

6 November Credit selection of unoccupied land in SA south of latitude 26° became possible with the enactment of waste land legislation, following settlers' demands for the scrapping of Goyder's Line. As a result wheat was planted further north, as far as the Flinders Ranges, until droughts disproved the optimistic theory that 'rain follows the plough'. In Vic's Wimmera district wheat farming expanded rapidly. Horsham became the principal town.

12 November The Riot Act was read at the School of Arts, Ipswich, Qld, and several people were seriously injured, when Catholics attacked a meeting at which Rev R. Porteous was speaking on 'Martin Luther'.

16 December Angus Cameron, sponsored by the NSW Trades and Labour Council, won the seat of West Sydney, becoming the first labour politician in NSW. The council gave him a special allowance of £3 a week, as parliamentarians were unpaid.

1874 Marcus Clarke's novel of the convict era, *His natural life*, was published as a book, having previously been serialised in the *Australian journal* from March 1870 to June 1872. Later editions appeared under the title *For the term of his natural life*, common usage since Angus & Robertson's edition of 1929.

1874 NSW wool was traded with Japan for the first time, Japanese silk and cotton products being imported in return.

1874 James Cassius Williamson, an American actor, was brought to Australia by the Melbourne impresario George Coppin. He stayed on to become a theatrical entrepreneur, founding the company later called J.C. Williamson Productions Ltd.

1874 Seamen's unions formed in Sydney and Melbourne; they federated in 1876.

1874 The Maloga mission was established as a refuge for the estimated 9000 surviving Aborigines in NSW.

1874 The Compulsory Vaccination Act in Vic required all children to be inoculated against smallpox within six months of birth.

1874 Shipwrights in Tas won a nine-hour day after a three-month strike for the eight-hour day.

1875

7 January The Sydney Municipal Council was not able to meet its debts. Half of its employees were dismissed and the government was forced to lend £10 000 to the council.

11 January The Presbyterian Ladies' College, Melbourne, was founded.

24 January The steamer *Gothenberg*, with 85 passengers and 36 crew, on its way from Darwin to Adelaide, was wrecked on the Barrier Reef. There were 27 survivors.

26 January Saul Samuel, postmaster-general of NSW, laid the foundation stone of the Great Synagogue in Elizabeth St, Sydney. The building was financed by public subscription and opened in 1878.

28 January The NSW premier, Henry Parkes, resigned after near-defeat in the legislative assembly over a series of motions by the opposition censuring the intention of the governor, Sir Hercules Robinson, to release the bushranger Frank Gardiner from gaol. The opposition treated the tabling of a letter by Robinson in the house as an attack on the people and the right to petition parliament, while the governor regarded the motions as an invasion of the privileges of the crown.

26 February Adelaide ratepayers participated in one of the first plebiscites in Australia, to decide whether steam trains from Glenelg should be allowed to terminate at Victoria Square in the city.

1 May The NSW Academy of Art opened in Sydney. It became the Art Gallery of NSW on 2 June 1876 and in 1880 was renamed the National Art Gallery. In its first year the academy established classes for modelling, taught by Achilles Simonetti, and drawing, with Giulio Anivitti.

6 May Ernest Giles left Beltana station on the overland telegraph line on his third attempt to reach the coast of WA. The expedition, comprising eight men and eighteen camels and financed by the pastoralist Thomas Elder, arrived in Perth on 10 November after travelling 2375 miles (3822 km). Giles immediately announced that he would repeat the journey from west to east.

10 May At a large public meeting in Sydney a motion urging British annexation of New Guinea was carried.

5 July Iron was smelted at the Derwent ironworks in Tas.

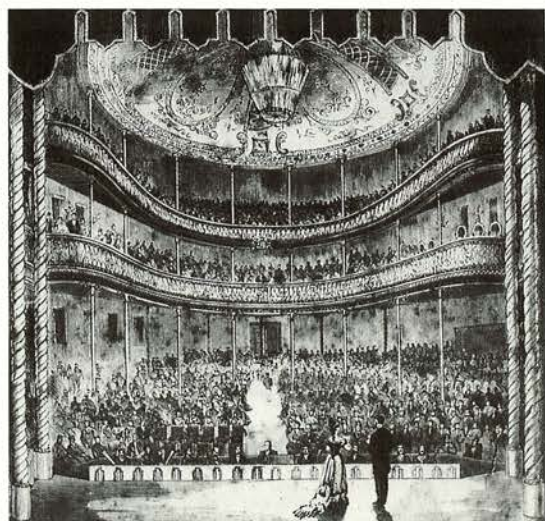
30 July The first part of Sydney Town Hall was opened at a building cost of £50 000. The second part, named Centennial Hall, was opened in 1888 and had the first pressed-metal ceiling in Australia.

6 August Irish Australians celebrated the centenary of the birth of the Irish patriot Daniel O'Connell with solemn masses, processions, banquets and concerts. At a public meeting in Sydney to mark the occasion, one speaker called for an end to factionalism in Australia and the development of 'pure national sentiment'.

10 August An act amending the system of free selection of crown land in NSW under Robertson's Land Act of 1861 came into force. It answered many criticisms of the selection system by providing for the sale of land in return for improvements, and preventing the practice of 'dummying' by purchasers to gain multiple allotments of land.

13 August Wharf labourers of the Sydney Labouring Men's Union issued a notice that after 17 September they would only work an eight-hour day at a rate of 10s per day. Their employers refused these terms and declared that they would no longer employ union members. The union withdrew its notice at the end of September but the employers refused to relent and by August 1876 the union had virtually ceased to exist.

10 October The first postal cards, ornamented with the arms of Great Britain, were issued at the Sydney GPO for one penny.



11 December 1875 *The opening night of the New Theatre Royal, Sydney, as seen from the stage looking into the auditorium. Engraving by an unknown artist, Illustrated Sydney News, 12 January 1876.*

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9 November The foundation stone of the Protestant Hall in Castlereagh St, Sydney, was laid. More than 10 000 people marched from the Domain and speeches were made against the Catholic Church.

14 December In NSW a bill to allow married women to own property was rejected by the legislative assembly.

16 December Smelting operations began in the blast furnace of the Eskbank ironworks at Lithgow, NSW. Locally mined coal, limestone and iron ore were fed into the furnace driven by a 70-horsepower engine to produce 100 tons of pig-iron per week.

24 December A cyclone hit the pearling fleet in the Exmouth Gulf, WA, leaving 59 dead.

1875 John Forrest published his *Explorations in Australia* and Peter Egerton Warburton his *Journey across the western interior of Australia*.

1876

1 January Elementary education became compulsory in Qld. Every primary school student was expected to gain 'a competent knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic' as well as learning grammar, geography, history, gymnastics, singing and (for girls) sewing.

21 February An undersea telegraph cable from Sydney to Wellington was opened.

March Delegates from Qld trade unions met at the Trades Hall in Brisbane to organise a campaign for the eight-hour day. Meanwhile, Brisbane wharf labourers struck for shorter hours and appealed to the government to legislate on the matter. The government agreed that future railway construction contracts would stipulate an eight-hour working day.

4 April The western railway line from Sydney to Bathurst was opened, allowing the Blue Mountains to be crossed by train. The main construction feat was the zigzag section near Mt Victoria, built at a cost of £25 000 per mile.

17 April Six Irish republican convicts escaped from Fremantle gaol on board the American whaling ship *Catalpa*. The government's armed steamer *Georgette* gave chase, firing a shot across the whaler's stern, but retreated when the captain of the *Catalpa* claimed immunity of the high seas under the United States flag. The escapees received a heroes' welcome in New York on 19 August.

25 April The University of Adelaide, Australia's third university, was inaugurated. The foundation stone was laid on 30 July 1879 by the governor, Sir William Jervois.

8 May Truganini, reputed to be the last surviving 'full-blooded' Tas Aborigine, died in Hobart. The Hobart *Mercury* described her death as pointing to 'the gradual but certain extinction of the Aboriginal races of these southern lands', but hoped the government would ensure that proper respect was paid to the body of a departed queen. After her death the Tas government refused to recognise Tasmanians of Aboriginal descent as Aborigines. In fact the last 'full blood' died in 1888 on Kangaroo Island.

11 May The NSW Coal Mines Regulation Act, modelled on an English statute of 1872, became law. Besides imposing more stringent ventilation and safety regulations and eight-hour shifts, it recognised union demands to monitor the amounts of coal hewed by each miner, which determined his pay.

7 June In NSW Angus Cameron, an independent labour member of the legislative assembly, introduced a bill for legalising trade unions. Designed to protect union funds against embezzlement by dishonest officials, it was drastically altered by the legislative council on 27 July and dropped on 11 August.

27 June NSW champion rower Edward Trickett defeated Englishman James Sadler in London to win the single sculls world championship, becoming the first Australian world champion sportsman.

3 August The Macalister government introduced a bill into the Qld parliament designed to restrict Chinese immigration to the Palmer goldfields by trebling the cost of mining and trading licences for 'Asiatic and African' aliens. On 12 August the governor, William Wellington Cairns, objected to the bill on the grounds that it might breach Anglo-Chinese treaties, and referred it to the Colonial Office in London, which disallowed it in December.

9 October In Qld a new judicature act came into force. It was introduced by the law-reforming premier Samuel Griffith three years after it had been enacted in England. The act unified courts of common law and equity, thus making proceedings in the supreme court simpler and cheaper. The judicature system was adopted in SA in 1878, WA in 1880, Vic in 1883, Tas in 1932 and NSW in 1970.

9 November The stump-jump plough, invented by the SA machinist Robert Bowyer Smith, was first exhibited at the Moonta agricultural show, SA. This simply designed plough enabled mallee scrub regions in SA and Vic to be cleared for wheat farming.

