This brochure has been published as a souvenir of "The Worker's" 70th birthday, which was celebrated on March 1, 1960. It contains several articles of great historical importance which appeared in the Golden and Diamond Jubilee issues of the journal in 1940 and 1950 respectively, and in others, and a number of cartoons and illustrations taken from some of our earliest issues.

It is confidently hoped that the material in this little souvenir will give younger members of the Australian Labor Movement a glimpse into the days when men, and women, had to suffer extreme hardship in order to lift themselves, and those who followed, from the depths into which they had been thrust by the tyranny and squalor of the times, and to help set Australia as a star among the Democracies.

We hope, too, that these messages from the past will urge those who read them, to strive for the noble aims of the Australian Labor Movement, which include Peace, and the broadest possible meaning of the word, humanity.
This composite picture shows the first home of "The Worker" soon after its establishment in 1890, and the present one, Dunstan House, Elizabeth Street, Brisbane, which is also the Headquarters of the Queensland Branch of the Australian Workers' Union, and Southern District of the Union—the largest District, numerically, in the Commonwealth.

NOT MANY newspapers, anywhere, can claim that they have been in existence for 70 years, but the claim is true about "The Worker" whose 70th birthday was celebrated on Tuesday, March 1, 1960.

The world, in its fullest meaning, is very different today from that of the nineties, when "The Worker" was first published, and the wants of white men are not nearly as distressing as they were in those far-off years. Then, it took great human courage for men to form trade unions, and to dream of someday having their own Parliamentary representatives, looked upon as the hallucination of an alcoholic by the enemies of the trade unions and Labor.

Nevertheless, we know that many of the dreams of our pioneers came true, for out of the Shearing Strike of the nineties emerged one of the grandest examples of brotherhood...the Australian Labor Movement.

A number of trade unions were associated in the establishment of "The Worker", but over the years, the other organisations fell away, until the entire undertaking became a task for the Queensland Branch of the Australian Workers' Union...an earlier counterpart, as it were, of the "Daily Standard" commenced by many trade unions, but after "withdrawals" was kept functioning for years by money poured into its publication by the Queensland Branch of this Union.

Since the day "The Worker" came into the ownership and control of the A.W.U. it has looked back only in retrospect, so to speak, when reviewing some of the battles waged on behalf of A.W.U. members, the A.L.P., and yes, on the side of many trade unions too impoverished to carry on their own campaigns.

To-day, the importance of "The Worker" cannot be measured idly. While other trade unions and A.L.P. journals have been cut back from weekly to monthly publications, and many have disappeared completely from sight because of rising costs and, unfortunately, because the workers though they were not worth supporting, though they readily bought anti-Labor and anti-union publications, "The Worker" has weathered many storms, some of which were veritable financial cyclones.

To-day, we stand with our roots firmly spread, gripping deeply into the Australian soil, and while we deplore the passing of so many Labor papers, we can thank "The Worker's" presence in the field of reading and political and industrial education to the strength of the Australian Workers' Union and the careful husbanding of our resources by those whose responsibility it was to do so.

Yes, to-day, "The Worker" is right in the front line, ready to do battle at any time for our members and for the Australian Labor Party. This paper will fight those within the Union or the A.L.P. who won't carry out policy laid down; "The Worker" will fight, too, those OUTSIDE who are bent on destroying all that we hold dear.

Communists, Tories, anti-Australians, profiteers, union smashers, fellow travellers...they can all count on "The Worker" being their implacable enemy.

In the near future, we hope to see plans for "The Worker" develop and take more definite shape, and before our paper has many more birthdays, we expect to be striding forward towards the next ten years with greater achievements on the record.

The march of time is relentless. Since "The Worker's" Diamond Jubilee, in 1950, three Chairmen of Directors have passed on. They were the late C. G. Fallon, H. Boland, and R. J. J. Bukowski. Each was Branch Secretary of the Queensland Branch of the A.W.U. and each knew the tremendous power exerted by "The Worker" as a vehicle for official A.W.U. opinion.

No advertiser could "buy" "The Worker", no enemy of the Union or the A.L.P. could expect anything but unrelenting opposition.

"The Worker" had faltering steps in 1890 because it was young; in 1960 it enters the next decade firmly in stride, to carry on the traditions laid down by men of great vision, love of country and their fellow men.

EDGAR WILLIAMS,
Chairman of Directors and Branch Secretary of the A.W.U.

G. G. GODING,
Vice-Chairman and Branch President of the A.W.U.
CHAIRMAN OF DIRECTORS

EDGAR WILLIAMS,
Branch Secretary of the A.W.U.

BOARD MEMBERS

W. J. DICKSON,
Southern District Secretary.

N. WILLIAMSON,
South-Western District Secretary.

G. C. GODING,
Branch President and Central District Secretary.

GEO. PONT,
Far Northern District Secretary.
Careers of "Worker" Board of Directors

The following short biographies of the Directors of "The Worker" reveal the all round knowledge of Australia, which must be obtained before A.W.U. Officials earn their spurs in the industrial conditions in Australian Workers' Union. The five directors named are members of the State Executive of the A.W.U., which is the largest Branch of the largest Union of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere.

EDGAR WILLIAMS (Chairman)

BORN IN Sydney in 1911, Mr. Wallace Edgar Williams left school at a very early age and began life's battle without having passed through any University.

He came to Queensland in 1929 where he immediately started to make himself known as one of the really fast shearers in the industry, and he followed this arduous occupation for fourteen years, mainly in the West of the State.

The late Mr. Clarrie Fallon was Branch Secretary when, in 1943, Mr. Williams joined the staff of the A.W.U. as Organiser for the Western District, and he soon made his mark, because he was appointed Western District Secretary with headquarters at Longreach, four years later.

From 1947 to 1950, Mr. Williams was District Secretary in the West. Following the death of the late Mr. T. B. Ryan, he took over the Northern District (Mr. F. J. J. Bukowski, he was up-raised to the Branch Secretaryship as Mr. Bukowski's successor just four days after the death of the former Southern District Secretary (Mr. W. J. Dickson). He was District Secretary in the West.

Mr. Dickson, has been a member of the A.L.P. for many years and was a member of the Q.C.E. At the time of his 1960 appointments in Brisbane he was Campaign Director for the State elections at Townsville, having been elected by the affiliated Unions and A.L.P. to the post, to lead Labor's election battle in the North and South Townsville seats.

Mr. Williams was elected to the Q.C.E. by delegates attending the Labor-in-Politics Convention held at Toowoomba (1953) and Mackay (1956) being among the ten chosen at each meeting from a large number of candidates who nominated... an honour not lightly bestowed.

In 1957 Mr. Williams was selected to represent the A.W.U. at the International Labour Organisation conference on metalliferous mining at Geneva, and he toured the United States of America later, for the Union.

He takes a keen interest in all forms of sport and knows the meaning of "front runners" and those that whip in the field, just as well as he recognises a "cobber" when he sees one.

G. G. GODING (Vice-Chairman)

Mr. G. G. Goding, Secretary of the Central District of the A.W.U., is also Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors, and President of the Queensland Branch of the A.W.U.

From the day he started working as a youth in the sugar industry until the present, he has been a continuous member of the Union over which today he presides. As a youth and young man he worked mainly in the sugar industry from books, he spent fourteen years at the end of a cane knife as a cutter in the Far North and Central Districts of Queensland.

He launched out as an Organiser for the Union at 31 years of age at Childers in the Central District, and in 1942 became District Secretary stationed at Bundaberg and a member of the Branch Executive. He became Branch President in 1956 and the Vice-President from Queensland on the Federal Executive Council of the A.W.U., shortly afterwards being elected to the Board of Directors of Labor Papers Ltd. (Sydney).

There is added interest in the last position mentioned, because Mr. Goding holds the 1921-22 Labor Daily Levy which was endorsed by the All-Australian Labor Congress of 1921, and issued by the Queensland Labor Papers Ltd. was the company which controlled the publication of "The World", the afternoon paper in Sydney (which ceased publication), for which the levy held by Mr. Goding was issued.

Mr. Goding has been a member of "The Worker" Board for many years, and Vice-Chairman for four. He joined the Australian Labor Party when cane cutting, and has been a continuous member ever since, and was a member of the Queensland Central Executive for many years, until 1959. He has been very active in all A.L.P. political campaigns, Federal and State, for the past 30 years, and has been campaign director in several electorates a number of times. At present he is Secretary of the Bundaberg Branch of the A.L.P. and the Wide Bay Divisional Executive. Although leading a very busy industrial life, Mr. Goding has devoted time and energy to the Bundaberg Hospital Board of which he was a member for about nine years. During that time very substantial improvements were made and an—his pastoral experience was gained on sheep and cattle stations and for a short period in shearing sheds. In the days when it was very necessary to fight hard for Union rights and in order to retain Industrial Conditions in the early depression years, he was a Union Rep. on the jobs. And in case anyone might think his knowledge of the sugar industry came from books, he spent fourteen years at the end of a cane knife as a cutter in the Far North and Central Districts of Queensland.

W. J. DICKSON

M. R. W. J. DICKSON is Southern District Secretary of the A.W.U. . . . the largest A.W.U. District, numerically, in the Commonwealth.

He was born at O.K. Copper Mines, North Queensland, and is 52 years of age.

After passing scholarship he attended the Brisbane Technical School for three years. He started his working life as a shop assistant, then left for the Western District. Like most A.W.U. executives he has been through the mill!

In ten years in the outback he worked as a truck driver, station hand, cook, wool presser and fencer, and has been all over Queensland with the exception of the South-Western district.

He knows well such places as Boonah, Dajarra, Cloncurry, Bedourie, Urudangi, Longreach, Isisford, Ilfracombe, Charleville, Cairns, Townsville, Mareeba and the Atherton Tableland.

In 1938, Mr. Dickson returned to the City and worked for the State Government (pick and shovel) on Howard Smith's wharf. He has been a topman on a barge which job he occupied when he became temporary Organiser for the A.W.U., commencing these duties in the Allied Works Council project at Cairns.

After 18 months in the Far Northern Area, he was transferred to the Northern Rivers of New South Wales, mostly organising the shop assistants there. After another 12 months, he was transferred back to Brisbane, where he organised the North Side of the City until his appointment as Southern District Secretary on January 23, 1960.

To say that Mr. Dickson knows every inch of Brisbane's network of factories (the owners and managers of most), especially those covered by A.W.U. awards would not be an over-statement. He has worked in every area of the Southern District, and, during the illness of the former District Secretary (Mr. Goding), was described by the late Joe Bukowski as "The Flying Doctor" when he (Mr. Dickson) had to be sent on special missions at short notice. He was stationed for several weeks on one occasion.
New South Wales during an industrial disturbance some years ago, sent there by Mr. Bukowski.

He has been a member of the A.L.P., for years a member of the Q.C.E. (also) and helped Labor candidates into Parliament. In his younger days he played League and Soccer, but nowadays, for relaxation, follows the game that has been associated with the Davis Cup.

NEIL WILLIAMSON

Mr. Neil Williamson, South Western District Secretary of the A.W.U., stationed at Charleville was born in Maryborough, Queensland, in 1905, and among the schools he attended were the old Normal School and Brisbane High, and at Gympie, the Christian Brothers' High.

He represented secondary schools at football, cricket and boxing.

For three years he was a clerk in the Taxation Department, but imbued with a desire for the Queensland outback, he went to Charleville in 1925.

He worked throughout Western Queensland as a station hand, fencer, drover, wool presser, shearer, wool impresser, bridge and builders' labourer, and in shearing sheds in many parts of New South Wales, he worked with the A.W.U. for years and has an enviable record for any Australian to lay claim to.

Mr. Williamson was appointed a temporary Organiser in Winton in 1942 and he officiated in the Longreach, Charleville and Cunnamulla Districts.

He was appointed South Western District Secretary in 1951.

Mr. Williamson has applied himself vigorously to helping Youth Organisations, sporting bodies and amateur boxing.

He is a past chairman of the Charleville Branch of the Bush Children's Health Scheme, and for several years was a member of the Charleville Hospital and Fire Brigade Boards. He is a Justice of the Peace and for years has been an active member of the Charleville Branch of the A.L.P. and a Trustee of the Randolph Bedford Bursary Scholarship Fund. He was a member of the Queensland Central Executive of the A.L.P. and is a member of the Queensland Branch Executive of the A.W.U.

MURRAY PONT

Mr. Geo. Pont, who is Far Northern District Secretary, stationed at Cairns, is another member of the Board of Directors whose career is typical of all A.W.U. men who have come up the hard way.

He was born at Blackall 49 years ago when Queensland outbackers were flexing their muscles in anticipation of the approaching years when Labor would govern the State. He worked as a drover, station hand, wool presser, sheared hand, lorry driver and at general labouring until after the big strike in 1930.

Following that boil up, things became extremely tough for a lot of people, and he went out to Mt. Isa where he worked on the surface and underground for five years.

They were hard times, but they were cutting out an industrial future for Mr. Pont—to be turned later to the advantage of the Union, which draws its experienced and efficient men only from those who have stood up to stress and test.

Because of bad health, Mr. Pont left Mt. Isa and went to Mackay where he worked on the rock drills in the quarry and on the construction of the Mackay Harbour. Later he entered the sugar industry at North Eton.

When he became an Organiser for the Australian Workers' Union his method of travel was per "push bike"—the medium by which many an A.W.U. District was organised in earlier days. Subsequently, Mr. Pont became Secretary of the Western District, station political at Longreach, and later Secretary of the Far Northern District at Cairns, and it is doubtful if there is a better informed man about this part of Queensland.

In 1950, Mr. Pont was appointed President of the Queensland Branch of the A.W.U. and Queensland Representative on the Federal Executive Council of the A.W.U. in the same year. Last, but not least, he has always been a member of the Queensland Workers' Union, and a staunch supporter of the Australian Labor Party.

A. A. Calwell, M.H.R.

My warmest greetings are extended to "The Worker" which for 70 years has carried the message of the Labor Party and the Trade Union Movement to every settled part of Queensland's 688,000 square miles. It has featured the important statements and the inspiring messages of all the Leaders of the Labor Party and the Trade Union Movement to every settled part of Queensland's 688,000 square miles. It has featured the important statements and the inspiring messages of all the Leaders of the Labor Party and the Trade Union Movement to every settled part of Queensland's 688,000 square miles.

