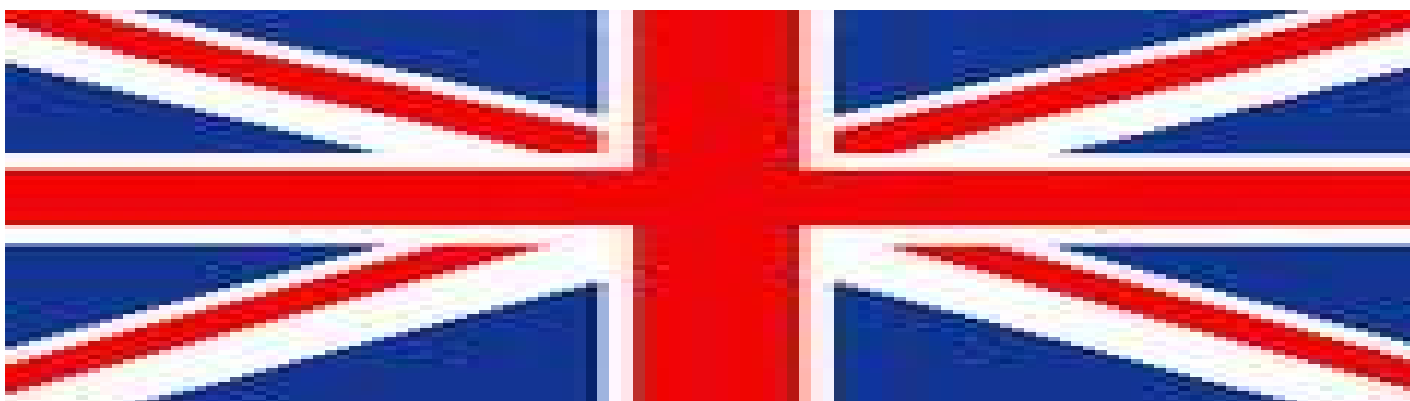


Exploring “Britishness” in South Australian history



Why this topic?

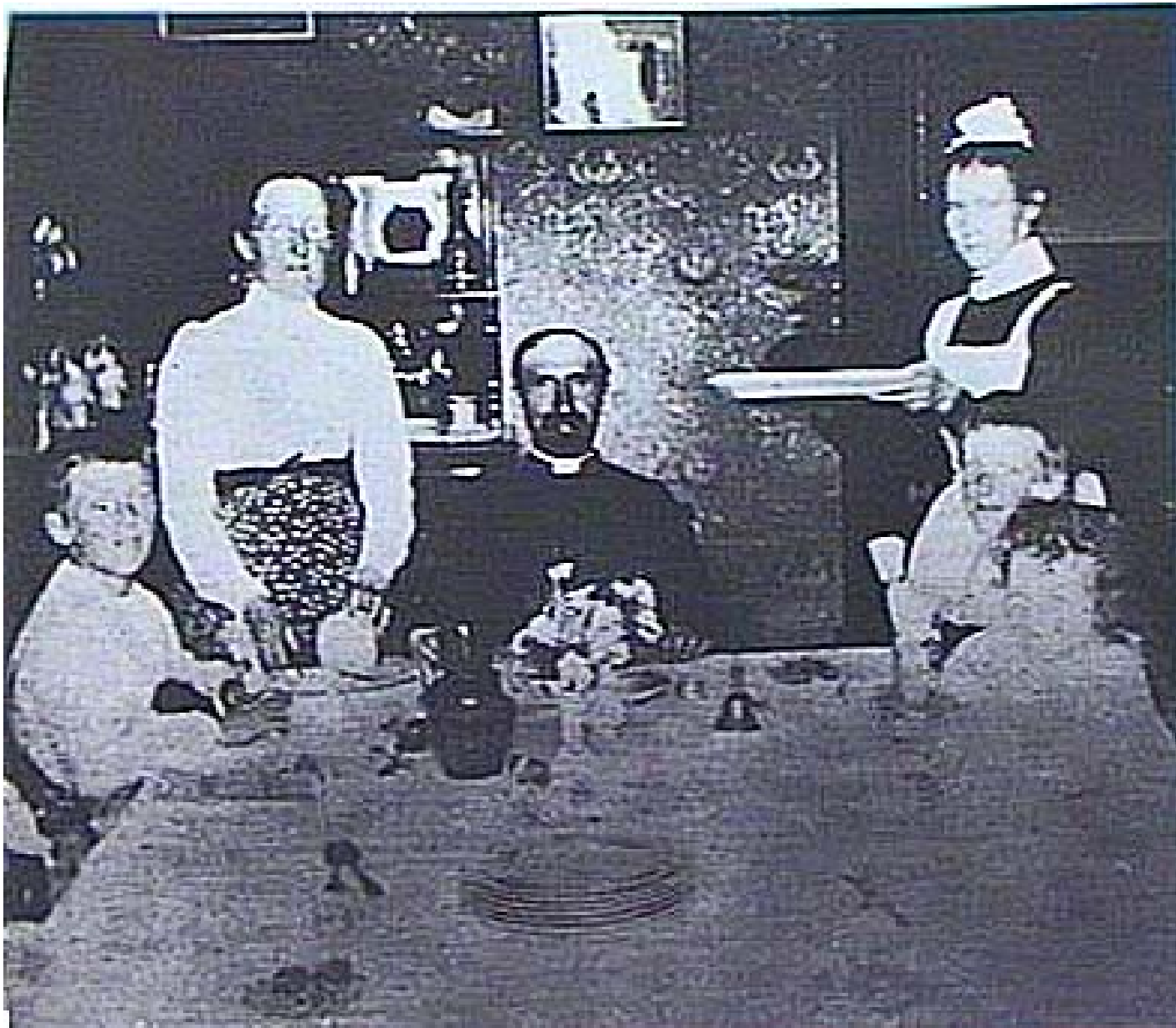
- Sociology : History
- Initial Focus : Older men “ten pound poms”
- Defaulting of “migrant” > “non-Anglo” & “ethnic”
- Prejudice?? “From Heroes to Whingeing Poms” (Hassam)
- British migrants - presumption of sameness (internally and with Anglo-Australians)
- **OVERSIMPLIFICATION?!**