1 December The SS *Georgette* broke up in heavy surf after striking a rock near Cape Leeuwin, WA; 50 passengers and crew were saved by Grace Bussell, aged sixteen, and her Aboriginal servant Sam Isaac. Bussell was awarded the first silver medal of the Royal Humane Society of Australasia for her heroism, while Isaac received a bronze medal.

5 December The first Church of England Synod of the Diocese of Sydney met.

1876 The Free Trade League was formed in Vic. It comprised 37 branches directed by a central council whose executive included a number of wealthy land-owners and merchants, and agitated for abolition of protective tariffs. Tariff increases in 1879, however, entrenched the tradition of protection in the colony.

1876 *Outlines of an industrial science*, written by the editor of the *Age*, David Syme, was published in London. It was a defence of protectionism and state economic activity and was reprinted the following year.

1877

19 February The National Reform and Protection League, which advocated high tariffs and land taxes, held its first 'monster meeting' at the Princess Theatre, Melbourne.

February The NSW government astronomer, H.C. Russell, began issuing daily weather charts to the press. Data were collected by telegraph and forecasts were produced in consultation with R.L. Ellery, director of the Melbourne observatory, and Charles Todd, astronomical observer and superintendent of telegraphs in SA.

6 March John Robertson's two-year-old ministry in NSW fell when Henry Parkes successfully moved a censure motion in the legislative assembly. Parkes formed his second ministry on 22 March, which survived only five months.

15–17 March A combined Melbourne and Sydney cricket team played James Lillywhite's English professionals in Melbourne. This first Australian eleven defeated the visitors by 45 runs.

16 March John Bede Polding, first Catholic archbishop in Australia, died in Sydney aged 82. His public funeral three days later was attended by 20 000 people.

28 March Robert Savage and Frederick Wolseley registered a patent for a sheep-shearing machine in Sydney.

March The Main Line railway from Hobart to Evandale was completed. On 1 November the first through train from Hobart to Launceston completed the 220-kilometre journey in less than six hours.

11 April The *Sydney Mail* noted the observation of a 'fashionably attired' woman smoking a cigar in public, in George St, Sydney.

21 May Graham Berry's liberals, backed by the National Reform and Protection League formed in February, won power in the Vic general elections with a platform that included reform of the legislative council.

May The Hermannsberg Lutheran mission station was founded on the Finke River, NT, by two German cattlemen.

13 August The Metropolitan Gas Co was formed by the amalgamation of three Melbourne companies. A select committee of the Vic parliament in August 1878 criticised the company's monopoly and recommended the supply of gas should be taken over by municipal councils.

18 August The first Australian performance of any opera by Richard Wagner, *Lohengrin*, was staged by W.S. Lyster's company in Melbourne.

20 August The governor of Qld, Sir Arthur Kennedy, assented to a revised version of a bill that discriminated against immigrant Chinese gold-diggers. As a result of the government's hostility, Chinese immigration to the Qld goldfields dropped from 6800 to 100 per year in 1877–81, while the total number of Chinese in Qld fell considerably.

11 October A large public meeting was held in Sydney to raise money for famine victims in India. By 19 February 1878, £65 110 had been subscribed throughout Australia and New Zealand.

17 October The SA ministry led by John Colton was brought down by the casting vote of the Speaker, George Kingston, over the building of a new parliament house. On 26 October James Boucault formed a government for the fourth time.

17 November Several whites were killed by Aborigines on the Daintree River in northern Qld. A large congregation of Aborigines was reported on 6 December, causing alarm among the timber-getters working in the Daintree rainforests.

1 December The overland telegraph line between Adelaide and Perth was completed, connecting all the colonies for the first time and enabling telegraphic messages to be sent between Perth and Europe.

18 December J.S. Farnell became the first native-born premier of NSW. The October elections had failed to give either major faction a majority and both Robertson and Parkes were unable to form governments. Over half the parliament's time in 1877 was taken up with changes in government.

26 December The Aboriginal athlete Frank Clarke set a new Australian record in the triple jump at Mortlake, Vic, with a distance of 42 feet 7.5 inches (12.99 metres).

December Aborigines near the Palmer River, Qld, were reported to be suffering from starvation, caused by the occupation of their hunting grounds by miners.



October 1877–February 1878 *Photographs of Indian famine victims were circulated in Australia and New Zealand as part of an appeal to raise money for the millions made homeless by droughts and floods in the Deccan, southern India.*

NSW GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

1878

1 January The NSW Torpedo Corps was established. Three torpedo boats were built in Sydney and successfully tested in April. On 15 April a Torpedo Corps was established in Qld.

8 January After the legislative council in Vic had rejected on 20 December the Berry government's supply bill, which included provision for paying members of the legislative assembly, Berry responded by sacking 300 top public servants in an attempt to intimidate the council and reduce waste in government administration. Among those dismissed on 'Black Wednesday' were county court judges, magistrates, coroners and officials in the departments of crown lands, mines, trade, railways and public works. A temporary compromise with the council was reached in April, which allowed for the payment of members but left the powers of the upper house intact.

16 February Heavy rain in western NSW broke a two-year drought. On 11 April the government announced that the number of sheep in NSW had decreased by 3748 000.

1 March Perth's first state high school, run on secular principles, was opened.

29 March An Australian cricket eleven, captained by David William Gregory, sailed for England via San

Francisco. The team played several matches in the USA, and in England won 18, lost 7 and drew 12.

15 April When a police trooper attempted to arrest Dan Kelly for horse stealing at Greta in northern Vic, he was allegedly shot in the wrist by Dan's brother Ned. The two took to the bush and formed the Kelly bushranging gang with Stephen Hart and Joseph Byrne. On 26 October they killed three constables at Stringybark Creek and twenty days later they were declared outlaws. The Vic government offered a reward of £500 for each of the gang captured, dead or alive.

20 May More than 1000 unemployed men marched up Collins St, Melbourne, to demand relief work from the Vic premier, Graham Berry. Berry agreed to authorise the construction of sanitation works to provide work for 200 people. The government's expenditure on public works increased by £120 000 to £1 500 000 during the year.

1 June The iron clipper *Loch Ard* was wrecked on the south coast of Vic with 45 lives lost and 2 survivors.

13 June Alexander Sutherland gave the first demonstration of a phonograph in Australia at a meeting of the Royal Society of Vic.

3 September The Great Southern Railway reached Wagga Wagga in an attempt by the NSW government to lure Riverina trade away from Vic.

16 September An Edison–Bell microphone installed at Melbourne Town Hall successfully transmitted a concert to the city fire station and South Melbourne council chambers.

18 November Seamen, firemen, cooks and stewards employed by the Australasian Steam Navigation Company struck over the employment of Chinese crews. On 2 January 1879 the company agreed with union demands to stop employing Chinese sailors, who were paid less than half the wages of European crewmen.

30 November At the Highland Society of NSW's annual Scottish concert in the Protestant Hall, Sydney, 'Advance Australia fair' by Peter Dodds McCormick was first sung publicly.

5 December James Farnell's government was defeated in the NSW parliament over a bill that attempted to reform the land laws in favour of small electors. Gov Hercules Robinson refused Farnell's request for an election and asked John Robertson, leader of the opposition, to form a ministry. Robertson, however, declined, resigned and declared that the existence of three parties in the house made the business of government impossible. On 17 December a meeting of his and Parkes's faction elected Parkes as leader of the opposition. Defeated again in the house, the Farnell ministry resigned and Parkes accepted the governor's commission offering Robertson a seat in the legislative council and a

portfolio in what became the Parkes–Robertson coalition — the strongest ministry since the coming of responsible government.

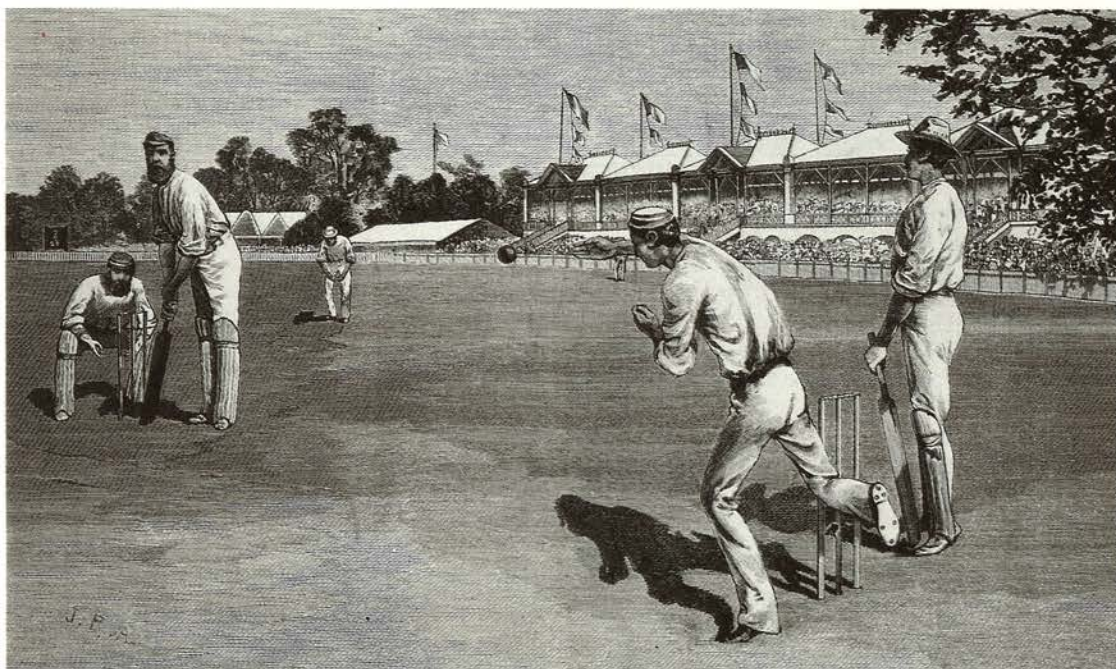
9 December The Kelly gang took possession of a sheep station near Euroa and locked 22 people in a storehouse. The following day the gang robbed a bank at Euroa, taking £2000 in gold and notes. The reward for their capture was doubled to £1000 each.

