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## BOOK REVIEW

*Henry Parkes's Utopia*. By KEITH CAMPBELL (Privately published by the author, Sydney, 1994). Pp. 253, \$40, ISBN 0-646-20098-4.

I began reading this book under something of a misconception thinking that it would be about the social policies of Henry Parkes. Nothing could be further from the reality. It is the story of a small community some 20 kilometres west of Goulburn, founded in the 1860s following the passage of the Robertson Land Acts of 1861 which enabled small holdings of between 40 and 320 acres to be selected by people of meagre means 'before survey' and under 'conditional purchase'. The role of Henry Parkes in the story is of interest but peripheral. Following the appointment of Parkes as Parliamentary Secretary in 1866, a trip to the southern districts of NSW rekindled an earlier vision he had held of settlements of 'plain, plodding, hardworking men of sober character and careful habits . . . anxious to convert [their] labour into money'. Parkes visited the free settlers on the Breadalbane Plain immediately to the west of the Divide and had the gall (which perhaps only a Henry Parkes could muster) to suggest that they name their community Parkesbourne a name which officially stuck from the early 1870s.

Campbell introduces us to the families who came in the 1860s. They were indeed plain, plodding, hard working and sober for the most part Primitive and Wesleyan Methodists whose only capital was their labour. Their determination to build better lives and a better community is told graphically, particularly in chapters on the building of Parkesbourne's Primitive Methodist Chapel and the establishment of the Parkesbourne Public School.

Most of the initial holdings were a mere 40 acres of inadequately watered or drained infertile land. Families were large, often having in excess of 10 children. Superhuman efforts were made by the selectors to retain the land they had conditionally acquired. At first farming was for subsistence, clearing for a garden and some cereals for human and animal use, a milking cow, some sheep for meat, a horse for work, open range poultry, some fruit trees and later a few pigs. In many cases labour was mostly absorbed working on large pastoral properties nearby, on road building, or in trades or cartage. Surpluses arose but disappeared in the periodic droughts when there was little work and real suffering.

Wheatgrowing developed in the '70s and '80s but disappeared in the 90s as rust spread and lands further west were opened up. Fruitgrowing, for which the soils, farm size and labour situations were better suited, became the principal activity as wheatgrowing declined. Orchardgrowing survived for four decades until World War II, and even brought comparative prosperity in the 1930s when the rest of the economy floundered.

The years between the two world wars, when the second generation of Parkesbourne families were in their prime, get most attention. We are told

of the organisation of the farms, life in the home, church life (by then the Primitive Methodist Chapel was part of united Methodism), the community's social and political activities, and the multifarious trials and tribulations which had to be survived. Campbell brings life to the period by describing a particular farm and household in which he tells us he was privileged to live for periods during the 1930s.

The old patterns of farming and community life could not survive the rapid technological and social developments which followed World War II. The initial orchards could not be profitably re-established at the end of their life. With pasture improvement, the Korean War wool boom, control of the rabbit and changes in transport and communications, pastoralism once more became the preferred land use, but required a larger scale of farming. Younger folk left, farms consolidated and the infrastructure of intensive farming deteriorated. The Parkesbourne school and the railway station at nearby Breadalbane closed, but some of the old farms and families reorganised and remain today. Despite reductions in the numbers of services, the church (now part of the Uniting Church) remains open. It is a story of painful but not unsuccessful nor unrewarding adjustment to change.

In a concluding chapter Campbell comes into his own as the doyenne interpreter and critic of Australian agricultural policy. He uses the Parkesbourne story to comment on the successes, limits and significance of the Robertson Land Acts. He is far more sympathetic than Manning Clark who described the period following the passage of the Acts in terms of a simplistic dichotomy between labour and capital which saw poor settlers becoming 'bush barbarians' over a mere two decades. Apart from its church life, Parkesbourne had developed an active Agricultural Bureau and a Literary and Debating Society by the time of World War I. Nor does the Parkesbourne story support the popular dichotomy of squatter blackguards oppressing poor selectors. Though the visions held by the principal landed family surrounding Parkesbourne may have been myopic, there was considerable good will. Campbell sees the Robertson Acts of 1861 as the prologue to a series of colonial and state land legislation over the next half century which set the scene for 'closer settlement' policies which survived until after World War II. However, by 1961 closer settlement had served its purpose, and by 1971 national legislation designed to foster farm amalgamation had replaced it in the statute books.

Keith Campbell's story of Parkesbourne is a valuable reminder to those of us who are prone, like Henry Parkes, to visions of Utopia or grand theories about what constitutes successful economic organisation. It forces us to question the rhetoric of our theories and remind ourselves that those whom our theories touch have lives and communities of their own which they tenaciously defend. For anyone travelling along the Hume Highway, a half hour diversion to Parkesbourne (heading north west at the Canberra turnoff) is a thoroughly rewarding experience.

## **Distinguished Life Membership of the Australian Agricultural Economics Society**

### **PROFESSOR JOHN DILLON**

John Dillon graduated in 1952 from the University of Sydney under the supervision of Professor Keith Campbell, Foundation Professor of Agricultural Economics.