Presentation Contents:

- Historical Literature Overview – the British in SA
- ABS Historical Data
- Oral Histories and Archival Research (post WW2 British migrants to SA)

SA - Historical Literature

- SA - Importing the British class system and embedded internal ethnic hierarchies (Richards)
- The Wakefield system : migration to serve the needs of development/capital
- The Adelaide Gentry (Van Dissell)
- Religious dissenters (Hilliard & Hunt)

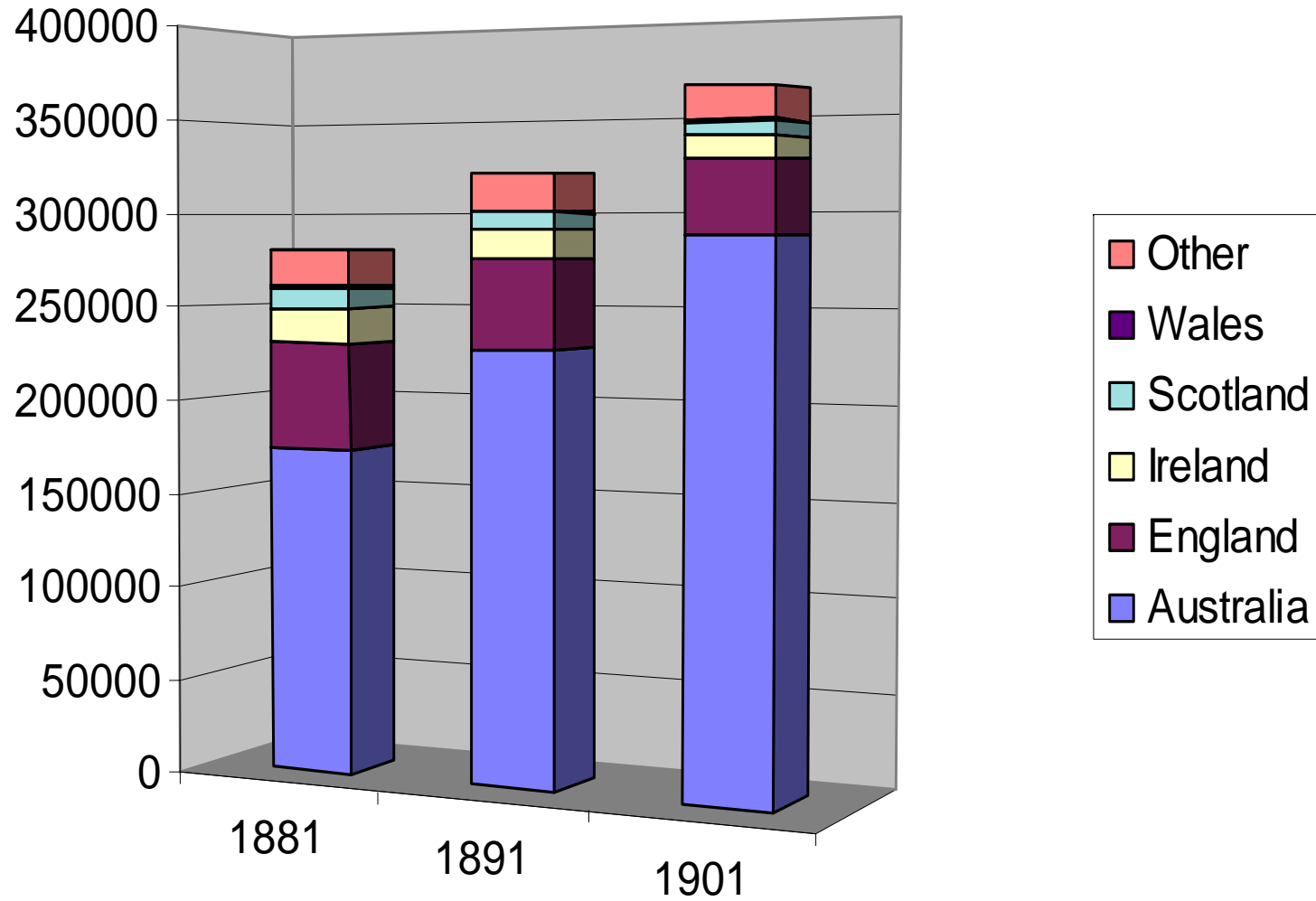


Christmas Dinner at St Michael's Rectory, Mitcham ca 1901
SLSA: B 36041 <http://143.216.21.253/mpcimg/36090/B36041.htm>

Literature (cont)

- Pre-federation British migration origins – Southern England (Jupp)
- British ethnicities in SA cf with other states (Richards; Lyng)
- More English and less Irish than other states; plus the Cornish twist.

