



February 1893 Brisbane was flooded during the disastrous record floods of Queensland's southern coastal rivers. On 6 February the lower part of south Brisbane was completely submerged.

COURIER-MAIL, BRISBANE

16 July William Lane left with a party of 220 on board the *Royal Tar* to set up a socialist utopia, New Australia, in Paraguay. It failed. In 1894 Lane led a disaffected group to form a second colony, called Cosme, 70 kilometres away. The co-operative association in the original colony yielded to private ownership in 1897; the Cosme association was wound up in 1909.

July The formation of an Australasian federation league in Sydney signalled a revival of interest in the federation movement. Federal leagues were forming in a number of country towns. In Vic the Australian Natives' Association was active in supporting the idea of federation. On 31 July and 1 August a conference of federal leagues and ANA branches was held at Corowa, a town on the border of NSW and Vic. At this meeting Dr John Quick, a Vic solicitor and politician, proposed the adoption of 'a Bill to establish a federal constitution for Australia' which should then be put to the people of each colony in referendums, rather than to the colonial parliaments. Quick hoped that this approach would avoid the fate of the 1891 draft bill, which was still languishing in the colonial parliaments.

9 September *Turquoise*, the first classical ballet to be choreographed in Australia, opened at the Princess Theatre, Melbourne.

13 October The WA parliament approved amendments to the Chinese Immigration Restriction Act of 1889, prohibiting Chinese labour in the northern districts of the colony.

1894

15 January Mrs Frances Knorr was hanged in Melbourne for murdering unwanted babies. Unmarried mothers sold their babies to Mrs Knorr on the understanding that she would act as a foster parent. A similar business was uncovered in Sydney in 1892. John Makin and his wife Sara were found to have murdered twelve babies, which they had buried in the yards of houses they had occupied. John Makin was hanged and his wife served fourteen years in gaol.

15 January The Qld Agricultural Lands Purchase Act provided for large estates to be resumed and subdivided for closer settlement. Closer settlement schemes were gradually adopted throughout Australia.

3 May An exploration party led by the surveyor C. A. Winnecke and funded by the retired politician W. A. Horn left Adelaide to investigate the country between Oodnadatta and the MacDonnell Ranges. The party, accompanied by Melbourne University's biology professor, Baldwin Spencer, collected information on amphibians, mammals and crustaceans. They also studied the Aborigines of the region. The expedition arrived back on 9 August.

5 May Women's College, which was to provide accommodation for female students attending the University of Sydney, was opened.

May The Australian Workers' Union was formed as a result of the amalgamation of the Amalgamated Workers' Union of Qld, the Australasian Shearers' Union and the General Labourers' Union of Australia.

28 June–9 July A colonial conference was held at Ottawa dealing mostly with matters relating to communications. It resolved that a telegraph cable should be laid between Canada and Australia.

July–September Another shearers' strike in Qld was broken by non-union labour. It was the last of the large-scale shearers' strikes of the early 1890s.

17 July In NSW, the Free Trade Party led by George Reid won an election on the promise that he would balance the budget by directly taxing land and incomes — a policy that also appealed to the Labor party. In August Reid announced his support for a second federal convention.

25 September The Peace Preservation Act became law in Qld. Under this act the government acquired exceptional power to deal with strikers. The Labor party vigorously opposed the passage of the bill through the legislative assembly.

September After two prolonged trials, David Syme, proprietor of the *Age*, won a libel case brought against him by a Vic commissioner of railways, Richard Speight. The *Age* had accused Speight of extravagance and incompetence in building and managing railways.

22 October Martha Needle was hanged in Melbourne for murdering members of her own family in order to claim insurance benefits.

31 October A head-on collision between two trains at Redfern, Sydney, claimed twelve lives.

12 November With the aid of four box kites, Lawrence Hargrave, an aeronautical pioneer and explorer, ascended five metres at Stanwell Park, NSW.

21 December An Act to Amend the Constitution enabled women in SA to vote and to stand for both houses of parliament on the same terms as men. SA was thus the first Australian colony to extend the

franchise to women. WA followed in 1899, NSW in 1902, Tas in 1903, Qld in 1905 and Vic in 1909. Other colonies allowed women to stand for parliament as follows: Qld in 1915, NSW in 1918, WA in 1920, Tas in 1921 and Vic in 1923. The federal parliament allowed women to vote and to stand for election in 1902.

21 December The SA parliament passed an Act to Facilitate the Settlement of Industrial Disputes. This established a statutory authority which was the model for all later arbitration acts in Australia.

1894 *Seven little Australians* by Ethel Turner was published.

1894 Henry Lawson's first book, *Short stories in prose and verse* was issued by his mother, Louisa Lawson, at the office of her magazine, *Dawn*.

1894 The Australian colonies decided to abolish the coexistence of differing local times. They fixed common time zones, 150° longitude east of Greenwich for the eastern colonies, 135° for SA and 120° for WA. Previously, many towns had used as many as three different local times: solar time, longitude time and railway timetable time.

1895

29 January At a meeting of the six colonial premiers in Hobart it was agreed to hold a second national federation convention, whose recommendations would be put to the people of each colony.

28 February The Music School, the forerunner of the Conservatorium of Music, was opened at the University of Melbourne.

28 March The Australian Colonies Customs Duties Act (an imperial statute) became law. It repealed acts that restricted the powers of the Australian colonial legislatures to impose customs duties.



16 July 1893 Members of William Lane's New Australia Association on board the *Royal Tar* prior to their departure for Paraguay to found a settlement based on communal ownership and control of the means of production. *Sydney Mail*, 22 July 1893.

MITCHELL LIBRARY

29 March The Qld Art Gallery was opened by the governor of Qld in the old town hall building in Queen Street, Brisbane.

6 April The *Bulletin* published the first in a series of sketches by Steele Rudd (Arthur Hoey Davis) which appeared four years later as the book *On our selection*.

6 April The folk song 'Waltzing Matilda' was first sung in public, at the North Gregory Hotel in Winton, central Qld. There is evidence to suggest that the poet A.B. ('Banjo') Paterson had written the words during the previous January, fitting them to the Scottish tune 'Craigielea'.

27 July The sculptor Theodora Esther Cowan returned to Sydney after studying in Italy and exhibiting her work in London. Her reputation in Australia was increased by her controversial bust of Sir Henry Parkes. She later produced busts of F.E. du Faur, E.L. Montefiore and Edmund Barton.

31 July The Art Gallery of WA was officially opened as part of the Perth Museum.

8 August The steamship *Catterthun*, on a voyage from Sydney to China, struck a rock off Seal Rocks and sank with the loss of 55 lives.

1895 Middle-class reformers formed the first Kindergarten Union in NSW. Australia's first 'free' kindergarten opened in Woolloomooloo, Sydney, in May 1896. Kindergarten Unions were established in most other states between 1905 and 1912.

1895 A severe drought began which covered much of the continent and hampered economic recovery. It was most severe in 1902 and lasted until 1904.

1895 A.B. ('Banjo') Paterson's *The man from Snowy River and other verses* was published by the Sydney booksellers Angus & Robertson. Ten thousand copies were sold in the first year of publication.

1895 The Sydney Society of Artists was formed. Tom Roberts was its first president.

1896

26–27 January The cyclone Sigma struck Qld from Townsville to Brisbane. In Townsville eighteen people were killed.

13 February In Brisbane the ferry *Pearl* struck the anchor chains of the yacht *Lucinda*. At least 28 people were killed in the accident.

6–15 April The first modern Olympic Games were held at Athens. The sole Australian competitor, E.H. Flack from Vic, won the men's 800 metres and 1500 metres foot races.

25 April Women voted for the first time in Australia at an election for the house of assembly in SA.

27 April Sir Henry Parkes died of heart failure at his home in Sydney at the age of 80. He was the dominant figure of nineteenth-century Australian politics.

April–July Coalminers in the Newcastle district, NSW, went on strike for eleven weeks in an

unsuccessful attempt to prevent employers from reducing wages.

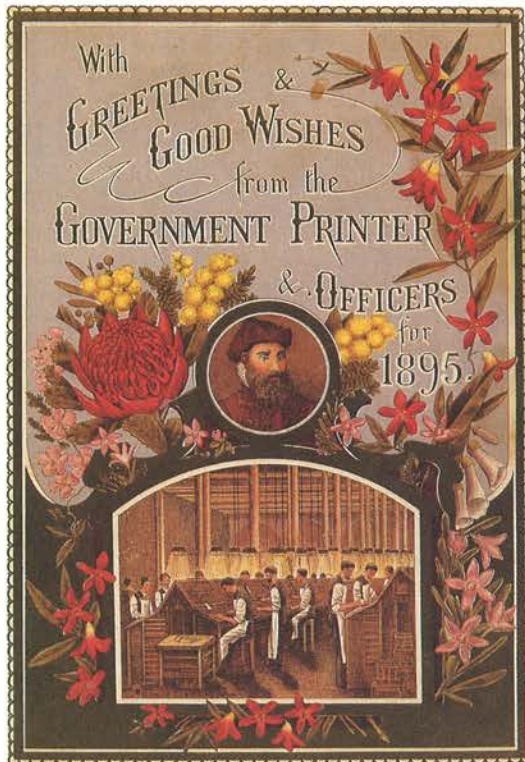
May Arthur Holroyd, who assayed gold at his shop in Kalgoorlie, proved that the rare telluride of gold occurred among gold samples sent from the local mines.

13 June An expedition under the leadership of L.A. Wells set out from Mullewa, east of Geraldton, WA, to explore unknown areas of central Australia. A wealthy Englishman, Albert F. Calvert, who had already written the first volume of his work *The exploration of Australia*, paid the expedition's expenses.