December As the Vic constitutional crisis continued, Premier Graham Berry left Melbourne with Professor C.H. Pearson on a six-month visit to London. He attempted to persuade the British government to pass an act enabling the legislative assembly to reform the legislative council without the council's consent. Berry failed to convince the Colonial Office that local avenues for reform had been exhausted and was forced to introduce another reform bill, which was defeated in the legislative assembly.

1879

8 February In Gawler, SA, 230 agricultural implement makers went on strike when their employer, James Martin and Co, tried to increase their working day from eight to nine hours.

8 February The Kelly gang held up the police barracks at Jerilderie, NSW, and occupied the town for two days. Before leaving, they robbed the bank of



2 January 1879 Frederick Spofforth, Australia's 'Demon Bowler', demolishes the English batting side, captained by Lord Harris, in what was later recognised as the Third Test. Australia won the match comfortably, Spofforth taking the first Test hat-trick. Engraving by Julian Ashton from an illustrated newspaper, 1879.

LA TROBE LIBRARY

£2141. The reward for their capture was again doubled, to £2000 a head.

5 March William Giblin succeeded William Crowther as premier of Tas, leading a coalition that became known as the 'continuous ministry' for its record five-year term in office. In 1881 Crowther and Treasurer John Dodds reorganised the colony's finances and introduced a new taxation system, which included high customs tariffs.

24 March The NSW Zoological Society was founded. In its first year it realised one of its original aims of 'acclimatising' fauna by releasing imported birds, trout and game animals around Bathurst, Goulburn, Penrith and Maitland for hunting.

26 March A 607-metre-long wrought-iron bridge, constructed with trusses imported from England, was opened at Murray Bridge, SA. Adapted for rail in 1886, it served as a road-rail bridge until 1925 when a new rail bridge was built.

14 April The aeronaut 'Professor' Henri L'Estrange miraculously survived when his balloon burst over Melbourne's Government House, disrupting a garden party.

21 April In Vic the first public holiday was held to commemorate the stonemasons' strike in 1856, which had won them the eight-hour day.

13 May The Provincial and Suburban Bank of Melbourne suspended payments. On 5 June the Australian and European Bank followed suit.

21 May A meeting in Sydney passed a resolution that criminals convicted of rape should have their death sentences commuted. On 10 June an Aborigine was hanged for rape, but three days later two white rapists had their sentences commuted to life imprisonment.

1 July The *Daily Telegraph*, a morning newspaper, commenced publication in Sydney.

24 July Alexander Forrest named the Ord River while exploring the Kimberley district of WA. The report of his expedition, published in 1884, aroused excitement when he estimated that 10 000 000 hectares of land was suitable for sheep and cattle grazing.

26 July The first state-owned railway in WA was opened for traffic between Geraldton and Northampton.

July Robinson Brothers of Melbourne installed Australia's first commercial telephone link between their Flinders St office and their foundry in South Melbourne.

July The first successful artesian bore was sunk at Kallara station near the Darling River in NSW.

18 August In NSW the Parkes government sent troops to Newcastle in response to the coalminers' strike over falling hours and piece rates. The soldiers were withdrawn on 26 November after the miners returned to work.

23 August J.C. Williamson and Maggie Moore starred in the first Australian production of a Gilbert and Sullivan opera, *HMS Pinafore*, at the Theatre Royal, Melbourne.

17 September Australia's first International Exhibition opened in Sydney. To house the displays, a timber and glass pavilion covering 2 hectares, was built in the Domain, topped by a dome 30 metres in diameter. The exhibition included a display of the first mechanical lift in Australia, manufactured by the Whittier Machine Co of America.

28 September A steam tramway service began between Redfern railway terminus and Hunter St, Sydney. Another private steam tram service began on 31 December 1881 between Newtown and Marrickville.

October The first Intercolonial Trades Union Congress was held in Sydney. The secretary, William Roylance, read a paper advocating the formation of co-operatives among workers, while the congress unanimously condemned the importation of Chinese labourers and called for a heavy poll tax on Chinese already resident in Australia.

29 November After more than ten years of experimenting with refrigeration, the entrepreneur Thomas Mort consigned a shipment of frozen meat on board the *SS Strathleven*. The cargo, of 70 bullock and 500 sheep carcasses with 2 tonnes of butter, arrived in London on 1 February 1880 in good condition.

4 December As unemployment among unskilled workers worsened, the NSW premier, Sir Henry Parkes, received a deputation from 1100 jobless seeking employment on government works. Parkes gave no promises to open relief works, but in January 1880 began a scheme of providing free railway passes for the unemployed to find work in the countryside.

1880

20 January The bushranger Andrew George Scott ('Captain Moonlite') was hanged at Darlinghurst gaol.

31 January The first issue of the *Bulletin*, founded by Jules Francois Archibald and John Haynes, was published in Sydney. It began as an eight-page illustrated weekly magazine costing 4d and the initial 3000 copies soon sold out.

6 February A regular fortnightly mail service between England and Australia was established.

23 February The Qld government protested to France that escaped political prisoners from the penal colony in New Caledonia had entered Qld. By July 1883, 55 escaped convicts had been extradited to France.

28 February The Berry government was defeated in the Vic elections and was succeeded by James Service's conservatives.

2 March The Edison method of incandescent lighting by electricity was patented in NSW. In 1882 H.H. Kingsbury, holder of the patent, returned from New York with several generators, and illuminated the Sydney GPO and Circular Quay using light bulbs.

19 March The Qld government offered a reward of £1000 for the discovery of a remedy for rust in wheat.



January–September 1879 *The Garden Palace under construction in the Domain, Sydney. Designed by James Barnet, the colonial architect, it was built to house Australia's first International Exhibition, which opened on 17 September.*

NSW GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

22 March Women became eligible to attend lectures at the University of Melbourne. The University of Sydney admitted female students in 1881. The first woman graduate of an Australian university, Bella Guerin, received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Melbourne University in December 1883 and a Master of Arts in 1885.

13 April The foundation stone of St Paul's Church of England cathedral in Melbourne was laid.

16 April Sir Henry Parkes's campaign for 'free, compulsory and secular' education in NSW came to fruition with the enactment of the Public Instruction Act. State assistance to denominational schools ended and government schools were placed under a public schools board which was to provide technical schools for boys, and evening schools and high schools for boys and girls. The act was subjected to criticism from Catholics led by Archbishop Vaughan.

20 April The International Exhibition in Sydney closed. More than 1 045 000 people had visited the exhibits in the Garden Palace in the Domain. As the population of Sydney was only a little over 200 000, many people had made several visits.

April Coalminers in the Newcastle region began a two-month strike against falling piece rates. The introduction of non-union labour by the coal owners caused rioting and an artillery company was sent to the area. On 9 June the parties agreed to submit the dispute to private arbitrators, who approved the wage rate reduction.

April A political scandal erupted in Qld when the former treasurer William Hemmant accused Premier Thomas McIlwraith of having obtained for his company a contract to supply steel rails to the government. A select committee of parliament cleared the premier of corruptly influencing the tender but, as doubts remained, a royal commission was appointed to investigate the affair in London. The commissioners confirmed the previous findings in March 1881.

20 May The Vic premier, James Service, introduced a bill into parliament to reform the legislative council. The bill was defeated by two votes in the legislative assembly on 24 June and on 29 June parliament was dissolved. On 14 July Berry's liberals narrowly defeated the Service government at the election.

26–28 June The Kelly gang entered the town of Glenrowan, Vic, holding up a local hotel. The gang attempted to blow up a train carrying police intent on their capture but were thwarted when the local schoolmaster raised the alarm. Police surrounded the gang and three of the bushrangers were killed in a gun battle, during which Ned Kelly donned a suit of home-made armour. He was captured, tried for murder and hanged at the old Melbourne gaol on 11 November.

22 July In Vic Peter Lalor, leader of the Eureka Stockade rebellion at Ballarat in 1854, became Speaker of the legislative assembly.

August The first telephone exchange opened in Melbourne, connecting 44 subscribers and operated by a private company.

August Australia's first wooden paving blocks were laid in King St, Sydney. This system, using hardwood blocks the size of house bricks, was already in use in London and Paris.

September More than 10 000 diggers had flocked to the goldfields at Temora, NSW, where winter rains had brought alluvial gold to the surface. Gold had been found there first in 1879.

1 October The Melbourne International Exhibition opened. More than 1 485 000 people visited the exhibition which covered 12 hectares and housed displays of produce, manufactures, arts and sciences from around the world. It closed on 30 April 1881 at a cost to the Vic government of £250 000.

16 November The premier of NSW, Sir Henry Parkes, announced that Irish immigration would be restricted to ensure that people of English descent would remain the colony's major group of overseas-born inhabitants.

26 November In Sydney, the London Comedy Co, led by Arthur Garner, finished its 38-week Australian season presenting well-known West End society plays.

28 December Alarmed at the devastation to agricultural land caused by rabbit plagues, the Vic parliament passed the Rabbit Suppression Act. Local councils were empowered to permit inspectors to enter private land and search for rabbits, while the land occupier was to pay for the costs of rabbit destruction.

1880 Henry Kendall's *Songs from the mountains*, *The 'Garryowen' sketches* by Edmund Finn and *An Australian heroine* by Rosa Caroline (Mrs Campbell) Praed were published.

1881

2 February The Great Southern Railway from Sydney to Albury opened.

3 April As part of the census of the British Empire, the first simultaneous Australian census was taken. All colonies participated, though not with uniform questions. The returns revealed a population of 2 250 194, including 751 468 in NSW, 862 346 in Vic,

213 525 in Qld, 115 704 in Tas, 286 211 in SA (including 3451 in the NT and 6346 Aborigines in settled districts) and 29 708 in WA (excluding full-blood Aborigines). The population of greater Melbourne was 282 947, while 224 939 people lived in Sydney.