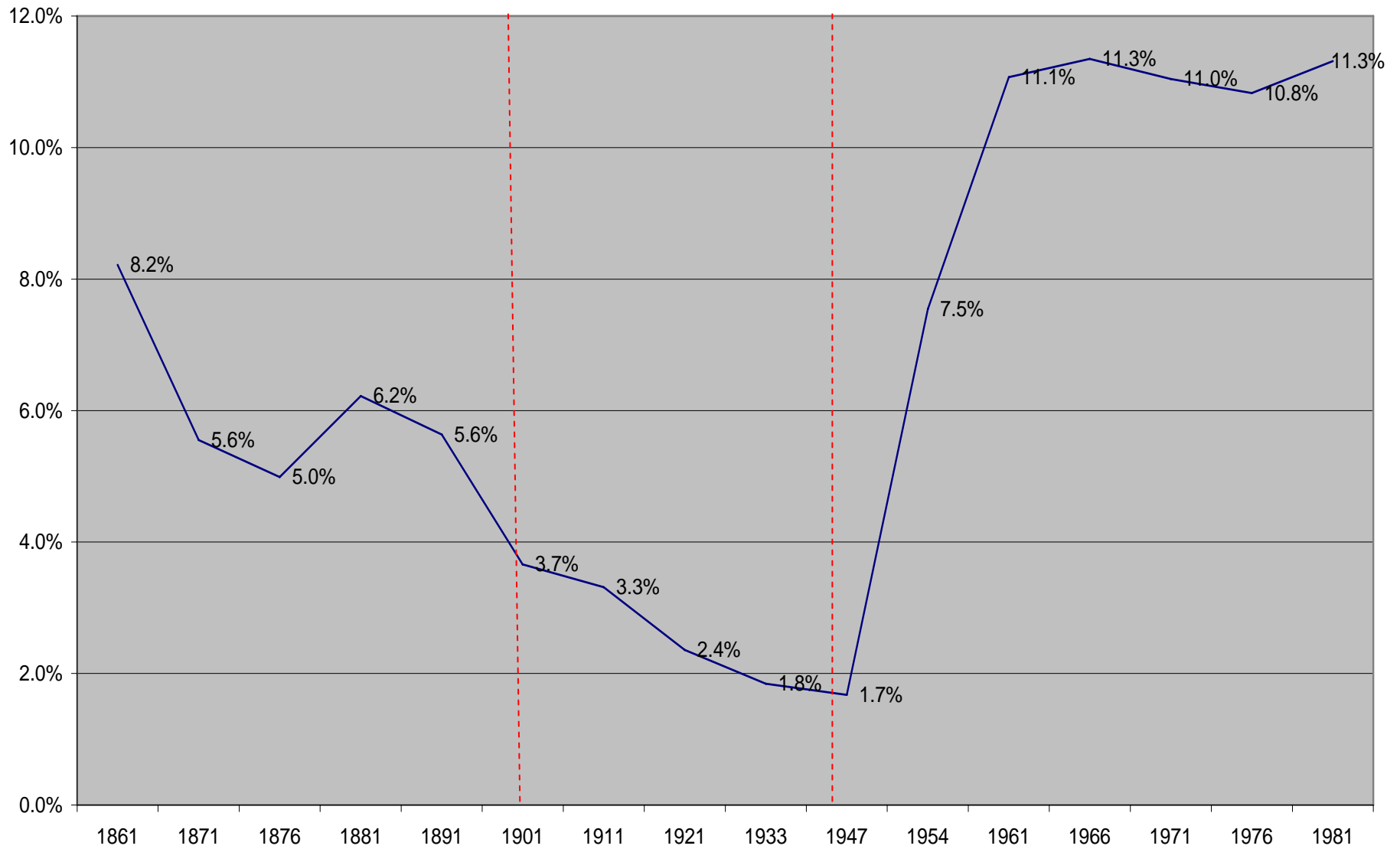
SA population by birth 1881-1901



Non British/Australian Born : South Australia 1881	
Germany	8 801
France	293
Russia	91
Poland	133
Austria	180
Hungary	26
Spain	26
Portugal	28
Switzerland	194
Holland	76
Belgium	41
Denmark	264
Sweden and Norway	765
Italy	141
China	4 151

Source : TABLE 69. Population, sex and country of birth, SA, census years, 1861 - 1891(ABS)

Percentage of SA population not born in Australia or Britain 1861-1981



Where did they go?

- Some left (eg Chinese)
- Some discrepancies
- Huge gender imbalances
- Merged into the “white Anglo” population base
- Marriage records – inter-ethnic marriages (first and second generations)

