freedom from these complications.

H B Higgins, a Member of the House of Representatives, debating the *Commonwealth Defence Bill 1901* in parliament.

Source: *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates*; quoted in J M Main, *Conscription: The Australian Debate, 1901–1970*, p 8

Source 2

Our experience in South Africa has shown that [the service of our citizens] is the most economical system ... We have seen the intelligent colonist, with a very small amount of training, go forth to fight the battles of his King and country in South Africa, and there to meet the trained soldiers of the Empire. He has been able to win for Australia renown upon the fields of battle, ... and ... he has added lustre to the British name.

The Commonwealth Minister for Defence, Sir John Forrest, debating the *Commonwealth Defence Bill 1901*.

Source: *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates*; quoted in J M Main, *Conscription: The Australian Debate, 1901–1970*, Cassell, North Melbourne, 1974, pp 7–8

Understanding the topic

- 1 Prior to 1914, which Australians had compulsory military training?
- 2 Under the *Defence Act 1903*, what distinction was made between defending Australia and fighting overseas?

thinking historically

H Analyse significant events.

H Use a range of primary and secondary sources.

TP

- 1 What does H B Higgins, MHR (Source 1), think of the military systems in European countries?
- 2 Why were the provisions of the *Defence Act 1903* (as amended in 1911) sometimes referred to as 'boy conscription'?
- 3 What 'Empire' is Sir John Forrest referring to in Source 2?

C&C

4 Which war is Sir John Forrest referring to when he speaks of 'Our experience in South Africa'?

5 According to Sir John Forrest, how has the Australian soldier in South Africa compared with the trained soldiers of the Empire?

4.3

Conscription debates 1916–17

Timeline

Britain declares war against Germany; Australia supports Britain and prepares to send troops to the European war (World War I)

4 Aug 1914

Australian and New Zealand troops land at Gallipoli, western Turkey, as part of the Allied attempt to force Germany's ally, Turkey, out of the War

25 April 1915

Australians narrowly vote against conscription in two referendums

1916, 1917

World War I ends with the Armistice; almost 60 000 Australians died and 167 000 were wounded during the War

11 Nov 1918

When war broke out in 1914, the common Australian feeling was enthusiasm: Australia should support the 'mother country'. The Australian Government immediately offered an expeditionary force of 20 000 and men rushed to enlist. This enthusiasm continued throughout 1915, especially after the Anzac landings at Gallipoli were reported in Australian newspapers. Recruiting campaigns further encouraged young men to join their compatriots overseas.

By late 1915, however, volunteerism had reached its limits and some argued for compulsory military service – conscription. The Universal Service League, in favour of conscription for service outside Australia, was formed in 1915. The Australian Peace Alliance was an example of an organisation opposed to conscription. The trades union movement and some Australian Labor Party representatives publicly opposed conscription.

By 1916, most countries participating in World War I had introduced military conscription: European nations, including Germany, had a tradition of military conscription; Britain introduced conscription in January 1916, New Zealand in June 1916.

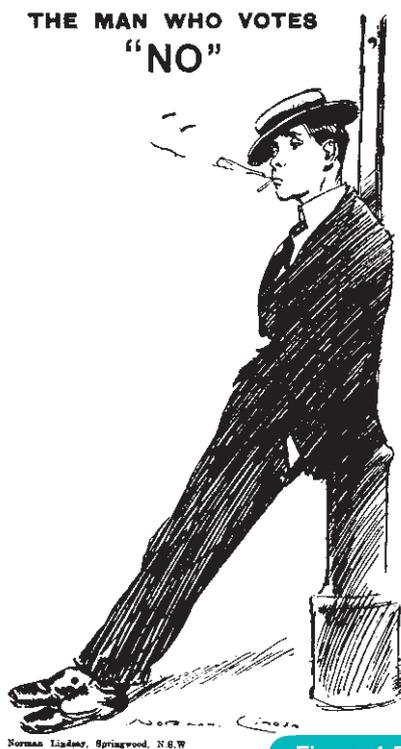


Figure 4.5



Figure 4.6

'The blood vote', first published in *The Australian Worker*, 12 October 1916.

thinking historically

H Use a range of primary sources.

H Recognise that in history there are multiple perspectives.

1 Using the graph in Figure 4.4, calculate how many Australians enlisted in the Australian Imperial Forces in (a) July 1915 and (b) December 1916. In small groups, brainstorm possible reasons for the difference between these two figures.

2 Use the graph in Figure 4.4 to describe the effect of the landing at Gallipoli, in April 1915, on the number of enlistments in the Australian Imperial Forces.

3 a What kind of person, as shown in the cartoon in Figure 4.5, votes 'No' to conscription?

b Do you think a cartoon such as that shown in Figure 4.5 would shame people into supporting conscription? Explain.

4 According to the poem in Figure 4.6, how has the woman 'doomed a man to death'?

5 Select four phrases or lines from the poem in Figure 4.6 that use emotive words to give an impression of the conscription referendum being a 'blood vote'.

Understanding the topic

- List three groups or people who supported the introduction of conscription during World War I.
- List three groups or people who opposed the introduction of conscription during the War.
- In what ways was Australia divided by the conscription issue?
- Study the referendum figures for 1916 and 1917. In each referendum, what percentage voted 'No'? Why do you think the percentage changed between 1916 and 1917?

Conscription in World War II

4.4

The conscription debate in World War I had bitterly divided Australia, but this was not the case during World War II.

The Australian Prime Minister during much of the War was John Curtin, who hated conscription and had been jailed during anti-conscription struggles in World War I. But World War II was against the forces of fascism and Australia was directly threatened by the Japanese. US forces were fighting in the Pacific region, partly to halt any Japanese attack on Australia.