Those who carried the banner of freedom on behalf of the toiling masses for liberty, for wage justice and for social betterment have passed in procession, and when their task was done, passed to the beyond.

We are grateful to them all. Fisher, Ryan, and Theodore, and after them McCormack, Forgan-Smith, Cooper and Hanlon on the political front, with McDonald, Riordan and Fallon who played their part too on the political and industrial field, joining the goodly array.

We remember them all. We remember the past, and Buckowski played on behalf of the Australian Workers' Union and we do not forget Collings or Bedford, Larcombe, Hynes, Helly, or any of the rest who struggled and laboured earlier and left their mark on the course of Australia's development.

Quite a number of those who edited and contributed to the pages of "The Worker" were my friends, particularly the former editor, John Hanlon, and the present, Jim McCarter.

We live in different days and perhaps television and radio have to some extent supplanted the written and published word for the propagation of ideas. But the need for newspapers such as "The Worker" is as great as ever.

Whatever the changes of recent years and whatever the future may hold I wish "The Worker" well in its next 70 years, and know that it will continue serving the working class of Queensland and the people of Queensland generally.

"The Worker" served the State of Queensland faithfully and well when it was a colony, and it has served Queensland in the same fashion since the formation of the Federation some sixty years ago.

May it continue as it began, and may those who come after see the successful completion of the work of the Labor Party and the Trade Union Movement, which is to see the establishment of a society based on production for use and not production for profit.

We have advanced along the road to political equality, economic equality and social equality, but we have not won the final victory. That will come as sure as the sun will rise on the Queensland coast.

I wish the controlling Board, the Editor, the staff and all members of the A.W.U. well in their great efforts, and every success in the years to come. With these good wishes go my own personal regards.

Melbourne


1st March, 1960.
N.S.W. PREMIER'S MESSAGE

R. J. Heffron, M.L.A.

My SINCERE and fraternal congratulations to "The Worker" upon the attainment of its 70th birthday.

I can think of no more fitting tribute than to quote the words of Abraham Lincoln:—

"Conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are equal..."

These words, of course, were used in Lincoln's address at Gettysburg. They applied to the birth of the American nation.

But they so eloquently epitomise the true spirit of Democracy that they may also be applied with equal force to the birth and preservation of any of our freedoms, one of which is the Press.

Particularly is this so in relation to the reason behind the creation of "The Worker" 70 years ago, before no paper in Australia has done more to foster the great ideal perpetuated in Lincoln's simple but famous words.

"The Worker" has ever been in the forefront of the long and successful fight to improve the conditions of those to whom its name is dedicated.

In its earliest days, it was largely responsible for the formation of the Labor Party in Queensland.

In 1892—not long after the paper commenced publication—T. J. Ryan and G. J. Hall were elected to the Queensland Parliament on the Labor platform.

With J. P. Hoolan and T. Glassy, who declared for Labor and resigned from the Tory Griffith Ministry, they constituted the first distinct Labor Party in the Queensland Assembly. Three years later, there were 16 Labor men, including Andrew Fisher, in the Queensland Parliament.

The growth of the party since then is history.

Although eminently successful today, there was a time in the long ago when, like so many other Labor newspapers, "The Worker" was in danger of going out of existence.

Tenaciously, it fought to survive, and, in the end, it won the battle.

That it did so, was in large measure due to the efforts of many of the brilliant journalists who filled its columns.

One of these men I remember particularly well—Henry Boote—a great writer who, in the early days of this century, was your Editor.

Later, he became the Editor of "The Worker" in New South Wales. To such men as Boote, "The Worker" owes its success today.

Let us not forget them as we celebrate the paper's 70th birthday.

Again, I extend to all concerned in its production my heartfelt congratulations.

R. J. HEFFRON, New South Wales Premier and Minister for Education.

JOHN DUGGAN'S MESSAGE

EVEN decades have gone since "The Worker" began what was then a highly formidable mission in fighting for a place in the sun for the toilers of Queensland.

Throughout those long years the paper has done a splendid job, and it is a great pleasure to join with the great band of well-wishers now congratulating "The Worker" on having achieved its 70th birthday.

In these days of syndicated journalism, when the major newspapers of Australia are virtually under monopoly control, and have vast financial resources at their command, the survival of a journal, particularly if it is a Union one opposed to the principles of monopoly capitalism, is hedged round with difficulties.

It says much for the enterprise, faith and tenacity of the management of "The Worker", and for the talent of a succession of able editors, that the written message of the Australian Workers' Union to its vast membership throughout this State has been maintained continuously over 70 years on such a high plane.

In order to protect the interests and well-being of the worker, it is of tremendous importance that a Union journal should provide reliable and factual information, and in this respect "The Worker" has fulfilled its function in a markedly high degree.

"The Worker" set out its charter in its first issue on March 1, 1890, when it said "it claims the right to work and live for all, and denies to any the right to take advantage of the need of another."

That charter has been honoured in performance over the years.

I wish "The Worker" continued success, and hope its influence for good will continue in the coming years, and that greater benefits for A.W.U. members in particular, and the Labor Movement in general, will distinguish the paper's future years of service in the field of political-industrial journalism.

-JOHN E. DUGGAN, Leader of the Opposition, Queensland.

A. R. G. HAWKE'S MESSAGE

I AM HAPPY to offer congratulations to "The Worker" on its 70th birthday and also on the wonderful service which it has given through the years to the cause of working class progress in both the industrial and political fields.

"The Worker" has also been a most effective advocate for a true dinkum Australian outlook and in this has provided an effective antidote to the servility of many daily newspapers in their efforts to develop the thinking of Australian people along lines which are certainly not pro-Australian.

The value of "The Worker" to the cause of true democracy in Australia has been outstanding.

In the "90's" the paper played a mighty part in helping forward the industrial and political organizing efforts which led to the successful establishment of the all-inclusive Labor Movement as we know it in Australia today.

And who of those of us who were privileged to read "The Worker" during the two military conscription referendums in 1916 and 1917 will ever forget the inspiring articles written by Henry Boote and others against conscription, and the brilliant cartoons.

So once again, hearty congratulations and best wishes for the future.

A. R. G. HAWKE, Leader of the Opposition and Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party in Western Australia.
TOM DOUGHERTY’S REMARKS

I AM VERY PLEASED TO CONGRATULATE THE WORKER UPON REACHING THE Ripe AGE OF SEVENTY YEARS, FIRSTLY, BECAUSE I AM A NATIVE QUEENSLANDER, AND “THE WORKER” HAS BEEN KNOWN TO ME SINCE CHILDHOOD DAYS, SECONDLY, BECAUSE I HAD THE HONOURS OF BEING NUMBERED AMONG ITS BOARD OF DIRECTORS IN THE NOT TOO DISTANT YEARS THAT ARE GONE, AND THIRDLY, BECAUSE IT IS PART OF THE GREAT INSTITUTION FOR good WHICH THE COMMONWEALTH KNOWS AS THE AUSTRALIAN WORKERS’ UNION.

Without “The Worker”, no one knows how this great State would have been organised from the trade union point of view. Without “The Worker” the framework of Labor never would have been established.

“The Worker” was always the bulwark against destructive elements; it never lagged in its defence of the highest principles of mateship and Australianism; it never failed to take up the cudgels against any foe contemptible enough to bring itself within the scope of “Worker” attack.

Many of our greatest politicians and trade union leaders came to the top because “The Worker” pleaded their cause and supported them. Some of those men later fell by the wayside, but that was because their hats became too small for their heads, and their belief in themselves far out-weighted their gratitude to the Union or Party which made them.

Some of my greatest friends have been closely allied with “The Worker” and its extraordinary growth, and I hope that in the years ahead the work that they performed will materialise also into greater progress for our Northern Worker” as it is also officially known.

“The Worker” reaches into the most isolated parts of this enormous State but wherever it goes, those who read it may know that it always champions the cause of Justice, and as far as the A.W.U. membership is concerned, its pages will always be used to fight their battles and defend their rights.

As a Queenslander and friend, I wish “The Worker” sustained progress in the years ahead, and as General Secretary of the A.W.U. I know that the Union as a whole has in this State, an ally ready to pit itself against anyone or any organisation that would threaten Australian standards and traditions, because THEY are the keystones on which our Union was established.

Sydney,
T. P. N. Dougherty, General Secretary, Australian Workers’ Union.
March 1st, 1960.

H. O. DAVIS’ MESSAGE

My congratulations to “The Worker” on completing 70 years of unparalleled service to the Labor Movement, the principles of Trade Unionism and the unceasing fight for the emancipation of the workers of Australia.

First published on March 1, 1890 (Eight-Hours Day), by the efforts of a small band of dedicated and inspired men, “The Worker” has grown, in spite of many vicissitudes, to its present stature as a bulwark against the forces of capitalism—a living memorial to the sacrifices of its founders and supporters, and the ability and loyalty of Australian Labor journalism.

Triumphant over the unrelenting attacks of its enemies—both subversive elements within and vested interests without—it flaunts the banner of Labor, proudly, for all to see and heed.

CLIVE STONEHAM’S MESSAGE

IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE THAT I JOIN IN CONGRATULATING “THE WORKER” ON ATTAINING ITS 70th BIRTHDAY. All of us have birthdays but, in the case of “The Worker” it is appropriate that we should recognise this occasion as a very special one. It is timely that we should review the past 70 years, in order to gain that proper perspective in our approach to current and future responsibilities.

Trite it is that I should remind you that we live in a rapidly changing world in which the forces of Labor must be ever vigilant and alert, if we are to retain political leadership of the people. Modern conditions make it necessary that we adapt our methods to meet the times, but our allegiance to the basic principles which guided the pioneers must remain inviolate.

The record of “The Worker” is one of which we are all proud. Many publications have been started and, after a brief glow of brightness on the literary firmament, have passed into oblivion. Not so “The Worker”.
but who, when actively occupying our present scene, dedicated their efforts to the advancement of Trade Unionism. May we prove worthy successors to them.

From our appreciation of the struggles of the past, we pass to our assessment of the future.

It is good for all Australians to be made conscious of the great progress already made and the almost incredible wealth of resources still awaiting development for the common good. Queensland certainly should have a glorious future, if Labor is elected to govern. I am confident that in the years ahead "The Worker" will retain its prestige and reputation as a prominent advocate in Australia of freedom, equality, humanitarianism and progress.


M. R. O'HALLORAN'S MESSAGE

M. R. O'HALLORAN, M.H.A.

IT IS WITH a deep sense of gratitude and with the greatest pleasure that I tender my good wishes to "The Worker" on its 70th birthday . . . gratitude for the magnificent part played by the paper in the struggle to improve the lot of the under-privileged in taking the truth on political and economic issues to the people throughout the vast State of Queens-

land and beyond, thus contributing in no small measure to the success of the Labor Movement . . . and pleasure at the fact that the journal, which from the modest beginning 70 years ago, has grown in strength and influence until to-day it occupies an honoured place in the homes not only of Queenslanders, but also those in many other parts of Australia who are working for social justice.

—M. R. O'HALLORAN, Leader of the South Australian Opposition.

* * *

TASMANIAN PREMIER'S MESSAGE

Eric Reece, M.H.A.

IT GIVES me pleasure, as Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party in Tasmania, to join in congratulating "The Worker" on reaching the venerable age of three score years and ten. All in the Labor movement know of and appreciate the manner in which this journal has fought fearlessly for the rights of the worker and the trade unionist, and for the ideals of the Party during the past 70 years.

"The Worker" has ceaselessly drawn attention to the evils of monopoly, and to the manner in which big business has taken more than its fair share from the pay packet of the average citizen. It has been a continual advocate of the cause of Labor, and in carrying out this policy it has exercised a great influence upon Australian national thought and made a valuable contribution in the cause of democracy in this country.

No journal in the Commonwealth has consistently given such a forthright denunciation of all forms of community injustice, and while newspapers of the calibre of "The Worker" remain there will always be a voice through which the Australian worker can draw attention to his needs, and express in clear terms his objections to the many forms of exploitation brought about by the capitalistic system and cultivated by the manipulation of monopolists and big business interests.

Many congratulations to "The Worker" on attaining its 70th birthday, and very best wishes for a successful future in the cause of true democracy, and justice for all who work and produce the wealth of this nation by their physical and mental efforts.

—ERIC REECE, Premier of Tasmania.

"AUSTRALIA WILL BE THERE."
The "Worker's" Growth

At a Time when so many Labor journals have been disappearing from the newspaper field—several important ones have gone during the past decade—it is very encouraging to know that the pioneer cooperative Labor journal of Australia, "The Worker" of Queensland, is having its 70th anniversary.

It was in 1891 that Australia's great bush poet,Henry Lawson, wrote "Too Old To Rat", published that year in "The Worker". In that memorable work he wrote the lines:

"The fighting, dying 'Boomerang' Against the daily Press; The infant 'Worker' holding out . . ."

Well, "The infant 'Worker" grew into a lusty child, and cut its manhood teeth during some of the most dangerous years of our nation's development.

"The Worker" was foremost in the battle for White Australia for it knew that employers preferred coloured, slave labour to whitemen's; it took up the cudgels against the Queensland National Bank and rocked the nation by sensational disclosures which were to bring a safely ensconced Government into the spotlight of scandal. It was not a pretty picture.

"The Worker" fought for the entry of Queensland into the Commonwealth partnership of States, and in the first World War years, it was out in the van in the combat against conscription.

"The Worker" fought with the Ryan Government against the political tyranny of William Morris Hughes, the former Labor Leader and Prime Minister who turned renegade, and sought to dragoon all men of military age into the services for fighting in foreign lands.

Up through the decades, it has consistently supported the cause of freedom of speech and assembly and the Australian Labor Party, and has been instrumental in winning elections by the publication of material which was banned by anti-Labor publications.

Through booms and depressions, the Queensland "Worker" has been tireless in its advocacy for justice, and has not wavered if the fight had to be carried into quarters where once trusted Labor leaders were strutting the stage as political and industrial apostates.

Carrying out the policy of the Australian Workers' Union to the letter, "The Worker" field and upholds the highest principles of conciliation and arbitration, but if the battle became more practical in the industrial field itself, "The Worker" was there, putting the case for the men, as for example, the 1956 shearing dispute.