Professor Dillon has made enormous contributions to the academic and administrative life of the University of New England in Armidale since his appointment as Foundation Professor of Farm Management in 1965, a period of nearly 30 years. He has been Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Business Management, Dean of the Faculty of Economic Studies, Chair of the Academic Board, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Acting Vice-Chancellor. He has given the Department of Agricultural Economics and Business Management a very high international profile such that it is recognised as one of the major academic centres of agricultural economics research in the world. It is also a Department that has graduated many influential agricultural economists who have made significant contributions both in Australia and overseas.

Not only was his contribution to the University of New England great but he has also developed an international reputation of the highest stature in the field of agricultural economics and has contributed to the development of the profession of agricultural economics through his work on production economics, decision analysis and more recently in international development. He has major publications in all of these areas with some 190 professional articles, reports, monographs and textbooks. Some of his most significant publications have been texts which have been used in teaching departments around the world and translated into a number of languages. He has published many other articles and monographs which have had significant impact and reflect a major contribution to the literature of agricultural economics.

In the area of international development Professor Dillon has held a number of highly influential positions in the international agricultural research centres. These positions are of real significance due to the influence these centres have had on the development of agricultural technology and plant varieties for the developing world. In recent years he has been Chair of the Committee of Board Chairs of CGIAR Centre Boards from 1985 to 1986 and 1992 to 1994, Chair of the Board of the International Livestock Centre for Africa (ILCA) from 1987 to 1993, member and Chair of the Board of Trustees of the International Service

for National Agricultural Research (ISNAR) from 1986 to 1993 and Chair of the Board of Governors of the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) from 1982 to 1986. He has also carried out reviews of various international centres, been on search panels and acted as a consultant, particularly to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). Within Australia he has been President of the Policy Advisory Council and Chairman of the Board of Management of the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR). His curriculum vitae lists 45 significant appointments and activities in the international area.

John Dillon has many awards and has been recognised by a number of other groups and organisations. One of the most significant of these is his election as a Fellow of the American Agricultural Economics Association. At the time of his election he was the first person so elected outside the North American profession. Also of great distinction is his Distinguished Achievement Citation of Iowa State University in recognition of his professional contributions. Not only has recognition been given internationally but he has also been recognised in Australia by his election as a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Agricultural Science. He has also been awarded the Farrer Memorial Medal for distinguished service to agriculture. Throughout his career he has been awarded prizes and recognition for distinction and excellence.

In relation to the Australian Agricultural Economics Society John Dillon has been President of the Society in 1971, Editor of the *Australian Journal of Agricultural Economics* from 1965 to 1967 and a dedicated supporter of the Society over a long period of time. He has contributed many articles to the journals of the Society and also more broadly to the development of the discipline of agricultural economics.

*April 1995*

**PAPERS PRESENTED TO THE 1995 AAES  
CONFERENCE, PERTH WA**

**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS**

T. G. MacAulay, The University of Sydney  
*Games, Clubs and Models: The Economics of an Agricultural Economics Society*

**INVITED PAPERS**

- Anderson, K., Agricultural competitiveness after the Uruguay Round  
Beare, S., Fisher, B. S., Property rights, information and physical transformation. A perspective on environmental valuation  
Carson, R., The economic structure of non-market valuation systems: Puzzles and some answers  
Carter, C. A., MacLaren, D., Trade wars and CGE modelling: Wheat trade between Canada and the United States  
Coelli, T. J., Recent developments in frontier modelling and efficiency measurement  
David, C. C., Huang, J., Price and market reforms and agricultural incentives in China  
Duncan, R., Managing commodity price instability in newly liberalised economies  
Harvey, D. R., European Union cereals policy - an Evolution or a new Austrian era?  
Hertzler, G., Expected utility theory: Rest in peace?  
Longmire, J., Changing structure and location of Australian agriculture  
MacAulay, T. G., Games, clubs and models: The economics of agricultural economics  
Penn, J. B., U.S. Agricultural policy: Implications for international trade  
Rygnestad, H., Fraser, R., An analysis of the effectiveness of the set-aside policy of the European Common Agricultural Policy  
Wilson, W. W., Decentralization of grain trading: Trends, implications, and challenges