16 May Princes Albert Victor and George, grandsons of Queen Victoria, arrived at Albany, WA, commencing their tour of Australia as midshipmen on board HMS *Bacchante*.

18 June The National Gallery of SA was opened by Prince Albert Victor. At the opening, a military band played 'Song of Australia' while the first acquisitions, 21 works purchased at the Melbourne International Exhibition the previous year, were exhibited.

June Panic spread in Sydney when several cases of smallpox were diagnosed. Children were vaccinated and the government disinfected or burned down houses of victims. By the end of the epidemic in January 1882, there had been 154 cases of the disease, including 40 deaths. The epidemic led to the establishment of a temporary health board, headed by Ashburton Thompson, later in 1881.

13 July Tom and Edwin Morgan discovered gold while prospecting near Rockhampton. Mt Morgan became the country's richest goldmine.

12 August Teams from NSW and Qld played the first intercolonial football match under the rugby rules, watched by a crowd of 4000 in Sydney. The NSW team won by 3 goals and 4 tries.

9 November A new Protestant hall was opened in Melbourne. It became the headquarters of the Vic Orange Movement of Irish Protestants, which claimed 4000 members.

18 November Worried at the influx of Chinese into the NT in search of gold, the SA government was the first to impose immigration restrictions that had been agreed upon at an intercolonial conference held in Sydney in January. Any Chinese crossing an imaginary line 1600 kilometres south of Darwin were to pay a tax of £10.

28 November Royal assent was given to an act to reform the Vic legislative council. Males owning freehold property worth £10 per year or leases valued at £25 per year were entitled to vote for members of the council, who were elected from fourteen provinces.

18 December The Trade Union Act became law in NSW. It provided that people could no longer be prosecuted for criminal conspiracy simply by engaging in union activities. It set up a system of trade union registration that enabled their funds to be held by trustees.

19 December A new Licensing Act regulating the sale of liquor became law in NSW. It banned the supply of alcohol to Aborigines and prohibited gambling, music and dancing on licensed premises. It also gave the ratepayers of each municipality the 'local option' to ban new publican's licences.

1881 Serialisation of *Gathered in* by Catherine Helen Spence began in the *Adelaide Observer*.

1882

22 March A government-run telephone exchange opened at the Sydney GPO. By 1883 all capitals except Perth had telephone exchanges.

1 July The *Sydney Mail* began serialising Rolf Boldrewood's bushranging romance *Robbery under arms*. It was published as a book in 1888.

22 September The Garden Palace, a temporary wooden-framed pavilion built for the Sydney International Exhibition in 1879–80, was destroyed by fire. At the time it housed the technological and mining museums, the 1881 census papers and the archives of several government departments, which were all destroyed.

25 September The Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney opened, named in memory of the attempted assassination of the second son of Queen Victoria at Clontarf, NSW, in 1868. It had been incorporated in 1873. Melbourne's Prince Alfred Hospital was founded in 1871.

September Strikes over the increased cost of living occurred in many trades in Sydney. Ironworkers and painters gained a wage increase of about 10 per cent, but a wharf labourers' strike was unsuccessful. Widespread strikes also occurred in Vic from Dec to the following Jan.

12 October The NSW Trades and Labour Council was addressed by the parliamentarian George Dibbs on the subject of courts of conciliation and arbitration. A week later the labour leader Edward O'Sullivan failed to gain enough support for a motion endorsing Dibbs's proposals, but on 2 August 1883 the council appointed a committee to investigate conciliation and arbitration.

15 October The NSW Art Gallery was opened to the public on Sunday for the first time.

17 November The premier of NSW, Parkes, obtained a dissolution of parliament from Gov Loftus after his government was defeated over a land law bill which the opposition criticised for not containing adequate reforms and failing to give secure tenure to squatters. Four government ministers subsequently lost their seats at the elections held in December. Organised Catholic opposition to Parkes led by Archbishop Vaughan resulted in an unprecedented 21 Catholics being elected from a total of 113 seats.

23 November The Australian Electric Co, formed in June, illuminated Spencer St railway station in Melbourne, two years after the first large-scale display of electricity in Paris. Brisbane first saw a display of electric power on 9 December.

November Murdoch's Australian cricket eleven returned to Melbourne after a triumphal tour of Eng-



22 September 1882 In a spectacular fire, which illuminated the Sydney skyline at dawn, the Garden Palace and its contents were totally consumed. Included in the loss were more than 300 paintings which were to have been hung at the Art Society of New South Wales annual exhibition on 2 October. Coloured lithograph by Gibbs, Shallard & Co in a supplement to the Illustrated Sydney News, 25 October 1882.

NATIONAL LIBRARY

land. Out of 38 matches played, the team won 23 and lost 4. This was the first series of the 'Ashes'.

2 December A train from Box Hill near Melbourne collided with a train from Camberwell, injuring 178 people. A coroner's jury later returned verdicts of manslaughter against a stationmaster and a guard. The Vic government paid out £120 000 in compensation.

4 December The Qld Great Northern Railway opened between the Charters Towers goldfields and Townsville.

10 December More than half the 4000 tailoresses employed in Melbourne factories went on strike over low pay and piece rates. They were supported by the Vic Trades Hall Council. A tailoresses' union, the first organised women's trade union, was formed at a mass meeting on 15 December, and on 19 February 1883 employers bowed to union and public pressure, agreeing to the women's terms.

12 December At Creswick, Vic, the New Australia goldmine was flooded, trapping 27 men underground. After 50 hours of rescue operations, five survivors were recovered.

1883

2 January All tolls on NSW government roads and bridges were abolished.

January Edward Cole's book arcade in Bourke St, Melbourne, was opened. Browsers were entertained by a band which played every afternoon.

15 February The first consignment of sugar grown in Qld was despatched from Cairns.

21 February The NSW parliament voted £3600 for the Protectorate of Aborigines, established the previous year in the colonial secretary's office. The following year the vote to the Aborigines' Protection Board, which took over the function of the Protectorate of Aborigines, was doubled to provide stores and blankets to Aborigines.

27 February Coal was first loaded at Port Kembla, NSW, by the Port Kembla Coal Co, formed in London in 1878. A jetty built at the new port five kilometres south of Wollongong was linked by rail to a coalmine 12 kilometres away.

6 March A large crowd gathered at the Protestant Hall in Sydney to protest at the visit of J.E. and W. Redmond of the Irish National League, who toured Australia arguing the case for Irish Home Rule.

3 April The Qld premier, Sir Thomas McIlwraith, ordered the police magistrate on Thursday Island to claim Qld possession of New Guinea on behalf of the British Crown. The Colonial Office disallowed the annexation order on 2 July.

13 April The Phoenix Foundry Co of Ballarat celebrated the delivery of its hundredth steam locomotive to the Vic Railways. Of 210 engines in service in Vic at the time, over half had been made in Vic.

14 April The NSW Rabbit Nuisance Act became law, empowering rabbit inspectors to enter land and order property owners to destroy rabbits. A parliamentary select committee appointed in 1887 to investigate the operation of the act, declared it a failure and recommended the offer of a reward for the discovery of a cheap means of exterminating rabbits and the construction of rabbit-proof fences.

30 April The trustees of the Melbourne Public Library decided to open the museum and picture gallery on Sundays. The museum was opened on the following Sunday, but protests from churchmen and parliament forced the trustees to change their decision. Shops and public houses in Vic were prohibited from opening on Sundays.

12 June The first Australasian headquarters of the Salvation Army were opened in Melbourne. The first Salvation Army officers had arrived in Adelaide from England in 1881.

5 July Dr T.P. Anderson Stuart was appointed first dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Sydney, the second medical school in the country after Melbourne University in 1862. The University of Adelaide established the third Faculty of Medicine in 1884. In 1885 G. Dagmar Sterne became the first woman to begin training in medicine in Australia, enrolling as a second-year student at Sydney University. In 1893 she gained her medical degree from the University of Edinburgh.

27 July The Vic premier, James Service, cabled the Colonial Office urging Britain to annex the New Hebrides to prevent it from being occupied by France. The secretary of state rejected the plea on 31 August.

July A party led by Michael J. Durack began driving 7250 breeding cattle and 200 horses 4800 kilometres overland from the Barcoo River in Qld to the Ord River in East Kimberley, WA. The party arrived at the Ord in September 1885 with half the cattle.

21 August The first regular train service between Sydney and Melbourne was established. Passengers changed trains at Albury because NSW and Vic used different track gauges. A uniform gauge was not installed until 1962.

4 September The SA parliament authorised the building of a railway line from Darwin to Pine Creek, NT. The line was completed in 1889.

5 September The German station hand Charles Rasp collected specimens of a heavy black rock at Mt Gipps station in the Barrier Ranges. When assayed, the specimens proved to contain high levels of silver and lead. By February 1888, £19 shares in the Broken Hill Proprietary Co which Rasp formed with six others in August 1885 were trading in Melbourne for £409.

16 October An act was passed in the Vic parliament reorganising the management of the colony's railways under independent railway commissioners. On 31 October another act was passed, providing for the reorganisation of the public service to encourage efficiency and promotion by merit.

October Melbourne magistrates held a special meeting to discuss the problem of 'larrikinism'. Gangs of unemployed youths who often committed violent crimes appeared in Sydney and Melbourne in the 1870s and by the 1880s were a major social problem in all large cities.

3 November The Sydney Royal Theatre made the first use of electricity in stage lighting, replacing gas, which had caused many theatre fires.

