

GOOD BRITISH STOCK

Child and Youth Migration to
Australia, 1901-83

by Barry M. Coldrey CFC
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Archives of Australia, Canberra,
1999, RRP \$10.00. Available from
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7425, Canberra Mail Centre, ACT
2610, tel: (02) 6212 3600)

Reviewed by Michael Gilchrist

On 20 September 1999, the National Archives released its Research Guide Number 11, *Good British Stock*, which explores resources for the study of the most controversial subject the Guides have tackled to date: child and youth migration before and after World War II — a subject that has come under relentless media scrutiny over the last ten years.

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Scene from the ABC mini-series 'The Leaving of Liverpool' (1992)

The author, Dr Barry Coldrey, a Christian Brother, was born in Melbourne and completed all his tertiary studies at Melbourne University.

Good British Stock covers the years 1901-83, during which thousands of unaccompanied young people, mainly from the UK— some from Malta — came or were sent to Australia as permanent citizens, a small percentage of the 3,000,000 immigrants who arrived during those eighty years.

The records in the National Archives collection are a rich source of information about the political context of juvenile immigration, the processes of government decision-making and administrative practice, as well as information about many of the young people who came. There are some 300 files in the National Archives which bear on different aspects of a vast subject.

The discussion of the records is prefaced by an introduction to the subject and a child migration timeline. Thereafter, the files are arranged in eight chapters, the first of which explores child migration policy, and the others focus on the service organisations, which arranged the immigration of the children.

In addition, there are numerous files arranged and discussed on the various organisations within the Catholic and Protestant churches — the Christian Brothers, Sisters of Nazareth and Sisters of Mercy — on the one hand and Salvation Army, Anglican and Presbyterian churches, on the other. There is a special section to assist Genealogical researchers.

Also included are a full bibliography and comprehensive address list of organisations to assist former child and youth migrants in accessing relatives. The book is indispensable for the further informed study of child migration.

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