28 July In response to an active anti-sweated-labour movement, the Factories and Shops Act in Vic was passed authorising the appointment of special boards to fix wages and piece rates. In NSW a Factories and Shops Act became law on 16 November and Qld passed a similar act on 21 December.

22 August Carl Hertz, an American magician, screened the first moving pictures in Australia as part of a variety program at Harry Rickard's Opera House, Melbourne.

29 August The 'red page' of the *Bulletin* was first published, edited by A.G. Stephens. It included literary commentary and original literary contributions.



1895 A New Year greeting card, printed and distributed by the NSW Government Printing Office under the auspices of Charles Potter. Coloured engraving, 1894.

ANU ARCHIVES OF BUSINESS AND LABOUR

17 September In NSW the report of the Select Committee on Old Age Pensions of the legislative assembly recommended a system of old age and invalid pensions paid out of consolidated revenue. The scheme was implemented in 1901.

September Joseph McMahon was the first man to screen a film in Sydney. In the same month Marius Sestier, an employee of the French film pioneers Lumière Brothers, brought the first motion picture camera to Australia. On 28 September Sestier and the photographer Walter Barnett opened Australia's first cinema in Pitt St, Sydney. Sestier shot the earliest Australian films, of which the most notable was *Passengers alighting from ferry Brighton to Manly*.

17–21 November A 'people's convention' met at Bathurst to press for the consideration of an Australian federation.

1896 Henry Lawson's collection of short stories *While the billy boils* was published.

1897

6–7 January A severe cyclone hit Palmerston (now Darwin). Many lives were lost at sea, and trees were levelled for 160 kilometres southeast and 80 kilometres south of town. During the following month another cyclone caused damage at Mackay, Qld.

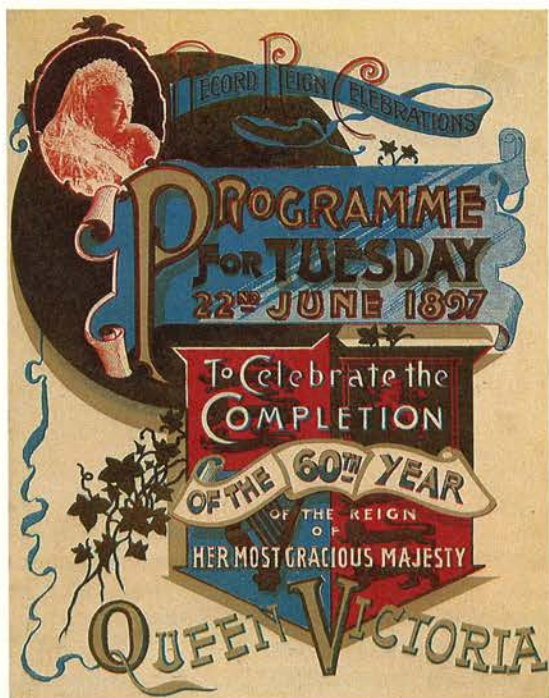
20 January The first Australian election under the system of proportional representation took place in Tas. Abandoned in 1901, it was permanently reintroduced in 1907. In 1947 a similar system was adopted for the federal Senate.

February The Australasian Horseless Carriage Syndicate of Melbourne exhibited its motor buggy at the cycle show in the Exhibition Building. It was driven by a horizontal engine using kerosene and its speed exceeded 10 miles (16 kilometres) per hour.

22 March–23 April The first session of the second federal convention met at Adelaide. All Australian colonies except Qld were represented. Further meetings of the convention were held in Sydney (2–24 September 1897) and Melbourne (20 January–16 March 1898). A bill to constitute a commonwealth of Australia, similar to that drafted in 1891, was framed and adopted for submission to a popular referendum in the colonies represented. The participating colonies would benefit from intercolonial free trade, and common defence and customs policies, but would have to surrender certain powers to a national government in the common interest. A federal parliament would have a house of representatives representing the people and a senate representing the states, formerly colonies.

22 June Like British colonies elsewhere, the Australian colonies congratulated Queen Victoria on the sixtieth anniversary of her accession to the throne.

2 October The first edition of the labour journal *Tocsin* appeared.



22 June 1897 Illuminated cover for the program of events to celebrate Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee, the sixtieth anniversary of her accession to the throne. The occasion was celebrated enthusiastically throughout Australia, as it was in British colonies throughout the world. By an unknown artist.

ANU ARCHIVES OF BUSINESS AND LABOUR

6 December The Employer's Liability Act became law in NSW, providing for compensation for personal injury.

9 December Sir Thomas McIlwraith, ex-premier of Qld, resigned from the ministry following an inquiry into the affairs of the National Bank, to which he was alleged to owe more than £250 000.

15 December In Qld the Aborigines' Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act provided that Aborigines and 'half-castes' should be confined to reserves unless they were lawfully employed or married to white men. Protectors were to be appointed, with extensive powers to enforce 'discipline and good order'. The act became a model for legislation in SA and the NT and the basis for further Qld Aboriginal legislation. Twentieth-century amendments increased its rigidity and influenced legislation in both WA and SA.

December During a three-day bushfire in Tas, six people and hundreds of animals were killed and buildings were destroyed as the fire spread south from Mt Wellington.

1897 Walter Withers won the inaugural Wynne Prize awarded annually by the trustees of the Art Gallery of NSW for a landscape in oils or a sculpture, for his painting *The storm*.

1898

21 March An explosion of gas and coal dust at Dudley colliery near Newcastle, NSW, caused the loss of fifteen lives. Subsequently the use of safety lamps was enforced and rescue stations were established with telephone communication with underground miners.

6 May The *Maitland*, a vessel of about 900 tonnes, was wrecked near Broken Bay, NSW, with a loss of 27 lives. Thirty-six people survived.

29 May The foundation stone of the first Christian Orthodox church in Australia was laid in the Sydney suburb of Surry Hills. It served the Greek and Lebanese communities.

3-4 June Referendums to approve the draft bill for a federal constitution were held in NSW, Vic, SA, and Tas. Although passed in three colonies by large majorities, in NSW the bill did not receive the majority required by the Enabling Act. The proposal was therefore decreed to be rejected. Qld and WA did not hold referendums.

July Sydney's Queen Victoria Market, one of the city's largest buildings, opened in George Street.

October The first edition of the *Barrier Truth* appeared in Broken Hill. It was printed in Adelaide because Broken Hill printers refused to handle it. It became the *Barrier Daily Truth* on 3 November 1908 and was the first English-language union-owned daily.

1898 The Yarra Sculptors' Society, the first society of sculptors in Australia, was formed in Melbourne.

1898 William Farrer, who led in the breeding of wheat strains suitable for Australian conditions, was appointed 'wheat experimentalist' in the NSW Department of Agriculture.

1898 An exhibition of Australian art was held at the Grafton Galleries, London. It included 371 works by members of the Heidelberg circle of painters and by those associated with Julian Ashton at the Society of Artists, Sydney.

1899

14 January At Kalgoorlie Dr L. Dhiel made public his bromo-cyanide process for hastening the recovery of gold from telluride ores.

28 January A conference of premiers met in Melbourne to consider amendments proposed by NSW to the draft bill for a federal constitution. The government of WA, where a referendum had not yet been held, requested certain concessions and Qld was represented for the first time. The premiers agreed on several amendments, among them to place the federal capital in NSW at least 100 miles (160 kilometres) from Sydney.

January The first issue of the *Bookfellow*, edited by A.G. Stephens, appeared in Sydney.



1 December 1899 Andrew Dawson (centre) led the first labor government in the world after being sworn in at Brisbane's Government House. The minority government lasted only six days, having just enough time to inspect official files, but advanced the notion that the Labor party was a respectable political force.

OXLEY LIBRARY

4–5 March Cyclone Mahina destroyed 55 vessels of a pearling fleet in Bathurst Bay, Qld. More than 300 people were drowned.

22 April A Conciliation and Arbitration Act in NSW became law. It provided for the appointment of an independent conciliator or a board of conciliation to settle industrial disputes.

24 April The *Loch Sloy* was wrecked off Kangaroo Island, SA, on a voyage from Glasgow to Adelaide. Thirty lives were lost.

May–September A second round of referendums on the federal constitution took place. Five colonies supported the draft bill to constitute a commonwealth of Australia, though the majority in favour was not great in Qld and NSW. WA also voted reluctantly in favour in July 1900.

25 August In Qld the Pearl-Shell and Bêche-de-Mer Fishery Acts Amendments Act became law. It restricted boat ownership to 'natural-born British subjects' and marked the start of a campaign to prevent Asians from gaining control of the pearling and bêche-de-mer industries.

12 September The Tivoli Theatre, Sydney, was destroyed by fire and the Arcadia Hotel was slightly damaged.

24 September Electric tramways were opened in Perth by a private company.

28 October The first NSW contingent embarked on the SS *Kent* at Sydney for service in the Boer War. On the same date Vic and Tas contingents left on the SS *Medic*. On 31 October the first SA contingent left

from Adelaide; a Qld contingent departed on 1 November and a WA contingent on 7 November.

1 December The first Labor party government was formed in Qld under the premiership of Andrew Dawson. Although short-lived, it was the first labour government in the world.

8 December A permanent electric service began on the main Sydney tramway system.

15 December A bushfire in WA destroyed hundreds of acres of wheat and more than 300 sheep. On 24 December extensive bushfires broke out in Vic. There was also a fierce fire in Tas, which started on 26 December.