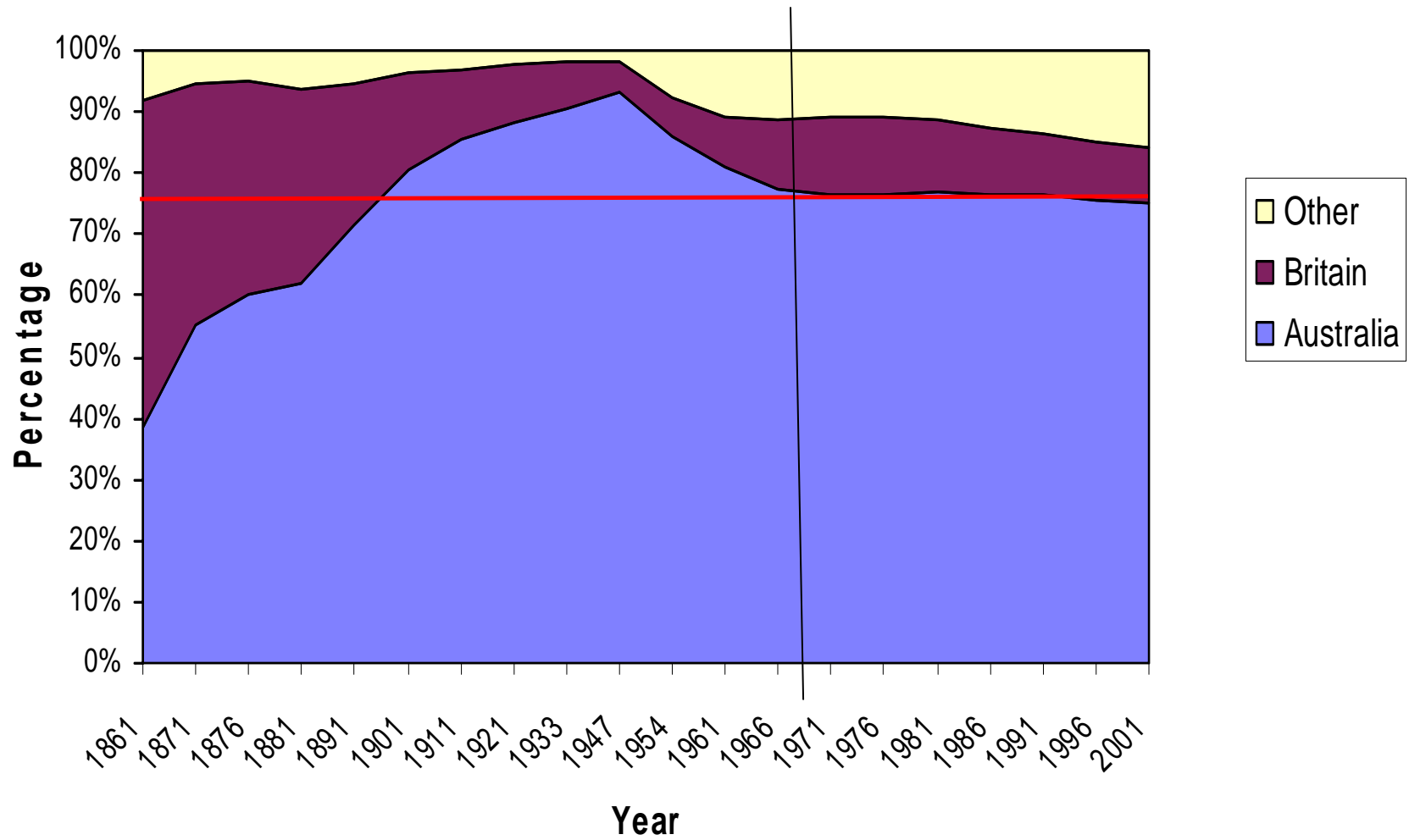
SA Population by Place of Birth by gender 1881 (selected categories)		
	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
SA	81750	81757
Australian colonies and New Zealand	5236	4330
England	32 901	24 639
Wales	932	679
Scotland	6028	4609
Ireland	9 060	9 186
Other British Possessions	903	445
Germany	5234	3567
Portugal	27	1
Sweden and Norway	740	25
Italy	133	8
China	4146	5

Source : TABLE 69. Population, sex and country of birth, SA, census years, 1861 - 1891(ABS)

Why the homogenous British picture?

- WW1 & 2 internment of “enemy aliens”
- Loss of surnames – formal and cultural processes
- Loss of anecdotal/plebian histories
- Ethnicity as only one form of social distinction
- Secularisation of SA society

SA population by Place of Birth 1861 - 2001



Oral Histories & Archival Research

- Predominately Midlands origins (as vs historically from Sthern England)
- Noting of religion in the earliest groups (eg 1950s)
- The wooing of migrants (to meet the needs of capital) and shedding of them! SRSA GRG 7/94/1965/ 9,10)

British ethnicities:

- “I take this opportunity to state that the hard core of those migrants who are dirty and drunken in habits, and who attempt to cause trouble here are the Irish migrants. Their clothes and personal habits are often filthy, they are loudest in their complaints, they say they are doing Australia a favour by coming here and generally they endeavour to unsettle all other migrants.” GRG 24/6/1950/190
- John - Irish parents in England
- Bill - Gypsy and wife's father German
- George - Welsh – living in the Midlands
- Howard – Scots (Mother French/Irish)

Concluding points

- Research has challenged many of my own pre-existing presumptions re SA ethnicity
- Identity differentiators - fluid and shift over time
- Challenge to homogenous notions of “whiteness” “Britishness”; “Anglo- Australian”
- Challenge to academic concepts of ethnicity; whiteness; multiculturalism

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Thank-you



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