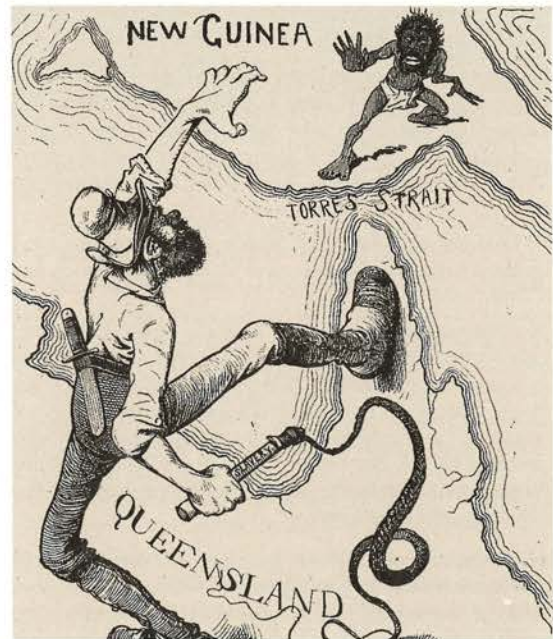
7 November The Irish Australian Convention met in Melbourne in support of Irish Home Rule. A counter-demonstration organised by the Loyal Orange Institution was held later in the month.

13 November Samuel Griffith became premier of Qld after the liberals defeated the McIlwraith government at elections held in August.

27 November More than 500 unemployed workers held a demonstration in Brisbane against the continuing high level of immigration into the colony.

December At the intercolonial conference held in Sydney, the Australian colonies agreed to the formation of the Federal Council of Australasia, which would have authority to legislate on external affairs, defence, commercial law, and the enforcement of court judgments. Fiji and New Zealand were to be included.

1883 George Rusden's three-volume *History of Australia* was published.



1883 Reflecting southern attitudes towards Queensland plantation owners' use of indentured Melanesian labourers, cartoonist Livingston Hopkins (Hop) comments in the *Bulletin on the Queensland government's moves to annex southeastern New Guinea in April 1883*. *The Bulletin*, 9 June 1883.

ANU ARCHIVES OF BUSINESS AND LABOUR

1884

February A stripper harvester, which could continuously strip, thresh and bag wheat, was first demonstrated in Vic by its inventor, Hugh Victor McKay.

April Meetings of unemployed workers were held in Sydney, becoming a daily occurrence by the end of the month. In response to high unemployment caused by a severe drought from the end of 1883 and slackening trade, the NSW minister of works ordered the opening of relief works in May. A government unemployment registry office was opened, and 700 men accepted work making roads for 5s per day. At this time, general labourers received 8s per day.

10 May After a series of disastrous droughts in NSW, a royal commission established to investigate water conservation gave its first report. The commission recommended the establishment of a government department of water supply and, after conferring with the Vic royal commission on water supply, called for action to investigate the use of the Murray River and the western rivers system for irrigation.

May As unemployment in northern Qld increased, the colonial secretary ordered labour bureaus to be opened in regional centres. Sugar cane workers suffered a 10 per cent reduction in wages as a result of the oversupply of labour.

May A soup kitchen was set up in Adelaide to provide food for destitute workers. Owing to the difficulty of the SA government in borrowing large sums on the London market and continuing high immigration, unemployment in the building trades reached record levels.

16 June John Bray's government in SA lost a no-confidence motion over the introduction of a new property tax and was replaced by the opposition led by John Colton. Colton's twelve-month ministry brought in land and income taxes as well as new laws on the sale of crown lands.

15 July A public meeting chaired by the mayor of Brisbane in the town hall passed a resolution requesting the Qld parliament to end public hotel trading on Sundays. A new licensing act passed in 1886 permitted hotels to trade from 6 am to 11 pm on Mondays to Saturdays but prohibited them from opening on Sundays.

17 July The master, government agent and five crewmen of the Burns Philp schooner *Hopeful* were arrested for the murder of islanders while on a voyage collecting Pacific Islanders to work on Qld sugar cane plantations. A large public meeting was held in Brisbane on 10 December to protest against the death penalties given to two crewmen, and on 23 December Gov Musgrave declared that he would commute their sentences to life imprisonment.

27 August An act to regulate the use of whipping as a punishment in WA became law. Persons sentenced to be whipped were now to receive their strokes publicly in prison. Boys under fourteen were to be whipped privately.

3 September Aborigines attacked and killed three men working at the Daly River copper mine in the NT. An official punitive party, led by police corporal George Montagu, was sent out to avenge their deaths and massacred a different group of Aborigines on the McKinlay River. After an outcry in Adelaide, the SA government set up an inquiry, which exonerated the party, even though Montagu had described the massacre in his official report.

7 October W.B. Dalley became acting premier of NSW after Alexander Stuart had suffered a severe stroke. On 3 November Sir Henry Parkes resigned his seat in parliament in protest against the corrupt railway policies of the government, accusing Stuart of rewarding supporters of his 1883 land bill with public works constructions in their electorates. Parkes returned to parliament on 31 March 1885, narrowly winning a by-election for the seat of Argyle, and immediately resumed his attack on the government.

17 October The first systematic legislation on crown lands became law in NSW. Providing for conditional purchases and leases by auction, pastoral leases, state forests and reserves, it became the model for all crown land legislation in Australia. Disputes over land were to be settled by local land boards, with an appeal to a land court.

14 November SA imposed a flat-rate income tax. Income derived from physical exertion was to be taxed at the rate of 3d in the pound, and incomes from property taxed at 6d in the pound.

20 November Employers began a lockout of members of the Vic Operative Bootmakers' Union, formed on 19 May 1879, in a dispute over uniform wages. The dispute became the first in which unions co-operated through the Trades Hall Council to support another union. The bootmakers returned to work on 16 February 1885 after a conciliation board had resolved the dispute.

1885

January The *West Australian* began daily publication.

11 February News reached Australia that Gen Charles Gordon had been killed at Khartoum. By noon the next day, plans were under way for the offer of a contingent of troops from NSW to avenge his death. The British government accepted the offer on 14 February but declined similar offers from Qld, SA and Vic some days later.

27 February A public meeting was held in Adelaide Town Hall to discuss the distressing level of unemployment. The SA government announced that it could provide relief work on the railways for only a few hundred men.

3 March Nearly two-thirds of Sydney's population of 300 000 lined the streets as more than 700 professional and volunteer troops from NSW marched to Circular Quay where they boarded the steamers *Iberia* and *Australasian* to join the British Expeditionary Force in the Sudan. The contingent reached the base camp on the Red Sea on 29 March where they were placed under British command. The soldiers returned to Sydney on 23 June without having engaged in more than a skirmish, in which three men were slightly wounded.

13 March The Vic Employers' Union was founded after the success of the bootmakers' strike the previous year.

28 March Amid rising fears that Britain might go to war with Russia, the Vic governor issued a proclamation that no foreign ships might enter Port Phillip Bay after sunset. Fortifications had already been commenced at the heads and on 30 April Admiral Tryon, commander of the Royal Navy's Australian squadron, ordered the Vic fleet to sea. The Russian crisis was settled diplomatically in May.

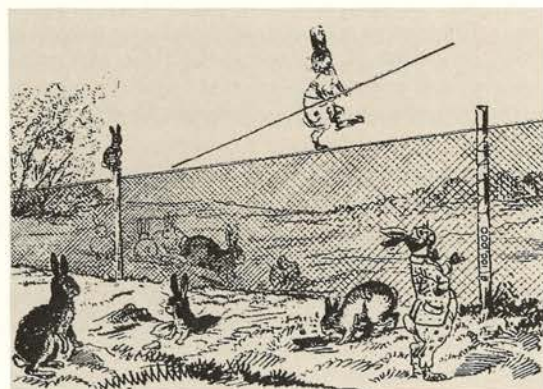
May A royal commission appointed to examine the recruitment of 'kanakas' as plantation labour confirmed widespread kidnapping and intimidation among the ships licensed to collect labourers. By this stage there were over 9000 'kanakas' in Qld.

26 July The first number of the popular Melbourne magazine *Table talk* appeared. Its sixteen pages of closely packed type cost 6d.

30 July Patrick Francis Moran, Catholic archbishop of Sydney since 21 March 1884, became Australia's first cardinal.

10 August The area where Charles Rasp had discovered silver and lead was proclaimed the township of Broken Hill.

August The Kimberley goldfield in WA was discovered by Charles Hall and Jack Slattery.



3 October 1885 Amid concern at the northward incursion of 'the furry hordes', Queensland Punch comments on the cost and effectiveness of rabbit-proof fencing. Queensland Punch and Figaro, 3 October 1885.

OXLEY LIBRARY



3 March 1885 *At Circular Quay, Sydney, Australian troops prepare to embark for the Sudan. On the left, behind the dignitaries in the centre, is the Namoi, which accompanied the Iberia through Port Jackson to farewell the soldiers. The artist, Arthur Collingridge, sits on the stool to the right.*
Oil on canvas, 1885.

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

October Newcastle coal trimmers and crane workers struck in sympathy with wharf labourers who were demanding a 25 per cent wage rise to 1s 3d per hour. The wharf labourers soon returned to work, having failed to gain support from the NSW Trades and Labour Council.

10 November After reports of kidnapping and ill-treatment of 'kanakas' forced to work on Qld canefields, the Qld parliament passed a bill stopping the recruitment of all Pacific Islanders after the end of 1890. As a result, the movement by sugar plantation owners for the creation of northern Qld as a separate colony strengthened and the premier, Griffith, eventually suspended the act.

11 November Melbourne's first cable tramway began service between the city and Richmond.

12 November In Qld the legislative assembly refused to accept financial amendments proposed by the legislative council to a local government bill. The question whether the houses had co-ordinate powers was referred to the Privy Council in London, which ruled in April 1886 that the legislative assembly possessed superior powers, but the council refused to accept this decision.

15 November The *Sunday Times*, the first Sunday newspaper in NSW was published.

16 November The eight-hour day was introduced at the Swallow and Ariell biscuit factory in Melbourne.

The employees assembled spontaneously and gave the proprietors 'three hearty cheers'.