December The limelight department of the Salvation Army completed thirteen segments of film on the life and death of Christ, titled *The passion films*.

1900

3 January A conference in Kalgoorlie, WA, discussed the separation of the goldfield districts from the remainder of the colony. On 17 March a petition for separation was presented to the governor from the Eastern Goldfields Reform League.

15 January Bubonic plague was reported in Adelaide. Four days later the first case was detected in Sydney. The epidemic was one of a series over the next ten years, killing 458 in 1900 and 1212 all told.

25 January An intercolonial labour conference assembled at Trades Hall, Sydney, to discuss a federal political platform.

15 March A committee of five Australian delegates met the British secretary of state for the colonies and officials of the Colonial Office to press for the passage of the bill to constitute a commonwealth of Australia.

May The first soldiers returned to Australia from the Boer War.

5 July Severe rain, snow and storms in NSW caused dislocation of rail and telegraphic services, damage to buildings in Sydney and flooding in country districts.

9 July The Act to Constitute the Commonwealth of Australia became law after certain amendments had been made to the bill by the British parliament, the most important being the retention of appeals from Australian courts to the Privy Council in London.

13 July Queen Victoria approved the appointment of the Earl of Hopetoun, formerly governor of Vic, as the first governor-general of the Commonwealth of Australia.

6 August The SA gunboat *Protector* left Port Adelaide for China to support the British in the Boxer Rebellion. A naval contingent of 451 volunteers sailed from Sydney in the *Salamis*, returning on 25 April 1901.

12 September An intercolonial conference to discuss regulations dealing with fruit and vegetable pests opened at the lands department, Melbourne.

17 September Queen Victoria signed the proclamation announcing that the Federation of Australia would be inaugurated on 1 January 1901.

10 October The first conference of the Library Association of Australasia opened in Adelaide.

15 November–14 December The last intercolonial postal conference was held in Sydney, to draft a commonwealth consolidating post and telegraph bill to unify regulations and rates for postage, telegraph and telephone services.

5 December The Early Closing Act became law in SA and the Early Closing (Amendment) Act became law in NSW. These acts stipulated that one half-day holiday a week should be provided for shop workers.

16 December There were extensive outbreaks of bushfires in the Benalla and Wangaratta areas of Vic.

19 December Lord Hopetoun commissioned the NSW premier, William Lyne, to form the first federal ministry, but Lyne was unable to gain sufficient support, and advised the governor-general to commission Edmund Barton.

1900 The NSW Kindergarten Union established Australia's first kindergarten teachers' college. Colleges were subsequently established in Adelaide in 1907, Brisbane in 1911, Perth in 1912 and Melbourne in 1916.

1900 The Perth Technical School was opened.

1900 Three Aborigines, the brothers Jimmy and Joe Governor and Jackie Underwood, killed nine people in NSW during the year. Joe Governor was later shot, and Jimmy and Underwood were hanged.

1900 The first section of the present building of the Art Gallery of SA was erected as a result of a bequest of £25 000 from Sir Thomas Elder. The gallery had been founded in 1879. Until 1967 it was known as the National Gallery of SA.

1900 In Brisbane the *Truth* was first printed; in October 1960 it became the *Sunday Sun*.

1900 Two books of Henry Lawson's short stories — *On the track* and *Over the sliprails* — and his collection *Verses, popular and humorous* were published.

1900 Two Australians won medals at the Olympic Games in Paris. S. Rowley won bronze medals for the 60-metre, 100-metre and 200-metre men's athletics. F.C.V. Lane won a gold medal for the 200-metre men's freestyle swimming.

1900 The streets of Adelaide were first lit with electric light.

1900 The Adelaide Conservatorium of Music was opened.

1901



1900 Professional rat catchers were employed by the New South Wales government in an attempt to curb the outbreak of bubonic plague in the Rocks area of Sydney. Residents were forcibly moved from their decrepit rented houses while the premises were cleansed.

MITCHELL LIBRARY

1 January The Commonwealth of Australia came into being at an inaugural ceremony in Centennial Park, Sydney, on the first day of the twentieth century, when the first governor-general, the Earl of Hopetoun, took the oath of office. He swore in the first federal ministry under the prime ministership of Edmund Barton.

1 March The federal minister of Defence took over all state (formerly colonial) forces. Maj-Gen Sir Edward Hutton was commanding officer.

29–30 March The first elections for the federal parliament were held. No party won a majority in the House of Representatives or the Senate, but the Labor members generally supported Edmund Barton and his Protectionist ministry. Free-traders constituted the official opposition. No single issue had dominated the election.

31 March A census was conducted by the six state governments on a fairly uniform pattern. The population of the commonwealth was 3 773 801, 1 976 992 men and 1 788 347 women.

31 March Frederick Slade Drake-Brockman, a WA surveyor, sailed from Fremantle to explore the largely unknown Kimberley region of WA. Leaving Wyndham on 9 May, his party made for the King Leopold Ranges, carrying out a methodical exploration of the Kimberley area before returning to Wyndham on 26 November.

30 April The laying of a telegraph cable from SA to the Cape of Good Hope began.

9 May The first parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia was opened by the Duke of Cornwall and York (later King George V).

May The newly elected Labor members of the federal parliament (fourteen in the House of Representatives and eight in the Senate) met informally to form a federal parliamentary Labor party.

30 August The final report of the Royal Commission on Technical Education (the Fink report) was tabled in the Vic parliament. Among other educational reforms it referred to the urgent need in Vic for an extension of compulsory schooling and the

establishment of a technical branch within the Department of Public Instruction.

3 September In the Exhibition Building, Melbourne, the Countess of Hopetoun opened an exhibition of 32 823 designs for an Australian flag. The winning design, which differed only slightly from the present flag, was independently submitted by five competitors; it was approved by King Edward VII in 1903. The flag was not formally adopted by the Australian government until 1953.

1 December The Commonwealth Post and Telegraph Act became law, superseding the various state post and telegraph acts. But the rates and charges levied in each state remained in force until the Post and Telegraph Rates Act became effective on 1 November 1902.

10 December In NSW the Industrial and Arbitration Act became law. It provided for the constitution of an arbitration tribunal to be presided over by a judge of the supreme court.

17 December A federal Pacific Island Labourers Act became law. Only a limited number of import licences were to be issued in 1902–03, no more were to be introduced after 1904, and all Pacific Islanders still in Australia after December 1906 were to be deported. The Pacific Islanders, known as 'kanakas', had made a



6 May 1901 In Swanston Street, Melburnians greet the Duke and Duchess of York as they pass under the King's arch. Three days later the Duke opened the first federal parliament in Melbourne, its temporary home.

NATIONAL LIBRARY

vital contribution to the economic development of Qld, particularly in the sugar industry.

23 December A federal Immigration Restriction Act became law. It allowed the government to restrict potential settlers to Australia by requiring unwanted persons to take a dictation test of 50 words in a European language at the discretion of the immigration official. They would be denied entry if they failed the test. This act was the legislative embodiment of what was loosely known as 'the White Australia policy'.

1901 *Joe Wilson and his mates* by Henry Lawson, *My brilliant career* by Miles Franklin, and the 'Bulletin' story book edited by A.G. Stephens, were published.

1902

19 February The first battalion of a federal contingent left for the Boer War.

5 May A federal act established the commonwealth public service.

1 June The Boer War ended. A total of 16314 Australians had served in South Africa, of whom 1400 had died. Cities and towns across the nation erected memorials to commemorate the dead.

12 June A federal Franchise Act became law, establishing a uniform federal franchise, and extending the franchise to women.

June–August At an imperial conference Sir Edmund Barton, the prime minister, agreed that Australia should pay £200 000 towards the maintenance of the British squadron in Australia, and that an Australian branch of the Royal Naval Reserve should be established. Other items discussed included the desirability of preferential trade within the empire, shipping subsidies, the metric system and ocean cables.

21 July The foundation stone of the new houses of parliament in Harvest Terrace, Perth was laid by the governor of WA, Adm Sir Frederick George Denham Bedford. The first part of the building was opened on 28 July 1904.

31 July An explosion at Mt Kembla coalmine, NSW, killed 94 miners when coal gas was ignited by a miner's flare light. Two rescue workers subsequently died. It was the worst disaster in Australia's mining history.

1 August *New idea*, a monthly women's magazine, was first published in Melbourne. It is now published weekly.

9 August Celebrations were held throughout Australia to mark the coronation of Edward VII.

14 September The soprano Nellie Melba, who had left Australia in 1886, returned to give a series of concerts which were enthusiastically received. From 1909 onwards she sang regularly in Australia.

8 October A federal Excise Tariff Act came into operation retrospectively. It included an excise duty



1902

ANU ARCHIVES OF BUSINESS AND LABOUR

(tax) on sugar but allowed a rebate in the case of sugar cane produced by white labour. The Customs Tariff Act, which came into operation at the same time, placed a duty on imported sugar to encourage local production, and provided for free trade between the states, with the temporary exception of WA. In WA the vote for federation had been won only by a small majority because it was feared that WA would be swamped by the eastern states.

3 November The Pacific cable between Australia and Canada was officially opened by the commonwealth postmaster-general. It was part of a scheme initiated at a conference in July 1898 for the laying of an 'all red' route — a route that did not touch any area outside the British empire — between Australia and Britain.

9 December The interstate commission on the River Murray, representing NSW, Vic and SA, reported on irrigation and the navigation of the river and its tributaries.

