

James Henry Scullin

Active in trade union affairs and the Labor Party for most of his adult life, James Scullin served a term in the House of Representatives as Member for Corangamite (1910–13). Then in 1922 he returned to parliament in the seat of Yarra. He held this seat for the next 27 years. Leader of the Labor Party from 1928, James Scullin became Prime Minister following the defeat of the Bruce government in the 1929 election. While Prime Minister, he held the portfolios for external affairs, industry and the treasury.

Scullin's government was confronted by the worst years of the Great Depression, which denied him the economic climate in which to introduce the government's program. But it was also faced with internal party crises, including the need for the Treasurer, Edward ('Ted') Theodore to stand aside during 1930, and the damaging Lang Labor split. Losing the support of key parliamentarians – a group led by Joseph Lyons, who later joined the Nationalists in the United Australia Party, and the five Lang Labor members – brought down Scullin's government.

Scullin retained the Labor Party leadership after the defeat of his government in 1931, remaining as Leader of the Opposition until 1935. In that year he was replaced by John Curtin. Scullin did not seek a ministry in Curtin's wartime government, but was regarded as a valuable adviser to the Prime Minister.

James Scullin retired from parliament in 1949 and died in Melbourne in 1953.

Records relating to James Scullin held by the National Archives

The National Archives holds one small series of records identified as having being accumulated by James Scullin. The National Archives also holds many records that relate to Scullin, either during his period as Prime Minister, or his years as a senior backbench member of the Curtin government during World War II.

In the tables below, reference numbers are linked to the item or series in [RecordSearch](#), the National Archives database. There you can find more information. In many cases you can view entire digitised records. The information will appear in a new browser window.

Personal records of James Scullin

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Papers relating to the Short Wave Broadcasting Service and other matters</u>	1942	AA1972/315

Other records relating to James Scullin

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Mildenhall photographic collection of early Canberra – contains over 50 photographs of Scullin as Prime Minister – see samples below</u>	1921–35	A3560
<u>Opening of the 16th parliament – Rt Hon. JH Scullin, 13th Prime Minister</u>	1929	A3560, 4993
<u>Arrival of Mr Scullin at Canberra railway station with welcoming crowds</u>	1929	A3560, 6098
<u>Scullin 16th ministry – Labor Cabinet</u>	1929	A3560, 6126
<u>Portrait of Prime Minister James Henry Scullin in his office</u>	1929	A3560, 6190
<u>Changes in Commonwealth ministers (Scullin and Lyons)</u>	1929–32	A461, B4/1/3 part 1A
<u>Scullin ministry – folder of typed copies of Cabinet minutes</u>	1929–31	A3264
<u>Scullin government – reasons for its defeat</u>	1929–32	A5954, 1174/10
<u>Historic memorials – portrait of Hon. JH Scullin</u>	1930	A458, BL370/2
<u>League of Nations – 11th assembly – Mr Scullin's address and notes</u>	1930	A981, LEAGUE 11th Ass 9
<u>Governor-General – appointment of Sir Isaac Isaacs by the Scullin government</u>	1930–31	M4794, 2/7
<u>Draft of a debt conversion agreement and copies of speeches by JH Scullin and EG Theodore</u>	1931	A432, 1931/1716 attachment 11
<u>Scullin, Rt Hon. JH</u>	1931	A1606, AF25/1
<u>Australian defence policy review by Scullin government – estimates of expenditure 1931–32 – Defence Committee minute</u>	1931	A5954, 1012/5
<u>Portrait of Rt Hon. JH Scullin MP by PI White</u>	1932–37	A463, 1965/1747 part A
<u>Report by Hon. J Scullin on uniform taxation</u>	1942–46	A571, 1945/3202 part 1
<u>Condolences – Rt Hon. Scullin, JH – messages</u>	1953	A462, 860/2/66
<u>Condolences – state funeral – Rt Hon. Scullin, JH – administrative arrangements</u>	1953	A462, 860/2/67
<u>Rt Hon. JH Scullin</u>	1959	A5954, 70/2