As far as we have been able to ascertain, Dunstan House, Elizabeth Street, Brisbane, is the only place where a complete file of "The Worker" is retained, and many a University student has come to this building for research purposes.

A perusal of old "Worker" files makes absorbing reading, because in them is contained the history of Queensland and much of Australia's.

The first issue of "The Worker", which was published on March 1, 1890, is without doubt a marvellous production, having regard to the conditions prevailing and the miracles of industrial and political reforms that have since been accomplished.

In crystal clear tones that resounded throughout the length and breadth of the land the tocsin of working-class organisation was sounded, and in the same issue, with a clarity that astonishes the most erudite scholars of the age, the draft of a great Industrial and Political Movement was laid down, which is almost without fault or weakness, and which has since been a never-failing guide for all who have followed in the same pathway.

Despite the fact that contributing to the first and other early issues of "The Worker" there were many writers whose names have since been immortalised in the annals of English literature, the official organ of the employing section of those days gave the infant "Worker" but six months to live, and here on this seventieth anniversary those "in apostolic succession" are able to contemplate with some satisfaction that the pompous news organ that expressed that opinion has long since been forgotten; and whilst the names of Francis Adams, of...
Henry Lawson, of William Lane, of Charles Mackay, and others still shine in the literary firmament; those of their traducers have been long since covered by the thick dusts of oblivion.

The publication of "The Worker" in those memorable and historic days was an inspiration to the down-trodden workers in every trade and calling, and the story of their achievements, particularly those of the great pastoral struggles of Western Queensland, is an epic not surpassed in this or any other age of human achievements.

The celebration of our seventieth birthday anniversary has a particular significance because in this issue a new chairman of Directors, Edgar Williams, steps into the picture.

He is the new Queensland Branch Secretary of the Australian Workers' Union, and he succeeds such notable men as the late Clarrie Fallon, Harold Boland, and the last but not least, the late R. J. J. ("Joe") Bukowski.

All of those who have gone before, devoted unflagging attention to "The Worker" though without doubt Clarrie Fallon and Joe Bukowski presided over the Board of Directors during relatively momentous periods.

It was in Fallon's regime that Dunstan House was completed, and in Bukowski's that "The Worker" weathered a particularly violent financial "hurricane" which revealed the strength of the A.W.U. as an impregnable "backstop" and, later, the willingness of bankers to "see the light".

Working men and women in Queensland and Australia have reason to be thankful for the sacrifices made by working-class pioneers in their efforts to build a nation wherein social justice would be on a plane higher than any country in the world, and wherein the working and living standards would enable men to live in peace and security. Men of vision helped to form the trade unions and the Australian Labor Party, and men of great wisdom were responsible for bringing into being "The Worker".

Many barriers barred the way to success, but they were surmounted one by one as the industrial and political stalwarts of Labor advanced from goal to goal.

Prior to 1890, papers with strong democratic leanings, including "The Boomerang", a Brisbane periodical, had been denouncing the oppressive conditions under which the shearers and station hands, as well as other classes of workers were being compelled to work in Queensland. But feelings of resentment in regard to intolerable conditions became more and more intense until finally they crystallised into a resolve that the toilers of Queensland must have their own newspaper to champion their cause, and to demand a reasonable measure of justice and freedom for all.

About this time there was much excitement over the employment of non-union shearers, and the necessity for a journal to place before the public the viewpoint of the unionists was recognised.

The first meeting of the Board of Trustees was held on February 14, 1890, the Board consisting of Gilbert Casey (chairman), Albert Hinchcliffe (treasurer), Charles Seymour (secretary), Matt. Reid, and W. Mabbott.

Choice of editor went to William Lane, then one of the outstanding way, and did so for decades until the workers in other States were able to organise in strength.

It was "The Worker" of Queensland which was instrumental in taking the gospel of the toiler into the highways and byways, and carried the battle against the enemies of Labor. It was a lone voice then, but it had brave men behind it, and, thanks to the A.W.U., their fight is commemorated to-day in the modern eight-storied stone building, which stands in Elizabeth Street, Brisbane, and houses "The Worker", the Australian Workers' Union Branch and Southern District Offices, and a host of private tenants.

The story of "The Worker's" progress against unprecedented obstacles and against the unscrupulous scheming of capitalistic and reactionary forces provides one of the finest romances of the age.

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figures in the Labor Movement in Queensland who had previously edited "The Boomerang."

The last task confronting William Lane was to secure an office and buy the necessary equipment. Lack of ready cash made it impossible to purchase a printing machine, and in consequence the first issue was machine-printed at an outside printing office.

From a single sheet, a 16-page quarto, the pages being about one-fourth size of the ordinary newspaper pages, and this was sold for threepence a copy.

The late "Charlie" Seymour, in an account of the early days of "The Australian Worker" and the first issue, after coming off the press, had been carried round to the original office, situated in Walford Street, and had then been folded by the hands of volunteers.

All arrangements had been made for the paper to come out on Eight-hour Day, March 1, but at the last moment the newsboys, for some indefinite reason, refused to handle it. Not to be baulked, however, volunteer workers, using a handcart borrowed from the "Boomerang" office, took copies of "The Worker" and managed to dispose of every available copy, either along the route of the Eight-hour procession or on the Exhibition Ground, where the sports were being held.

Many were sold at advanced prices, and it is said that as much as 2s. 6d. was paid for a copy in some cases. "Charlie" Seymour also relates how, when the second issue was brought out, the papers were folded and carried out by the volunteers, who humped them in sacks to the Post Office in a heavy downpour of rain, but even this was not enough to dampen their ardour.

Two months later the office was transferred to what is described as a "humpy" in Raff Street. The first year of the paper's life was turbulent in an industrial sense, and towards the end of that year the maritime strike caused a financial upheaval, which was followed in the ensuing 12 months by the big bush strike.

The late Albert Hinchcliffe (the first Manager, and later Manager of "The Boomerang", Sydney), in reviewing the history of "The Worker", said the enemies of Labor had declared that the new paper was nothing but an "additional agency for the stirring up of industrial strife"; but this he emphatically denied, asserting that the early issues showed definitely that every effort had been made to secure a peaceful settlement of industrial difficulties.

Eight months after its first publication "The Worker" was issued fortnightly, its price being reduced to one penny. In March, 1892, the office was moved from Raff Street to a two-storey brick cottage at the intersection of Phillip and Gloucester Streets, and in this building the printing machine for "The Worker" was installed.

For two years and four months William Lane had edited "The Worker" with ability and good judgement, but towards the end of that time his plans for the setting up of the new Australia colony in Paraguay had taken possession of his thoughts to the exclusion of all else.

The result was his resignation as editor, having written his last article for "The Worker" in July, 1892. Ernest Blackwell was appointed to succeed him in the editorial chair, and William Lane set sail for South America.

Shortly before this, the paper had been issued as a weekly broadsheet of four pages, and this was being produced entirely by the staff of "The Worker", and by the use of its own plant. Its value as a champion of the cause of the workers was not understood by those who had taken possession of the paper. An attempt was made for funds to enable additional plant to be purchased for the production of a paper double the size of the first issue, and after nearly £1,000 had been collected the desired enlargement was effected.

In October, 1892, "The Worker" benefited to the extent of £700 from the will of John Leopold Wretling, a Cairns carpenter—a unique incident in the history of Australian Labor journalism—and this was a material help to the cause of unionism in the struggle that followed.

In consequence of the prevailing depression early in 1893, the Board of Trustees felt themselves obliged, though with the greatest reluctance, to revert to the fortnightly issue and to discontinue the front page cartoon, which then was a popular feature of the paper.

Such a storm of remonstrance was raised, however, that the big bush unions at their annual meetings gave guarantees to cover the initial costs that it was decided to go back to the weekly issue and to restore the cartoon.

Another editorial change took place in September, 1893, following upon the resignation of Ernest Blackwell, who, during his tenure of office, had had the satisfaction of seeing 16 pledged members of the Labor Party returned to the Queensland Parliament, E. Blackwell was succeeded by William Guy Higgs, and "Charlie" Seymour filled the sub-editor's chair.

Charles Seymour was largely responsible for the formation of the Australian Federation of Labor, also, and he was its secretary in 1889, the year before "The Worker" was born. It was just about this time that "Touchstone's" delightful column of comment on passing events, in which free rein was given to humour and satire, commenced to appear in "The Worker". This continued to be an attractive feature for a number of years.

Under W. G. Higgs' editorship "The Worker" made history by a series of trenchant and analytical articles on finance and economics arising out of the great banking crisis of 1893.

During the same editorial regime there was another bush strike of gigantic proportions, during which attempts were made by various devices to trap unionists, and particular efforts were made to incapacitate those directly in control of "The Worker".

It was in Higgs' time too, that an attempt was made to bribe "The Worker" into supporting legislation in favour of Tattersall's sweeps. The attempt, however, was frustrated, and although the matter was the subject of a Parliamentary inquiry, the newspaper was completely exonerated.

Having won a seat in the Queensland Parliament, Higgs resigned the editorship of "The Worker" in April, 1899, and after a brief interval, during which C. Seymour was acting editor, Frank Kerina was appointed to the editorial position in June of the same year.

It was in 1899 that Queensland Labor won distinction by the party securing the reins of government in the State—the first Labor Government in the world.

Kenna retained the editorial position for two and a half years, when, however, he gained a seat in Parliament and resigned. H. E. Boote ("Touchstone") then took charge as editor and continued in control for nine years.
The late Jack Hanlon was born near Ballarat (as were Labor Prime Ministers Jim Scullin and John Curtin) and it was a coincidence that he should have been succeeded by the present editor who had been at St. Patrick’s College, Ballarat (Jack Hanlon’s old school) with a younger brother of his predecessor!

Following Hinchcliffe as manager was Tim Donovan, who succeeded his predecessor also as manager of “The Australian Worker”, Sydney, in January, 1926, after something like 34 years on the staff of the Queensland “Worker”.

Following the resignation of Mac Ross in 1943 (who became General Manager of “Truth” & Sportsman Limited) the late Jack Moir (Scottish-born), was appointed to succeed, and a son of Clarrie Fallon, C. E. Fallon, became secretary to the company the following year.

About the year 1910, Moir was organiser for the Amalgamated Workers’ Association, and no man played a more determined part in placing the A.W.U. in a strong position after the two bodies affiliated. He became secretary at Cairns later.

After Moir’s retirement (Jack Moir had a grand industrial history behind him in the A.W.U. and elsewhere), D. J. Doyle was appointed and later, the late J. M. Comrie, who occupied the position from April 1, 1953 until his illness—Comrie died after resigning in March, 1956. He had been on the old “Daily Standard” on the journalistic side, and later was publicity officer to the late Forgan Smith when “Forgan” was Premier.

THE FIRST A.L.F. EXECUTIVE, 1890

Back Row: GILBERT CASEY, W. MABBOTT, M. FANNING, J. C. STEWART

Front Row: R. MORRISON, CHARLES McDonald (Chairman), ALBERT HINCHCLIFFE

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The present manager, J. A. Ferguson, who was appointed in 1956, is perhaps the youngest man to occupy the position. He had been accountant for the Company before his elevation to the managership, and served in the Second World War.

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Front Row: R. MORRISON, CHARLES McDonald (Chairman), ALBERT HINCHCLIFFE
THE WORKER

THE first issue of "The Worker" was a memorable one. In those dim days there were no linotypes; even the paragraphs had to be picked out and formed into words, every word placed into sentences, and every sentence into paragraphs, and so on. There were no printing machines, only tedious "one-at-a-time" sheets to be passed through the flat-bed printing press, which was completely blind. But the work went on, and the first issue appeared as scheduled, but not without incident.

We have laid the foundation of Freedom, that of one article which appealed very strongly to the workers to support the Australian Federation of Labor, the foundation-stone, as it was, of the present Australian Labor Party. We reprinted that article now, so that readers may discern better what it meant.

"Workers," it said, "we are in a young country and upon us rests its future. Climate and union have done a great deal for us, but it has not been done all. The fiercest part of the fight, and the most costly, that of the hard-working, honest, and in the main, the poor worker, is yet to be done.

"There was another article which read as follows:

"Not until the workman shall tear away the veil of ignorance which covers him with an inexorable pall, can he reap the just rewards of his labour.

"The revolution with which our country is pregnant, and of which the next will see the birth, is a revolution of intellect.

"It grows with the education of the masses. It will attain its zenith when men, not content with blindly following others, will do for themselves which truth tells them is right, and which intelligence tells them is best.

"Blindly following, now one leader, now another, the worker is played upon by men who hide from him the real position in which he stands, to prevent him from knowing that he is the greatest factor in the history of civilization."

Then, there was the article about the gospel or organisation. It read:

"The workers of Australia, not by petty trades or in jealous sections, by scores and dozens only, but in great comrade masses, by hundreds and thousands and by tens of thousands — and Queensland leads!"

"While the men of the South have been talking the men of the North have been doing; have formulated a Federation scheme and are coming together like flood waters that run a banker, like the lightnings and thunderclouds on a sweltering summer-night.

"The bushman has stretched out his hands to clasp in union with the tradesman of the towns and the dweller by the sea. The miner hesitates, but the miner is true as a brother, as his arm is strong, and the miner will not be the last to sign the pledge of industrial brotherhood. The wharf labourer sees to the fare and their dockers to get their dinner. We must and will add to it more and more by having it as our aim to be ever in the vanguard of the army which writes on its standard "Freedom, Equality, Justice."

"The [Extracts from the First Issue]

"The Worker" of March 1, 1890.
near cousins, the seamen, are not far off. The artisan marchers in under banded condition have borne the brunt of many a bitter battle, and women come also to fight as comrades for early closing and the right to live. With them too, is the huge phalanx of the 'unskilled', which itself is an army, and which can be recruited until it must crush the entire manhood of the State.

"To all these has the call gone forth to stand together, and to act together, so that the Australian worker may not be the silent outcast in the Australian land that of right is his; so that he may be able to win and maintain that he has won for himself and for his fellows; so that he may be able to secure redress for industrial wrongs through the legislature from which as yet he is almost entirely excluded. And many have answered, and all will answer, for Australian Labor is rousing everywhere and Queensland indeed leads.