1902 The first interstate trunk telephone line was opened between Mt Gambier, SA, and Nelson, Vic.

1902 Ada Emily Evans, the first woman law graduate in Australia, took her degree at the University of Sydney. Under the NSW Legal Practitioners Act 1897 the supreme court excluded her from practice. She was admitted to the NSW bar on 12 May 1921 after the Women's Legal Status Act had been passed in 1918.

1902 *Bush studies* by Barbara Baynton and *Children of the bush* by Henry Lawson were published.

1903

22 January The Coolgardie Water Supply scheme was opened. The scheme involved pumping water from Mundaring (near Perth) to the Eastern Goldfields — a distance of 560 kilometres. On 10 March 1902, the engineer of the scheme, Charles Yelverton O'Connor, had shot himself at Fremantle, apparently as a result of the criticism directed at him over the construction of the pipeline. His suicide note included instructions for the completion of the Mundaring weir.

9 March The cyclone Leonta caused damage of an estimated £250 000 to Townsville, and ten people were killed.

8–15 May A strike of railway engine-drivers and firemen brought the Vic railway system to a halt. The strike finally collapsed after the Vic parliament considered a strikes suppression bill.

25 August A federal Judiciary Act established the High Court of Australia. The first three judges appointed were all former politicians. The chief justice was Sir Samuel Griffith, former premier of Qld. The other two justices were former prime minister Sir Edmund Barton and former senator Richard Edward O'Connor. All three judges had played a prominent part in the federation movement and were expected to use the knowledge and experience so gained when interpreting the provisions of the commonwealth constitution.

28 August A federal Naval Agreement Act became law. It embodied the principles of the agreement reached between Australia and the imperial government at the colonial conference in June–August 1902.

August The Federal Council of the Chamber of Manufactures was established, mainly to try to influence the federal government to increase tariffs, thus protecting local manufacturers.

24 September Alfred Deakin became Australia's second prime minister when Barton resigned to join the high court. Deakin had been attorney-general in the first ministry.

September Ada Jemima Crossley, an Australian singer who had become celebrated abroad, arrived to tour Australia. She was accompanied on her tour by the young Australian pianist Percy Grainger.

3 October The *Brisbane Daily Mail* was first published.

8 October Following the recommendation of a royal commission about the site for a federal capital, the House of Representatives chose a location near Tumut, NSW. However, on 15 October the Senate disagreed, favouring Bombala, NSW.

16 December At the second federal election Deakin retained office with the support of Labor members. Women in Tas and the eastern states voted for the first time in a federal election.

THE LABOUR TICKET.



THE RIVALS—Trades Hall v. Employers' Federation.

1903 At the second federal election, held on 16 December 1903, women voted in a federal election for the first time. Claude Marquet, a well-known illustrator, clearly sympathised with the labour cause. He later became the chief cartoonist on the *Australian Worker*.

NATIONAL LIBRARY

1903 Joseph Furphy's *Such is life, being certain extracts from the diary of Tom Collins* was published.

1903 Vic became the first state to admit women to the practice of law. Other states followed: Tas in 1904, Qld in 1905, SA 1911, NSW 1918, and WA 1923.

1904

8 January Alfred Felton, businessman and pastoralist, died in Melbourne, leaving an estate valued at more than £500 000. The income generated by more than £380 000 of the estate was left to the state of Vic, half for recognised charities and half to its National Gallery to buy works of art to 'improve the level of public taste'.

22 April The Deakin government resigned, having lost Labor's support when it refused Labor's amendment to the conciliation and arbitration bill which would have extended the power of the federal arbitration court to cover state public servants.

27 April J.C. Watson became prime minister at the head of the first federal Labor government. The ministry resigned on 15 August when defeated on an arbitration bill.

21 July The P & O passenger steamship *Australia* was wrecked while entering Port Phillip heads. No lives were lost. The fact that the ship had run aground because of the pilot's ill-health led to stringent physical tests for Port Phillip pilots.

18 August The Free Trade leader George Reid formed a coalition ministry in federal parliament with Protectionist leader Allan McLean.

3 September The first Australian open golf title was won by Michael Scott at Kensington, Sydney.

27 September The Royal Commission on the Decline of the Birth-rate and on the Mortality of Infants in NSW reported. It referred to the waning birth rate of NSW as a 'grave disorder sapping the vitals of a new people, dispelling its hopes, blighting its prospects, and threatening its continuance'.

15 December The Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act became law. It established the commonwealth conciliation and arbitration court.

December 1903–December 1904 In NSW a royal commission, appointed in 1902, presented reports on primary, secondary, technical and other education. Conferences were held in January and April 1904 to consider the reports' recommendations. In 1904 a revised primary school syllabus was adopted.

1904 The first Australian Rhodes scholars were chosen. Only males with literary and scholastic attainments and 'a fondness for and success in manly outdoor sports' were eligible.

1904 *The northern tribes of central Australia*, by W.B. Spencer and F.J. Gillen was published.

1905

1 July Charles Cozens Spencer organised a season of films at Sydney's Lyceum Hall. He was soon commissioning films shot locally. During the year Millard Johnson and William Gibson entered the film business in Melbourne.

4 July Alfred Deakin became prime minister for the second time; he held office until 12 November 1908.

September Herbert Hoover, later president of the United States, formed the Zinc Corporation to extract zinc from millions of tonnes of tailings he had bought at Broken Hill. The corporation later became Conzinc Riotinto of Australia Ltd.

18 October The Wireless Telegraphy Act gave the postmaster general authority over wireless telegraphy.

November A Melbourne-to-Sydney reliability competition for motor cars was held.

23 December In WA an Aborigines Act became law, extending control over Aboriginal reserves and providing increased powers to the chief protector and local protectors. The effect of the act was to tighten control over many aspects of Aboriginal life.

1906

14 February C.J. Dennis and A.E. Martin published a satirical magazine, the *Gadfly*, in Adelaide. Although the magazine had a short life, Dennis went on to establish himself as one of Australia's most popular comic writers.

February A group of surfers formed the Bondi Surf Bathers' Lifesaving Club, the first such club in the world. The first rescue, with an early version of the reel and line, was of the future aviator Charles Kingsford Smith in January 1907. By 1912 there were seventeen surf life-saving clubs in Sydney and four in Newcastle.

May A Japanese squadron of three cruisers, the *Hashidate* (flagship), the *Itsukushima* and the *Matshshima* arrived in Sydney on a goodwill visit.

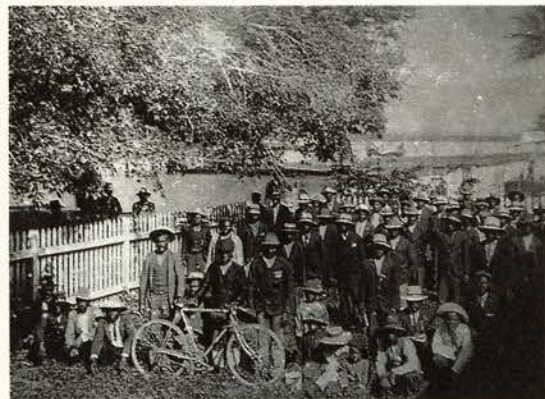
18 June G.H. Knibbs was appointed as the first commonwealth statistician.

1 August Sydney's new Central railway station was opened, extending the line from Redfern.

1 September British New Guinea became a territory of the commonwealth on the completion of formalities for its transfer to Australia. A royal commission was appointed to enquire into the government service in Papua, and to recommend an Australian policy.

12 October The Customs Tariff Act and the Excise Tariff Act became law. Together with the Australian Industries Preservation Act of 24 September 1906, they were designed to encourage Australian industries. They put the 'new protection' policy into operation, by which employers were protected against 'unfair outside competition' provided they were paying 'fair and reasonable wages' to their employees.

12 December At the third national election the Deakin government retained office. A federal referendum to make minor alterations concerning Senate elections and senatorial service was held. Although the constitution was only six years old, voters approved the amendment by a majority of six to one in this first referendum. About 50 per cent of those eligible voted.



1906 Under the Pacific Island Labourers Act of 1901, all Pacific Islanders working in Australia were to be deported by December 1906. Before these Pacific Islanders were deported from Cairns, they were mustered at the courthouse for a medical examination. Queenslander, 3 November 1906.

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1907 *Lone hand*, published by the Bulletin Company, first appeared in Sydney in May 1907. In its first edition, it attacked Melburnian John Wren as 'a pestilent citizen' and alleged that he rigged horse races and intimidated policemen. Front cover of first issue. Until it ceased publication in 1921, *Lone hand* published the work of some of Australia's finest writers and graphic artists, including J.F. Archibald, Henry Lawson, Norman Lindsay and May Gibbs.

1906 Surf bathing in the daytime was no longer illegal in Sydney. Previously there had been a law forbidding sea bathing between 6 am and 8 pm.

1906 The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, the first permanent orchestra in Australia, was formed.

1907

1 January The first commonwealth meteorologist, H.A. Hunt, was appointed.

19 January A cyclone caused £20 000 damage to Cooktown, Qld. The government ketch *Pilot* sank and six hands drowned.

January A.W. Canning opened up the longest stock route in Australia, enabling Kimberley cattle to be marketed in Perth.

22 April The barque *Norma* sank after being run down by the barque *Ardenraig* off Port Adelaide. One

person was drowned. A few hours later SS *Jessie Darling* hit the wreck of the *Norma* and sank. On 17 November 1912 the barque *Dimsdale*, approaching an anchorage at night, demolished the Wonga Shoal lighthouse while trying to keep clear of the wrecks: two lighthouse keepers lost their lives.

May The first edition of the *Lone hand*, a monthly, was published in Sydney. It included work of most of the chief writers and artists of the period, such as Randolph Bedford, Will Dyson, Norman Lindsay and Mabel Forrest. It ceased publication in 1921.

