

WEST OF THE BIGHT



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Basil Fuller

"The south-west's special all right," said one of the people whom Basil Fuller met on his journey into that great area of Australia south of Perth and "West of the Bight." The author found that remarkably few people outside the area know anything about it. Even those who believe that they have "done Australia" have not bothered to visit the south-west, because they feel that it has little of interest to offer. Yet in many ways it is geographically, botanically, and historically unique.

The author took a wandering trip south-west from Perth, seeing the country with the eye of the present and relating it to the past. He tells of such things as the only duel fought in Western Australia, the first public execution of a white man ("only a lad"), and the romantic escape of six Irish convicts. He unearthed the stories of the beer-drinking police horse, the wreck with a post-office, and Moondyne Joe, the prisoner who always escaped.

Many such historical snippets spice his entertaining and informative account of the south-west as it is today, with its huge forests, thriving townships, beautiful coastline, and industries which range from trout-breeding to cattle-raising—the latter on land which was believed to be worthless until American capital and Australian research turned it into profitable pasture.

Basil Fuller's ability to ferret out unusual facts and convey them in fast-moving, light-hearted prose makes *West of the Bight* an ideal book for the armchair traveller and a colourful guide for anyone who plans to visit the area.

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