16 December Following the state election, the NSW government led by Patrick Jennings resigned after admitting a budget deficit of over £1 700 000 caused by the economic recession and the loss of land revenues after Stuart's land reforms. John Robertson was sworn in as premier for the fifth (and last) time on 22 December but Parkes's faction refused to join the government, resulting in its collapse on 25 February 1886.

18 December The Factories and Shops Act was passed in Vic, after public outcry over the use of 'sweated' child and female labour and a royal commission on factories and shops in 1884.

1886

1 January The Vic Wharf Labourers' Union, formed on 15 May 1885, struck for the eight-hour day. A negotiated settlement was reached on 18 January, the union gaining shorter hours at slightly lower wages.

23 February Agents-general of all Australian colonies met the secretary of state for the colonies in London to urge British annexation of the New Hebrides. In June, French marines invaded the New Hebrides amid public outrage in Australia and threats of naval action by the colonial governments.

24 February The Commercial Bank of SA suspended payments. This led to the collapse of many small building societies and an increase in unemployment by March, which was further worsened by a poor harvest. Wages for artisans in Adelaide fell by nearly 20 per cent. Other banks raised their interest rates as a precaution against further collapses.

26 February Patrick Jennings returned to the NSW premiership. Faced with a crisis in state finances, he announced retrenchment of government employees, increased stamp duties, land and income taxes, and the introduction of a 5 per cent duty on the value of imported goods.

March The Gillies–Deakin coalition of liberals narrowly won the Vic elections. A breakaway group of radicals had formed a National Liberal League soon after Alfred Deakin's election as leader of the Liberal party on 19 January and contested the elections in conjunction with three labour representatives from the Vic Trades Hall, but were unsuccessful.

6 May The Broken Hill Proprietary Co opened its silver and lead smelting works at Broken Hill.

10 June The first Australian Antarctic exploration committee was set up jointly by the Royal Society of Vic and the Vic branch of the Royal Geographical Society of Australasia. The objects of the committee were to promote scientific research and investigate the possibility of commercial whaling in Antarctica.

12 June A large meeting of shearers was held at Fern's Hotel in Ballarat, Vic. Chaired by William Guthrie Spence, the meeting unanimously decided to establish the Amalgamated Shearers' Union with the object of securing fair wage rates and 'the adoption of just and equitable agreements between employers and employees'.

16 August Employers in Perth conceded a nine-hour day after an Eight-Hours Association formed in June began to agitate for a reduction from the nine-and-a-half-hour day.

2 September The WA Aborigines' Protection Board was established, with powers to control Aboriginal reserves and distribute food and blankets.

September The fourth Intercolonial Trade Union Congress was held in Adelaide. The congress carried motions in favour of conciliation and arbitration, the extension of the eight-hour day to all branches of labour, the total abolition of Chinese immigration and labour representation in parliament.

2 October A shearers' union was formed at Dugan's Shakespeare Hotel, Bourke, with 21 members. In January 1887 it and another union of shearers in Wagga Wagga joined the Amalgamated Shearers' Union.

21 October Californian irrigation experts George and William Chaffey signed an agreement with the Vic government to establish irrigated farming on the Murray River at Mildura. In 1884 a royal commission on water supply chaired by Alfred Deakin had recommended farm irrigation in northern Vic.

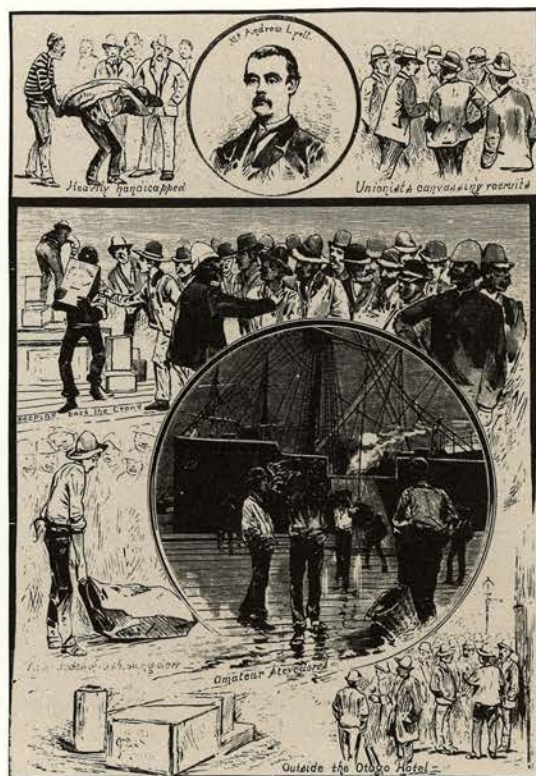
10 November A meeting called by Archibald Liveridge, professor of geology and mineralogy at Sydney University, decided to form the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science.

13 November A procession of 2000 people was held in Sydney to mark the formation of the Protection Union of NSW. Protectionist members of parliament, manufacturers and trade unionists called for the introduction of protective tariffs to reduce the effects of the recession. The union became the body which campaigned for the Protectionist Party in NSW elections.

December The WA Reform League, formed in 1878, was reorganised as the Reform Association to promote responsible government for the colony. Within ten days it gained 400 new members.

December The Princess Theatre, Melbourne, run by J.C. Williamson, Arthur Garner and George Musgrove, opened with a performance of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado*.

1886 Fergus Hume's *The mystery of a hansom cab*, the first Australian detective novel, was published in Melbourne. It became a bestseller.



January 1886 Scenes from the Melbourne wharf labourers' strike. Ship owners use their clerks to unload cargo while the newly formed Wharf Labourers' Union conducts peaceful pickets, determined to avoid 'rowdiness'. Andrew Lyell, a large employer, persuaded the unionists to return to work on 18 January. Engraving from Illustrated Australian News, 3 February 1886.

NATIONAL LIBRARY

1887

8 January Four men were hanged for the rape of 16-year-old Mary Jane Hicks at 'Mount Rennie' in Moore Park, Sydney, on 9 September 1886. Five other men involved in the crime had their death sentences commuted.

14 January The Vic Trades Hall Council adopted rules for a board of conciliation which was to attempt to resolve disputes between unions and employers.

January A deputation from the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, WA's only union, met representatives of the government to urge an increase in public works to alleviate high unemployment among its members. On 24 September the governor agreed to circulate lists of men seeking work and to pay their travelling costs to take up employment in country districts, as well as providing rations for the destitute.

21 February A deputation of unemployed met the NSW premier, Sir Henry Parkes, who agreed to the provision of rations for those in urgent distress. It was agreed that a railway to the Field of Mars (Ryde) would be constructed to provide relief work for the unemployed.

24 February Another deputation met Parkes to protest that the government was paying piece rates for unemployed relief work and demanded a wage of 6s per day. Parkes refused, and a riot occurred when police were called in to disperse the crowd.

12 March The *Radical*, Australia's first regular socialist newspaper, began publication. It was produced by Bob Winspear in Newcastle, NSW, and advocated the redistribution of the product of labour to the workers.

4 April The first colonial conference of representatives from British colonies was held in London to coincide with the celebration of Queen Victoria's jubilee. On 6 May the Australian representatives concluded an agreement with the British government for a Royal Navy squadron to be permanently stationed in Australian waters, with the colonies agreeing to pay maintenance and depreciation costs not exceeding £126 000 per annum.

22 April A cyclone at Cape Jaubert, WA, sank four pearling schooners and eighteen luggers, drowning 140 men.

4 May The Australian Socialist League was founded in Sydney. A meeting on 26 August launched the movement publicly and in November the league held a meeting to form 'an Australian Labour Party and Democratic Club'.

11 May A train collision at Windsor, Vic, killed six people and injured 250 when an air brake hose burst. On 21 June another brake malfunction derailed a train at Peat's Ferry, NSW, causing six deaths.

June John Downer's government, in office in SA since 16 June 1885, lost in the general elections and was replaced by Thomas Playford's Liberals.

Playford passed legislation which formed all settled districts into local government councils with responsibilities for local roads and public health.

June A slump in the building industry caused high unemployment among Melbourne's stonemasons, bricklayers and carpenters. On 19 July the Vic government agreed to provide stone-breaking work as unemployment relief.

6 July S.H. Parker, leader of the Reform Party in the WA legislative council, moved to make the executive responsible to the legislature. The motion for responsible government was carried by a majority of nine.

19 November The Brisbane radical William Lane started publishing the weekly labour newspaper *Boomerang*.

23 November The premier of NSW, Sir Henry Parkes, introduced a bill to change the name of NSW to the 'Colony of Australia'. The proposal aroused protests to the Colonial Office in London and an angry exchange between Parkes and Duncan Gillies, premier of Vic. Parkes dropped the idea on 19 January 1888 on accepting the offer of becoming a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St Michael and St George. Parkes was the first Australian politician to gain this high imperial decoration.

1887 The Vic Farmers' Protection Association was formed as an organisation to represent the interests of farmers to government.

1888

2 January The privately built Silverton Tramway was opened, connecting Broken Hill, NSW, to Cockburn, SA.

16 January Brisbane and Sydney were connected by rail at Wallangarra on the Qld-NSW border.

20 January Transactions on the Melbourne stock exchange passed the £2000 000 mark. Share prices levelled out in July, by which time land in the centre of Melbourne was selling for £1500 per square foot.

2 March The Western District Sheep Farmers' Association was formed at Hamilton, Vic, to resist the demands of shearers for higher shearing rates.

3 May A large meeting was held at Sydney Town Hall to protest against Chinese immigration. On 4 May a shipload of Chinese was prevented from coming ashore in Sydney Harbour, and a crowd marched to Parliament House demanding that the premier, Sir Henry Parkes, stop the 'invasion'. Another group of Chinese immigrants was stopped from landing the next day.

12 May Thomas Glassey became the first labour representative in the Qld parliament when he won a by-election for the seat of Bundamba on a platform of an eight-hour day, a minimum wage, factory and workshop legislation and an insurance scheme for workers.