"If you doubt it, think that this journal you read has been started and is owned and controlled by the organised and associated workers of Queensland, that its mission is to preach with fearless tongue the gospel of organisation, and to give out the cause of the workers in the worthy skirmishes of the industrial war.

"It is perhaps a little thing to start a paper. Papers are spawned like ova from a fish, with much the same percentage of survival. There are few old business men who have not had more or less experience that way, and with few exceptions they have burnt their fingers.

"Labor papers in the southern parts of the continent, and in Queensland also, have come and gone till infan
tile mortality seems for them the rule, without even a saving clause.

"Nevertheless 'The Worker' has come—never to stay—or rather will be as long as it stays the most widely circulated and universally read of any publication in Queensland.

The associated workers of Queensland, thousands of whom are denied the franchise, all of whom are placed by the property-vote in an inferior position to those whose ability to grab land is accepted by the law-makers as a hallmark of intelligence, have done with a few paltry pounds what no 'captains of industry' could do with as many thousands.

"Here is a journal in your hand, which every member of the co-operating societies is reading also, which is produced for him at cost price, which is managed for him by trustees elected by him, which is conducted for him by an editor whose services he can dispense with at any time, which is circulated for him among thousands of others who are thus brought into touch with the great movement having for its object the elevation of the worker to his rightful place in the industrial world.

"Here is a journal which has already a subscription list of near 13,000 assurred and prepaid and which when it goes through the continent with its stately independence and its bold, free talking will have 20,000 at the very least.

"Here is a journal which before its second issue will have its own office and its own plant, and agents wherever the workers are organised through the means with which every one of them is provided. As all this is being done with a capital of barely £100.

[We observe here, that 'The Worker' building to-day would be worth a bit more than £100, and the Union's assets colossal.]

The first issue also contained the reminder that Australia did not wait the miseries of the Old World brought into our country (a reminder which could well be renewed, especially to new arrivals who might desire to bring their feuds with them).

Here is what the article says:

"It is against the conditions which have crushed down our brothers, the workers of Europe, that Australian Labor is marshalling its legions. The Gospel of Organisation is only a form of the universal gospel of discontent.

"It is not good enough to drift on to the slums and the work-house. It is not good enough to build here a nation whose head of gold be the private property of monopolists, and whose feet of clay shall be crimson with the blood of ill-paid toilers. The workers are to be its beasts of burden, and the rich its aristocrats, and there is to be no thought for the helpless, and sympathy for the poor. Few of them see, like Chief Justice Lilley, that the actual root itself in the lives of the people. But they will see it soon if the workers only stand together, if to skilled and unskilled, men and women, to all army of the workers, there comes a consciousness of the great issue at stake, and a realisation of the value of organisation.

"The Worker" first came to light on the very day the workers of the Colony (not then a Commonwealth!) were celebrating Eight Hours Day . . . March 1, 1890.

Referring to the day's demonstration "The Worker" said that it emphasised two facts—that it was absolutely necessary to change the day out of the wet season into the dry, if eight-hour men and women really meant to be enjoying themselves; and that it would be most advisable to fix on a week-day instead of on a month day for future celebrations. A Monday holiday was suggested.

The demand for the statute day should be made an integral part of eight-hour demonstration programmes all over the country, said "The Worker", and the eight-hour demonstration idea should be popularised as a means to the inevitable end in every possible way.

"We should have a common Eight-Hour Day for Australia if possible, but for Queensland at least. And we particularly want a day likely to be fine," said the article.

"Why not have Gympie, Charters Towers, Rockhampton, and every other town, great or small, and every group of workers in the country celebrating the jubilee of Labor together?"

As an alternative to a Monday holiday, "The Worker" proposed that the holiday be on a Saturday so as to emphasise Eight-hour men's collective disapproval of late hour shopping.

"Those who are attempting to break the early closing movement might just as well have the gage of battle flung at them early as late," said "The Worker". "This would fling it in a way that would itself be half the battle.

"For the Government would be bound to proclaim as a holiday every-where the demonstration day. The jubilee Labor everywhere; the weight of the demonstration would soon annihilate all opposition and lend immense impetus to the movement for the
Poets, Cartoonists, Writers

ROUNDABOUT the years "The Worker" was born, and for several decades later (and to some extent now in 1960), "saying poetry" was always popular among men carrying their swags, in the tented camps, on the mining fields, at station homestead dances or at shearing shed concerts under the old kerosene lamp.

While anyone could recite a poem, dance a jig, play a fiddle or accordion, or rattle teaspins in the neck of a bottle to accompany a songster, was sure of a round of applause, it was the 'reciter'—the man who told of Australia's history and folk lore in rhyme, sometimes his own efforts, but mostly those of our early poets—who could always touch the strings of people's hearts. They could fire the imagination, for there was a 'cause' in what they were doing.

"The Worker" was always a medium through which Australia's political and industrial movements expressed themselves, and they did. Numbered among them was Henry Lawson.

Lawson later blossomed into one of Australia's greatest poets—certainly the most outstanding in depicting in simple language all could understand, the true meaning of mateship, and around people's hearts. They could

While anyone who could sing, "The Worker" was always a reciter. Anyone who sang the praises of the "underdog". We must always recognise the fact that all the industrial forces and resources of this colony are not organised; and it is well for the interested to remember that they are not. Whilst we would not on our side,

Brentnall's only claim to fame is that his name remains in the dusty pages of "Hansard" as a bitter opponent of Labor and the reforms it introduced, and of the principles of democracy which were so clearly stated and so eloquently championed by the "scum of the earth", as he so bitterly dubbed them during the course of his remarks.

An imposing monument in Hyde Park, Sydney, is one of the nation's tributes to the rebel, Henry Lawson, who, 50 years ago, was a member of his class and who expressed in verse his objections to the bad industrial conditions of that period.

Brentnall's reference to "The Worker", in which was published "Freedom on the Wallaby", was during a debate on a motion brought before the Legislative Council on July 14, 1891, expressing thanks to all, including the police, military and volunteers, "for the energy and ability with which they executed the services which they were called upon to perform in relation to the suppression of the said attempts to subvert the reign of law and order".

In the course of his remarks, Brentnall, inter alia, said:

I think it is desirable that we should review, at any rate, some of those causes, and then we shall be better able to appreciate the great deliverance the colony has had. I will therefore ask your indulgence whilst I try to point out what has been going on for some time past about the result which was witnessed in February and March last. The Labor Federation of this colony, called by a wider designation, and intended, according to its designation, to compete.

The politician who objected to the

WALLABY—was F. T. Brentnall, a journalist, and one-time editor of the "Telegraph", a champion of vested interests, and it was his minority and vitriolic speech the hostility of the squatters to "The Worker" and the men it represented, and who remained in the Queensland Legislative Council, opposing reforms that have since become the law of the land, right to the published undemocratic Chamber in Queensland in 1921.

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The politician who objected to the...
My object in bringing these extracts before your attention is that you may see the kind of doctrine that has been taught to these people by their official organ, and, mark you, every member of a union is expected to subscribe to this paper, and if I mistake not the union is charged with his subscription, so that it is compulsory upon every member to take and read the matter which is put in this, their official organ. Going on a little farther to the question of what just division of the common wealth proposed to bring about, conciliation between Labor and Capital, no thoughtful worker admits for a single moment that the existing relationship of employer and employed can possibly be made permanent. The power by which one man is able to refuse to work to others, to stay production unless it will yield him a profit, to dictate the producers of all wealth for leave to live upon the land, which of right should be common to all, is a fundamental wrong, which sooner or later must be extracted by the roots.

That is one of the principles, and I will take you on to another: -

"But it is of little use to agree on this or anything else so long as the workers permit themselves to be overtaxed out of their preponderant share in government.

"You will see competition is to cease, and its cessation is to be accomplished through the agency of legislation:

Whatever people think of Government as constituted all must recognise that it has considerable authority, and, to a very great extent, can be used for or against any interest. Even William Morris admits this when he contends that Parliament must ultimately be a mere registering office for the legislation of the decrees of the organisation of labour, just as at present it is a mere machine for registering the decrees of the employing classes under the guise of democracy.

So we are working on towards the platform of this Labor Federation. They are desirous that competition should be abolished by means of legislation, and the Legislature is simply to be a power to declare what Labor may decree outside of Parliament.

Now we come to another issue a month later:

Wherever civilisation goes it carries its disease with it; misery follows as wealth increases and populations grow. It is not that we do not produce enough; it is not that we do not strive. The whole world not merely

misery and want and degradation until we sweep it away. The land that we must live on is held by the machinery which must use to live is held by the profitmonger; capitalism holds us enslaved at its feet by the possession of the means of living. We are getting to understand this. The moment we understand it we realise and know that a cure is possible, and that the whole Social and Industrial Movement, commonly called the Labor Movement, is working towards such a cure. The cure is the holding of the State, for the benefit of all, whereby alone employment can be guaranteed to all, and a just division of the common wealth produced insured to each.

So that, hon. gentlemen, according to these ethics, everything is wrong. Civilisation is wrong, and wealth produces misery and want. Land ownership is robbery, workers are slaves, and the panacea for all these evils is the ownership by the State of all the land and machinery solely for the benefit of all the people. Socialism is said by "The Worker" to be "The natural sequence of unionism", declaring such things as these—that workers must hold for themselves, through the State, the land and machinery whereby they must live, and all and each have the right to labour and enjoy the fruits of their labour. I will read an extract to show that the system of profit-sharing, which has been advocated by the philanthropists as a remedy for the degradation of a large number of the working classes, is not consonant with the principles of the gentlemen who are running this paper. They disapprove of profit-sharing and want to have absolute control of everything and therefore they disapprove of the capitalist employer sharing the profits of the employees.

"Clearly, then, the only political action which Organised Labor can take is to directly attack the competitive system, and openly commence a campaign which will not cease until Capitalism—that is, the private holding by a few of the means whereby all must live—is no more. This is the aim of the Labor Movement, and all the petty legislative measures which are nominally granted by capitalistic Parliaments, after being emasculated beforehand, are, at best, only the splashing of its spray. The Australian Labor Federation, as the most progressive body in Australia, perhaps in the world, cannot do better, if the general council favours political action, than put forward a platform which will draw the line clear and straight between those who are for Labor and those who are against it—which will definitely declare it to all the world that Organised Labor is after, and how it proposes to get it, and will rise north at once to
Could you have anything more injurious to the general interests of this colony than such teaching as that? Can you be surprised that there should be an outbreak of disorder? Can you be surprised that the passions of men should be stirred by this matter, or can you be surprised when men have had this instilled into them, at first month after month, and more recently fortnight after fortnight, by the issue of this paper, and changes are continually being rung upon the same theories and ethics, that the men should rise up and say "We will no longer work except on the terms which we choose; you have no right to any profit, it belongs to us; we have made it by our labour, you never made it?" Was it not virtually stated in the first manifesto issued after the maritime strike broke out: The ships do not belong to the shipping companies: they belong to us, and the Government has no right to allow them to be tied up by the nose. The wonder is that they did not try to take possession of the ships and run them in their own interests, just the same as they wanted to run stations during the late strike; and if they could not work on their own lines they would take care that they should be of no value to anybody else. Thus we have here, primarily, the Labor Federation's object to abolish capital. In the next place, how it is to be done. By political action. We are told the Australian Labor Federation is the most progressive body in Australia, and perhaps in the world. My own opinion is that it went too fast and the pace will soon kill it. I think the late outbreak came too soon for the arrangements of the Australian Labor Federation. But here we have, plainly enough, the object that it is after. Capital is to be abolished and competition is to be abolished. Private production by the employment of capital is to be abolished, and all labour and all property is to be under the control of the State. All legislation is to be dominated by the Labor vote. These doctrines are taught plainly in the extracts which I have just read to you.

After referring to the following extract from "The Worker" in connection with the strike:

"Our parents toiled, to make a home
Hard grubbin', 'twas and clearin',
They wasn't crowded much with lords
When they was pioneerin'.
But now that we have made the land
A garden full of promise,
Old Greed must crook 'is di&y hand
An' come ter take it from us
So we must fly a rebel flag,
As others did before us,
And we must sing a rebel song
And join in rebel chorus.
We'll make the rants feel the sting
O' those that they would throttle;
They needn't say the fault is ours
If blood should stain the wattle."

Henry Lawson.

That was written in Brisbane.

I have brought this specially before your attention in order that you may see the agencies that have been at work to produce the result which has evoked from us this afternoon a vote of thanks which, there cannot be a shadow of doubt, will be unanimously accorded to the Defence Force and the volunteers and police who have been called out, and who have obeyed with alacrity the call of duty to put down this insurrection, the outbreak of which cannot give any one of us the least surprise after reading and reflecting upon the extracts I have read.

Those are the influences which have been at work in the western part of the colony, and are at work in other parts, embittering men of the working class against their employers, as tyrants, and fomenting in their minds feelings of hatred and distrust as well as envy. They have worked up those feelings to such a pitch that when the very first opportunity occurred they broke out into open violence. I have not the least doubt in my mind that the intention was to bring on a general insurrection in the colony; but it was precipitated by the violent action of a section of the strikers who may be regarded as the scum of the country—the ne'er-do-wells who wander about, avoiding work as far as they possibly can, and who are not honest shearsers or honest labourers. Those are the men who
precipitated the strike. Less than two years ago the editor of this paper from whom I have been quoting advocated what he called the "slave" proposal, which meant a two years' truce both labor and employers of labour. Scales of wages should be fixed, and there should be no interference with those scales for two full years.

A sacred agreement should be made between the two parties that there should be a truce from strikes and labour agitations during that period. A more beautiful scheme has seldom been hatched by the most mischievous agitator. Some people saw through it plainly enough, and instead of listening to the proposal they poh-pohed it, laughed at it. They saw plainly enough that it was a mere pretext for the complete federation of labour in the colony, and if possible in the other colonies, so that at the end of that time there might be a sufficiently strong phalanx to insist upon all that I have endeavoured to bring before you this afternoon; the abolition of capital, the control of the Legislature, the nationalisation of land, and the conduct of all industries by the State in such a chaotic state of things. Were that to come about it would mean the absolute ruin of the colony. This was the object, and, as I said, the strike came too soon; the plans were not matured, and the force was not ready. But the drilling went on, and the arming went on; all the military evolutions went on amongst those people, and the intention, no doubt, was, had they not been so promptly put down, to bring about such an insurrection as would have rendered us helpless, and perhaps driven us out of the country altogether. Therefore, I think we cannot for one moment hesitate in giving very cordial thanks to those who delivered us from that impending danger.

