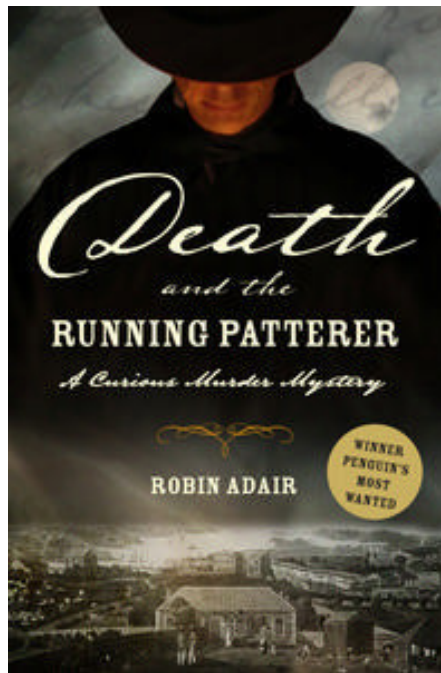




Death and the Running Patterer

Robin Adair

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

Death and the Running Patterer

Robin Adair

Death and the Running Patterer Robin Adair

1828: Sydney is a city built on the backs of exiled convicts. But in a colony of criminals, how do you narrow down the list of suspects when a murderer is on the rampage?

Nicodemus Dunne was a London policeman. After being deported on trumped up charges of assault, he now makes his living in New South Wales as a running patterer, spreading the news of the day by word of mouth. Confronted with a series of gruesome and horribly inventive murders, the governor seeks out Dunne for his investigative skills and his ability to infiltrate all levels of society.

With each mutilated body, the murderer has left clues for Dunne to decipher. Can he put the pieces of the puzzle together and catch his elusive quarry without becoming prey himself?

Death and the Running Patterer Details

Date : Published 2009 by Penguin

ISBN : 9781921518256

Author : Robin Adair

Format : Paperback 267 pages

Genre : Mystery, Historical, Historical Fiction, Cultural, Australia, Fiction

 [Download Death and the Running Patterer ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Death and the Running Patterer ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Death and the Running Patterer Robin Adair

From Reader Review Death and the Running Patterer for online ebook

Tonya Cheney says

This author has a great sense of humor.

Jan McClintock says

This historical mystery was fascinating on so many levels. First, because the setting was a new one to the genre and the author took full advantage of this to convey the unique community of 1828 Sydney, New South Wales, Australia. In a penal colony with strict levels of society, a person's freedom is tenuous, no matter his previous position in life.

Second, because the hero is so well-drawn as a disgraced Bow Street runner who is now a prisoner, able to make his own living by dispersing news by mouth. His real skill is detection, and he will need every ounce of it when the killing starts.

Third, it's a real mystery with many red herrings.

Fourth, the characters were varied and distinctive, with only a few straying into stereotypical territory.

Summarily, adding together a thinking man and lots of action with quirky characters in a well-described atmosphere equals an excellent historical mystery.

Elizabeth says

This is a very entertaining book which is also educational although I found it pedantic at times. Nicodemus Dunne lives in a place and time that is grim, frightening and filled with desperate people trying to stay out of trouble because the consequences are always dire. A redeeming feature is that the reader has a view from the future and knows that better times are coming. Australia is a land of transported convicts under penalty, other convicts who have served their time and are on parole, their guards who behave criminally and hapless natives who every one treats badly. There are many people who are trying to live decent lives but it's an uphill battle.

Many of the unfortunates were transported for crimes like stealing a hat but they have been treated so cruelly by the system they have lost a lot of their humanity and they never had any rights to begin with. Well, Dunne is asked to help solve a series of vicious murders and the stories he has to tell as he goes about investigating the crimes will curdle your blood. Believe me after finishing this book I have stopped complaining about the weather, the government, work, the state of the world, the younger generation and the traffic!