The ALP was divided over conscription, but at the ALP Federal Conference in January 1943, Curtin's proposal to introduce limited conscription for overseas service was supported by 24 votes to 12. In February 1943, the Militia Bill was passed in Federal Parliament: this allowed members of the militia to be sent to fight in the South-West Pacific Zone.

Source 1

A secondary source sums up the reasons why the ALP was not torn apart by the conscription issue in 1943 as it had been in 1916–17.

Other Labor members were swayed by the gravity of Australia's situation, the limited nature of Curtin's plan, Curtin's reputation and the fact that no new recruits would be required to implement it.

Source: Michael McKernan, *Australians in Wartime*, Nelson, Melbourne, 1983, p 86

Timeline

World War II begins; Australia joins Britain and its Allies to resist fascist forces in Europe and North Africa, and later to fight the Japanese in the Asia–Pacific region

3 Sept 1939

Japanese planes bomb Darwin; northern Australian locations bombed over next two years

19 Feb 1942

World War II ends (May in Europe, August in Asia–Pacific); almost 39 000 Australians died and 181 000 were wounded

1945

Vietnam

The Vietnam War (1945–75) was part of the Cold War, the struggle between the West (or 'free world') and the East (communist countries.) Communists controlled North Vietnam and anti-communist governments controlled South Vietnam. The USA feared that, if South Vietnam became communist, it would create a flow-on effect as, one by one, other South East Asian countries fell to communism. This was known as the domino theory.

From 1962, Australia, a close ally of the USA, sent military advisors to help the South Vietnamese. In 1965, involvement was increased when Australia sent an infantry battalion. Between 1962 and 1972 almost 47 000 Australians served in Vietnam; 500 were killed.

In 1964, the Australian Government, under Liberal Prime Minister Robert Menzies, introduced conscription. All 20-year-old men were required to register for National Service and twice a year marbles representing birth dates were drawn out in a kind of lottery. Those who were 'called up' – their birth date was selected – had to report for medical tests and could be required to enlist in compulsory military service. From 1966, conscripts were sent to fight in Vietnam; the first conscript killed in Vietnam was Private Errol Noack of Adelaide, killed in May 1966.

As it had been in 1916–17, Australia was divided by the conscription issue during the 1960s and early 1970s. There were many large public

Source 2

We expect a continuing requirement to make forces available for cold war and anti-insurgency tasks. We must have forces ready as an immediate contribution should wider hostilities occur. ... The necessary units cannot be provided with a lesser strength than 33 000, yet this number cannot in present circumstances and in proper time be obtained by voluntary means.

Source: Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzies, quoted in J M Main, *Conscription: The Australian Debate, 1901–1970*, Cassell, North Melbourne, 1974, p 137

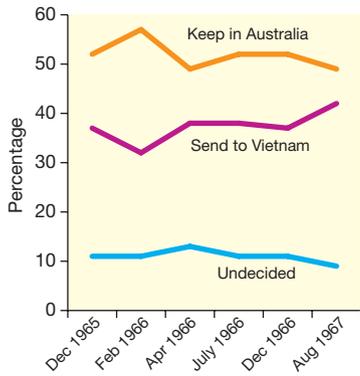


Figure 4.7

Gallup Polls on Conscription 1961-70: figures showing percentage in favour/opposed to conscription.

Source: Peter Cook, ed, Australia and Vietnam 1965-1972, Dept of History, La Trobe University, 1991, p 29

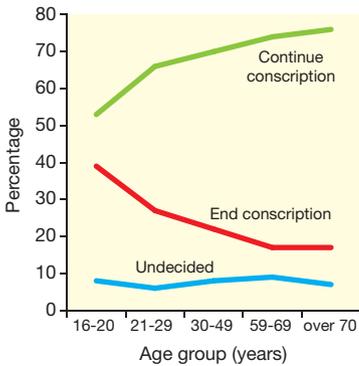


Figure 4.8

Gallup Polls on Conscription 1961-70: figures showing age groups in support of ending conscription/continuing conscription.

Source: Peter Cook, ed, Australia and Vietnam 1965-1972, Dept of History, La Trobe University, 1991, p 29

demonstrations, from 1970 called ‘moratoriums’ – usually a combination of those who opposed Australia’s involvement in Vietnam and those who specifically opposed conscripts being sent to Vietnam.

Australians’ attitudes to the War and conscription changed over the course of the War. In the 1966 federal election, the Liberal Party campaigned principally on the Vietnam issue and won a huge majority. In 1969, the Liberals won by a small majority. In 1972, the ALP won office.

Few of those who opposed conscription during the Vietnam War did so because of religious or pacifist beliefs. Probably the majority opposed conscription because of deep concerns about the morality of Australia fighting in that particular war; many argued it was a civil war between two rival governments and Australia had no place in it.

In 1971, the Liberal government made the decision to bring home most Australian troops. When the new ALP Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam, took office in 1972, one of his first decisions was to end conscription and withdraw the last troops from Vietnam.