** J. P. HOOLAN'S SPEECH **

THERE have been countless strikes in various industries in Australia in the upsurge of trade unionism, of the industrial welfare of themselves and their families a rightful place in the community life, and to obtain the industrial turmoil of the 90's played the most significant part in the growth of the Australian Labor Movement.

Historians invariably find their way back to that period in search of the "beginnings" of Labor industrially, and politically in which the Australian Workers' Union played such a big hand.

We mentioned earlier how F. T. Brentnall, a journalist and one-time editor of "The Telegraph", had attacked the strike of 1889, in a speech on July 14, 1891. Let us now show the other side of the picture and record the speech in the Legislative Assembly made by John "(Plumper)" Hoolan, M.L.A., who was the member for Burke. Hoolan spoke a few days before Brentnall did in the Legislative Council. Possessed of strong principles, and a defender of democracy to his core, Hoolan had intentions in Parliament in defence of the bushmen who had been gaoled. He declared there was a strong feeling in the public mind that the men were not receiving fair play and that they had been cruelly and unjustly treated while the men being travelled from place to place to place in charge of officers of the law.

To show that the unionists of the 1891 era had been leg-ironed and chained, he read affidavits to the House. He declared that the trial and imprisonment of the men left an impression that the concept that would be difficult to eradicate and as long as the men remain imprisoned, there would be a remote element of crime that would require great care in the healing. Hoolan's words came true; the public rebelled at the ballot boxes and in rapid time Queensland became the strongest Labor State in the Commonwealth.

Speaking in Parliament on July 10, 1891 (before Brentnall did so in the Legislative Council), J. P. Hoolan said:

"It shows the sign of the weakness" on the part of the Brisbane Press when one pressman, with a tiny little publication, issues a monthly or one a fortnight, was able to completely override them, notwithstanding all the rabid writings and utterances— and writings that have done more to incite this strike than all Lane's writings— and discloses the aims of the 'New Unionism' in Queensland". The head of the Patriotic League's document, was "to show that the unionists of Queensland who consider themselves bushmen are a stronger section of the intelligent class in Australia than at present. The fact remains.

** It is very easy to stand here and make charges against those prisoners who are now suffering, and I suppose that pressmen have to do that, but I have not made use of those words, but have expressed their views to that effect in a general way.**

One side says it is plain that these men came down from the bush in a body, terrorising the district, prepared to take possession of the railway; in fact, to take possession of all the Government institutions, and to administer the law on their own account. I do not believe they had any such intentions. They are spoken of as ignorant, benighted fools. They are not that. We claim that for them. There is no doubt they made a demonstration to try and strengthen their cause, but it was anything like a revolution was intended I do not believe.

"You know more in Brisbane as to who pulled the threads of them. I know I do not think they intended anything of the sort. I do not think they would be of such a sort that they had a few guns, such as a man might put on the stage to make a bit of a display, and that they would have any of the military. They certainly went into camp peacefully when the military approached. It is said that they did not fear the Nordenfeldt gun; it was no such thing. There were some among them who I do not know, but I am acquainted with a great many of them, and whatever they may be, I do not believe that anything like cowards reigns in their hearts. I think their own sense of law and order restrained them, and they went into camp peacefully to avoid any collision with the military.

"If they had intended to fight, they could have very easily got away from the Nordenfeldt gun commenced trouble. It was the good influence of a number who knew they had made enough demonstration intended to go no further, and the influence brought to bear from outside places, of which pressmen in the Legislative Assembly any knowledge. They have a number of friends throughout
the country who have all along done their best to restrain them, and it is unfair to impute motives of cowardice to men who are pulled from behind by their friends and asked to keep quiet so as to gain the public sympathy in order to better their cause.

"There is a strong feeling in the public mind that they have not received fair play, and that they were cruelly and unjustly treated while travelling from place to place in charge of the officers of the law.

"I will now read a little information I have here. This is sworn information, on the oath of a unionist. I suppose hon. members here are not inclined to pay much attention to that, but from my point of view it is just as good as the oath of any other man:

"Six men were kept on one chain for ten days at Augathella night and day, and fourteen men in two cells measuring 7 feet by 8 feet each.

"These are the assertions we want to come at, and see whether they are true or not. When a man allows himself to be arrested quietly by the officers of the law, it is evident that he is prepared to put up with whatever the law may allot him, and has no intention of trying to escape:

"'One man named Gavin was suffering from fever and ague, and notwithstanding this fact was known to the police he was still kept in handcuffs at night. This will account for the twenty-one men arrested at Augathella. During the day we were allowed to go to the closet with a guard, but at night we had on a leg-iron and a heavy chain attached to a policeman with a drawn revolver having hold of the end.

"We were handcuffed and leg-ironed travelling in Cobb and Co.'s coach for two days. During those two days the coach horses kept continually knocking up, and we were placed on horseback at intervals, handcuffed, and our horses bitted to one another. Having to camp out one night, some of the men were leg-ironed together and some handcuffed on a chain.'

"I will read a small paragraph from the affidavit of an eye-witness:

"'I, George Best, at present of Charleville, in the colony of Queens-

land, shearer, do most solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:

"'I was present at Augathella on the 30th day of March last past, and in the evening of that day I saw a number of military and police there. I started to go to a camp about eighty yards away from my tent, and when within about ten yards of it I was covered with a rifle, and told that I would be shot down if I moved, as the Riot Act had been read in the camp; I was going to twelve men who were at supper, surrounded by military and police, Captain King and Inspector Stuart being in command.

"Inspector Stuart then called upon a boundary rider and a man named Bartlett to identify some of the men camped there. John McNamara and Latraile, now in Roma jail, were pointed out. Inspector Stuart, covering McNamara with a revolver, called upon him to step out, charging him with committing arson, rioting and conspiracy. When Latraile was coming out the inspector covered him with a revolver, and, as he (Latraile) was not coming quick enough, counted one, two, as a threat to fire.

"Latraile stopped and said: 'Fire, that's all you are good for is firing on defenceless men.' The Inspector then ordered them to be handcuffed together, saying: 'Screw them together like dogs.' He repeated this order twice, which was carried out by his men.

"Certainly if these statements are lies they are calculated to do a great deal of damage to the Government, and also to the laws under which we live. If the statements are true, such things ought to be checked; and if not those who gave utterance to them should bear the brunt of them.

"During our confinement in the cells we were allowed out for fresh air by changing places with the prisoners on the verandah, this verandah being only 3 feet 6 inches wide; only the occupants of one cell were allowed out for exercise at a time, and we were confined in these cells for nine days, the air being almost suffocating.

"We started next morning about 10 a.m. for Charleville; after proceeding a short distance the coach got bogged. The men were taken out and ordered to walk about half a mile,
gone through the reputations of those found out their records. He said last of him."

"Has forfeited the manliness that was in now. At any rate he behaved poor man if I turned my back upon him now; so I do not intend to do it."

"Until these matters are gone into, there will always be a doubt as to whether or not they were fairly treated. It does not matter what crime a man may commit, he is supposed to be treated humanely while he is in the hands of the officers of the law. These assertions and many others that are agitating the public mind must be cleared up, or there will always be an impression that these men were unfairly treated and brutally treated."

"It is rather a tough job to identify oneself with a prisoner in St. Helena, but one of these men is my particular friend. I do not care if the whole world stands against him; he is still my friend. He was a miner at Croydon in 1887 and he worked very hard to make a living, put me in the position I am in now. At any rate he behaved like a friend to me, and if I accepted his friendship then, I should be a very poor man if I turned my back upon him now; so I do not intend to do it."

"The man whom I refer to at St. Helena is Alexander Forrester, and I pledge myself, although Chief Secretary scouted the idea last night, that he could never do anything mean or sneaking."

"I do not say anything bold to-night, or to insult anyone, not that, if I did, I would care if any hon. member resented it, because I suppose I must get used to those things. I will conduct myself in a proper way; but I must state that I will conduct myself to that man as he remains a prisoner of the Queensland Government, at the Island of St. Helena. I pledge my constituency of Burke also to sympathy for him, and this is a very bold thing for any man to do; at any rate I do it, and if they do not like what I say then they can judge me."

"The unfortunate prisoners have very few friends who have said a word in their favour; and I think it is the duty of any man to speak in their favour if he has anything to say. It would be very mean for a man, who professed to be a friend, to receive a letter from a distant land and not communicate it to the columns of "Hansard".

"It refers to a man named Hamilton, and is as follows:"

"You need have no doubt, Jack, as regards Bill Hamilton's character. He is an Australian goldfields' boy, noble-minded, honest to a fault, and one who resents the oppression of the producer by the capitalist. He has more than the average intelligence, and has always, I believe, conducted himself respectfully, as his parents taught him to. He is a zealous workman at whatever he tackles. I have known him on Mount Brown to do two men's work. I have also known him on Kimberley to walk like a Trojan (if they ever did work), but I am sorry to say with very poor results. Pat Hyland, who used to canvass for you at Tabletop, says he thinks you are acquainted with Bill Hamilton (I doubt it), hence my recommendation as to character."

"People of the North have only had a one-sided story of what took place in the Western districts, owing to the hostility of the Press. The Press, particularly the Brisbane Press, fiercely attacked the shearsers, and by giving a one-sided version of the affair created enemies where they expected to make friends, and caused hostility where they should have used every endeavour to sow the seeds of peace and friendship. Their duty as moderate, truthful and straight-forward journalists was to state both sides of the story."

"There is no possibility of bringing about a peaceful state of affairs while the country fancies that the men have been unjustly or improperly imprisoned, or too severely sentenced."

"Those men have a lot of friends, and the shearsers and unionists still have a lot of friends: the unionists are a strong body, and it is necessary that a full explanation should be made of the whole affair, and satisfaction given to those who sympathise with them without being participants in or having any connection with the strike."

"I hope, if the Government intend to bring all things to a peaceful conclusion, that they will seriously take into consideration the case of the conspiracy prisoners, and others who have been sent to jail during the late trouble. The imprisonment of those men is making more impression on the public mind than the downfall of the strike or the loss of money. The loss of a bit of money is not a great matter, but where human beings suffer it is a much more serious affair, and there is a sympathy with those men which it will be very hard to eradicate."
Among the earliest cartoonists were Monte Scott, Alf, Ponty, and the prolific Jim Case, who became one of this country's leading artists in the Labor cause. Case, to Queensland, was what Claude Marquet was to the "The Australian Worker", and he emerged from the composing room of "The Worker" itself!

J. A. Stuart, Henry Lawson, Edwin "Ted" J. Brady and Francis Adams were among our earliest versifiers, later ones including such names as Randolph Bedford, R. J. Cassidy, and Henry Boote. The following pages contain some of their works.

THE SPIRIT OF THE BUSHMAN

THE slavery days when slavish men Scarce claimed to own their very soul;
When battering hordes of tyrant drones Begrudged the herd their paltry dote;
When grovelling serfs—afraid to think— Dared not of "Right" or "Justice" dream;
When word of "might" how'er unjust Was bowed to as the all-supreme;
When over deeds and very thoughts The power of soulless tyrants reigned,
Made men as blocks forget to hope, And crouch as whining curs afraid; At passing now! The coming dawn Must greet the first notes of science to their keeping you must wash the stain of "might.

If tyrants shall oppose the light, Their blood shall wash the stain of tears;
Their groans shall echo to the groans of hearts oppressed through slavish years. But ere the light of hope shall shine, Before the tyrants' power is bent, Our noblest efforts must subside. The bravest of our life-blood spent.

The very best of word and deed Must greet the first notes of the drum, And heroes for the cause must bleed, Before the glorious light shall come.

—J. A. Stuart.

THE BALLOT IS THE THING

THE worker is by law forbid to camp on camping ground. Unto the chain-gang's clank again Australian woods shall ring. For they have found a law was made when George the Fourth was king. It makes the squatters sing, oh, it makes the squatters sing! This vile old law that once was made when George the Fourth was king.

* * *

We used to have the notion that in Queensland men were free, That before the law the squatter was the same as you or me; But the sturdy bushman now, they say, "down to his knees we'll bring With this old law that once was made when George the Fourth was king." It makes the squatter sing, oh, it makes the squatter sing. This vile old law that once was made when George the Fourth was king.

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FREEDOM ON THE WALLABY
(Written for "The Worker")

Australi'a's a big country
Then Freedom couldn't stand the glare
An' Freedom's humping bluey,
Of Royalty's regalia,
An' Freedom's on the wallaby,
She left the loafer where they were
An' come out to Australia.
But now across the mighty main
An' Freedom's humping bluey
She's just begun to boomerang,
And boil another billy.
An' she little thought to see again
When they was pioneerin',
The wrongs she left behind her.
And come out to Australia.

Our fathers toiled for bitter bread
While loafers thrived beside 'em,
While loafers thrived beside 'em,
Our parents toiled to make a home,
And boil another billy.
Our parents toiled to make a home,
Our parents toiled to make a home,
And come out to Australia.

Our fathers toiled for bitter bread
While loafers thrived beside 'em,
While loafers thrived beside 'em,
Our parents toiled to make a home,
And boil another billy.
Our parents toiled to make a home,
Our parents toiled to make a home,
And come out to Australia.

So we must fly the rebel flag
And must sing a rebel song
And join in rebel chorus.
We'll make the tyrants feel the sting
O' those that would throttle;
They needn't say the fault is ours
If blood shall stain the wattle.
— Henry Lawson.
Brisbane, May, 1891.

FROM THE SOUTH TO THE NORTH

There are anxious, watching faces
'amongst the workers of the South.
There's a hope in many bosoms,
for we know the stake at issue and
If the time arrives for action we can
So we watch the battle keenly, counting

We're true to one another
For we feel the Cause is mighty and
For we feel the Cause is mighty and
If we're true to one another
For we know the stake at issue and
If the time arrives for action we can
So we watch the battle keenly, counting

We applaud their noble efforts and
We can also go and dare.
And we have a little money and a
So I send a friendly greeting o'er the
Tell the North to stand together, for
— Edwin J. Brady.
Sydney, April 4, 1891.

