

## Joseph Aloysius Lyons

### Prime Minister of Australia 1932–39

A former Labor Premier of Tasmania (1916–19 and 1923–28) Joseph Lyons entered federal parliament in the 1929 elections, becoming Postmaster-General in the Scullin Government that was swept to power by that poll. Labor had not been in power federally since 1917, and it was only Lyons and former Queensland Premier 'Ted' Theodore who brought ministerial experience to the new government.

Resigning from the Government and the Labor Party in 1931, Lyons and a small group of supporters joined with the John Latham-led Nationalists to form the United Australia Party (UAP). Lyons became leader of the UAP, and subsequently Prime Minister and Treasurer when the Party won the election held in December 1931. A coalition formed with the Country Party in 1934 kept Lyons as Prime Minister, although he handed the Treasury portfolio to Richard Gardiner Casey the following year. Through a mixture of caution and sound financial management the Lyons government led Australia out of the depths of the Great Depression.

During his time in office, Lyons also covered the portfolios of Commerce (1932), Health (1935–36), Repatriation (1935–36) and Defence (1937). Joseph Lyons died in office on 7 April 1939.

### Records relating to Joseph Lyons held by the National Archives

The National Archives holds a collection of Lyons' personal records, and many records about Lyons and the issues he was involved in during his years in government. Lyons' personal records, and a selection of records about him, are listed below.

In the tables below, reference numbers direct you 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 Joseph Lyons

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<a href="#">Personal correspondence</a>	1919–39	CP103/19

<u>Correspondence of Lyons as Prime Minister</u>	1920–56	CP30/3
<u>Correspondence of Lyons as United Australia Party Leader and Federal Opposition Leader</u>	1922–56	CP30/2
<u>Personal correspondence of Lyons as Prime Minister and as United Australia Party leader</u>	1931–39	M2270
<u>Correspondence of Lyons as Postmaster-General</u>	1931	CP30/1
<u>Correspondence series – Lyons and Menzies</u>	1931–39	CP167/2
<u>Representations regarding employment</u>	1931–39	CP167/3
<u>Cables to and from Lyons during his visit to London</u>	1935–38	CP290/5
<u>General correspondence</u>	1937–39	CP167/1
<u>Letters between King George VI and Lyons, regarding the presentation to HM of an oil painting of the coronation</u>	1938	CP144/1

### Other records about Joseph Lyons – in Canberra

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Changes in Commonwealth Ministers (Scullin and Lyons)</u>	1929–32	A461, B4/1/3 Part 1A
<u>Rt Hon. JA Lyons, CH, MP</u>	1929–33	A461, D4/1/12
<u>The Hon. JA Lyons. Prime Minister of the Commonwealth – appointed member of The Privy Council 18th May 1932</u>	1932	A2926, A8
<u>The basis of policy and the priority of expenditure Lyons Government</u>	1932–37	A5954, 1201/13
<u>Portrait and Bust of Rt Hon. JA Lyons by WB McInnes.</u>	1932–38	A463, 1965/3219 Part A
<u>[Correspondence to] Lyons, the Rt Hon. JA</u>	1933	AA1970/559, 7
<u>Budget Speech 1933–1934. Delivered 4th October 1933 by JA Lyons.</u>	1933	A5954, 2390/14
<u>Prime Minister's Department 'Record of the Lyons Government'</u>	1933–34	A518, BB112/1
<u>Record of Lyons Govt</u>	1933–38	A601, 165/1/1
<u>Rt Hon. JA Lyons, CH, MP – background papers on honours</u>	1934–39	A1209, 1969/7484
<u>Photograph – HRH Prince Henry, Rt Hon. JA Lyons and Mrs Lyons. Registration and Exhibit.</u>	1935	A1861, 6590
<u>Publications Emanating from Unlawful Associations Booklets of Forms re Donations to the Communist Party for the Defeat of the Lyons Government</u>	1937	A467, Bundle 89/SF42/14
<u>Miscellaneous. Policy speech of the Rt Hon. JA Lyons</u>	1937	A1928, 670/112

### Other records about Joseph Lyons – in Sydney

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u><a href="#">Right Honourable Joseph Aloysius Lyons MP - 1934 (audio tape)</a></u>	1934	C102, 1552431
<u>Curtin, John – Speech on death of PM Lyons (audio tape)</u>	1939	C102, 1552439

## Other records about Joseph Lyons – in Melbourne

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Lyons government</u>	1932–36	MP124/6, 404/201/195
<u>Pamphlets – The Defence of Australia – What the Lyons Govt has done and Defence Aspects of the Imperial Conference</u>	1936–37	MP1587/1, 218AO

## Research guide

Joseph Lyons: Guide to the Archives of Australia's Prime Ministers