15 September Fire destroyed more than 50 buildings in the business centre of Murwillumbah, NSW.

8 November Mr Justice Higgins, president of the commonwealth court of conciliation and arbitration, delivered his 'Harvester' judgment. Under the Excise Act of 1906, H.V. McKay had applied for an exemption from excise duty on his Sunshine Harvesters, on the basis that the wages he paid were 'fair and reasonable'. Higgins found against him and in his judgment he formulated the principle of the 'basic wage'. In the following year the high court declared the 'new protection' legislation invalid. The concept of a basic wage was gradually adopted and became an article of faith in Australia for many years.

1907 The Carlton and United Breweries Ltd was formed when six Victorian breweries amalgamated.

1907 Norman Brookes won the men's singles at Wimbledon, the first Australian to do so. With Anthony Wilding, he also won the men's doubles. On this tour he and Wilding competed for Australia in the Davis Cup, which Australia won for the first time.

1907 In WA the 'No 1 Rabbit-Proof Fence' was completed after five years' work. It ran north from Starvation Boat Harbour (west of Esperance) for over 1800 kilometres, to a point on the southern end of Eighty Mile Beach, but failed to keep out rabbits.

1908

January The minister for Customs, Austin Chapman, prohibited importation of jute cornsacks holding more than 90 kilograms, considering this the maximum weight that wharf labourers should be required to lift.

30 March The commonwealth Quarantine Service came into operation and took over quarantine stations in every state.

20 April The Bendigo Special ran into a Ballarat train at Sunshine station outside Melbourne, killing 44 and injuring 412 people.

16 May The Commonwealth Literary Fund was established at the instigation of the prime minister, Alfred Deakin, following an earlier suggestion by H.B. Higgins, then a member of the House of Representatives. Parliament voted £525 to enable grants to be made to destitute authors or destitute widows and orphans of authors. These grants became known as literary pensions.

3 June The federal Customs Tariff Act of 1908 increased tariff protection. It also provided for a unilateral 5 per cent margin of preference being given to British-made goods.

27 August The 'great white fleet' of the United States navy arrived in Sydney to begin a month's visit to Australia. Big crowds turned out in Sydney and Melbourne to view the fourteen white ships.

September 'My country' by Dorothea MacKellar was published in the *Spectator* in London. The poem had been written on a property near Maitland, NSW, and had been inspired by the breaking of the drought. Publication in Australian newspapers followed. In 1911 it appeared in MacKellar's first collection of poetry, *The closed door and other verses*.

8 October In the ninth ballot, the House of Representatives finally selected the Yass-Canberra area as the site for a federal capital and the Senate agreed to the proposal on 6 November by nineteen votes to seventeen.

12 November Labor leader Andrew Fisher became prime minister after Alfred Deakin resigned when the Labor party withdrew its support for his government.

26 December The entrepreneur Hugh D. McIntosh arranged for Tommy Burns to fight the black boxer Jack Johnson at a specially constructed stadium at Rushcutters Bay in Sydney. Burns received £6000 and Johnson £1000. This world heavyweight boxing championship drew a huge crowd and a gate of £26 000. Police stopped the fight in the fourteenth round but Burns never had a chance against his more able opponent.

1908 At the Olympic Games in London, Australia won a gold medal for rugby football, a silver medal for middleweight boxing, a silver medal for the men's 400-metre freestyle in swimming, and a bronze for the men's 1500-metre freestyle in swimming.

1908 The Davis Cup final was held in Australia for the first time. Australia defeated the USA 3-2.

1908 *We of the Never Never* by Mrs Aeneas Gunn, *Maurice Guest* by Henry Handel Richardson (Ethel

Florence Richardson) and *The explorers of Australia* by Ernest Favenc were published.

1908 The Adelaide Literary Theatre was formed by Bryceson Treharne. In 1913 it became the Adelaide Repertory Theatre.

1909

1 January Broken Hill miners were locked out for their refusal to accept a reduction in wages. The lockout lasted until 24 May.

9 March The first commonwealth-owned seagoing ship (a trawler) was commissioned. It was built in Australia from Australian materials, to be used as a research vessel to locate trawling grounds off the coast and undertake hydrographic surveys.

March The federal government let a contract with UK shipbuilders the Denny Brothers and the Fairfield Shipbuilding and Engineering Co Ltd for the construction of two torpedo boat destroyers, to cost £81 000 each. A third vessel of the same kind was to be delivered in sections to Australia, at a cost of £72 500, to be completed locally.

2 June Alfred Deakin defeated Andrew Fisher's Labor government and became prime minister for the third time. Deakin had previously negotiated a fusion between free-traders and protectionists which called itself the Liberal Party. He held office until the election of April 1910.

18 June The Norwegian barque *Errol* was wrecked on Middleton Reef in the Tasman Sea. Seventeen men died but on 12 July five survivors were rescued.

1 July The federal Invalid and Old-age Pensions Act came into operation, although the sections relating to invalid pensions did not come into force until 15 December 1910. An old age pension of £26 per annum was subject to a means test on income. Pensions had been paid in Vic since 18 January 1901, in NSW since 1 August 1901 and in Qld since 1 July 1908. Other states did not provide old age pensions.

6 November General dissatisfaction among Newcastle coalminers caused a strike. The leaders were arrested, but the strike continued until March 1910. The NSW government considered that the disruption of services warranted an amendment to the Industrial Disputes Act.

5 December George Augustine Taylor made the first unpowered flight in Australia in a full-size biplane fitted with a double box kite at Narrabeen, NSW. Taylor had formed the Aerial League of Australia, which first met on 28 April 1909. He designed and built a glider, which was flown by his wife Florence — the first woman to fly in Australia.

9 December Colin Defries made the first motor-propelled flight in Australia, flying about 105 metres at a height of between 0.6 and 4.5 metres on Victoria Park racecourse, Sydney.

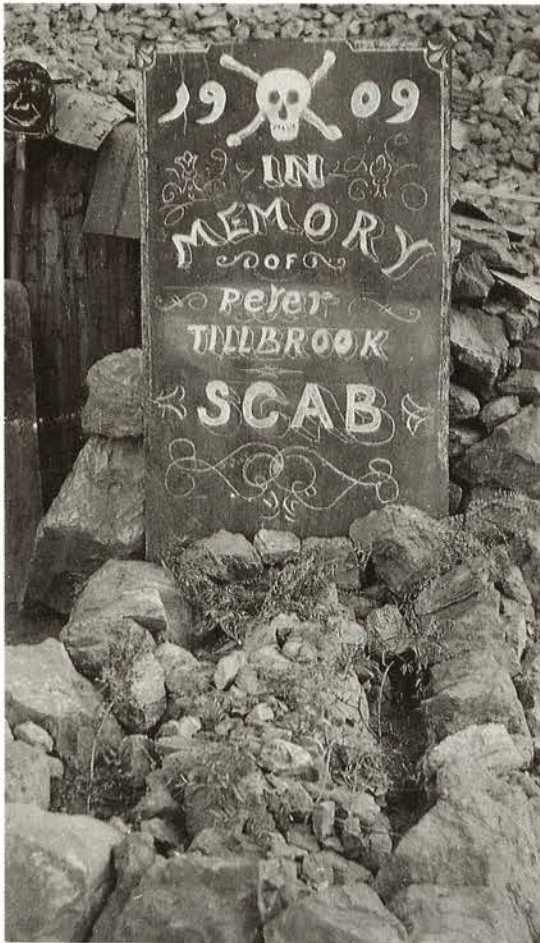


1908 Australia welcomes the visit of the American 'great white fleet'. Bulletin, 20 August 1908.

10 December A bill to establish the University of Queensland was passed by the Qld parliament. Lectures began in March 1911.

13 December The federal Defence Act provided for the establishment of a military college and for calling out reserves for active service in time of war.

21 December–12 February 1910 Field Marshal Lord Kitchener inspected military establishments throughout Australia at the invitation of the federal government. His report took the form of a *Memorandum on the defence of Australia* (7 July 1910), in which he stated that the land forces were inadequate and recommended a force of 80 000 fighting troops.



1909 At odds with other Broken Hill mining companies, BHP determined in late 1908 to reduce the minimum wage then prevailing in Broken Hill mines. Union picketing, in which many Australian and international socialists played a leading role, led to massive police intervention in the town. Community support for the locked-out unionists vilified the police and ostracised non-unionists, who continued to work. After five months the dispute was settled on terms generally favourable to the unions. This is one of many postcards produced at the time.

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1909 Severe flooding occurred along the Murray and Murrumbidgee rivers and in the northwest of NSW. In Vic almost every river basin flooded. In Qld flooding which had begun in 1908 continued until 1913. Floods spread over the southeast of SA, along the Gascoyne River and in the southwest of WA, and in many parts of Tas.

1909 The singers Peter Dawson and Amy Castles toured Australia and Dame Nellie Melba made her third concert tour.

1910

22 January George Reid, formerly a premier of NSW and a prime minister of the commonwealth, was appointed first Australian high commissioner to London, an office he held until January 1916, when he was elected to the House of Commons.

1 February The federal Bills of Exchange Act, defining the legal obligations of banks and customers, became law.

9 February The first ship of the Australian navy, the destroyer HMAS *Parramatta*, was launched on the Clyde River in Scotland by Mrs Asquith, wife of the British prime minister. A sister ship, HMAS *Yarra*, arrived in Melbourne on 10 December. A third destroyer, HMAS *Warrego*, was shipped out in parts and assembled in Sydney in 1912.