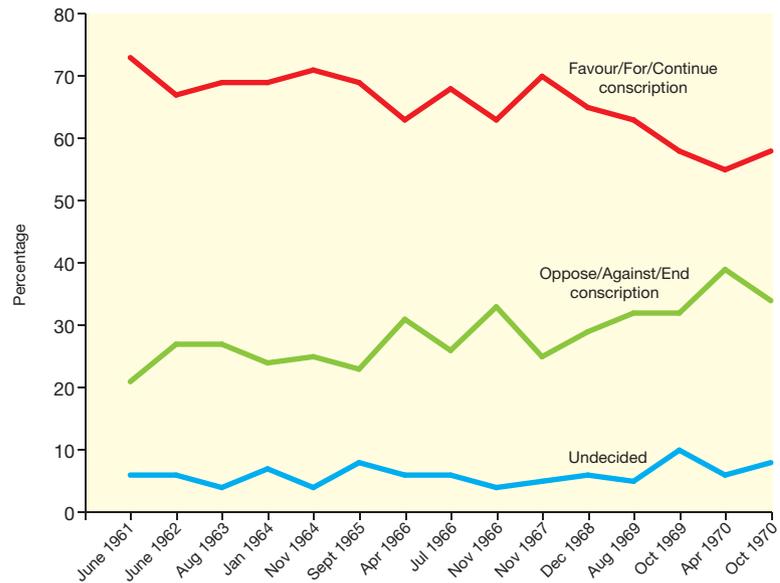


Figure 4.9

Gallup Polls on Conscription 1961-70: figures showing those supporting/opposing sending conscripts to Vietnam.

Source: Peter Cook, ed, Australia and Vietnam 1965-1972, Dept of History, La Trobe University, 1991, p 29

thinking historically

H Compare different perspectives about a significant event.

H Critically evaluate sources of evidence.

- 1 What reasons did Prime Minister Menzies give for introducing conscription in 1964?
- 2 Why do you think Menzies chose not to have a referendum on the introduction of conscription, as Prime Minister Hughes had done in 1916 and 1917?
- 3 Study the figures from the Gallup Polls in Figure 4.7.
 - a Describe how support for conscription changed between 1961 and 1970.
 - b Prime Minister Menzies announced the introduction of conscription in November 1964. What evidence is provided in Source 2 that this was a very popular decision?
- 4 **a** According to Figure 4.8, which age group is least supportive of continuing conscription?
 - b Why might that particular age group be less supportive than other age groups?
 - c Do the figures in Figure 4.8 support the contention that 'young people opposed conscription'? Explain.
- 5 According to Figure 4.9, did most Australians support conscripts being sent to Vietnam in the 1960s? Use supporting evidence from this section.
- 6 Use information from Figure 4.7, 4.8 and 4.9 to describe Australians' attitudes to conscription and conscription for service in Vietnam.
- 7 In the photograph shown in Figure 4.10, who is holding the placards? Does this support the popular image of protest movements in the 1960s and 1970s?
- 8 According to the poster shown in Figure 4.11, what does the campaign hope to achieve?
- 9 From your study of conscription in three wars in which Australia has been involved — World Wars I and II, and Vietnam — what factors influenced Australian attitudes towards conscription?



Figure 4.10

Women protesting in Sydney in 1966.

SCHOOLS' MORATORIUM CAMPAIGN

FOR THE
IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL FROM VIETNAM
& IMMEDIATE REPEAL OF NATIONAL SERVICE
ACT.

MAY 29, 1966

MARCH
Fri 8th

Students and Teachers leave school, join the march. Assemble 2-30 P.M. at the Treasury Gardens. March starts at 3-30 P.M.

OTHER ACTIVITIES DURING MORATORIUM WEEK Guest-speakers, discussions, debates, films, badges & car stickers available...

Authorised: Schools' Moratorium Campaign, B544D
G.P.O. Melb. 3001, 4/30 Murphy St. S.W. Yarra.

Figure 4.11

Understanding the topic

- 1 Why was the introduction of conscription far less divisive in World War II than it had been in World War I?
- 2 Explain why the 'domino theory' is named after a game.
- 3 How did opposition to conscription differ in World War I and Vietnam?
- 4 Popular belief today is that the ALP made the decision to end Australia's involvement in Vietnam. Is this correct? Explain.

4.5

Impact of war

Source 1

As to amputations, one of the positive contributions of the war to scientific medicine was that it made the provision of artificial limbs a major problem of the medical profession.

Source: Colonel A G Butler, *The Australian Army Medical Services in the War of 1914–1918, vol III, AWM, Canberra, 1943, p 279*

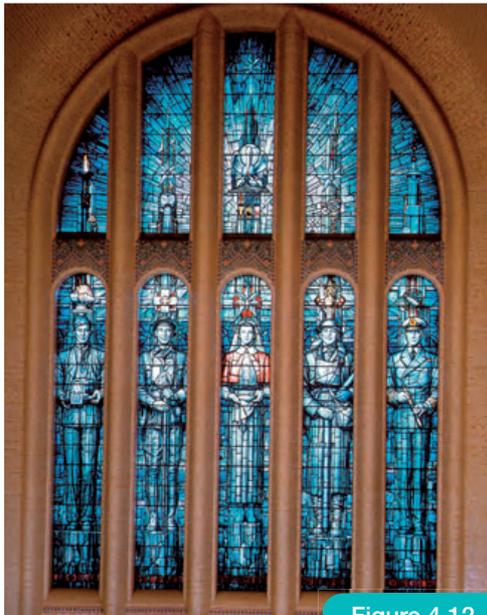


Figure 4.12

South Window surrounding the dome at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.

This series of symbolic windows of glass mosaic was created by Mervyn Napier Waller, who before World

War I had been known as an artist of great promise. He was wounded and his right arm was amputated. He

trained his left hand to do all that his right had previously done.

We often think of the ‘casualties of war’ as those killed or wounded in fighting. In fact, there are many aspects to war that have effects beyond deaths and physical wounds.

During the Boer War (1899–1902), more Australians died of disease than of wounds. This was not the case during other major 20th-century wars in which Australia was involved. During World War I, for example, 53 884 Australians were killed or died of wounds or gassing, whereas 6371 died of non-battle related disease or accidents.