Karen says

DEATH AND THE RUNNING PATERER is the book that won Penguin's last Most Wanted Crime Writing competition, and there's a comment in the acknowledgements that explain a little about the development of the book:

"I owe a debt to Robert Sessions, Penguin Australia's Publishing Director, who overcame his initial shock at being confronted with a manuscript knocked out on an old manual typewriter...."

The reason for highlighting this is that whilst reading DEATH AND THE RUNNING PATERER was a very enjoyable overall experience, the book is made up of a series of short, sharp chapters, which gives the book a sense of rapidity of movement. It made the book extremely easy to read, particularly given that, as a period piece, it provided fictional entertainment as well as a real-life glimpse at Colonial Sydney life. A really good sense of place and time, as well as the incorporation of true historical alongside fictional characters brought early Sydney to life very vividly whilst just flat out telling a great story.

Set in 1828 Sydney, that story starts with the murder of a colony soldier. Governor Ralph Darling is not pleased, but as the killing's continue and get more violent, he's forced to put his faith in the investigative ability of Nicodemus Dunne. Dunne is an ex-Bow Street Runner, transported to Australia, he now makes his living as a running patterer - reading / reciting the news for people in the colony without access to newspapers because of lack of time, cost or illiteracy. Not only does he have the ability and skills to track down the killer, he also has the contacts, working in the streets, the pubs and the back areas of Sydney daily. Add to that, the perfect cover - few notice a man who is always around, a man who is expected to be interested in "the news". As Dunne searches he finds there are a lot of secrets in the newly formed colony and he's quickly under threat himself. Luckily there is the bonus of an increasing attraction to the charming seamstress Rachel Dormin.

There's nothing like something different to pique the interest of the dedicated crime fiction reader. DEATH AND THE RUNNING PATERER hits that originality mark in a number of ways. Partly the setting - 1828 Sydney isn't commonly used and in this book it's done particularly well. The interweaving of the characters and the fledgling city sit together well, with glimpses of the pubs, the brothels, the newspaper offices, and the day to day living giving the story a depth of setting to work in. The characters - both the fictional and the real - are interesting, frequently fun and definitely involving. From the Pieman and his lunatic attempts at various records, to the dour Governor Darling, as well as Nicodemus Dunne they live in the city created in this book in a very natural way. There's a real sense of the society trying to come to terms with the Colonial background, to create an identity of its own. At the same time, there's constant acknowledgement of where many of the players come from - their backgrounds are sketched out, providing a real sense of moving on from the past. The brief glimpses of the awful treatment of the indigenous peoples, and yet their willingness to help / befriend the incomers is nicely balanced.

Already mentioned, the use of the short, sharp chapter layout adds both a readability and pace to the book, which was rather surprising and noticeable (the acknowledgement actually provided a possible explanation). Overall you can really see why DEATH AND THE RUNNING PATERER won the Penguin Most Wanted Competition. Let's hope they run the same competition again, but in the meantime another Nicodemus Dunne outing wouldn't go astray.

Carmen says

This book is horrible. No grammatical or spelling mistakes, but it's boring. The author seems to be

attempting to educate his audience on the history of Australia instead of entertaining them with a mystery story. In fact, for every line or two of dialogue that the characters speak, three or four paragraphs follow with explanations about what was just said. For instance, if someone mentions a pipe, then there are two paragraphs explaining different kinds of pipes that were available at this time. It's boring and long-winded and the audience doesn't care at all about this, so why include it?

This book is also overly dramatic in a needless and silly way. The author seems to think that he has to end every chapter with some dramatic comment or revelation. The problem is that they are not that dramatic. Sometimes it's as simple as someone stating the obvious, as in: "He's dead!"

Last, but not least, I don't like to read about this horror and objectification of men and women that is so prominent in this novel. All convicts are slaves who can be used for any backbreaking or sordid purpose. New whores are raped into submission. Eight-year-old children are hanged until dead for stealing bread. Etc., etc. Adair seems to love to linger on the vicious, wretched lives of all those living in 1828 Australia. It's disturbing. Worst of all, there is no relief from it. There is no good, no sweetness, no love, no kind words to elevate this book out of the depths of human misery.

