

AUSTRALIA

A.D.HOPE

## Biography

**Alec Derwent Hope** was born on 21 July 1907 at **Cooma**, in the New South Wales, where his father was a Presbyterian minister.

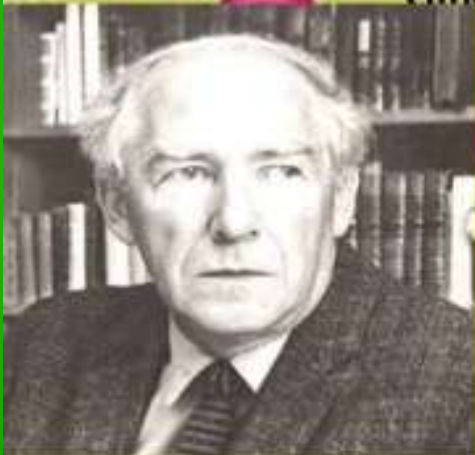
He was educated at home also at Tasmania and New South Wales Matriculating to **Sydney University**, he graduated Bachelor of Arts with two majors (English and Philosophy).

**In 1928** won a scholarship to University College, Oxford.

**In 1937 Hope married Penelope Robinson** with whom he had three children.

He was appointed lecturer in education at the Sydney Teachers' College in 1937, later becoming lecturer in English there from 1938-44.

**In 1945** he moved to the University of Melbourne. **In 1951** was appointed as Professor of English at Canberra University College (later the Australian National University) where he taught until his retirement in 1968.



## AUSTRALIA

A nation of trees, drab green and desolate grey  
In the field uniform of modern wars  
Darkens her hills, those endless, outstretched paws  
Of Sphinx demolished or stone lion worn away.  
They call her a young country, but they lie:  
She is the last of lands, the emptiest,  
A woman beyond her change of life, a breast  
Still tender but within the womb is dry.  
Without songs, architecture, history:  
The emotions and superstitions of younger lands,  
Her rivers of water drown among inland sands,  
The river of her immense stupidity  
Floods her monotonous tribes from Cairns to Perth.

In them at last the ultimate men arrive  
Whose boast is not: 'we live' but 'we survive',  
A type who will inhabit the dying earth.  
And her five cities, like five teeming sores,  
Each drains her: a vast parasite robber-state  
Where second-hand Europeans pullulate  
Timidly on the edge of alien shores.  
Yet there are some like me turn gladly home  
From the lush jungle of modern thought, to find  
The Arabian desert of the human mind,  
Hoping, if still from the deserts the prophets  
come,  
Such savage and scarlet as no green hills dare  
Springs in that waste, some spirit which escapes  
The learned doubt, the chatter of cultured apes  
Which is called civilization over there.



Alec Derwent was one of Australia's greatest poets, who touched the lives of many throughout the world.

Within the 7 stanzas of "Australia", A.D hope gives us a very negative one-sided approach to the poem. His poetry explores the spiritual poverty of our land. He insinuates that it takes so much to survive which has prevented Australians from reflecting upon their journey through life. A.D hope is looking down on Australia and our way of life. The sombre images of ' a nation of trees, drab green and desolate grey' indicate that Australia is a monotonous and dreary place.

Each stanza consists of four lines with the rhyme scheme being ABBA. Little enjambment exists in the poem; most of the stanzas stand alone as paragraphed.

' ..drab green and desolate grey'

' Her rivers of water down among inland sands'

'Floods her monotonous tribes from Cairns to Perth."

A.D Hope uses imagery as a means to convey meaning to the poem. The dark colours portray the insipidness of the landscape. Monotonous tribes refer to the fact that there is no individualism throughout Australia everyone looks and thinks the same. The alliteration helps to once again convey an image ' drab green and desolate grey'. ' She is the last of lands, the emptiest..' A. D Hope uses this metaphor to give the concrete reality that Australia does have human qualities an abstract idea. The tone is mocking Australian culture, our history, our land and they way we live our life.

A.D Hope gives Australia human qualities he refers to the land as a woman "they call her a young country". Australia is Hope's criticism of general Australian society and the country itself.

'a woman beyond her change in life, a breast still tender but within the womb is dry

Refers to the fact that Australia is empty the inability to bear children, being infertile a change of life.