One result of World War I was the greater realisation of the psychological effects of warfare. At the time, this was often called *shell shock*; today, we might call it *post-traumatic stress disorder*. The Australian Imperial Forces’ (AIF) medical officials preferred terms such as *traumatic neurasthenia* or *psycho-neuroses*.

At the time of World War I, the study and understanding of the mind – psychology – was in its early stages, and was not well understood by most participants or even many medical staff. The War itself helped develop psychology as it became necessary to deal with thousands suffering mental effects.

All wars result in horrific injuries; in the 20th century, improvements in medical treatments meant many wounded survived, where previously they would have died. During and after World War I, it became commonplace to see Australian men with severe permanent injuries: former soldiers who had lost one or both legs, extreme facial disfigurement and blindness.

The need for artificial limbs was so great that, while the War was still being fought, the AIF established a limb factory in London, where, incidentally, all employees themselves had limb amputations. It is estimated that 4 per cent of all Gallipoli wounded had lost a limb, and, by the end of the War, approximately 3000 officers and men of the AIF were returned to Australia with artificial limbs.

Source 2

Well, we lay down terror-stricken along a bank. The shelling was awful. I took a long drink of neat whisky and went up and down the bank trying to find a man who could tell where we were. Eventually I found one. ... we went back and got the men. It was hard to make them move, they were so badly broken. We eventually found our way to the right spot, out in No Man’s Land. Our leader was shot before we arrived, and the strain had sent two officers mad.

Lieutenant John Alexander Raws, 23rd Battalion, AIF, describing the horror at Pozieres, on the Western Front in France, 31 July to 1 August 1916. Raws himself was killed three weeks later.

Source: Lieutenant John Alexander Raws, quoted in *CEW Bean, Official History of Australia in the War 1914–18, vol III, p 658*

Source 3

[In the] hallway ... a souvenired German gas-mask hung on the tall hallstand, looking like the head of a captured Martian, and the whole area of the hall was a clutter of walking-sticks with heavy grey rubber tips — the sort of tips on walking-sticks that relate to injury rather than to elegance — and sets of crutches — the French type as well as the conventional shapes of bent wood — and there was always at least one invalid wheel-chair there and some artificial limbs propped in the corners.

* * *

The two New Zealanders, for example, are there — Alleck, who had been blinded early, at Gaba Tepe, with his polished leggings and his Boy Scoutish hat with the four dents in it: and 'Stubby', who was really only a trunk and a jovial red face in a wheel-chair, a German whizzbang having taken both his legs and both forearms at Villers-Bretonneux.

* * *

The nightmarish one in this remembered gallery is Gabby Dixon, because he kept in the background and was never seen much, and I don't suppose he wanted to be seen because he had suffered terrible facial burns with mustard gas and his face was no longer really like a face at all. ... sometimes at night through the thin partitions of the wall we could hear him sobbing in his room.

George Johnston wrote this semi-autobiographical account of his memories of growing up in Melbourne after World War I.

Source: *George Johnston, My Brother Jack, in The Meredith Trilogy, Collins, 1971, pp 1–2*

Source 4

The diary of the 2nd Mobile Veterinary Section notes that the section was under shell-fire for the first time, and that the horses of the 2nd Division were suffering badly ...

Source: *CEW Bean, Official History of Australia in the War 1914–18, vol III, p 724fn*

thinking historically

H Analyse significant events.

H Recognise that in history there are multiple perspectives and partial explanations.

- 1 By studying Source 1 and Figure 4.12, explain how the horrors of war can have positive side-effects.
- 2 Using Sources 2 and 4, explain the effects of constant shelling on men and animals.
- 3 George Johnston, author of the three extracts in Source 3, wrote that 'I must have spent a good part of [my] boyhood in the fixed belief that grown-up men who were complete were pretty rare beings ...' Explain why Johnston would have thought this.

TP

Understanding the topic

- 1 What percentage of Australian casualties in World War I were due to non-battle-related disease or accidents? How did this compare to the Boer War?
- 2 Explain why *shell shock* was not well understood throughout much of World War I.
- 3 Describe some of the people you might see in a large Australian city's streets in the 1920s.

4.6

Chemical weapons – Vietnam

Vietnam's dense jungles created many difficulties for aerial reconnaissance. In 1962, the USA launched Operation Ranch Hand to defoliate large areas of the jungle and so expose enemy guerrilla movement. Herbicides were also used against crops believed to be grown for the Vietcong. At the time, Agent Orange (herbicides such as 245T and 24D) was believed to be a safe chemical, but since the War there have been many cases of cancer among those exposed to the chemicals, and deformities in their children. Higher rates of some cancers and some birth defects have been found among both former soldiers and the civilian Vietnamese.

Herbicide spraying in Vietnam has been likened to the use of poison gas in World War I. As a result of that latter war, the Geneva Protocol of 1925 prohibited chemical and biological warfare. Major powers such as the USA and former USSR signed the Protocol; but it did not ban the production of chemical and biological weapons, only their use.

From the 1950s, herbicides such as 245T were used by several countries during wars, especially in South-East Asia. These countries argue that herbicides are not 'chemical weapons' and so do not fall into the categories under the 1925 Geneva Protocol.

Source 1

[He] was an army man for 22 years. He fought and was decorated in the conflicts of Malaya and Vietnam. But friends and relatives say he was changed dramatically when he returned from Vietnam. He isolated himself from others during acute attacks of anxiety and depression. His agony finally ended when he killed his wife and then himself.

Source: Jan Riddell, 'For some, the agony is just beginning', *The Age*, 26 August 1982, p 11

Source 2

No war is comfortable to reflect on, most of all this one. It does not invite inspection not only because of the waste but also because it was wrong in the first place. Even soldiers were uneasy about it. Losing was only part of it.