*CONTRIBUTED PAPERS*

- Agbola, F. W., Testing for recent dynamic structural change in Australian wool supply
- Ahmadi-Esfahani, F., Brakey, J., The political economy of the Australian Agricultural Economics Society: Implications for future directions
- Alaouze, C. M., A short run economic analysis of the eutrophication problem of the Barwon and Darling Rivers in New South Wales
- Antony, G., Stakeholders and their preferences in setting water charges
- Arch, A. M. J., Verspay, H., Provision of statistical information in the Victorian Department of Agriculture
- Bantilan, M. C. S., Joshi, P. K., Tracking the impact of genetic enhancement research in the semi-arid tropics: The case of short duration and wilt resistant medium duration pigeonpeas
- Battese, G. E., Rambaldi, A. N., Wan, G. H., A stochastic frontier production function with flexible risk properties
- Beard, R., Optimal stocking in a bioeconomic model of grazing with plant-herbivore competition
- Beard, R., Bloesch, A., Willcox, T., The impact of irrigation and soil type on sugar cane production: A whole production set approach
- Bell, R., Wiblin, J., The relationship between economic activity and industrial production in selected Asian economies
- Bogahawatte, C., Samarappuli, I., An econometric study of the world rubber economy with implications for the Sri Lankan natural rubber industry
- Brennan, J. P., Murray, G. M., An economic analysis of the value of improved disease resistance
- Brett, E., Stoneham, G., Johnston, J., Johne's disease: An economic evaluation of control options for the Victorian dairy industry
- Briggs, I. M., Funding mechanisms for WA waterway resource management
- Brush, G., Clemes, M., The effects of informational uncertainty on agricultural training decisions
- Campbell, C., When too much Landcare is barely enough
- Chisholm, A., Jayasuiya, S., Economic growth and sustainability: Rural China in the reform era
- Crean, J., Graham, P., The capacity for producers to successfully value add in the wool industry
- Cunningham, C., Wool futures and type premium or discount risk
- Daryanto, A., Growth and change in the structure of the Indonesian agricultural economy, 1971-1985: An input-output perspective
- Davis, J., Lubulwa, G., Integration of research evaluation analysis into research institution decision-making: Progress at ACIAR
- Dole, D., The economics of private forestry: Integrating industrial and non-industrial private forest management models
- Eckersley, P. P., Stapleton, S., Evaluation of revegetation with commercial tree crops in South Western Australia
- Espinass, V. E., Assessing the market potential of proposed technologies: *Ex ante* evaluation of R&D

- Etherington, D. M., Enhancing the sustainability of tropical island communities by improving self sufficiency in liquid fuel supplies
- Farrell, T., Structural change in the Australian lamb industry
- Flatley, G., Bennett, J., International values of tropical forest conservation: A cross-cultural contingent valuation experiment
- Franco, M. A. P., Riethmuller, P. C., Brown, C. G., Probit model of the factors affecting the adoption of artificial insemination in the breeding of beef cattle in the Philippines
- Fraser, K. I., A comparison of cotton costs: Australia versus the US
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- Goldsworthy, D. G., Deregulation of the Victorian tobacco industry
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- Herath, G., Quantitative assessment of the costs of phosphorus removal in Australian waterways to control algal blooms
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- Hill, D., Piggott, R. R., Griffith, G. R., Assessing the impacts of wool promotion: An equilibrium modelling approach
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- Jakobsson, K. M., Kennedy, J. O. S., Elliot, M., Survey methods of valuing the conservation of endangered species
- James, C., Davenport, S., A review of developments in competition policy
- Johnson, R. M. W., Further thoughts on constitutions, institutions and collective decision making
- Jones, R., James, C., MacAulay, G., Estimation of the economic costs associated with rice marketing arrangements in NSW
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- Keyworth, S., Lack, M., Lynn, F., The Ord River irrigation project, past, present and future: An economic evaluation
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- Milham, N., Kelly, C., Douglas, R., Moldrich, N., How high is the step? Regulatory thresholds and the growth and efficiency of small agribusiness firms in Australia
- Mullen J. D., Cox, T. L., Trends in public research expenditure in Australian agriculture
- Murray-Prior, R., Wright, V., Responses of New England wool producers to the risks associated with producing and marketing wool
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- Pitt, M. W., Non market valuation of public land - A study at Arakoon State Recreation Area, NSW
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- Schmidt, C., Pannell, D. P., The role of herbicide resistant lupins in Western Australian agriculture
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- Singh, J. P., Singh, J., Production instability in India and Australia: Similarities and dissimilarities
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- Young, M. E. S., Strategic planning - The second five years - A practical application of resource allocation during implementation of the Shepparton Salinity Management Plan

### *POSTERS*

- Ahmadi-Esfahani, F., Jensen, P., Adding value to Australian wheat: Present problems and future prospects
- Ahmadi-Esfahani, F., Locke, C., Food aid: A substitute for domestic production and commercial imports
- Ahmadi-Esfahani, F., Stanmore, R., Valuing Australian wheat quality characteristics in selected Asian markets
- Arch, A., Irving, K., Use of the internet for agricultural economists
- Butt, S., Pine plantations, high income, long wait
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- Fraser, K. I., Gould N., Holmes, A., Ethanol production from crop stubbles.  
And economic analysis of methods to collect crop stubbles for use as  
feedstocks for ethanol production.
- Jarratt, I., Brown, H., Commodity marketing board modernisation: The  
Queensland experience
- Johnson, R. W. M., Further thoughts on constitutions, institutions and collective  
decision making
- Lubulwa, G., Davis, J., Estimating the social costs of the impacts of fungi and  
mycotoxins
- Weatherford, J., Structural transformation in developing monsoon economies