Andrea Bilardi toon says

Boring

Barb says

I was really looking forward to reading this novel, I thought the premise sounded like it would make an interesting and exciting mystery.

Nicodemus Dunne was a Bow Street Runner before he found himself deported to Australia as a convict. Now he makes his living as a running patterer, reading the newspapers to a variety of customers who pay for his services. Because of his experience investigating crime the governor has asked for Dunne's assistance discovering who's responsible for the recent murder of a soldier. Before Dunne can examine the body of the victim the murderer has committed another crime. As Dunne makes inquiries regarding the mysterious note that was sent to the governor the bodies pile up.

This book was not my cup of tea. I didn't care for the style of writing, the constant explanation of seemingly every bit of interesting history incorporated into the story only served to stall the story itself and irritate the reader. For example on page 163 the author fills us in on the history of the stethoscope, page 167 offers details on the brisky, a large horse drawn vehicle, page 173 gives us details on false teeth and page 184 illuminates the origin of the slang word 'tup'. One of the things I love most about reading historical fiction is learning little tid bits just like the ones this author incorporated into his story. Unfortunately the technique he used was so heavy handed that it completely detracted from rather than added to the interest of the story.

There was very little character development, the graphic description of gory details of the murders were too graphic and the love scene and its aftermath was really distasteful. The number of coincidences were too many and the mystery itself just wasn't satisfying.

Mistress Bast says

2 and a half stars. It was better than OK, but I am not sure how much I liked it.

In some ways this is a great book for someone who is interested in the very early history of British settlement of Australia - particularly if they want a feel for the daily life of people, because the author often (every couple of paragraphs) gives the reader a quick history lesson. But a history buff would already know quite a bit of it, and it does interrupt the narrative somewhat, and for a history novice, there is (in my opinion) a bit too much to try to learn it all. For all that, the book did have a well constructed "feel" that you could get into. For the most part I quite liked the characterization.

The mystery (a series of murders) was well set up, and had me hooked and wanting to know more quickly. But in the second half of the book became too convoluted and the clues relied too heavily on both the murder and the investigators to have the same knowledge and understanding of the Bible and Shakespeare. The only real forensic clues were very circumstantial. I really felt that the whole thing would never have held up in court without a confession, except for the status differences between who would be the accuser and the murderer themselves. I found the resolution very unsatisfying.

By the end of the book I got the feeling that the author had a really good idea. But then go so carried away by the research that he wanted to share all the fascinating things he had learned with us. For some parts of the book it was what gave the story realness and atmosphere. For other parts, it felt like the story was being shoehorned around the facts for the sake of including them all.

LeeAnne says

I finished Death and the Running Patterer this morning and I'm a little torn. I did NOT guess the killer but I don't think the author really gave me a chance at it. The book reads fairly quickly and it is really steeped in the history of early Sydney but at times it read a bit like a history professor's lecture notes. There is lots and lots of information and anecdotal stuff but...that doesn't necessarily make for a great mystery, historical or not. The author explained what a patterer is at the beginning of the book (sort of like a town cryer) but the main character and patterer, Nicodemus Dunne, never seemed to be doing his job. The author also referred to the main character as "the patterer" constantly. I found it very annoying and it really took me out of the story for some reason. Overall, this one read like a first novel. It definitely has potential but could go south very easily. I'll be interested to see what Mr Adair produces next.

Lenore says

Mr. Adair has obviously done his historical research for this mystery, but unfortunately loves it so much that he had chosen to burden the book with too many historical references. Instead of using his knowledge to create a rich, historically accurate setting for his solid, engaging mystery story, he has chocked the story overly full with historical characters, linguistic factoids, locations, other details that could have been interesting if there were fewer. His story has another problem, that Mr. Adair shares with genre luminary, Agatha Christie. They both tend to hold out on an abundance of relevant clues until the last scene, thus not enabling the reader to actively enjoy the problem solving along with the protagonist. Mysteries need to keep a balance of revelation and secrecy to keep the reader engaged, but also pleasantly surprise them. If not the reader becomes a passive recipient of information withheld until it is too late to enjoy. Paradoxically then,

less would be more for the history, and more would be best for the mystery.