Source: John Larkin, 'Vietnam: Australia's legacy', *The Age*, 20 April 1985, p 3

Source 3

Operation Ranch Hand set a new threshold in the conduct of national affairs ... the spraying represented a callousness towards life in an abstract sense. ... The treatment of the Vietnam veterans in Australia has been entirely consistent with such callousness.

Source: 'Australia and the politics of Agent Orange', *The Age*, 16 June 1984, p 5

Source 4

Veterans approaching the Department of Veterans' Affairs hospitals found staff actively hostile to their ills and to any suggestion that herbicides were implicated. All too often these men were treated as malingerers, seeking benefits for imaginary or fabricated ailments.

Source: 'Australia and the politics of Agent Orange', *The Age*, 16 June 1984, p 5



Figure 4.13a

Before Agent Orange.



Figure 4.13b

After Agent Orange.

Source: *The Vietnam Experience—Thunder from Above, Air War 1941–1968*, pp 84–85

thinking historically

H Explain the historical foundations of contemporary issues.

H Use a range of primary and secondary sources.

- 1 What do Sources 1 and 2 tell us about the stresses associated with having served in Vietnam?
- 2 In the photographs in Figure 4.13, what has been the effect of herbicides on the jungle? How would this help the US troops fighting there?
- 3 When Vietnam veterans thought they had health issues as a result of their service, how well were they treated by the Department of Veterans' Affairs, according to Sources 3 and 4?

Understanding the topic

- 1 Why did the USA use herbicides against Vietnam's jungles?
- 2 Explain how the USA could be a signatory to the 1925 Geneva Protocol and still use herbicides in Vietnam.

4.7

Social changes

Source 1

In 1939 there were 644 000 women in paid employment in Australia. In June 1941 there were 1181 women in the army, most being in the Australian Army Nursing Service, 22 in the navy and 196 in the air force, working mostly as telegraphists and teleprinters.

In June 1943, the figures had changed to:

- 840 000 occupied women, which included:
- 44 700 in the armed services
- 390 400 in munitions, and ship and aircraft construction
- 106 000 in other defence works
- 80 000 in non-government factories
- 27 000 in transport and communications
- 158 000 in commerce and finance
- 55 000 in rural industry.

Source: Paul Hasluck, in: Garry Disher, *Total War: The Home Front 1939–1945*, OUP, Melbourne, 1983, p 49

War, and World War II in particular, has been considered the catalyst for significant social changes in Australia. As men left jobs to join the armed services, their places were filled by women, and suddenly women appeared in many places they had not previously been seen: they became bus and tram conductors, worked in factories producing goods for the war effort, worked on farms.

Another area of great social change occurred in sexual mores. Prior to 1939, Australians seemed naive about sex. The subject was rarely discussed publicly and certainly not in schools. Especially from 1942, large numbers of servicemen were stationed throughout Australia. US servicemen had comparatively high wages and spent this money on entertainment, which often included entertaining young Australian women.

Rumour promoted the fear that Australia's sexual morality had broken down. There is little evidence to support a 'total breakdown of morality' as some reports stated, however, the rate of venereal diseases did increase during the War – the Director of Social Hygiene in New South Wales stated there had been a 20 per cent increase between mid-1941 and mid-1942.

Social conservatives often blamed the changes in social values on blackouts and on women working. City streets were blacked out (no street lighting, black curtains over windows to stop light shining through) and vehicle headlights were hooded (lights were not visible from above) so that enemy planes could not locate features. The darkened streets allowed some behaviour to take place surreptitiously. Some also thought women working outside meant children were neglected.



Figure 4.14

Posters encouraged women to take an active role in helping Australia win the War.

Understanding the topic

- 1 Which two groups of people, previously not seen so frequently in Australian city streets, would have become more prominent during World War II?
- 2 What values and attitudes did Australian society hold towards women working and towards sexual behaviour?

thinking historically

H Analyse significant events.

- TP 1 What occupations or roles does the poster in Figure 4.14, encourage women to take up?
- Com 2 Use the data in Source 1 to write a paragraph outlining how women's role changed during World War II.
- TP 3 Did women enjoy the social changes resulting from World War II? Use both the text and the sources to help you answer this question.

Myth-making

Wars have a prominent part in Australia's history and in our view of ourselves. The Commonwealth of Australia was proclaimed in 1901 as Australians were fighting in South Africa. Probably our most significant national day – Anzac Day – commemorates Australia's involvement in war. The Australian War Memorial in Canberra, built to commemorate Australia's involvement in the Great War 1914–18 but since extended to include all aspects of our war history, is one of the most visited sites in Australia. The War Memorial and Anzac Parade are heritage-listed.

The history of European settlement in Australia begins in 1788, when a colony was founded for a penal settlement; perhaps it is significant that, along with the 700-odd convicts, there were just over 200 officers and men of the marines.

The Australian colonies sent troops to four 19th century wars – the New Zealand Maori Wars in 1863–64, the Sudan in 1885, the 1900 Boxer Rebellion in China and the Boer War in South Africa, 1899–1902. In each case, there was no direct threat to Australia; rather, troops were sent to assist the British Empire.

In New Zealand, the Sudan and China, reports of the Australian colonial forces were always positive: there was little glory but they were praised for 'dash and enthusiasm'.

Many nations were founded by war, especially wars of independence. The British colonies in North America, for example, had to wage war against Britain to achieve independence as the USA after 1776. Their founding myths included battles and heroic death.

