

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** AWE3969

## Swanton, Mary Hynes

(1861 - 1940)

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<b>Born</b>	22 June, 1861, West Melbourne Victoria Australia
<b>Died</b>	25 November, 1940, Sydney New South Wales Australia
<b>Occupation</b>	Tailoress, Trade unionist, Women's rights activist

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### Summary

Mary Swanton was an staunch labour activist who was particularly concerned about the conditions endured by working women. Born in Melbourne, she moved to Perth, Western Australia, in 1889 where she worked as a tailoress. She was a member of the Australian Native's Association, a strong supporter of women's suffrage and a founding member (secretary) of the Perth branch of the Australian Women's Association.

In 1900 she became the foundation president of the Perth Tailoresses' Union until its amalgamation with the Tailors' Union in 1905. She was elected to the presidency of the combined union in 1910. Swanton was also a foundation member of the Karrakatta Club, and a friend and associate of reformist women such as Katharine Susannah Prichard.

A lifelong commitment to the cause of labour did not limit her criticism of the movement when it ignored women's working conditions.

### Published resources

#### Resource Section

Swanton, Mary Hynes (1861-1941), Grahame, Emma, 2006,  
<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A120166b.htm>

#### Edited Book

Women in Australia : an annotated guide to records, Daniels, Kay, Murnane, Mary, Picot, Anne and National Research Program (Australia), 1977

#### Journal Article

In the thick of every battle for the cause of Labor' : the voluntary work of the Labor women's organisations in Western Australia, 1900-1970, Oliver, Bobbie, 2001

#### Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

### Archival resources

#### Mitchell and Dixson Libraries Manuscripts Collection

[Mary Hynes Swanton - papers, 1896-1940](#)

### Author Details

Nikki Henningham

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