Tonya says

Nicodemus Dunne is currently making his living as a running patterer, this means he 'reads' newspaper articles and ads as well as passing other information via word of mouth to the illiterate citizens and soldiers of Sydney, Australia. Dunne had a life in London where he was a Bow Street Runner until he gets transported & has only a year left before he can return to England. This past leads the Chief of Police Francis de Rossi to ask for Dunne's help after gruesome murders start occurring. Rossi is hoping Dunne's past and his acceptance among the many middle/lower classes and prisoners of the colony he'll be able to help solve the mystery behind the deaths and un-mask the killer.

I enjoyed this book for a couple reasons, one being it has numerous historical facts peppered throughout it that both add to the story but also add a life to the background and people. Second any character that was introduced had/has a role to play however minor, this includes the city itself, all the people and places are interwoven into the story and done so well that you almost miss the mastery of it. Another enjoyable aspect about this book was I didn't know who the killer was. This is new for me as I almost always know who, what, and why before I'm halfway through a mystery & it was refreshing to have the killer there before my eyes all the way through and not have guessed until the very end.

If you like mysteries that hold your hand and point you to the murderer with a neon arrow then this book is NOT for you, you will find yourself saying 'Ah ha!' then saying 'wait... what?' you'll find before the end you may have guessed a couple times who dunnit but you may not have known for sure.

I found this book refreshing in its telling, its characters, and its setting. I honestly cannot wait for next book featuring Nicodemus Dunne and the character of 1820's Sydney, Australia.

Shannon Teper says

I enjoyed the period details scattered throughout this book. Having no knowledge of the history of Australia except that it began as a penal colony, being transported back in time to the early days of Sydney was enlightening, if a little overwhelming. The book was dark with a good deal of gore and violence, but probably very true to the time period the author sought to capture. It's darker aspects were periodically lightened by humor and the presence of several likable characters. I wish Dunne himself were a little more sympathetic as a character. He made some very worthy choices in the book and was certainly intelligent and inventive, while being human and flawed. In spite of this, I had trouble feeling a strong connection with him. Perhaps as the series progresses he will grow on me. The mystery itself was well plotted and complicated enough to be a real challenge. The author played fair with the reader and sprinkled appropriate clues throughout. I would have liked to find included a map of the area I was reading about, but found the list of characters extremely useful.

Carolyn Rose says

Although the setting was fascinating and there was a strong start to voice and characterization, I found myself losing interest, perhaps because I nailed the killer too soon.

Katharine (Ventureadlaxre) says

Utterly boring and poorly written. There was a lack of plot structure, pace, and the characters weren't very interesting. I hardly got through the first 60 pages before I had to turn my attention to better books.

A shame, because I got it through Dymocks where you get the first book free when you buy the second... so I have both books and don't know where to get rid of them too. I hope the library lacks copies.

Elizabeth says

Sydney, Australia 1828, Nicodemus Dunne, a transported ex-Bow Street Runner on parole, is called on by Governor Darling to help solve a spate of unsolvable murders. He joins forces with the beautiful Rachel Dormin, a seamstress, but there are many twists and turns along the way. There are also numerous suspects with secrets worth killing for, including the Governor himself. The biggest twist of them all though is who the actual killer is.

I found this really easy to read, I loved the Historical aspects, that is the real historical figures from the well known figures such as Governor Darling and Captain Rossi, to the quirky figures like the Flying Pieman. I also loved the information about the colony itself like how things had been built up and how they had been run, as well as the naming of the places. I also loved how fact and fiction were intertwined to become 'friction' without losing anything, there were little snippets of facts that didn't take anything from the story.

Anyone who enjoys a read of crime fiction and loves reading about the history of Sydney would love this book.