8 March The Mitchell Library opened. David Scott Mitchell had bequeathed his Australiana collection to the trustees of the Public Library on 14 February 1901. Mitchell endowed the library to the extent of £70 000, but died in 1907 before the building was completed. The original collection comprised some 61 000 volumes, manuscripts, pictures and maps.

12 March *The life and adventures of John Vane, the notorious Australian bushranger*, a film produced by Cozens Spencer, had its premiere in Melbourne. The film marked the beginning of expansion in Australian film production.

18 March The American magician Harry Houdini (Ehrich Weiss) made three successful flights in a Voisin biplane at Diggers' Rest, Vic. The Aerial League of Australia awarded Houdini a plaque for making the first controlled flight in a powered aircraft in Australia. Houdini later made successful flights at Rosehill, near Sydney.

13 April The Labor party won the federal election with a clear majority in both the House of Representatives and the Senate. Andrew Fisher was re-elected party leader by the Labor caucus, and became prime minister and treasurer. Electors also voted in favour in a referendum to give the commonwealth unrestricted power to take over state debts. A second referendum, to enable a minor adjustment to temporary commonwealth-state arrangements, was lost.

30 June A prize of £5000 was offered by the commonwealth to the inventor of a flying machine

judged by the defence department to be most suitable for military purposes.

1 July The Sydney *Sun* commenced publication as an afternoon daily.

16 July At Mia Mia, Vic, John R. Duigan, flew an aircraft he had designed and built himself. This was the first Australian-built powered aircraft.

27 August In NSW the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area Resumption Act became law. It authorised the resumption of some 1 020 000 acres of land (675 000 hectares). In July 1912 land settlement began there and the first citrus fruits were planted.

10 October The federal Bank Notes Act became law, establishing an Australian paper currency and putting an end to the trading banks issuing their own banknotes by subjecting those to a high tax. During 1910 the commonwealth issued silver coins depicting the bust of King Edward VII on the obverse and the Australian coat of arms on the reverse.

19 October In Vic an Aborigines Act extended the authority of the Board for the Protection of Aborigines to include 'half-castes'.

21 October J.S.T. McGowan became the first Labor premier of NSW after the Labor party defeated the Liberals in the September election.

16 November The federal Land Tax Act became law. Partly based on the ideas of the American writer of popular economics, Henry George, the tax set out to break up large estates — in which it failed.

25 November The Naval Defence Act became law, and with the Naval Defence Act 1909, provided for the establishment of an Australian navy which could be placed under the British Admiralty in time of war. The title 'Royal Australian Navy' was authorised by King George V in July 1911.

1910 *On the wooltrack* by C.E.W. Bean, *The getting of wisdom* by Henry Handel Richardson, and *A little bush maid* by Mary Grant Bruce were published. The last was the first of the popular 'Billabong' series.

1910 St Andrew's Presbyterian church was completed in Brisbane. Designed by G.D. Payne, it was an example of early modern architecture in Australia.

1910 Australia's first steel-framed building, Nelson House, was erected in Sydney. It was designed by L.S. Robertson.

1911

1 January Under the Defence Act of 1909 compulsory military training began for all Australian male youths, except Aborigines.

1 January An area of 2360 square kilometres was transferred by NSW to the commonwealth government to become the Australian Capital Territory, consisting of land around Canberra and at Jervis Bay. The latter was expanded in 1915.

1 January The administration of the NT was transferred by SA to the commonwealth government. The commonwealth was also to take over the Port Augusta-to-Oodnadatta railway and complete the transcontinental line between Oodnadatta and Port Darwin.

9 January Joseph J. Hammond made a 45 minute flight at Perth, WA, in a Bristol Boxkite. On 23 February, he made the first flight in Australia carrying passengers. By 5 May, he had completed 72 flights covering 1231 kilometres in three states.

16 February In WA an act to establish the University of WA came into force. Lectures began in 1913 in the faculties of arts, engineering and science. It was the only university in Australia that did not charge tuition fees — until the Whitlam Labor government abolished tuition fees altogether on 1 January 1974.

23–24 March The ss *Yongala* sank in a cyclone off Cape Bowling Green, Qld, with the loss of 120 lives. It was on a voyage between Brisbane and Townsville.

2–3 April According to a uniform commonwealth census, the population was 4 455 005.

26 April At a federal referendum, voters rejected proposals put forward by the Fisher Labor government to extend commonwealth powers in industrial and trade matters and to give the government power to nationalise monopolies.

1 May The Commonwealth Postal Rates Act came into force. This established 'penny postage' (1d for every ½ oz or 14 grams) throughout Australia. Previously, varying local and interstate rates had been in operation.

26 May At a special secret meeting during the Imperial Conference in London, the prime minister Andrew Fisher sought to be consulted about international agreements affecting Australia, especially the Anglo-Japanese alliance and its effect on Australia's immigration policy. The British prime minister, Herbert Henry Asquith, had been adamant that foreign policy could not be shared with dominion representatives in open discussions at the conference.

May–August Qld sugar workers went on strike for an eight-hour day, better conditions and higher wages.

27 June The Royal Military College was founded at Duntroon, Canberra, under the command of Brig-Gen W.T. Bridges. Initially 41 cadets enrolled.

16 August Cardinal Moran died in Sydney. He had become archbishop of Sydney in 1884, and had been created cardinal the following year.

25 October The Royal Australian Navy's first battle cruiser, HMAS *Australia*, was launched at Clydebank in Scotland. It was commissioned in 1913.

2 December The Mawson Australasian Antarctic expedition left Hobart on the *Aurora* for Macquarie Island, where the party would establish its base before exploring the Antarctic. On this expedition, which lasted until 1914, the explorers mapped more than 1500 kilometres of coast, probed 500 kilometres

inland and gathered valuable scientific data. Mawson was subsequently knighted and awarded the Polar Medal and the Founders' Medal of the Royal Geographical Society.

7 December In SA, an Aborigines Act became law. The chief protector of Aborigines was given extensive powers over Aboriginal reserves and the lives of Aborigines, including marriage.

22 December The Commonwealth Electoral Act introduced compulsory enrolment, subject to a £2 penalty. Compulsory voting for federal elections was not introduced until 1924.

1911 The first boy settlers arrived from England to be trained in rural skills in NSW under the 'Dreadnought' scheme. The scheme was interrupted by World War I, but was revived in 1921. About 7000 Dreadnought boys were settled in Australia under the scheme.

1911 Large deposits of iron ore were found near Iron Knob in the Middleback Ranges of SA.

1911 The first permanent building at the Mt Stromlo observatory in the ACT was erected, following a request by Australian scientists for a federal observatory for research.

1911 The Festival of Empire, the first of the sporting competitions now known as the Commonwealth Games, was held at the Crystal Palace in London as part of the festivities for the coronation of George V. Gold medals were won for Australia by G. Hardwick in boxing and swimming.

1911 *Jonah* by Louis Stone and *The dreadnought of the Darling* by C.E.W. Bean were published.

1911 The Melbourne Repertory Theatre was founded by Gegan McMahon.

1911 Australasia defeated the US and retained the Davis Cup in Christchurch, NZ.

1912

31 January–6 March In Brisbane a general strike was called as a result of the Brisbane Tramways Co's suspension of tramway employees for wearing union badges. Forty-three trade unions were involved in the strike. The police were called out to control unruly crowds. The high court ruled in favour of the strikers but had no power to have them reinstated, and the strike failed. By 7 December the Industrial Peace Act became law in Qld. It established an industrial court and provided heavy penalties for lockouts and strikes.

9 February The first official wireless station was declared open in Melbourne by the governor-general, Lord Denman.

21 March The liner *ss Koombana* sank in a hurricane off Balla Balla, near Condon Creek, WA, on a voyage between Port Hedland and Broome; 139 lives were lost.

15 April In NSW the Industrial Arbitration Act 1912 received royal assent. While strikes and lockouts



1912 On Wednesday 31 January a general strike began in Brisbane as a result of the Brisbane Tramway Company's suspension of tramway employees for wearing union badges. On Friday 2 February police attacked unionists and their supporters. Jim Case, cartoonist for the *Worker*, portrays Australia turning away in shame from 'Black Friday' in Queensland.

OXLEY LIBRARY

remained illegal, imprisonment for such actions was no longer possible.

4 May *On our selection* by 'Steele Rudd' opened as a stage production, starring Bert Bailey.

14 May The submission of the American architect Walter Burley Griffin won a competition for the design of the new federal capital. In 1920, after various disagreements with the government over the design, Griffin's position as director of design and construction was terminated.

29 June William Ewart Hart of Parramatta won the £250 Sydney-to-Parramatta air race, the first held in Australia. He competed against the American 'Wizard' Stone, who lost his way in a cloud.

June John Flynn, a Presbyterian minister, visited northern and central Australia, and in September presented a report to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia. The assembly agreed that the Home Mission Board should extend

its services to the NT and possibly to adjacent areas. Flynn was appointed superintendent of this area, and carried on the work for the next 39 years. In 1928 he founded what is now known as the Flying Doctor service.

3 July The commonwealth government ordered the first military aircraft — two BE biplanes and two Deperdussins. A further order, for a Bristol Boxkite, was placed in December.

15 July The Commonwealth Bank — 'the people's bank' — owned and operated by the federal government, opened as a savings bank and on 20 January 1913 as a trading bank.

30 July Australia's first automatic telephone exchange was opened at Geelong in Vic.

20 September The federal government agreed to the formation of an Australian flying corps, and a central flying school. Point Cook, Vic, was selected and the first course started there on 17 August 1914.

