CRISIS IN CLIO'S FAMILY: A STUDY OF THE DISCIPLINE OF AUSTRALIAN ECONOMIC HISTORY 1918-1965

Part One & Two

A thesis submitted to the School of Social Sciences, Deakin University, Geelong, Australia in total fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Kathleen Marie Haig-Muir, BA (Deakin), BA Hons (Deakin), Dip. Phys. Ed. (Melbourne), January 1991.
Acknowledgements

principal supervisor Associate Professor Li Veit-Brause

and my associate supervisor Roy Hay.
Synopsis

This thesis presents an intellectual history of the historiography of Australian Economic History between 1918 and 1965. More specifically, it is a contribution to a relatively novel area of research into 'disciplinary history'. It takes as its basic analytical material the four books widely used for significant lengths of time for undergraduate teaching during the period of the study.

The thesis consists of five main chapters, plus an appendix which surveys the institutional development of Australian Economic History and provides the empirical basis for the selection of the works named above. After a brief introduction and overview, the next four chapters consist of a detailed study of one of these works, the historical context in which each was written, and an intellectual biography.

The fifth chapter is largely theoretical and conceptual. It analyses the epistemological bases of History and Economics and explores the implications of different models of knowledge for the relationship between Economic History and its two antecedent disciplines, History and Economics. Current perceptions of the state of the discipline in Australia and overseas are also examined.

There are three main propositions advanced and their implications explored in the fifth chapter. First, that changes which occurred in Australian Economic History during the period 1918-1965 shifted the discipline from the broad area of History to the broad area of Economics. Second, that the inherent tension and fundamental differences between the two disciplinary areas of History and Economics have profound and complex implications for Australian Economic History at a number of levels and in a number of areas.
The third proposition posits that the paradigm shift of the 1950s/1960s in Australian Economic History, and the paradigm shift of the 1960s/1970s in Economic History respectively have resulted in crisis. The final part of the chapter summarises the contents of the preceding chapters, and draws some conclusions based on those detailed studies.