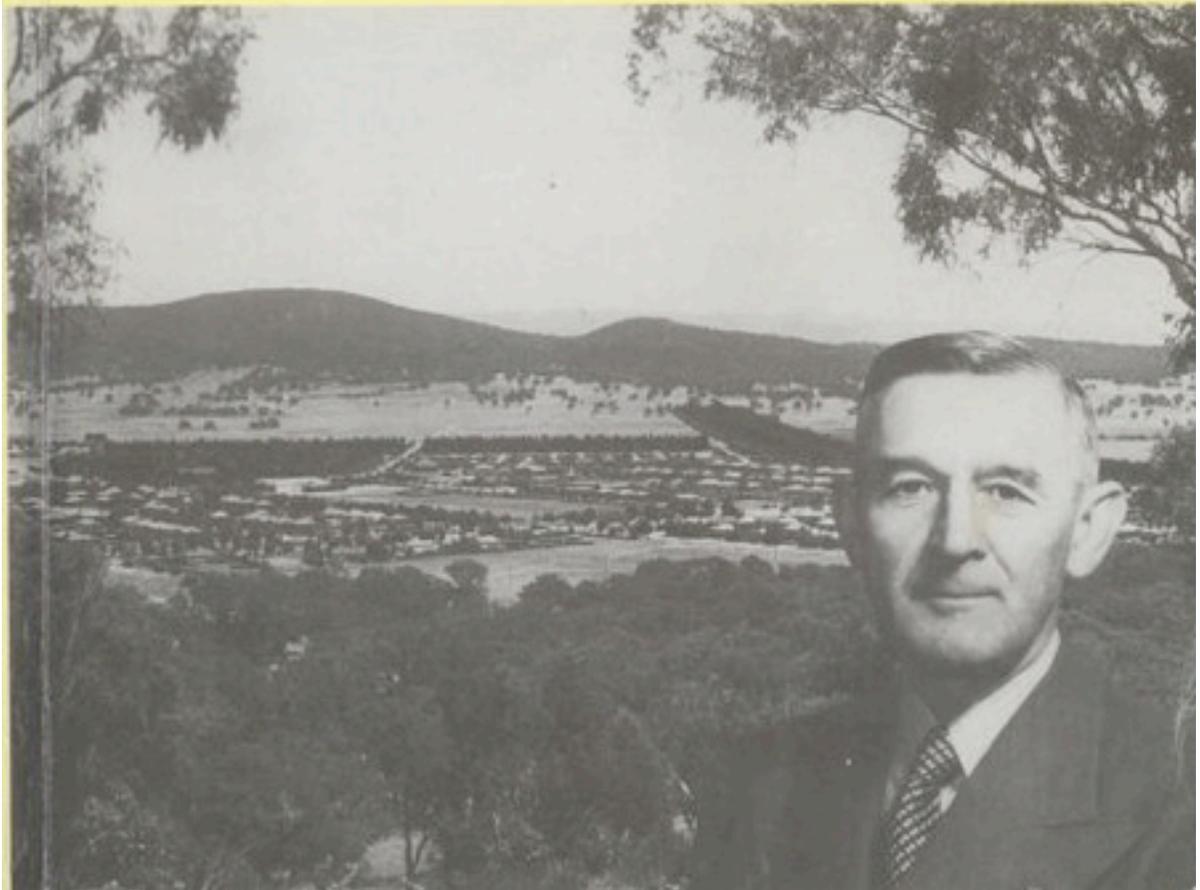


AS I RECALL

Reminiscences of Early Canberra

Charles Daley



As I Recall

Reminiscences of Early Canberra

by Charles Daley

Edited by Shirley Purchase

Introduction by Chris Coulthard-Clark

Ebook prepared by Norman Dahl



Charles Studdy Daley in about 1942.

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C.I.P.

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Front cover: Canberra as seen from Mount Ainslie in about 1927.

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Notes:

- 1. For ease of on-screen reading, the layout and typography of the ebook version is not the same as the original book; this includes page numbering. For citation purposes, the original starting page number of each article is given in the [Alphabetical Index](#).*
- 2. Endnotes in the ebook are taken from the 1994 print edition without modification to reflect the later date of the ebook.*

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Charles Daley with 'ACT 1' on the first Holden car in Canberra.

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On 4 July 1964 the following announcement appeared in the Canberra Times under the heading 'As I Recall':

More than half a century has elapsed since the Commonwealth embarked upon its constitutional obligation to provide a seat for its government. After surviving much hostility, misunderstanding and indifference during this long period, Canberra, as the nations capital, may be regarded now as having come of age, and is rapidly earning the respect and admiration of the Australian community.

On the part of the present generation, there is a natural interest, not only in its remarkable, present state of development, but in its unique history, in the factors that have affected its growth, in the persons who have contributed to its foundation and progress, and in the many incidents, grave and gay, that abound in its history.

A weekly article on some aspects of the human story will appear in this column by Charles Daley, whose association with the Federal Capital project dates back to the early days of 1905, and who, for many years, took a responsible part in its administration and physical development, as well as in its cultural and community life.