(When "The Worker" was established, Henry Lawson was a member of the staff of "The Boomerang"); a weekly paper published in Brisbane to which William Lane was a voluminous contributor. Almost from the first issue of "The Worker" Lawson contributed occasional verse, but most of it was published anonymously and in association with Lane's editorials. When the shearers' strike was precipitated, Henry Lawson devoted his pen to the defence of the men, and it was the above poem published over his name which aroused the ire of the Hon. F. T. Brentnall (mentioned earlier in this book), and which inspired him to the utmost flights of oratory in the Queensland Parliament in his condemnation of "The Worker" and its contributors. It is worthy of special note that during his residence in Brisbane, Henry Lawson wrote the poem, "Trooper Campbell", which is regarded to be, by competent critics, the best Australian ballad that has yet been written.

[Edwin J. Brady, one of Australia's sweetest singers and without equal, perhaps, as a writer of sea songs and sailors' chanties, was a robust champion of the shearers when the great pastoral strikes of 1891 and 1894 commanded the attention of the world. Brady, who is the author of many works—"Australia Unlimited", "The King's Caravan", "River Rovers", "Bells and Hobbies", "The Ways of Many Waters", "The Land of the Sun"—and many others, was for some time editor of "The Australian Worker", and the above verses which appeared in our issue of April 4, 1891, were an inspiration to the union men of those days, and they have been extensively reprinted ever since.)
FLING OUT THE FLAG

FLING out the Flag! let her flap and rise in the rush of the eager air,
With the ring of the wild swan's wings as she soars from the swamp and her ready lair.

FLING out the Flag! And let friend and foe behold, for gain or loss,
The sign of our faith and the fight we fight, the Stars of the Southern Cross!

Oh blue's the sky that is fair for all, whoever, wherever he be,
And silver's the light that shines on all for hope and for liberty.

FLING out the Flag! And let friend and foe behold, for gain or loss,
As we fling up the Flag that friend and foe may see, for gain or loss,
The sign of our faith and the fight we fight, the Stars of the Southern Cross!

As the sky above is fair for all, whoever, wherever he be,
As the blessed stars that shed their light of hope and liberty:
So let the earth, this fertile earth, this well-lined Southern Land,
Be fair to all, be free to all, from staff to shining strand!

Let boy and girl and woman and man in it at least be sure
That all can earn their daily bread with hearts as proud as pure;
Let man and woman and girl and boy in it forever be
Heirs to the best this world can give, equal, fearless, free!

FLING out the Flag! Let her flap and rise in the rush of the eager air,
With the ring of the wild swan's wings as she soars from the swamp and her ready lair!

FLING out the Flag! And let friend and foe behold, for gain or loss,
The sign of our faith and the fight we fight, the Stars of the Southern Cross!

Oh! blue's the sky that is fair for all, whoever, wherever he be,
And silver's the light that shines on all for hope and for liberty:
And that's the desire that runs in our hearts for ever quenchless
And that's the sign of our flawless faith and the peerless fight we fight.

—Francis Adams (1890).

TOO OLD TO RAT!

I don't care if the cause be wrong.
Or if the cause be right,
I've had my day and sung my song,
And fought the bitter fight.

In truth, at times I can't tell what
The men are driving at:
But I've been United thirty years,
And I'm too old to rat.

Maybe, at times in those old days
Remembered now by few,
We did bite off in various ways
Much more than we could chew—
We paid, in sodden strikers' camps,
Up the black-soil flat;
We paid, in long and hungry tramps—
And I'm too old to rat.

The Queensland strike in 'Eighty-nine
And Ninety's gloomy days—
The day the opera company sang
For us the "Marseillaise!

The sea of faces stern and set,
The waiting "bitter cup,
The hopeless tears, unbeaten yet,
The storm cloud rushing up.
The fighting, dying "Boomerang!
Against the daily Press;
The infant "Worker" holding out;
The families in distress;
The sudden tears of beaten men—
Oh! you remember that!
And memories that make my pen
Not worth its while to rat.

I've wept with them in strikers' camps
Where shivered man and beast;
I've worn since then the badge of men
Of Hell!—and London East;
White faces by the flaring torch!
Wraith wives!—the slaves of Fat!
And ragged children in the rain—
Yes! I'm too old to rat!

—Henry Lawson.
A.W.U. STORIES RETOLD

Over the years "The Worker" has been fortunate in having men with first-hand experience of the great shearing strikes of the '90's who were able to tell of those events for publication.

One of the most outstanding of these men was the late H. J. Kelly, who died in June, 1948, at the age of 74.

Harry was a regular caller at "The Worker" and related many a grim tale of the sufferings of early A.W.U. men and women, and of the first Labor candidates, who battled their way into the Queensland Parliament, before Federation.

Harry Kelly wrote a number of articles for this paper, and they were always appreciated, especially by the older generation who knew the truth in what he wrote, and by the younger members of the Union who realised that their working and living standards had not been given to them on a platter, but were the result of the combined effort of men who would not bow to injustice, or stretch out an unfair hand against any man.

In this small book we reprint one of Kelly's articles because it makes history. We reprint, too, some of the facts about the A.W.U. contributed from time to time by the late Clarrie Fallon and "The Worker" and one who knew the story of the early days as did Harry Kelly.

By HARRY KELLY

"In the early eighties, labour conditions were very bad in the west of Queensland. Wages were low, hours were long, and food was bad when the shearers in the Peak Downs district, in 1884, started to organise. Early in 1885 a Shearers' Union was formed in Clermont, and everything was fixed up except its registration. An office was taken, and H. B. Stanley was appointed secretary. What happened subsequently I do not know, but the union collapsed after a very short time . . ."
UP FOR VAGRANCY

What May Soon Happen in Queensland

(End of 1886, and in 1887 it was registered. A man named Penncuclick was the first secretary, and later on Bill Kewley was appointed.

"Bill was secretary for about 20 years until he died. He was a great man—one of the best that one could meet.

"Things began to improve a bit for shearsers after this. They got back to 'the pound a hundred' once more; but the station hands and shed hands were still having a very rough time, so they, with the help of the shearsers, formed a union. In 1886, H. O. Blackwell was appointed as secretary Henry Bradbury. The union was registered under the name of "The Central Queensland Labourers' Union", and the office was in Oak Street, Barcaldine.

"The first shed to shear under the Queensland Shearers' and the Central Queensland Labourers' Union rules was Beaconsfield Station, near Longreach. The shed hands got 30/- a week, instead of 25/- a week which they got before the union started. That was on the 1st January, 1889. Of course the shed did not give in without a struggle.

"Anyhow the Union was doing well, and all sheds, when they started to shear, used to put up a notice: 'This shed is shearing under Queensland Shearers' and Central Queensland Labourers' Union Rules', and at the start of the shearing they would engage a stand. The shed would be handed to the shed chairman, and he would keep them till the shed was finished. At the start of the shearing the shed chairman would hand the shed ticket to the manager of the station as a guarantee that the shearer from engaging any more stands in other sheds until he finished. After the finish of the shearing the shed chairman would hand the shed ticket to the shed chairman, and he would keep them till the shed was finished.

"About this time a Carriers' Union was formed in Barcaldine. A. H. Parnell was secretary. Things were going well for them, when all of a sudden 70 non-union teams belonging to the Bank of New South Wales came out on the strike. The station hands and shed hands notified that they wanted to shear under 'Freedom of Contract' system. That meant that they wanted to employ anyone they liked—black, white or brindle—and also pay what wages they liked.

"On January 1, 1891, most of the station hands came out on strike, not over the 'Freedom of Contract' principle, but because of the Chinese employed on the stations. If of course, if a station had no Chinese employed the men stayed on.

"The General Strike of 1891 was called on March 15. A number of men were chosen from the Shearers' Union and a number from the Labourers' Union, and they formed a committee to run the strike under the name of the Barcoo District Council—"B.D.C."

"A man named Risley was chairman, and the committee comprised Jack Payne, George Taylor, Dick Wood, Tom Ryan, Jack Murphy, and others I cannot think of at the moment. Things started to get lively in Clermont district. The stations
intended to shear in that district first, and then bring the ‘free labourers’ up to the Central district.

A lot of trouble followed in the Clermont district. Union men were arrested every day, mostly on the framed-up charges, like the Clermont and the Hughenden affairs.

“Many of the police and some of the railway men had no time for unionism in those days. The stations had a rule that the day before a man was to go off to the strike or go on strike, he had to call at the manager's house at 7 p.m. on his way to the strike or to the station. If the manager found that the man had his goods packed, he had to have him arrested. The manager had the police help him. The police followed the man and arrested him on the charge of being in possession of goods without the manager's permission.

“Here is an instance: A manager of a station in the Winton district, with 150,000 sheep, was getting £150 per week. One day a manager came on his visit of inspection and found that the manager of the station had a daughter about 16 living with him, and because of that the manager was knocked off £30 of his salary for his daughter's maintenance, leaving him £120 for managing a station of that size.

“Hundreds of men were arrested during the strike in 1891, and most of them, besides the conspiracy prisoners, got from three to six months’ imprisonment in the stations, mostly amongst the kanakas. The police used to raid the union rooms nearly every other night.

“At the latter end of 1891 the Shearers’ Union and the Queensland Labourers’ Union decided to amalgamate with branches at Charleville, Longreach, and Hidalgo, and to hold a delegates’ conference every year. The branch at which the conference was held was to be the head office of the union for the year. In May, 1892, the first conference was held in Charleville, and three branches were formed under the Amalgamated Shearers’ Union of Queensland, the Charleville branch with E. Brennan secretary, the Longreach branch with H. F. J. W. Bartlett secretary, and the Hidalgo branch with W. C. Curtis secretary. The number of members at that time was: Charleville, 2,500; Longreach, 2,800; Hidalgo, 800; making a total of 6,100.

“There are some public national benefits in Australia for which the governments of all classes, and for bush workers especially.
name of The Bushmen’s Parliamentary Association. The tickets were 2/6 each. The Bushmen’s Parliamentary Association was subsequently merged with the Workers’ Political Organisation, known as the W.P.O.—now the A.L.P.—and Labor members were always told to vote for Adult Franchise, and eventually they got it.

“In the early part of 1892 the then sitting member for the Barcoo—Frank Murphy—owner of Northampton Downs, died, and Thos. J. Ryan, the secretary of the Queensland Labourers’ Union, stood for the seat against Mr. W. H. Campbell, the owner of the ‘Western Champion’, which stood in the station interests.

“Of course the stations thought it was a walkover for Campbell, as all those men travelled hundreds of miles mostly on horseback but many on foot, to record their votes and send the first endorsed Labor man to Parliament.

“Those were the days! Those were the men!”

Thus wrote Harry Kelly for “The Worker” in 1941—twenty years ago. It is not hard for outbackers to visualise the events, and the surroundings.

What scenes at those shearing sheds! There were always men leading packhorses arriving or leaving the various sheds. The roads were scarred by wagon wheels and Cobb & Co. coaches. Often after shearing, a race meeting would be held by the shearers and shed hands themselves, the proceeds frequently going to the local hospital or some charity.

Charity from those who were battling for more justice from employers and Governments!

And what sheds they were! Take a few of the names which were published in “The Worker” for May 6, 1899 (many large sheds existed in the 1920’s). The number of sheep to be shorn and the number of shearers and “rousabouts” (nowadays classified as shed hands) make romantic reading.

Here are but a few to conjure with:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shed</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
<th>Shearers</th>
<th>Rousabouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manuka</td>
<td>110,000</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kunyuna</td>
<td>120/150,000</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oondooroo</td>
<td>130,000</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowen Downs</td>
<td>370,000</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellshot &amp; Coome-Martin</td>
<td>375,000</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corinda</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marion</td>
<td>200,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vindex</td>
<td>130,000</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isa Downs</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collinda</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coroma</td>
<td>160,000</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northampton Downs</td>
<td>180,000</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Terrick Terrick</td>
<td>180,000</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adelong and Irvingvale</td>
<td>23,000</td>
<td>several</td>
<td>23,000, 45,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No wonder the birth of the Australian Labor Movement came, really, from these localities, because they were little self-supporting communities for weeks in a year, and they had to provide their own entertainment, and political and industrial discussions.

Let us recapitulate some of the colour and effervescence of the times, as related in “The Worker” by the late Harry Kelly in a series of graphic articles which appeared from time to time.

“...”

By HARRY FRENCH

A FTER the strikes of the nineties, much bitterness was evident in the industrial movement in Queensland. Work was scarce, and the outback tracks and billabongs were crowded with men, carrying their swags, or as it was generally called by the men themselves, ‘humping bluey’, in search of work.

“Kanaka labour was manning the sugar fields, and in some instances kanakas were introduced on the sheep station. Chinese were running over the properties, ring-barking and repairing fences. Some were being taught to shear.

“In addition to scarcity of work the employers had a secret mark on the reference, and as each man had to produce a reference to secure a job this was used very effectively against the good unionist, or agitator, as we called them in those days. A man’s reference would read O.K. as to his work, etc., but on handing it in he would be told:

‘Sorry, full-handed.’

‘Yet, perhaps, five or six would be put on immediately after, and then would come the same answer:

‘Sorry, full-handed,’ as another ‘agitator’ would hang his reference.

“The late William Kawley, secretary of A.W.U. in Longreach, advised us to carry no reference. This was done. Meetings were held at sheds and on the roads and references burnt. In the end we won employment without carrying that death warrant.

The union was very active in winning better conditions and in securing the nomination of Labor candidates for the Legislative Assembly. As with great foresight and after bitter experience of the strikes, our leaders realised to do any lasting good for the people they would have to amend the bad old laws of privilege and make fresh ones, introducing the measures so necessary.

“Tim Ryan, a shearer, won the Barcoo, the seat afterwards held by a namesake, the illustrious T. J. Ryan, Labor Premier of Queensland. Bundaberg was held by Labor—a great sugar centre those days and worked by kanaka slave labour.

“I recall the Tory Press of Queensland reiterating that if Labor’s demand for the abolition of this kidnapped kanaka labour were granted, that the grass would grow in the streets of the sugar towns of Queensland.”