Australia, on the other hand, was founded through a democratic process with no bloodshed: the colonies discussed and then agreed to form the Commonwealth of Australia, proclaimed on 1 January 1901. In the years leading to Federation, much was made of the special quality of a nation founded in peace.

But at the time of Federation, Australian troops were fighting in South Africa, and commentators promoted the theme of the new nation being put to a test, 'being blooded'. Australia could now be just like those other nations, founded in blood.

Many of the themes we now associate with Anzac Day actually began during the Boer War. The phrase 'Lest we forget' is from a Rudyard Kipling poem written in 1897 and Boer War memorials in towns and hamlets set the pattern for the innumerable memorials built after World War I.

Anzac Day

The greatest Australian legend is based around the landing of Australian and New Zealand troops at what became Anzac Cove, Turkey, on 25 April 1915. Many historians have described Anzac as 'a legend waiting to happen'.

Australia had been 'born' 14 years earlier, and was about to face its 'baptism by fire'. Officers delivered this phrase to Anzac troops in the day or

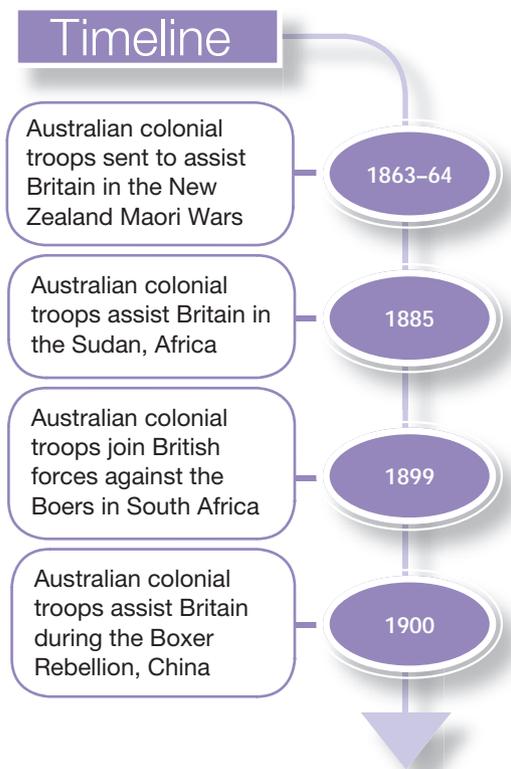


Figure 4.15

Federation commemorative plate.

Source 1

Sacrifice was called for, to purify and sanctify ... the assumption of nationhood; the road to greatness lay for nations, as for individuals, through fire and blood.

Source: 'The Sudan expedition of 1885', in Jane Ross, *The Myth of the Digger*, Hale & Iremonger, Sydney, 1985, p 14

Source 2

A country which has never fought a war of independence must take its national legends where it finds them.

Source: Michael Neill, in Maurice Shadbolt, *Once on Chunuk Bair*, Hodder & Stoughton, Auckland, 1982, p 12

LATEST WAR NEWS

AUSTRALASIANS
GLORIOUS ENTRY INTO WAR.
HISTORIC CHARGE.
BRILLIANT FEAT AT GABA TEPE.

The story of how the Australasian troops landed at Gaba Tepe, and made good their footing, in the face of Turkish fire and subsequent counter-attacks, is vividly told by Mr. Ashmead Bartlett.

The work of the covering force was splendidly carried out, and Mr. Bartlett says there has been no finer feat of arms in this war than that of the Colonial troops.

Figure 4.16

Source: The Sydney Morning Herald, Sydney, 8 May, 1915

two prior to the landing, and it occurs in several first-hand accounts written by participants. The first Australian newspaper reports of the landing included the phrase.

Anzac Day was commemorated in 1916 and has been every year since. In 1925 it became a national holiday. The impression of the day has gone through constant change over the years. The first marches commemorated (and in a way, re-enacted) the soldiers' march to the wharves before they set sail for European wars. In the 1970s, it was assumed the marches would slowly fade away as veterans of World War I became too old to march. There are now no World War I veterans, and those from World War II are old. Yet, the numbers marching and attending other Anzac Day commemorations has increased.

Simpson and his donkey

One of the most enduring Australian military legends is that of 'Simpson and his donkey'. John Simpson Kirkpatrick, born in England but in Western Australia at the outbreak of war in 1914, enlisted with the 3rd Field Ambulance, AIF. He became a stretcher-bearer and landed with Western Australian troops at Gallipoli early on 25 April 1915. He commandeered a donkey and carried wounded from the front line to first aid stations and tent hospitals on the Anzac beach. On 19 May 1915, he was killed while bringing a wounded man down.

The story of Simpson and his donkey appeared in the *Fourth Book of Victorian Readers* – from the early 20th century, these readers were published by the Victorian Education Department and similar versions were published in other states. They contained short stories, articles, poems and sketches, to be read throughout the school year. Almost every student attending school would have been familiar with the readers.

Most of these readers included a story or poem relating to Australia's war history; in the *Sixth Book*, for example, was included the poem 'For England', written by JD Burns, killed at Gallipoli. Extracts from John Masefield's *Gallipoli* were included in the *Seventh Book*, ('The landing of the Anzacs') and the *Eighth Book* ('The departure of the Anzacs from Mudros').

Memorials

Almost every town in Australia has a memorial to World War I. These take various forms, but usually include the names either of the men who enlisted from the town or district, or the names of the dead from that area.

These memorials were built in the years immediately after the War. Often, more names were added after World War II. In recent years, many of these have been altered to add the names of district participants in the various wars since 1945.

The comparative number of World War I memorials in Australia far exceeds that in any other country except France, where much of the fighting on the Western Front actually occurred.