10 October The Commonwealth Maternity Allowance Act became law, under which a maternity allowance of £5, known as the 'baby bonus', was paid to Australian mothers after 1912. Aborigines, Asians and natives of the South Pacific were not eligible.

12 October Forty-two miners died in a fire in the North Mount Lyell mine in Tas.

24 October The Australian Harry G. Hawker, flying a Sopwith Wright biplane, won the British Michelin Cup No 1, setting a British endurance record.

19 December In SA the Industrial Arbitration Act became law. It defined a 'living wage' as the sum that is 'sufficient for the normal and reasonable needs of the average employee living in the locality where the work . . . is done or is to be done'. On 21 December a WA Industrial Arbitration Act became law, enshrining the same principle. Both pieces of legislation were based on Mr Justice Higgins' judgment in the 'Harvester' case.

1912 Culwalla Chambers, Sydney, was the first Australian skyscraper. It was 55 metres high, and was built by Spain and Cosh.

1912 The largest concrete dome in the world was erected over the reading room of the public library in Melbourne.

1912 Kingsley Fairbridge and his wife arrived in Perth and took up land at Pinjarra, WA. Before leaving England, Fairbridge had formed the Child Emigration Society, a scheme under which orphaned and underprivileged children from English slums were to be trained in agricultural pursuits in underpopulated parts of the world.

1912 The first public children's library in Australia was opened in the Sydney Municipal Library.

1912 The Olympic Games were held at Stockholm. Australia's Fanny Durack won the gold medal for the women's 100-metre race in freestyle swimming.

1912 The British Isles defeated Australasia in the Davis Cup.

1913

2 January The first penny postage stamp of the Commonwealth of Australia was issued. It depicted a kangaroo in the centre of a map of Australia and became known as the 'roo' stamp.

13 January Commonwealth Savings Bank agencies were established at post offices.

12 February The first sod of the east-west transcontinental railway was turned at Kalgoorlie.

1 March The Royal Australian Naval College was officially opened in temporary premises at Osborne House, Geelong, Vic, while the permanent buildings were being erected at Captain's Point, Jervis Bay.

12 March The governor-general, Lord Denman, laid the foundation stone of the federal capital. At the ceremony to mark this occasion, Lady Denman announced that the name of the capital would be Canberra — the name by which the area was already known. The governor-general said that the people should not cavil at the expense of creating another city because Sydney and Melbourne were already overcrowded.

13 March The Farmers' and Settlers' Association of WA formed its own political party, the Country party. They agreed on a constitution in August.



1913 The 'Roo' series, issued in January 1913, were the first stamps to be issued with 'Australia' printed on them. Although postage stamps became a federal responsibility on 1 December 1901, the issue of separate stamps in each of the six states continued until 1913.

AUSTRALIA POST

22 May The first Australian submarines, *AE1* and *AE2*, were launched in England.

31 May Elections were held for the federal parliament, and the Fisher Labor government was narrowly defeated. The Liberal leader, Joseph Cook, formed a government.

1 July The control of Royal Navy establishments and property in Australia was transferred to the commonwealth.

4 October The ships of the Royal Australian Navy were stationed in Sydney Harbour — the battle cruiser *Australia*, the light cruisers *Melbourne*, *Sydney* and *Encounter* and the torpedo boat destroyers, *Warrego*, *Parramatta* and *Yarra*. They arrived to a tumultuous reception.

1913 Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia) Ltd was formed to take over the Australian subsidiary of the London-based Wireless Telegraph Co Ltd and the Australasian Wireless Co.

1913 The first banknotes were printed by the commonwealth. They were pound notes known as the 'rainbow' issue because of their colourful back.

1913 The Victorian Country Roads Board was established. Similar boards were formed in Qld in 1920, NSW and WA in 1925, and SA in 1926.

1913 King George V laid the foundation stone of Australia House in London.

1913 *Poems* by C.J. Brennan, *Backblock ballads* by C.J. Dennis, Henry Lawson's *Triangles of life*, Norman Lindsay's *Curate in Bohemia*, *Clovelly verses* by Katharine Susannah Prichard and Frank Wilmot's *Unconditioned songs* were published.

1914

27 January Lord Denman resigned as governor-general. His successor, Sir Ronald Munro Ferguson, a landholder and provost of Kirkcaldy in Scotland, was appointed on 9 February and held office from 18 May 1914 until 6 October 1920.

16 February Mr Justice Heydon of the NSW industrial court found that a 'living wage' for a family of four would be 48s a week, but that more than a living wage should be paid. He recommended a minimum wage for a six-day week of 8s 6d per day for unskilled workers and 9s per day for heavy work.

1 March Lieuts Harrison and Petre flew the first military aircraft in Australia when they tested the Boxkite CFS 3 and Deperdussin CFS 4 at Point Cook, Vic. On 30 November 1914 the first aviation unit to be sent overseas from Australia for active service left Sydney for German New Guinea. The unit, comprising two officers, four mechanics and two aircraft, returned to Australia in April 1915.

16 March At Exeter, NSW, a train missed a signal because of fog and collided with a train shunting at the station, killing fourteen people.

27 March Eighteen people died when the steamship *Saint Paul* was wrecked at Cape Moreton, Qld.

2 May An accident at the Great Extended Hustler's mine in Bendigo, Vic, killed seven miners.

June The Liberal prime minister, Joseph Cook, asked the governor-general to dissolve parliament in Australia's first double dissolution. Cook's government had a majority of one in the House of Representatives but held only 7 of the 36 seats in the Labor-controlled Senate. In order to precipitate a double dissolution Cook twice passed through the House of Representatives a bill to prohibit preference to unionists in commonwealth employment and on both occasions the Senate rejected it. The governor-general agreed to Cook's request and the election was called for 5 September.

16 July The Frenchman Maurice Guillaux left Melbourne for Sydney in a Bleriot monoplane carrying Australia's first airmail. He arrived in Sydney on 18 July in a total flying time of nine and a quarter hours, carrying with him 1785 specially printed postcards, letters of greeting to various officials and several private parcels.

31 July As the likelihood of war in Europe increased, both major political parties pledged their allegiance to Britain and the empire. Electioneering at Horsham, Vic, Joseph Cook declared, 'All of our resources in Australia are . . . for the preservation and the security of the Empire'. On the same evening, at Colac, Vic, Labor opposition leader Andrew Fisher promised support to Britain and declared that 'Australians will stand beside her own to help and defend her to our last man and our last shilling'.

4 August Britain declared war on Germany, as a consequence of which Australia became involved in World War I.

5 August The first shot for the British Empire was fired from Fort Nepean battery, Vic. News of the declaration of war reached the fort at 12.10 pm, when the German merchant ship *Pfalz* was moving down Port Phillip Bay to the heads. Ten minutes later the battery fired a shot across its bows, forcing the ship to surrender.

10 August Recruiting began for the Australian Imperial Force, intended for service in Europe. The government had offered Britain a force of 20 000 men.

10 August Ships of the Royal Australian Navy were placed under the operational control of the British Admiralty.

18 August The Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force of 1500 men left Sydney with the aim of capturing German New Guinea. The troops landed in German New Guinea on 11 September, Rabaul was occupied on 13 September and on 17 September the German acting governor capitulated.

5 September The Labor party, led by Andrew Fisher, easily won a federal election, securing 42 of the 75 House of Representatives seats and 31 of the 36 Senate seats.

9 September The Australian light cruiser HMAS *Melbourne* captured the German radio station at Nauru.

14 September The Australian submarine *AE1* was lost with all 35 crewmen while patrolling off New Britain.

29 September The Melbourne stock exchange reopened, having closed at the outbreak of war. Employers and other businessmen panicked when war was declared, fearing grave economic consequences. In NSW the price of imported commodities rose by between 7½ and 20 per cent in August and from 10 to 31 August unemployment in the state rose from 13500 to 29313. During 1914 Australia suffered a major drought, which had begun in 1911 but was at its worst in 1914 and 1915. It affected all states, severely reducing agricultural output and placing even greater strains on the economy.

29 October Federal parliament passed the war precautions bill. The act gave the government power to require the registration and control the movement of aliens to prevent money, goods and information from falling into enemy hands. An amendment passed on 30 April 1915 gave the government the broadest possible powers, to 'make regulations for securing the public defence of the Commonwealth'.

1 November Escorted by the Japanese battle cruiser *Ibuki*, the British cruiser *Minotaur* and the Australian cruisers *Melbourne* and *Sydney*, 38 transports carrying the First Division of the Australian Imperial Force and the New Zealand Expeditionary Force left Albany in WA bound for England via Suez. The troops arrived in Egypt on 5 December to undergo training near

Cairo and to protect Egypt from Turkey, which had entered the war as a German ally.

9 November The cruiser HMAS *Sydney* immobilised the German cruiser *Emden* off the North Keeling (Cocos) Island in Australia's first major naval victory.

19 December The destroyer HMAS *Derwent*, the first major warship to be built in Australia, was launched at Cockatoo Island dockyard in Sydney.

1915

1 January At Broken Hill, NSW, two Turks declared their own war on Australia and opened fire on a trainload of picnickers, killing four passengers and wounding six. The Turks were pursued and shot, and the attorney-general, William Morris Hughes, remarked that the incident demonstrated the need to keep the enemy behind barbed wire.

9 March The first blast furnace at BHP's ironworks at Newcastle, NSW, began operations two years after construction of the plant had begun. On 9 April the first steel ingots were produced and on 24 April the first steel rails were manufactured there.