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“I recall the Tory Press of Queensland reiterating that if Labor’s demand for the abolition of this kidnapped kanaka labour were granted, that the grass would grow in the streets of the sugar towns of Queensland.”
The conditions we have to-day were won by the unions the very hard way. Farm owners were barred from meeting their members on the job. I have seen our organisers ordered off station properties and forced to camp on the road alongside. Every weapon was used. The sheep kings, with very few exceptions, treated men as serfs. Work was done in tiers in the huts for sleeping in, no baths, no lavatory accommodation. No butter on the table, 10lb. flour, 12 lb. meat, 2lb. sugar, 2lb. tea, pinch tartaric acid and soda was the ration scale; sometimes as many as 12 names, mostly built-in joy or squatter's purge. If you wanted jam you paid for it. Potatoes or onions, if asked for, meant the sack as a dangerous agitator—the same applied to butter.

"Hours were from starlight to starlight. Drinking water was not supplied at the huts and had to be drawn from a creek, nearby, contaminated by animal and perhaps human waste.

"Wages for shed and station hands ranged from 10/- to 15/- to £1 per week. Holidays, nil.

"Men working for Shire Councils or Divisional Boards and railway contractors found their own tents and campi ng gear. If the nearest water was many miles away, that is where they would have to camp; but they would have to be on the job at starting time and leave at knock-off time.

"I have worked on a railway construction job myself and spent over three hours daily travelling backwards and forwards. If the nearest water was many miles away, that is where they would have to camp; but they would have to be on the job at starting time and leave at knock-off time.

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\(^9\) This was done, also, in the 1956 shearing dispute and A.W.U. leaders were fined.

\(^{Page Fifty-four}\)
appealed to their sense of manhood.

We tried by moral persuasion to influence the men themselves. We had Wolseley machines, on calling for a show of tickets we found six men were holding M.S.U. tickets. First we interviewed the manager of the station and tried to reach an agreement, but it was useless; although a manager he was one of those buffer union and root and rapped out:

"We then interviewed the manager of the station and tried to reach an agreement with him, but it was useless; although a manager he was one of those buffer union and root.

On being told we would not shear with them he smiled gleefully and rapped out:

"Well, take the bloody consequences!"

"We did!"

"We were prosecuted for breach of agreement and 58 of us fined £5 or £14 days. Though we were all financial, this broke the men. By the end of that season for most of us, and the third for some, we decided to take it out and not to pay the fine, much to the disgust and anger of the Magistrate, who was stated to have said he would have made the alternative much more if he had found out that we were holding M.S.U. tickets."

"However, we were lucky. Cobb & Co.'s coach came past only twice a week; the nearest gaol was nearly 300 miles away. So we were kept there in prison and conditions were pretty rotten."

"Of course, the old continuous "Gov." was in power and threw all its weight behind the gaol."

Paddy Langston said to John Payne: 'Give me some books of tickets and I will get down the river and start operations temporarily as there was no money and the prospect of any coming in till the following season was very remote.'

"Paddy Langston said to John Payne: 'Give me some books of tickets and I will get down the river and start operations temporarily as there was no money and the prospect of any coming in till the following season was very remote.'

"On being told there was no money to pay his tucker bill while travelling, he replied:

"'Damn the money! Give me the tickets and you can talk about tucker bills some other time — now come back; but keep the doors open.'"

"His offer was accepted, and Paddy loaded his pack horse and started down the Thompson.

"I was only in my mid-'teens those days, and I used to be very enthusiastic. I travelled with Paddy down through Jundah, calling at every station and camp on the way. Paddy never failed to hold a meeting, and wherever men were financial he always sold union tickets.

"There was no need to talk of compulsory unionism to the men who made our union were lion-hearted white men. We went as far as Thargomindah, calling at every station and camp on the way. Paddy never failed to hold a meeting, and wherever men were financial he always sold union tickets.

"However, Paddy touched the Barcoo, and then went across through the J.C. This place got its name from one of our tough old pioneers, John Costello, who cut his initials on a tree at the crossing when he was driving his herd of cattle farther out in search of new country. Paddy touched the Diamantina, turned and went back to Longreach.

"He had sold between five and six hundred tickets. A great achievement, considering the lack of work.

"In talking to Paddy after, he told me he only met four "twitchings" on the whole trip. 'Whitewing' was one of the names of for free labourers, as they were called in those days."

"Before telling of the many devious methods our opponents used to try and defeat us I must mention the prospectors as grand a body of men and unionists as ever trod this earth of ours.

"These men penetrated into all classes of wild and then unknown country, prospecting in their search for gold, tin, opal, sapphire, copper, wolfram and other metals, as many of these men who opened most of our mines and our alluvial gold deposits, our opal and sapphire fields were early members of our Union, as they would, when broke, take a job on a station till they earned another stake to take up their prospecting again, and also, many of our victimised early members followed prospecting as a means of livelihood.

"In the early days of our Union I never remember meeting a prospector who was not a unionist and Labor man, and many a time he was indebted to them for a feed and was put on to a patch of alluvial where I could make a few bob to carry me on my way.
"Many of these grand men have now passed across the Divide and very few are able to follow their calling."

"But Queensland owes them a debt of gratitude for they pioneered this country, as their strides caused many prosperous towns to spring up, land to be bought, railways to be built, and in doing so they left behind them a record of clean, straight, white men who fought for better conditions for us all-to-day."

We were paid off to-morrow gets the sack.'

"Labor, issued his phase: "were proven to have been stacked in forged votes for Hood, the pastoralist, been awarded the seat, but we had to get on the track next day."

"As each electorate was held and Labor strength grew we found it harder and harder to keep Labor men on the roll. Our members were enthusiastic and those who managed to get on the roll let nothing stand in their way when it came to voting."

"Men swam flooded rivers and creeks, tackled dry stages and lost wages for a week or more, as they would walk perhaps 100 or 150 miles to reach a polling booth."

"Many suffered loss of their jobs, but they were few. I, have seen them sacked and been sacked myself when the votes were counted, as the boss always knew how we voted though the ballot was supposed to be secret."

"I remember an incident on Emu Dilla Station, an outstation of Milo, in the Warrego district. We were shearing when the new election was being held for the seat. After Bowman had appealed against the stacking of the ballot boxes at Bonna Vonna and other stations, our case was proven and Bowman should have been awarded the seat, but we had to fight it again although hundreds of forged votes for Hood, the pastoralist, were proven to have been stacked in the station ballot boxes. The day before the new election the manager issued his phase:"

"Any man who votes for Bowman to-night gets the sack."

"All the men were unionists and Labor, but only 13 of us were on the roll when we went to vote, and 13 of us were told next day to roll our blueness and get. We were paid off without any reason being given, but we knew."

"We had voted Labor."

"I could relate hundreds of cases of a similar and rotten nature."

"There was another case where there were 16 votes on a station and no more within 50 miles. Yet when the votes were counted there were 22 supposed to be cast for the Tory candidate and six for the Labor man, and those six were sent on the track next day."

"I remember a very amusing incident at a small two-hotel township down the Thompson Valley. It was polling day. There were only about 10 votes in the town and about 2 1/2 hours were held for the seat. A school teacher—a Government servant—was poll clerk, and when the votes were counted the vote was: Ken (Labor), 22; the Tory candidate—nil."

"'Hell,' exclaimed the schoolie. 'This means the sack for me, as I should have voted Tory, but I thought I was safe, as I thought someone would vote Tory. Now I am in a stew."

"After some discussion among the boys, old Saddle Strap, an old-timer even in those days, said: 'Give me a bit of a slipp and I will fix it up.'"

"This he did, voting for the Tory candidate and making the vote 22 to 1. It must have got through because when the election was well over the local weekly recorded 22 to 1 for that booth!"

"To mention the conditions of labour and rates of pay prevailing 40 years ago in the Queensland saw milled, was as bad as in any industry; 4/6 to 6/- per day, and tucker yourself. Pine fellers were paid 4d. per hundred super feet, find your own axes, saws, tapes, etc., and cut all snigging tracks through the scrub for the bullocks to tag the logs out. It was mostly bullock teams those days, with an occasional horse team."

"The engine-driver did not have to be a certificated man, as the safety of the workers was a very minor consideration."

"The A.W.U., on taking control and organising the industry, bettered conditions amazingly by negotiation with employers and by strikes where necessary and by Arbitration Awards. But never did the Union call a senseless strike or let the men down."

"I have seen men who were afraid to be seen sitting near an agitator during the lunch hour. If he were placed where he would immediately get up and send another position, so great was the fear of the boss."

"Conditions in most country mills were very primitive. Everything was done by brute strength. There were few, if any, mechanical aids; no cranes, no mechanical feeds on the bench. I have seen all hands in the mill walking on a flitch which came off the breaking down frame on its back. We would kneel on one edge and grasp the other, and rock it till we could turn it on the skids to bring it into the No. 1 bench."

"In those days 4 inches of heart were deducted from every sound hardwood log, up to 80 inches girth, excepting red stringy bark, which was subject to a deduction of 6 to 10 inches, according to the various mill owners. If a log showed a pipe of say, six inches, generally a square of 9 by 9 inches would be docked from the faller, in some cases only 8 x 8 inches would be taken, and then again in others 10 x 10 inches would be deducted."

"A faller in the bush had to slave all day to earn enough to keep just above the bread line at 4d."

"To start with, the hours of labour were from 7 a.m. till it was too dark to see to use the saw, not even a ten-hour day; no holiday or half-holiday; no accommodation, but supply your own tent or build your own humpy out of waste. Very rarely was a full hour allowed for breakfast and dinner."

"The rates of pay were: Benchmen, 6/6 to 7/6; engine-driver, 6/-; tailer-out, 5/- to 6/-; handle-man or roller man, 3/- to 4/6 per day; sawyers, 3/- to 4/- per day, and tucker yourself. Pine fellers were paid 4d. per hundred super feet, find your own axes, saws, tapes, etc., and cut all snigging tracks

"The coolie conditions were the navvies and construction workers on the railways as they were being built in the early days. Nearly all our early railways were built by contractors, as it was not till the voice of Labor was heard in increasing strength in our Parliament that the day labour construction was brought into being. Most of the contractors wereigger drivers."

"I think Jack Laracy, Organiser, from the Hughenden office of the A.W.U., closed now for many years in the reorganisation of districts, was the first man to really try to do something for these workers. It was before the A.W.U. covered them. At their own request he enrolled some hundreds of them, when the line was being laid from Hughenden with the object of finally linking Cloncurry with Townsville."

"The conditions and rates of pay were as bad as in any industry; 4/6 to 6/- per day prevailed, and as I mentioned the worker found his own food and camped on the nearest water to his work, walking backwards and forwards to his job in his own time."

"In dry times in the North-western portions of the State this water was really unfit to drink, but it had to be used, and on the plain country firewood was as scarce as diamonds. He had to buy the shovels to work with, 3/-6 being the usual price paid. As nearly all these men travelled per boat carrying their swags, or else by coach to their jobs, the shovels that were left behind, when a man was sacked or the job finished up and disgusted with rotten conditions, amounted to a nice profit to the contractors."

"These coolie conditions prevailed until the A.W.U. broadened its constitution to take in saw-milling, and I would ask my fellow members of the A.W.U. in this branch of industry to compare the conditions prevailing today with those at the time the grand old union took control. With your sick pay, holiday pay, your much shorter working hours, and your better paid.
A.W.U. HISTORY

IT WOULD be impossible to mention the history of "The Worker" without mentioning the Australian Workers' Union, the foremost reason being that, without the latter the former would never have come into existence.

It was the pioneers of the A.W.U. who were instrumental in keeping "The Worker" in circulation during its early months of life, and it has been augmented and expanded by members of the A.W.U. that the newspaper has been kept alive ever since.

Incidentally, it was the financial aid from the A.W.U. which was largely responsible for keeping "The Daily Standard", Brisbane, functioning long after other Unions had withdrawn from the tremendous cost of production field and it was A.W.U. money which was the financial strength of such Labor journals as "The Echo" (Ballarat), "World" (Tasmania), "The World" (afternoon daily, Sydney), and the Westralian "Worker" (once edited by the late W. G. Spence)—all of which have gone into oblivion.

Hundreds of thousands of pounds paid out by the A.W.U. were lost over the years in these ventures, mainly because the workers would not support their own publications. However, in the battle for the Australian Labor Party was won, and our native land given a standard of freedom and liberty unequalled elsewhere in the world.

Without doubt, the Australian Worker's Union has no parallel in the Australian history. Today is the industrial colossus astride the nation from East to West, searching out employers who would, through their avatars, destroy what has been built, and the employee who would equally try to smash the standards which have been so hardly won.

There are some employers who still live in the past, and there are some workers who would, to use an old-time word, which has lived through the decades, readily "scab" on their mates.

In briefly re-telling the story of the A.W.U., the former method is to rely on the A.W.U. historians themselves, and there is no more quoted authority than the late W. G. Spence, the first General President of the Australian Workers' Union.

The first meeting of the Shearers' Union, which was the forerunner of the Australian Workers' Union, was held in the golden city of Ballarat in 1886. It was a chance. It was held as the result of a newspaper advertisement, and not more than a mile from the historic Stockade where Eureka miners fought their battle against tyranny at the Stockade.

The meeting took place in Fern's Hotel, on Saturday, June 12, 1886; and although several attempts had been made to get men together in various districts, none met with the success as the gathering over which W. G. Spence presided, with David Tampie (President of the Amalgamated Miners' Association), acting secretary pro tem.

The object of the union at that date became:

1. To protect the rights of shearers throughout Australia;
2. To secure a set rate of wage by the adoption of prices suitable to the circumstances of the several colonies and districts;
3. The adoption of just and equitable agreements between employers and employees;
4. To make arrangements as will prevent undue loss of time in travelling to sheds to ensure the proper comfort of the employees;
5. To protect members against exorbitant prices of rations.

At the first meeting of the A.W.U. held in Ballarat on June 14, 1886, a set of rules similar to those operating in the Amalgamated Miners' Association was drawn up, and David Temple was installed as the Union's first secretary.

The meeting place was in a tiny back street close to the Adam Lindsay Gordon cottage (preserved by the Ballarat Botanic Gardens).