23 May The Colonial Land Investment Co of Melbourne, with nominal capital of £1 000 000, held its

first general meeting. Although it had not yet sold any land, the directors declared a dividend of 66.6 per cent. In the year ending May 1888, at the height of Melbourne's land boom, 112 new land and investment companies were registered in Vic.

24 August Newcastle coalminers struck after a series of conciliation conferences with employers had failed to resolve a dispute over wage rates. A citizens' conciliation committee was unable to end the strike, which seriously disrupted the economies of NSW and Vic. A new agreement was signed on 10 November which resolved that future disputes would be referred to an independent arbitrator.

28 August The first general meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science was held in Sydney with 830 members attending.

16 October The Melbourne *Age* reported new gold finds near Ballarat, and hundreds of prospectors

rushed to the site. The find, however, proved illusory and Vic gold production continued to decline from 899 000 ounces in 1882 to 615 000 ounces in 1889.

22 October The Vic Associated Banks agreed not to lend further money on overdraft for speculative land purchases, thus ending the Melbourne land boom. In the period from January to September land sales had totalled more than £13 000 000.

22 October Three railway commissioners were appointed under the NSW Government Railways Act. Following the Vic example of 1883, the administration of railways was removed from direct political control to stifle charges of manipulation and patronage for political purposes. The Qld government railways were vested in railways commissioners on 6 November.

8 December J. T. Williams gave the first demonstration of a parachute in Australia, jumping out of a balloon over Sydney.



1887 *Students of the National Gallery School, Victoria. Founded in 1870, this was Australia's first art school. Its foundation director and master of painting was Eugène von Guérard, whose teaching methods were grounded in European aesthetics and largely consisted in copying works in the Gallery's collection. After George Folingsby succeeded him in 1882, students were encouraged to paint from nature en plein air. In the photograph are some of the earliest exponents of 'plein airism', associates of the Heidelberg School. Standing (left to right): Jones, Alexander Colquhoun, E. Phillips Fox, Frederick McCubbin. Seated (left to right): John Longstaff, Tudor St George Tucker, Julian Gibbs, Aby Altson, David Davies and F.M. Williams.*

LA TROBE LIBRARY

1889

9 January The NSW premier, Sir Henry Parkes, refused to answer questions in parliament about railway commissioner William Fehon, who was accused by J.H. Want of involvement in land and wool scandals. Parkes's arrogance shocked his own supporters, eight of whom crossed the floor to defeat the government. A minority government led by George Dibbs was sworn in on 17 January and parliament was dissolved for elections.

January At an intercolonial medical congress of Australasia held in Melbourne, the president, T.N. Fitzgerald, warned that as a result of poor sewerage and drainage the city was a major site of typhoid fever. During the year there were 558 deaths from typhoid in Melbourne.

February Leaders of the Australian Shearers' Union discussed increases in shearing rates at a joint meeting with the Pastoralists' Union at Wagga Wagga, but no agreement was reached.

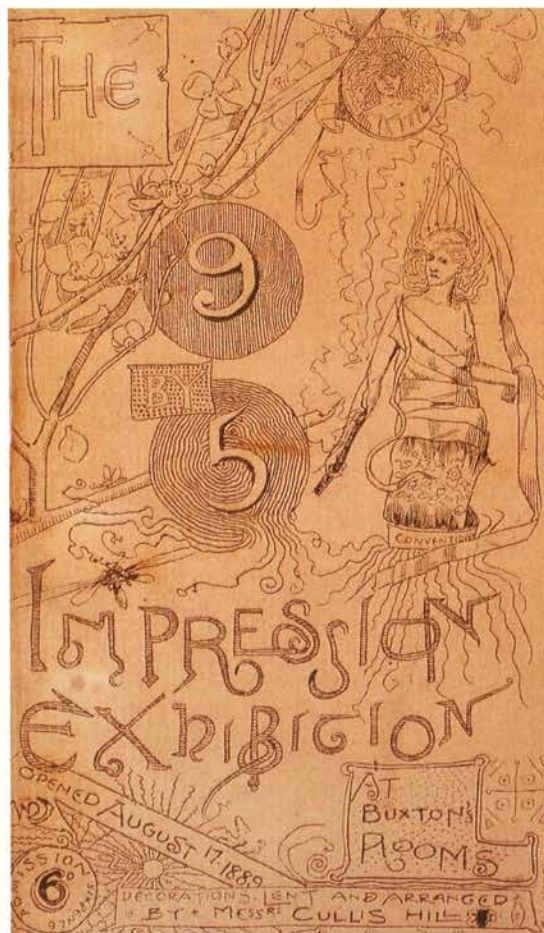
April The price of copper in London had fallen by half since the previous September, resulting in a wage reduction of 10 per cent at the Moonta and Wallaroo mines in SA.

4 May A conference of groups advocating a single tax was held in Sydney. Led by the Single Tax League formed in 1887 and now counting fifteen branches, the single-taxers espoused the theories of the American Henry George who advocated the abolition of all taxes except those on land, from which he believed all wealth flowed.

17 August The 9 x 5 Impression Exhibition opened at Buxton's Gallery, Melbourne. Oil paintings on 9 x 5 inch (23 x 12 centimetre) cigar-box lids were exhibited by Arthur Streeton, Tom Roberts, Charles Conder and Frederick McCubbin; they were condemned by leading art critics.

30 August The Brisbane Seamen's and Wharf Labourers' unions telegraphed £250 to the strike committee of the London dock workers just as the strike of 15 000 dockers was on the verge of collapse. This was immediately followed by a donation of £500 from Sydney wharf labourers and a promise of more to come. Contributions from all over Australia flowed into funds set up by unions and churches, and a number of prominent citizens also gave large donations. In all, Australians contributed close to £37 000 out of a total relief fund of £48 000, enabling the dockers to continue their strike, which they won in November.

August The first annual conference of the NSW Free Trade and Liberal Association was held in Sydney. About 140 representatives from 77 branches attended, including 21 members of parliament. It was decided to endorse candidates for all seats held by supporters of protectionism at the next election, and an appeals committee was established to settle disputes if requested by local branches of the party.



August 1889 Charles Conder's design for the catalogue cover of the 9 x 5 Impression Exhibition. The treatment of landscape painting as a record of momentary impressions, effects of colour and atmospheric conditions, was seen as a conscious break with academic conventions of painting by the artists whose work was exhibited in this show.

MITCHELL LIBRARY

24 October Speaking at a banquet held in Tenterfield, NSW, the premier Sir Henry Parkes called for an Australian parliament, consisting of a house of commons and a senate, to govern the whole continent in conjunction with the colonial governments.

7 November After several months of agitation for a fully unionised workforce in the mines at Broken Hill, the Barrier Branch of the Amalgamated Miners' Association held its first strike. The mine owners capitulated and on 15 November agreed to compulsory unionism, with the companies collecting union dues from their employees.

7 November The executive of the NSW Trades and Labour Council discussed the possibility of standing candidates at the next elections. At this time, the council had 53 unions affiliated to it, with a total membership of more than 35 000.

25 November The Vic parliament passed the Public Health Act, establishing a department of public health with a medical inspector to supervise sanitation.

November At a meeting of the Vic Employers' Union, proposals for the federation of all Australian employers' associations were made.

20 December The Premier Permanent Building Association of Melbourne, with public liabilities of £1414000, closed its doors. An investigation of its affairs showed that it had engaged heavily in land speculation and had overvalued its assets.

1890

1 January The University of Tasmania, the fourth in Australia, was established by an act of the Tas parliament. Students began attending lectures in 1893.

6-14 February Representatives of the six Australian colonies and of New Zealand met in Melbourne and called for a national convention to consider 'an adequate scheme for a Federal Constitution'.

7 February Dr Emma Constance Stone became the first registered woman doctor in Australia. In September 1896 she and eight other women doctors set up a committee to found a public hospital for women in Melbourne, whose first premises were in a Welsh church in Latrobe St. In 1899 the hospital moved to a larger building and became known as the Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital for Women and Children.

1 March The first issue of the *Worker*, the journal of the Australian Labour Federation, was published in Brisbane by the radical journalist and social reformer William Lane. It popularised the theories of Henry George, Edward Bellamy, Sidney Webb and other socialist thinkers of the time.

6 March Henry George, the American journalist and political economist, arrived in Sydney. George's book, *Progress and poverty* (1879), had been widely read in Australia, in England and in America. George advocated a graduated tax on land which would result in land ownership being unprofitable unless used to capacity. This 'single tax' was intended to replace all other taxation. George's concepts appealed to some free-traders and socialist reformers.

March Serious flooding occurred in Brisbane and in northern NSW and southwestern Australia.

13 July J.F. Connelly discovered gold in the Murchison district, north of Geraldton, WA. The Murchison became one of the most productive Australian goldfields.

1 August The first general council of the Australian Labour Federation began sitting in Brisbane, and subsequently drafted a parliamentary platform.

3 August *Truth*, a Sydney Sunday newspaper, was issued for the first time.

15 August A constitution for WA, conferring responsible government on the colony, received royal assent. It provided for a legislative council nominated

by the governor and a legislative assembly elected by male property owners.

