

NATIONAL LIBRARY

PRESENTATION OF DEAKIN PAPERS

Papers of critical importance to the record of Australian history were received today by the Prime Minister for the National Library in Canberra. They are the personal papers and records of Alfred Deakin, one of the major figures in the Federation Movement, three times Prime Minister and the dominating personality of the early Commonwealth.

They were presented by Deakin's eldest daughter, Mrs, Ivy Brookes who, along with her husband, the late Herbert Brookes, preserved and added to them. Deakin's other daughters, Lady Rivett and Lady White also took part in the ceremony.

The mass of papers, filling 20 large cartons, cover in great detail political developments from Deakin's entry into Victorian politics in 1879 to his retirement from the Commonwealth Parliament in 1913.

Correspondence between Deakin and many of the prominent figures of his day is there; so are his private diaries and note books on issues and personalities of the day.

Trained in the law and a practising journalist, Deakin was something of a compulsive writer who possessed as well the ability to describe events and people with a stark clarity.

Despite the tempo of the events in which he was involved he was able to set down, also in manuscript, the text of a number of books. These included his brilliant Federal Story, published after his death and republished in 1963.

He also found time to contribute regularly to the Morning Post in England over a considerable number of years a surprisingly impartial account, preserved in the papers, of Australian politics including those events in which he was a principal.

The great value of the papers is that the extent of them is allied with a detailed record which he alone could provide to clarify many apparent mysteries of the political events of his period. They formed the basis of the recently published biography of Deakin by Professor La Nauze and will interest scholars for all time.

CANBERRA,
3rd December, 1965

MEMORANDUM : This ceremony took place in the Prime Minister's office today, and pictures of the presentation are available from my office. Attached is the text of Sir Robert Menzies' remarks at the ceremony.

A. EGGLETON
Press Secretary to Prime Minister