The late W. G. Spence, M.H.R., points out that at a general A.W.U. (he was the author of "Australia's Awakening") that long before that time there was nearly every similar unions existing in Queensland and New South Wales, and Spence himself says that as far back as in 1874 an effort was made to establish a Shearers' Union in Queensland. An attempt was made in the Peak Downs district, about the same time, but for some reason or other both of these efforts failed.

Right up till 1912, from its commencement in 1886, the A.W.U. was practically a Shearers' Union. It had been established in North Queensland—clearly the A.W.A.—that the character of the Australian Workers' Union may be said to have assumed its public outstanding feature of one big union for all classes of workers, no matter what their occupation or sex.

History reveals that it was in 1888 that the first conference of shearsers was held, at Echuca, in Victoria, on the Murray River. In 1890, an amalgamation was made with the General Labourers which had until then catered for shed hands and bush workers. There was a strong demand for the setting up of what would have amounted to one big union.

In 1905, delegates from Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia first conferred, and from that point onwards the Amalgamation of the Union in any State meant membership throughout Australia, without and without pausing.

In 1913, the Amalgamated Workers' Union of North Queensland came into the A.W.U. bringing the sugar workers, railway and road construction workers, timber and sawmill workers, blacksmiths, miners, and rail and sewerage workers. Next year, in Victoria, the Rural Workers of that State joined in, as did the U.L.U. and the U.U. in South Australia. Later, other States and Federal Unions joined the A.W.U.

Prior to its amalgamation with the A.W.A., perhaps the most important factor in the establishment of the A.W.U. was the affiliation of the then existing Queensland unions under a scheme of industrial federation, which was the brainchild of Mr. A. G. Spence, who was one of the founders of the Queensland "Worker", and who in 1890—being the man who organised the colony in 1890—was a memorable and most important year in the industrial history of Australia.

The impetus behind this desire for a closer, or a wider, organisation of workers may be found in the splendid history of "The Worker", which was issued about that time by the officials of the newly-formed Australian Labor Federation.

"The workers of Australia are organising to their heart's content. The sections by scores and dozens only, but in great conglomerate masses by hundreds and thousands. Men of the South have been making the great issue..." the line is never the same. The men have been fighting for the right to organise. The Stepney has been a hotbed of activity; there have been clashes in the face of the law men with the tradesmen of the towns and the Government. All have held the call gone forth to stand and fight together, and never has a paper answered for Australian Labor, rising everywhere, and Queensland is leading.

There is no doubt that in the late eighties and the early nineties the great economic pressure exerted by the squatters on the unorganised workers was primarily responsible for the establishment of the Shearers' Union in the various colonies.

In those days the sheep was little better than a slave. The employer dictated his terms and he was the sole judge as to their fulfilment. The employer had no systems of wholesale robbery of the shearer were practised almost universally. Contrary to anything as oners to the job, and "deductions" and fines were imposed at the discretion of the bosses, most of whom were unscrupulous and dishonest of an un-
Queensland indicates to what extent the malpractices of the squatters were to reduce the wages of the pastoral workers, together with the employment of Asiatic and non-union labour, was than workers at a meeting held on January 11, 1891, decided to back up the Western labourers in resisting the proposal. At Logan Downs, and when the Shearers' Union met later on, although they were not yet then affiliated, they were prepared unanimously to stand behind their mates in the shed.

At Meteor Downs the shearers stood out and the shed hands were paid their union rates. The shearers at Logan Downs and Wolfang followed suit. It was estimated, by the end of 1891, that 10,000 shearers and shed hands were involved in the struggle.

It was the year of the pastoralists' fight for their so-called "Freedom of Contract", and it was one of the bitterest industrial conflicts ever waged in this country. It was a marvel that unionism lived through that bitterest industrial conflicts ever. This was the year of the great pastoral upheaval of 1891.

The determination of the squatters to reduce the wages of the pastoral workers, together with the employment of Asiatic and non-union labour, was without a doubt primarily responsible for the great pastoral upheaval of 1891.

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John Curtin, former Prime Minister of Australia, was at the amalgamation conference.

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A.W.U. Office, Charleville

A.W.U. Office, Ayr

A.W.U. Office, Longreach

A.W.U. Office, Cairns
The conference recommendations were adopted at the A.W.U. Convention which followed almost immediately, and by the Annual Conference of the A.W.A., which was held a few weeks later at Rockhampton; and, to all intents and purposes, the A.W.A. then went out of existence, having merged with the other organisations to form what has been known ever since as the Queensland Branch of the Australian Workers' Union.

How great was the development both politically and industrially even the far-sighted vision and prophetic voice of W. G. Spence would hesitate to indicate, but suffice it to say that in less than two years following the first Delegate Meeting of the Queensland Branch of the A.W.U. in Brisbane a Labor Government was returned to power in Queensland.

When the amalgamation took place, and just prior to the first Delegate Meeting, the workers of this State of Queensland were not only the lowest paid but they also worked the longest hours, and they had by far the lowest standard of living in Australia.

The first president of the Queensland Branch of the Australian Workers' Union was the late E. G. Theodore. Dave Bowman, M.L.A., was vice-president and returning officer, and the first secretary was the late W. J. Dunstan, who had been a very prominent figure in the A.W.U., both in South Australia and in Western Australia.

Dunstan was appointed to the newly-formed Board of Trade and Arbitration in 1925, and he was succeeded as Branch Secretary of the Queensland Branch by the late W. J. Riordan. In turn, Riordan went to the Industrial Court Bench in 1933.

Looking at the list of delegates to that first Delegate Meeting of the Queensland Branch of the A.W.U., one sees the name of John Dash, at that time a representative of the Northern District. Another representative of the Far North was the late W. J. Riordan, and yet another (Southern District) was the late G. W. Martens, a former member for the Herbert.

Dash has always been revered in memory by old-time Labor and A.W.U. stalwarts because he was right in the thick of all negotiations for amalgamation and, as secretary of the Western Workers' Association, he attended the first amalgamation conference at Townsville in 1910. W. J. Riordan was the second Branch Secretary of the A.W.U. He was succeeded by C. G. Fallon (after whom the Bundaberg District Office building is named). Then came the late Harry Boland, who had been a tower of strength in Far-Western New South Wales before he entered Queensland. (Harry had been a shearer and was widely known around Nyngan, Bourke, and Cobar), and then came the late Joe Bukowski.

Bundaberg has been the starting point for a number of top A.W.U. officials, and it was there that C. G. Fallon began as a temporary organiser in 1921. Two years later, he was put in charge of the Central District Office at Rockhampton, and twelve months later was transferred to Mackay. His outstanding ability was quickly recognised because he became Northern District Secretary at Townsville in 1928, and when W. J. Riordan was appointed to the Industrial Court in 1933, Fallon became Branch Secretary.

In a special article in "The Worker" in 1948, the then Branch President, Harry Boland (who succeeded Fallon following the latter's sudden death, and who, himself, died unexpectedly), pointed out that during his occupancy of the Branch Secretarialship, Clarrie Fallon had held the following positions in an honorary capacity:

- Chairman, Queensland "Worker" Board (17 years);
- Chairman, "Daily Standard" newspaper (six years, until the affairs of the company were wound up);
- General President, Federal Executive, Australian Labor Party (six years, from which position he resigned);
- General Secretary, Australian Workers' Union (two years, from which position he resigned);
- President, Queensland Executive, Australian Labor Party (a position which he occupied for 17 years);
- Member of the Queensland University Senate for a number of years;
- Chairman, Labor Papers Limited (six years).

In addition, Fallon had been requested to attend the Geneva Labor Conference on at least two occasions and had been invited to become a
Harry Boland was born at Goolongong, in New South Wales. Some of his relatives were pastoralists; the Bolands were among the earliest settlers on the Lachlan River. He lived at Nyngan as a young man and his children were born in that town. After working at various bush occupations he became an official of the A.W.U. In the then Central District of New South Wales—mostly organising "per bike". He transferred to Queensland in 1923, at different stages he was Organiser in the Southern District at Gympie, Western District Secretary at Longreach, Organiser in the South-West District, and later in the Far Northern District. In 1939 he became Far Northern District Secretary at Cairns and held that post until 1947, when he transferred to Brisbane as Branch President when the then Branch President, W. H. Edmonds, was elected to the Federal Parliament as the Representative for Herbert. Harold Boland was a personal friend of such A.W.U. stalwarts as the late Senator John Barnes, Arthur Blakely, Ted Grayndler, Jim Scullin, Frank Lundie and Jack McNeil, and knew Jack Curtin. At the time of his death he was the oldest A.W.U. official (though in his early sixties), and was a member of only two organisations—the A.W.U. and the A.L.P.

Harry Boland was one of those big-hearted men who travelled the outback stock routes, seeking A.W.U. adherents, and wherever he went he preached the story of those who lived in those days could teach it. He taught his children as the unionists at Longreach those days taught their children to be true Australians and Labor followers, and he never lost his intense desire to build Australia as the early Laborites did.

When R. J. J. Bukowski died at 58, years of age, the Queensland Branch Secretary in ten years to have passed away suddenly, emphasising the stresses of the position undoubtedly take a terrific toll even of the strongest men, and no one could say that Fallon, Boland or Bukowski had been made of anything but fine physical bearing. They had stood up to the physical wear and tear of organising years, but the constant demand of office life coupled with the highest possible responsibility, underlined the strain on health. Like Harry Boland, R. J. J. (Joe) Bukowski died at home—he was found dead by his wife in the early hours of January 20, 1960.

He was born at Mut. Morgan in 1901 and had a Christian Brothers education at Rockhampton and Brisbane. He worked as a prospector, miner, drovers' cook, fencer, timber getter, etc., at one stage working in New Guinea after minerals. Turning to the canefields of the North, he fought Communists there and, where he encountered them, and that meant he was a "tough nut" to crack.

There was no man with a better all-round knowledge of Queensland and its industries, primary or secondary, and this was invaluable in his position as Branch Secretary.

His A.W.U. history started (officially) in 1924, when he became a temporary Organiser. He was stationed at Ayr where he "cleaned up" the Communists. When he was appointed "full-time" at Ayr, he organised the 'wide open spaces', pastoral, mining—anything. From Ayr, he was transferred to Bundaberg as Central District Secretary, and in 1941, became Southern District Secretary in Brisbane.

Southern District leaped ahead under his secretaryship, and he became Branch President in due course.

When Harry Boland died, Joe Bukowski was elected to the Branch Secretariat, and to the other top posts usually held by the Branch Secretary, such as President of the Q.C.E. and Federal Union positions.

Under Bukowski's guidance, the Branch made some of the most momentous industrial gains in the history of the Union. No trade union office in the Southern Hemisphere has such a large or more capable industrial organisation than the Queensland Branch of the A.W.U. which has its headquarters in "The Worker" building.

It is to be hoped that in the years to come, when the Union is fraught with danger and difficulty, the workers of Queensland will profit by their previous industrial and political history, and that the strides it has made will reach no further than the stage of organisation. It has reached no farther than that which has just been passed.
all who were in need, and which would stand beside them in their industrial and economic difficulties and work steadfastly and energetically towards the realisation of that great objective of the movement they loved, which is both the inspiration and the hope of the world.

In Queensland there are the Far Northern District Secretary at Cairns (Geo. Pont), and five Organisers.

Townsville is the headquarters of the Northern District (K. Costello, secretary), where there are seven Organisers.

G. G. Goding, Central District Secretary, is at Bundaberg (he is also Queensland Branch President), where there are four Organisers.

In the West, the District Secretary, Geo. Burns (Vice-President of the Queensland Branch), is stationed at Longreach, and there are four Organisers at that centre.

In the South-West, we have Neil Williamson, the District Secretary, who is stationed at Charleville and is assisted by five Organisers.

The largest District in Queensland (and Australia), numerically speaking, is Southern, the headquarters of which is Dunstan House, Brisbane, where W. J. Dickson is the District Secretary (also Branch Vice-President). There are seven Organisers attached to this District.

In the Branch Head Office alone there is a secretarial-typiste staff of seven, and four Industrial Officers constantly probe the laws of the World, analysing agreements and awards of the Court, negotiating under the Branch Secretary's direction, and preparing new cases. It is an enormous never-ending function, but it spells the highest protection for every A.W.U. member in the State. A man or woman may not need assistance, ever, in a job, but should he or she do so, it is the proud boast of the A.W.U. in Queensland that any member will have the whole of the A.W.U. organisation behind him if necessary.

No other trade union organisation in the Southern Hemisphere has such an array of industrial talent, and possibly, no other trade union organisation in the world handles so many different awards and industrial agreements.

In all Districts there are office staffs, while 40 motor vehicles are on the road, continually plying the distant and city routes in the service of the membership.

There are A.W.U. offices at Mackay and Mt. Isa. There are rented offices at Rockhampton, Ingham and Innisfail. All this represents a huge outlay of capital.

Besides the properties in the country areas of the State, the A.W.U. owns "Dunstan House", "Bowman House", "Radio House", and very valuable city land in Brisbane.

History will never allow it to be forgotten that this mighty machine developed out of the protests of men in the '90's who refused to bow to the tyranny of their overlords whose friends were the "blackbirders" of the Pacific, and who preferred Asiatic slave labour to that of white men! Those pioneers realised that their cause would be aided immeasurably if they established a newspaper of their own and supported it.

They realised that their industrial battles would be utterly useless if they could not secure representatives in Parliament.

So, using more or less "rule of thumb" methods, they set about that job, and in Queensland, laid the main plans for an Australian Labor Party which came into its own as a fully fledged Government for the first time in 1915, and carried on undefeated until 1929.

After three years in Opposition, Labor came back into its own in 1932 again, and remained in power until renegades once more showed that broken trusts pay for the time being and Labor was defeated.

Thus, from 1915 until 1957, with a three-year-break only ... A.L.P. Government, backed all the way by the Australian Workers' Union (and championed by "The Worker" until the gauntlet was dropped) reigned for 37 years. During that time the rest of the Commonwealth was given a pattern, industrially, politically, socially, and domestically to follow, and some States which had the guidance of Labor Government profited by the example set up here in the North.

Undoubtedly, the success of the Australian Labor Party Governments in Queensland was due almost entirely to the prestige and power of the Australian Workers' Union.
Section of Linotypes and Composing Room.

Rotary press showing "Worker" going through the machine and emerging as a printed paper.