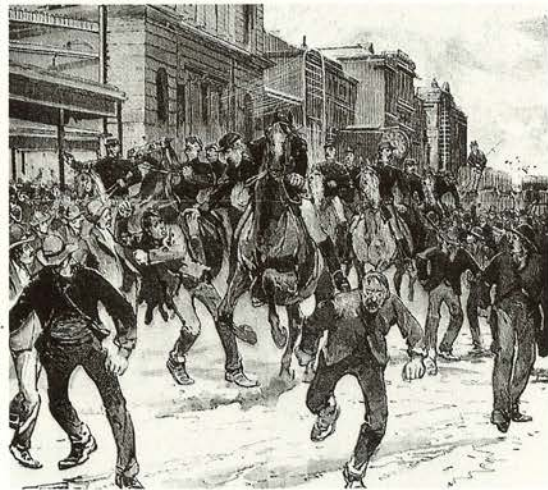
16 August A maritime strike began, in which some 50000 miners and transport and pastoral workers stopped work for periods of two weeks to two months. Unions in four colonies, NSW, Vic, Qld and SA, were involved. The issue was that of the 'closed shop' versus 'freedom of contract'. Earlier in the year the Australian Labour Federation in Qld had told the Pastoralists' Union that wool not shorn under union conditions would be declared 'black'. The pastoralists had yielded to union demands in May 1890, but had subsequently decided to resist. The strike was precipitated by marine officers walking off their ships as a protest against the loading of wool shorn by non-union labour. It brought many industries in eastern Australia to a halt, but was eventually defeated by the employment of non-union labour and by the power of the nationally organised Pastoralists' Union, which enlisted support from employers and, some considered, from government.

29 August In Melbourne 250 special constables were sworn in by the Vic government to cope with striking miners.

1 October The first issue of *The Australasian critic: a monthly review of literature, science and art* was published in Melbourne and Sydney.

2 October The franchise was extended to the NT (under the administration of SA) when eligible voters were permitted to elect two representatives to the house of assembly sitting in Adelaide.

22 December John Forrest became the first premier of WA under responsible government.



19 September 1890 Mounted police charge workers attempting to block wool being carted down George Street to Circular Quay, Sydney, by prominent employers and woolbrokers, after the trolley- and draymen joined the Maritime Strike. Engraving by an unknown artist, *Illustrated Australian News*, 1 October 1890.

NATIONAL LIBRARY

1891

6 January A shearers' strike began in Qld. The shearers refused to sign on when pastoralists tried to enforce the principle of freedom of contract. Special constables and soldiers were called in. On 30 May executive members of the Shearers' Union at Barcardine were arrested and sentenced to three years' imprisonment. The Pastoralists' Union secured non-union labour from the other colonies and succeeded in defeating the shearers. Later in the year, shearers' strikes occurred in NSW and Vic. In August a conference was held in Sydney between the Pastoralists' Union and the Amalgamated Shearers' Union, at which the Shearers' Union agreed to work alongside non-union labour.

7 January The entry of an organised Labor party into politics in Australia was marked by the selection of direct Labor candidates for the SA legislative council elections by the United Trades and Labour Council in Adelaide. A United Labor party was formed at this meeting. Three Labor candidates won seats in the 9 May elections, the first Labor party members elected to an Australian parliament.

26 February–7 March The Intercolonial Postal and Telegraphic Conference met in Sydney. It recommended uniformity of postage rates and regulations.

March The first labour electoral league in NSW was founded in the Sydney suburb of Balmain. It was followed in the same year by the formation of other electoral leagues in adjoining industrial suburbs. Members of the leagues were required to accept the political electoral platform drawn up by the parliamentary committee of the Trades and Labour Council. The final draft of this platform was completed on 6 April. Its sixteen planks included the eight-hour day as the maximum working day, elective magistrates, legislative recognition of the rights of the whole community to the land, support for federation of the Australasian colonies, and a demand that Chinese-made furniture be stamped to distinguish it from other furniture.

March–April The National Australasian Convention was held in Sydney. It comprised the Australian colonies and New Zealand and Sir Henry Parkes was appointed president. Under the leadership of the Qld premier, Sir Samuel Griffith, a committee drafted a 'Bill to constitute a Commonwealth of Australia', which was approved by the convention. It was then referred to the colonial parliaments, where it made little headway for six years.

5 April A census took place within each Australian colony. The total population was 3 233 281 (1 737 375 males and 1 495 906 females).

29 April The Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery was opened in Launceston.

30 April In Tas the last five-year-term parliament was dissolved. Three-year terms came into existence and remained until 1937, after which the parliament reverted to five-year terms. In 1972 a four-year parliamentary term was introduced.

April The seventh Intercolonial Trade Union Congress met at Ballarat and adopted a scheme to establish an Australian Federation of Labour. It failed, but the ideas of union amalgamation and co-operation which the congress had generated, persisted.

2 May A European was speared by Aborigines at Dora Dora Creek, near Albury. The subsequent man-hunt lasted nearly three years, until the two Aborigines involved were captured in Qld.

16 May 'Freedom on the wallaby', by Henry Lawson appeared in the *Worker*. The strong feeling engendered by the shearers' strike had inspired Lawson to write the verse.

17 June The Labor party first entered the NSW parliament when 35 members were elected to the legislative assembly. At about this time, the principle of majority rule inside the parliamentary party — called the caucus — was first mooted. Labor candidates were first successful in the legislative council elections in SA in May 1891 and in legislative assembly elections in Qld in 1892, Vic in 1892, SA in 1893, Tas in 1894, WA in 1901 and in the federal elections in 1901.

8 July The actress Sarah Bernhardt made her first Australian appearance at Her Majesty's Theatre, Sydney.

20 July The Female Employees' Society — later renamed the Female Employees' Union — was formed in NSW. It did not survive the economic depression, but a similar society in SA did.

31 July The WA Art Gallery was opened in Perth Town Hall.

5 September The Royal Navy's Australian Auxiliary Squadron of five cruisers and two torpedo gunboats arrived in Sydney Harbour. The *Sydney Morning Herald* declared that its arrival marked 'a distinct epoch in the onward march of Australian nationality'.

1 October The Australian colonies joined the Universal Postal Union.

8 October Somebody broke into Melbourne's Parliament House and stole the mace. It was never recovered, though persistent rumours suggested that it was on display in a local bawdy house.

19 October Sir Henry Parkes resigned as premier of NSW after his ministry lost the support of the Labor Electoral League in the legislative assembly. This was Parkes's last term as premier; he was succeeded by Sir George Dibbs.

19 October The *Hummer*, owned by the Amalgamated Shearers' Union, began weekly publication in Wagga Wagga, NSW.

1891 The collapse of the Bank of Van Diemen's Land in Hobart and of several speculative land and investment companies in Melbourne signalled the beginnings of a severe economic depression which reached a low point in 1895 and extended to the end of the decade. Only WA, soon to be rich in gold, escaped its worst effects.



25 August 1892 A shift boss attempting to 'scab it' is attacked by women supporting striking miners outside the offices of BHP at 8.15 am, when the Broken Hill mine owners reopened the mines with non-union labour. The magistrate Whittingdale Johnson immediately led police and mounted troopers armed with rifles and fixed bayonets into the crowd to protect the managers and strikebreakers. Engraving by an unknown artist, Illustrated Australian News, 1 September 1892.
NATIONAL LIBRARY

1892

January *The working man's paradise: an Australian labour novel* by the socialist William Lane (using the pseudonym of John Miller) was published in Brisbane.

19 February A government labour bureau opened in Sydney. During the first six months of its existence nearly 14 000 people registered.

31 March The NSW Trade Disputes Conciliation and Arbitration Act was passed. It proved ineffective as it did not provide means to compel parties to participate in the conciliation process.

31 March The Children Protection Act, aimed at ending 'baby farming', was passed in NSW. The practice of contractors being employed to find homes for unwanted children had led to the murder of babies. SA passed a similar act in 1879.

17 June Fire destroyed Sydney's Theatre Royal, built on the same site as the Prince of Wales Theatre, which had burned down in October 1860.

4 July Broken Hill miners went on strike following a decision by the mine owners to reverse a wages agreement of 1889 and substitute piecework rates for time rates. Rioting occurred when the owners brought in non-union labour. Police reinforcements were called in from Sydney via Adelaide and strike leaders were arrested. The strike ended on 6 November, the unionists being defeated by non-union labour. Many strikers were destitute.

9 August The Elections Act of 1892 became law in Qld. This pioneered the 'preferential' voting system later adopted by the federal parliament in 1918 and by

Tas in 1897, WA in 1907, Vic in 1911, NSW in 1926 and SA in 1929.

13–15 August A postal and telegraph conference was held in Melbourne, at which the colonies of NSW, SA and Vic were represented.

17 September Arthur Bayley and William Ford, who had discovered gold near the present town of Coolgardie, registered their claim. This marked the beginning of the Eastern Goldfields rushes in WA and the subsequent boom period in that colony.

27 October The Queensland constitution bill, which would have resulted in the partition of Qld into two or three provinces, was defeated in the legislative council. For the time being, this put an end to the separatist movements which had persisted in the colony since the 1880s.

November Work started on the inner harbour of the port of Fremantle; it was completed in 1897.

1893

28 January The Federal Bank of Australia in Melbourne ran out of cash and closed.

30 January Between this date and 18 February three cyclones hit southeast Qld and the far north of NSW. There was extensive flooding between Rockhampton and Grafton and as far inland as Toowoomba. In Brisbane three ships were washed into the botanic gardens; eleven lives were lost and there was considerable damage to property.

8 March The first public telephone in NSW was installed at the GPO in Sydney.

4 April The Commercial Bank of Australia, one of the country's largest, suspended operations. Twelve other banks followed in quick succession as depositors struggled to retrieve their savings. Some of them reopened, calling up state capital, and compulsorily converting many deposits into shares. Thousands of small investors were much distressed.

30 April The Vic cabinet met on Sunday and decided to close all banks for the following week in an attempt to meet the financial crisis, which had a more dramatic effect in Melbourne than in any other capital city. Only three banks remained open.

13 June The Labour Settlements Act, which allowed co-operative settlement on crown land, was passed in NSW. Similar acts were passed in the same year in Vic on 31 August and in Qld on 13 October. The Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act in NSW abolished plural voting. Acts to the same effect were passed in Vic in 1899, Tas in 1901, Qld in 1905 and WA in 1907. SA's Constitution Act of 1856 did not provide for plural voting, and the federal constitution prohibited the practice.

14 June Patrick Hannan and two others discovered gold at Kalgoorlie. Along with other gold discoveries it helped change the social and economic structure of WA.