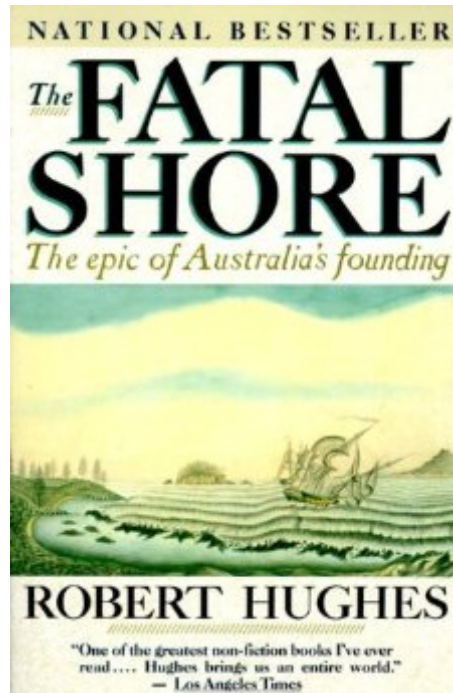


The book was found

The Fatal Shore: The Epic Of Australia's Founding



Synopsis

The history of the birth of Australia which came out of the suffering and brutality of England's infamous convict transportation system. With 16 pages of illustrations and 3 maps. From the Trade Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As luck would have it, I recently had the opportunity to make a brief business trip to Australia. I knew very little about Australia and thought the best way to get some brief but non-superficial background would be to learn something of its history. I opted to read Robert Hughes's book which tells the story of Australia's founding and of its convict past. The book is lengthy, even too lengthy to complete on the 14 hour flights from the West Coast of the United States to Sydney and back. But the story was fascinating, and the book was well worth the attention and effort. Hughes tells the story of the discovery of Australia, the decision of Great Britain to "transport" its convicted to the continent, the various kinds of lives the convicts found there, the aboriginal settlers and their treatment by the newcomers, and the ultimate creation of a new society. There are harrowing accounts of the passage from Britain to Australia in the convict ships, and still shocking accounts of the secondary places of punishment created in Australia for repeat offenders -- places such as Norfolk Island, Port

Aurthur, and Macquarrie Bay. Hughes describes these nineteenth century camps as precursors of the Gulag in our own time, and I am afraid he is correct. They reminded me to of Andersonville Prison in our own Civil War but on a much broader, more wicked scale. The description of the prisons and barbaric punishments were to me the most vivid portions of the book. Besides the horror stories, there is a great deal of nuanced, thoughtful writing in the book about the settlement and building of Australia and of the dangers of facile over-generalization about how the convicts fared, or about virtually any other historical subject.

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