Source 3

It is our baptism of fire; Australia knows something of the flames of war, but its realities have never been brought so close as they will be in the near future, and the discipline will help us find ourselves. It will be a great test of our manhood and our womanhood ...

Source: Sydney Morning Herald, at the time of Britain's declaration of war against Germany, quoted in Jane Ross, *The Myth of the Digger, Hale & Iremonger, Sydney, 1985, p 15*

Source 4

During the Great War, many noble deeds of bravery were done. Here is an account of how a British soldier and his donkey saved many lives. ... Wherever bullets rained the thickest, there Simpson was to be found bandaging the wounded or holding a refreshing flask of water to the parched lips of some dying soldier.

Source: 'Simpson and his donkey' in *The Victorian Readers: Fourth Book, Melbourne, 1930, p 106*

Source 5

There were few people in Australasia of whom some near relative or close friend did not lie on those hillsides abandoned to the enemy.

Source: From C E W Bean, *The Story of Anzac, vol II, pp 909–10*

thinking historically

H Analyse significant events and movements in Australian history.

H Describe the contributions of key participants and leaders in these events.

- C&C**
- 1 Study the commemorative plate shown in Figure 4.15. Identify what each of the figures represents (some will be real people, others representative of a group). What values does the plate promote?
 - 2 According to Source 1, how does war help develop nationhood?
- TP**
- 3 Michael Neill, in Source 2, is writing about New Zealand's legend of the attack on Chunuk Bair, Anzac battlefield, August 1915. How do his words help us to understand Australia's fascination with Anzac and the Anzac legend?
 - 4 What evidence does Source 3 have that supports the contention that 'Anzac was a legend waiting to happen'?
 - 5 **a** Charles Bean, in Source 5, is describing Australia at the time of World War I. How could such a situation help to develop the Anzac legend?
b Charles Bean's comments would not apply today. How then can you explain the endurance of the Anzac legend?

Understanding the topic

- 1 List Australia's involvement in wars since the 19th century.
- 2 Why do countries feel it necessary to have a 'foundation myth' based around war?
- 3 Explain how the School Readers helped develop the legend of Simpson and his donkey.

Making links

chapter summary

Although we often think of Australia as a peaceful and peace-loving nation, war has been a significant part of our history. Only occasionally has the Australian continent been directly threatened by military invasion; we have commonly gone to the aid of another power – Britain and the USA. Our involvement in wars left terrible wounds on many participants: some wounds were visible, others often

hidden in psychological trauma. Wars have also left deep divisions in society: many argue about the impact of European occupation on the indigenous people, and there were bitter debates about conscription and Australia's involvement in 'other people's wars', such as Vietnam. Despite this, one of our most enduring national legends is based on our military past, the Anzac legend.

what do you know now?

- 1 How we view the past is always changing; until the late 20th century, we often thought 'war' was confined to fighting other people's wars outside Australia. Why is frontier conflict now seen as part of Australia's history?
- 2 The study of the past is an integral part of the present: which historical events help you to understand why Australia is the way it is?
- 3 Although Australia has little real evidence of battlefields, its landscape is covered with
- 4 A great deal of debate has occurred between Henry Reynolds and Keith Windshuttle. What is the main issue of this history war? How do you believe it is possible for such radically different interpretations of historical events to occur?

activity A

- 1 Do you think the term 'black armband view of history' is appropriate to describe how some historians view the European occupation of Australia?
TP
- 2 Make a list of the wars and conflict that have divided Australian society. What do you think have been the most lasting divisions?
TP
- 3 In what ways do school textbooks, national commemorations and public buildings reinforce myths and legends about Australia's military past?
TP

activity B

- 1 Form groups of two to four students. Investigate war memorials and commemorative plaques in your local community. Make a list of all the memorials, plaques and honor rolls you can find in a
InD

designated area such as your city, town, shire or even your school. Decide on an appropriate way to sort them: this could be based on which war they commemorate, or another feature such as their style or format. Create a presentation that summarises some key similarities and differences in the various memorials.

- 2 Research a relative's or acquaintance's involvement in wartime activities. This might be related to Australia's involvement in overseas wars. Or consider interviewing a recent refugee. Once you have done some background research into the conflict, prepare a list of interview questions. If living, you could record an interview with the participant; if you cannot interview them, do a mock interview. Enlist another student's help and prepare answers based on your research. You could present your interview in the style of popular television interviews or an *Australian Story* profile of the researched person.
TP
Com
InD

- 3 Investigate the role of women in a particular conflict. Once you have researched this, create either a short play that demonstrates how women were affected or involved in the conflict, or make a 3-D museum display that shows their involvement.

Com

DCT

what else could you find out?

- 1 What was the effect of European occupation on the indigenous people of your area?
- 2 How is Anzac Day commemorated in your local area? Can you attend the local Anzac Day march?
- 3 The Simpson Prize is an Australian Government-sponsored essay competition open to all Year 9 and 10 students in

Australia. It commemorates the sacrifice of Private John Simpson Kirkpatrick at Anzac in 1915. Entries are due in early December each year, and prizewinners receive all-expenses travel to Gallipoli or the Western Front to attend services in the following April. For further information visit the Simpson Prize site.