20 April The first Australian Flying Corps contingent, comprising four officers and 41 men but no aircraft, left for service with the Royal Flying Corps in Mesopotamia. On 10 August the first Australian-built military aircraft, the Boxkite CFS 8, was test flown at Point Cook, Vic.

25 April The Third Brigade of the First Division of the AIF stormed ashore at Anzac Cove, Gallipoli, a



7 August 1915 *Charge of the 3rd Light Horse Brigade at the Nek (Battle of Sari Bair, Turkey)*. Oil on canvas by George Lambert, 1924.

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

rugged part of the coast 1.6 kilometres north of their intended landing place. They were met with solid resistance by the Turkish defenders but managed to secure a beachhead for the Allied landing.

30 April The Australian submarine *AE2* was scuttled after passing through the Dardanelles. The crew were taken prisoner by the Turks.

6 May The NSW Conservatorium of Music was officially opened. Its first director, Henri Verbrugghen, arrived in August and immediately set about creating a symphony orchestra.

19 May Pte John Simpson Kirkpatrick was killed in 'Shrapnel Gully', Gallipoli. With a donkey called Duffy he had daily evacuated the wounded from the heights above Anzac Cove to dressing stations on the beach.

19 May Maj-Gen Sir William Bridges, commander of Australian troops in the Dardanelles, died of wounds sustained in action.

19 May The Turkish force on Gallipoli made its strongest attempt of the Dardanelles campaign to drive the Anzacs into the sea. The Anzacs repulsed the attack.

1 July The Navy took control of broadcasting for the duration of the war, confiscating all broadcasting sets.

14 July The war census bill, providing for the registration of the men and wealth of Australia, was introduced into the House of Representatives by the attorney-general W.M. Hughes. After much criticism the bill was passed without division. In reply to a charge that it was a prelude to conscription, Hughes declared that he did not believe that conscription was necessary, but added that changes in the war situation might cause him to alter his opinion.

6–8 August The Australians attacked Lone Pine and Sari Bair, the original objectives of the landing at Anzac Cove in April. Seven Victoria Crosses were won by Australians in the action but it soon became obvious that the Allied position was untenable. The troops were evacuated from the Anzac area on 18–20 December, by which time 7594 Australians had been killed and another 19 500 wounded.

15 August A fish shop owned and run by the NSW State Trawling Authority in Sydney was the first in Australia to have air conditioning for the display of perishable goods.

1 September The first commonwealth war loan closed, heavily oversubscribed. The loan of £5 000 000 at 4½ per cent interest attracted £13 380 000.

13 September The war income tax bill, enabling the federal government to levy a tax on incomes for the first time, was passed in the House of Representatives. The tax was payable on incomes exceeding £156, and the rate climbed from 3d to 5d in the pound for incomes exceeding £7600.

20 September A Returned Soldiers' Association was formed at a meeting of returned wounded soldiers in Sydney.

30 September *HMAS Brisbane*, the first cruiser built in Australia, was launched at Cockatoo Island dockyard in Sydney.

27 October Andrew Fisher resigned as prime minister to become Australia's high commissioner in London. The Labor caucus elected William Morris Hughes to replace him.

October C.J. Dennis published a book of poems, *The songs of a sentimental bloke*, expecting it to attract only a limited audience. A year later he wrote the preface to an edition marking sales of 51 000 and within a decade he had sold more than three times that number.

5 November The commonwealth government assumed responsibility for the sale and marketing of Australian wheat. Each state set up a wheat board to handle the crop within the state. Over these was a commonwealth wheat board, comprising commonwealth and state representatives and representatives of growers and merchants.

26 November No males of military age could leave Australia without a passport.

18–20 December Eighty thousand Australian and Allied troops withdrew from Suvla Bay and Anzac Cove, Gallipoli. The withdrawal, carried out surreptitiously, deceived the Turks and only a few casualties occurred. A similar Allied withdrawal from Cape Helles took place on 16 January 1916.

1916

20 January The prime minister, Hughes, left Sydney for Britain via Canada.

1 February The second commonwealth war loan of £10 000 000 closed with £21 655 580 subscribed.

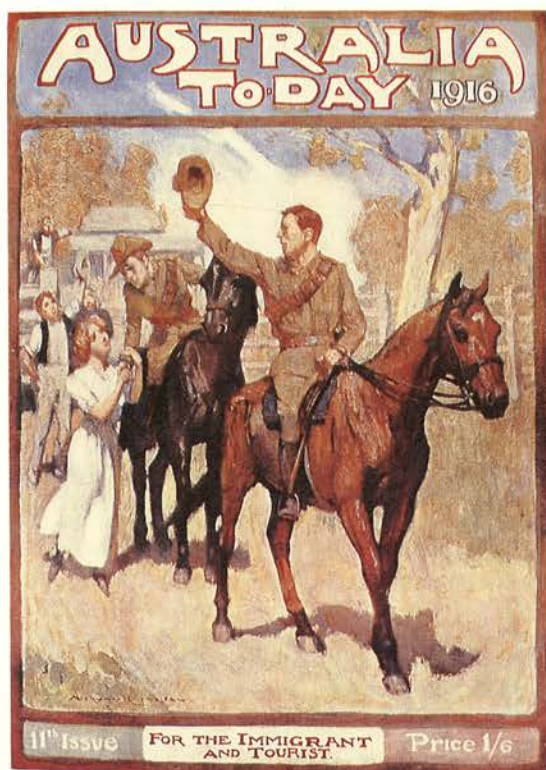
14 February Early in the morning 5000 troops of the AIF in camp at Casula near Liverpool in NSW refused to undergo a new training syllabus, and marched instead to Liverpool where they called on their colleagues to join them in a call for shorter working hours. Soon about 15 000 troops had mutinied. Some commandeered trains and went on a day-long rampage in Sydney, stealing liquor, breaking into shops and maltreating pedestrians. During a clash with military police at Central railway station, one soldier was shot dead and six others wounded. Peace was restored the following day by threats of discharge from the AIF.

3 March Under the War Precautions Act, the federal government fixed the price of flour (£11 8s per ton) and of bread over the counter (6½d per 4-pound loaf) throughout the commonwealth metropolitan areas.

20 March The first Australian troops landed in France.

27 March Six o'clock closing came into force in hotels in SA as a result of a referendum held in 1915.

7 April The Allies bought, through the Australian Wheat Board, 150 000 tons (152 407 tonnes) of Australian wheat for shipment during April, May and



1916 Norman Lindsay's gallant outback farmers respond to the call to arms, leaving mothers and sweethearts behind. This cover, drawn for the Commercial Travellers' Association's annual, was prepared in 1915, well before the first conscription referendum in October 1916 split the country.

SPEARITT COLLECTION

June, bringing the total of such sales to nearly 1 000 000 tons (1 016 046 tonnes).

10 June A referendum was taken in NSW to decide whether hotels should close at 6 o'clock for the duration of the war and 6 months thereafter. It was approved by a large majority. Six o'clock closing was enforced in Sydney on 21 July and in Vic on 11 October. It had also been introduced in Tas in March after a referendum.

28 June Hughes purchased on behalf of the commonwealth fifteen steamers at a cost of about £2 000 000. These vessels, with an average carrying capacity of 8000 tonnes, formed the Commonwealth Shipping Line.

19 July The Fifth Australian Division assaulted Fromelles on the western front with British support. Over the next seven weeks 22 826 Australian casualties occurred.

8 August Hughes arrived back in Melbourne from London, convinced that conscription should be introduced to ensure reinforcements for the AIF.

30 August Hughes announced that a referendum would be held to determine whether or not Australians

were in favour of compulsory overseas military service for males during the war.

11 September The first congress of the newly federated Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia met in Brisbane. It strongly supported the proposal to introduce compulsory overseas military service for males.

14 September The rift in the Labor party over conscription widened when the party's deputy leader, Frank Tudor, resigned and Hughes's military service referendum bill to introduce conscription was passed with the support of the opposition. The following day the NSW Political Labor League expelled Hughes.

2 October The first group of men were called up for compulsory military training within Australia under the provisions of the Defence Act. The proclamation, requiring men to enlist for compulsory home service, was withdrawn on 22 November, after the defeat of the conscription referendum, and the men were immediately released from camps.

27 October Three federal ministers, the treasurer, William Higgs, the vice-president of the executive council Senator Albert Gardiner and Senator Edward Russell, resigned on the eve of the referendum on conscription. They were dissatisfied with Hughes's conduct of the referendum campaign.

28 October The referendum on conscription abroad was defeated by 1 160 033 to 1 087 557, with Vic, WA and Tas voting in favour and NSW, Qld and SA voting against. Although the measure was defeated, mounting Australian casualties on the western front ensured that the issue continued to divide Australian society.

1 November A general coal strike began in eastern Australia over the miner's claims for better wages and the principle of payment for all time spent reaching the actual place of work from the pithead. The strike continued until 4 December, causing the closure of many factories, but the miners' demands were met following a conference called by Hughes under the War Precautions Act.

14 November The federal Labor party split on the issue of conscription. Hughes rejected a majority view that conscription was not essential for the war effort. On 14 November he and 23 supporters walked out of a Labor party caucus meeting considering a motion calling for his dismissal. He resigned but was recommissioned by the governor-general and formed a ministry drawn from his own supporters. He formed his own National Labor Party — a rump group which retained office with Liberal support.

2 December Twelve members of the Industrial Workers of the World were convicted in Sydney on charges of conspiring to commit arson and sedition and received prison sentences ranging from five to fifteen years with hard labour. The IWW was an international group, which conservatives believed to be both radical and seditious.

28 December Disastrous floods in Clermont in Qld claimed more than 60 lives and caused widespread property damage.