pl. Wahroonga.....153 L7	APPLEBY	rd. Chester Hill.....251 D1	cr. S Coogee.....277 E6	ARMEN
ANVIL	ct. Agnes Banks.....83 Q16	rd. Galston.....111 P2	la. Millers Point.....C G3	av. Hornsby Ht.....113 G16
pl. Jamisontown...163 B15	pl. Plumpton.....167 B8	rd. Glebe.....12 B10	pl. Bonnyrigg Ht...247 M6	ARMENTIERES
rd. Seven Hills.....189 Q3	APPLECROSS	st. Coogee.....257 G14	pl. Emu Plains.....162 G9	av. Miperra.....270 M11
ANZAC	av. Castle Hill.....151r A7	st. Merrylands W...210 F12	pl. Kareela.....313 B14	wy. Matraville.....277 B15
av. Cammeray.....22 J13	APPLEGUM	ARCADIAN	pl. Mcquarie Fd...288 D16	ARMIDALE
av. Collaroy.....158 D14	pl. Mt Riverview...161 Q3	oct. Carlingford.....191 M5	pl. Millers Point.....1 D9	av. Hoxton Park...267 G6
av. Collaroy Plat...158 D14	APPLETON	ARCHBALD	pl. W Pent Hl.....171 L6	pl. Engadine.....331 G12
av. Denistone.....193 F14	av. Lumea.....203 J11	av. Btn-le-Sds.....274 Q15	st. Arcliffe.....274 N7	ARMITAGE
av. Engadine.....351 J1	APPLETREE	ARCHBOLD	st. Auburn.....211 P15	dr. Glendenning...167 E3
av. Fairfield.....230 A13	dr. Cherrybrook...152 D7	rd. Eastern Ck.....186 K12	st. Bilgola.....118 L8	la. Mosman, off
av. Ryde.....193 F14	gr. Oakhurst.....146 N16	rd. E Lindfield.....175 H15	st. Camden.....323 M15	Rosherville Rd...217 D2
av. Smeaton Gra...325 C9	pl. Menai.....311 H13	rd. Lindfield.....175 H15	st. Carlton.....294 D6	ARMITREE
av. West Ryde.....193 F14	APPS	rd. Minchinbury...186 K12	st. Dawes Pt.....1 E9	st. Kingsgrove.....273 E7
la. Campbelltown...346 K4	av. N Turramra...154 J8	rd. Roseville.....195 K1	st. Millers Point...1 E9	st. Kingsgrove.....273 F8
la. West Ryde, off	pl. Narellan Va...344 Q1	ARCHDALE	st. Parramatta.....24 D10	ARMOUR
Wattle St.....193 E15	APSLEY	wky. Wahroonga...153 P7	st. Penhurst.....293 B2	av. Camden S.....343 M14
mw. Holsworthy...269 M14	av. Kingsford.....276 N4	ARCHDALL	st. Picton.....368 J13	ARMSTEIN
pde. Chifley.....297 C6	ct. Cranebrook...143 J9	gr. Bella Vista...169 N4	st. Picton.....368 K11	cr. Werrington...164 L11
pde. Kensington...20 E6	la. Kingsford.....276 N4	ARCHER	st. Picton.....368 L4	ARMSTRONG
pde. Kingsford.....276 L1	pl. Campbelltown...346 P8	cl. Bossley Park...228 E8	st. Riverstone.....127 F13	ct. Bnkstn Aprt...270 P1
pde. La Perouse...296 Q14	pl. Taren Point...314 B13	ct. St Clair.....185 Q11	st. S Windsor.....86 D12	la. Lidcombe...232 C10
pde. Little Bay...297 A11	st. Guildford.....230 K1	cr. Bankstown...271 P6	st. The Rocks.....1 G10	pl. Castle Hill...151 C10
pde. Maiabar.....297 C6	st. Penhurst.....293 F5	la. Windsor Dn...126 C1	st. The Rocks.....C P3	pl. Dean Park...167 H1
pde. Maroubra...277 A7	AQUAMARINE	pl. Maroubra...277 C8	ARGYLE REACH	st. Ashcroft.....268 J1
pde. Matraville...277 B15	dr. Eagle Vale...326 K8	pl. Minto.....327 L3	rd. Freemans Rch...66 K12	st. Ashfield.....254 D7
pde. Moore Park...16 B4	AQUARIUS	row. Menai.....311 L15	rd. Wilberforce...66 M8	st. Cammeray...22 E8
pde. Phillip Bay...296 Q14	cr. Erskine Park...206 E1	st. Blacktown...188 G6	ARGYLE STAIRS	st. Raby.....306 J12
rd. Bangor.....311 M13	AQUATIC	st. Burwood.....233 M12	The Rocks.....C P3	st. Seaforth.....197 A4
rd. Holsworthy...269 M14	dr. Frnch Frst...178 P7	st. Chatswood...23 G1	ARGYLL	st. Willoughby...195 Q15
rd. Moorebank...269 F13	AQUILA	st. Concord.....233 K2	pl. Cheltenham...172 P6	st.e. Willoughby...196 A16
sq. Campsie.....253 K13	pl. Erskine Park...206 F2	st. Mosman.....217 A8	rd. Winmalee...121 C12	ARMYTAGE
st. Canterbury...253 Q16	AQUILINA	st. Mount Druiht...186 G4	rd. Winmalee...121 D12	pl. Glen Alpine...345 Q13
st. Chuliora...252 C10	dr. Plumpton...167 D11	st. Roseville...23 G1	ARNCLIFFE	rd. Earlwood...274 H4
st. Greenacre...252 C10	ARA	wy. West Hoxton...267 D10	rd. Arcliffe.....274 N7	ARNDELL
st. Miranda...333 P6	cr. Narraveena...177 L1	ARCHIBALD	st. Camden S...343 M10	
st. N St Marys...165 K10	pl. Hinchinbrook...267 Q3	cr. Rsemeadow...366 B8		
ANZO	ARAR	st. Belmore...273 H5		
177 C9				

Figure 4.18

UBD Sydney street directory index, showing many streets, roads, courts, and avenues named ANZAC.