The articles do not appear in chronological order, but have been arranged according to theme. An index to titles and dates of articles may be found at the end of the book.

Introduction

The articles comprising this book were originally published 30 [now almost 50] years ago as a regular column in the Canberra Times, appearing each Saturday under the title 'As I Recall'. After the first item appeared on 4 July 1964, the series ran with a few interruptions for thirteen months, followed by a two-month break from the end of July 1965 while the author, C.S. Daley, was overseas. Resuming in October, the articles continued – albeit with an increasing number of 'skipped' weeks – for another year. The last appeared the day after Daley died on 30 September 1966, aged 79.

As a record of Canberra's history, this collection of writings was unique at the time and – despite the subsequent appearance of a wide range of works dealing with the region which became the home of the national capital, and of the city's early development – remains a source of immense interest and value. Covering a timescale ranging from pre-Canberra days to the 1960s, the articles deal with personalities, places, events, folklore, and the background to a variety of policy decisions which affected life in the bush capital.

What gives these articles enduring significance is the fact that they are the work of a man with an unparalleled knowledge of his subject. Daley's long association with the national capital, in official and private capacities, placed him in a position to comment about the affairs of Canberra with unusual authority. In particular, his role with the Federal Capital Commission 1924-30, then the Federal Capital Territory Branch in the Department of Home Affairs 1930-32, and finally with the Department of the Interior until his retirement in 1952, meant that Daley personally knew and dealt with virtually all the political figures who had shaped Canberra's direction over 30 years.

Born on 4 July 1887 at Maldon, a small town in the Bendigo district north-west of Melbourne, Charles Studdy Daley was educated at Harvard College in Stawell, and at the Stawell School of Mines. In 1905 he joined the Department of Home Affairs in Melbourne, becoming a clerk in the Public Works Branch. This post brought him into contact with two men soon to figure prominently in the story of Canberra. P.T. Owen, a retired colonel in the Royal Australian Engineers, was director-general of works and controlled practically all Commonwealth architectural and engineering projects, while J.S. Murdoch was then a senior clerk in the branch and later the Commonwealth's chief architect. Impressed by Daley's potential, they encouraged him to further his education by attending classes in accountancy, architecture and engineering at the Working Men's College. Later, he became a student in arts and law at Ormond College, at the University of Melbourne, graduating BA in 1914 and LLB in 1921.¹

From his vantage point within Home Affairs, where he was Owen's secretary for several years, Daley observed the controversy surrounding the question of siting the national capital, finally settled in 1909, and the international competition conducted in 1911-14 to find a suitable city design. He reportedly shared with many colleagues a suspicion and dislike of W.B. Griffin, the

competition winner, although he later became a ‘stout defender’ of his plan and worked hard to prevent its violation.² The city’s planner looms large in ‘As I Recall’, as does another principal player in the Canberra story: the eccentric minister with later responsibility for Home Affairs, King O’Malley. Daley strongly disapproved of O’Malley, and – as a consequence of his attitude – it is hardly surprising that he, in turn, has been portrayed in critical terms by O’Malley supporters.³

The decision of the government headed by W.M. Hughes to proceed with the development of Canberra, along the lines of Griffin’s plan, brought Daley into direct contact with the national capital scheme. In January 1921 he became secretary of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee, the body charged with drawing up a construction programme, and became a frequent traveller over the rail-line between Melbourne and the capital site. Well-educated (to a level unusual among his departmental colleagues) and endowed with a remarkably good memory, he has been described as ‘neat, dapper and birdlike’ and a man who was ‘loquacious but wrote lucidly, had an orderly mind and already had a good grasp of the complex problems facing the committee.’⁴

When the Committee was replaced in 1924 by the Federal Capital Commission, established under an Act of Parliament, Daley’s services were taken over by the new body as secretary and quasi permanent head. He moved to Canberra, joined by his wife and young family in August 1926, and took up residence at 20 Balmain Crescent, Acton, where he lived for the rest of his life. From his position with the Commission, Daley was in a singular position to help shape Canberra’s future. Although quickly viewed as a local patriot, opinions of his ability as an administrator differed:

Critics called him ‘Mr Delay’, or ‘Dilly Dally Daley’... Unlike some others, however, he saw Canberra as his home and maintained for it the grand vision of an earlier day.⁵

The importance of Daley’s contribution to the young capital was recognised in 1927 when he was appointed OBE, an award which he received from the Duke of York at an investiture following the ceremonies for the opening of Parliament House. He personally became convinced of the advantages of an independent body in directing the city’s growth. To a Senate committee inquiring into the development of Canberra in 1955 he deplored the mischief caused by incompetent, dishonest or ignorant Ministers’ (adding that ‘we have had all three’) and described the period of the Commission’s existence as ‘Canberra’s golden age’.⁶

When the Commission was abolished in April 1930, its functions being shared between the federal departments of Health, Works, Attorney-General’s and Home Affairs, Daley remained intimately involved with Canberra’s future. Appointed Civic Administrator (a sort of unelected mayor) in August 1930, he now became the city’s leading citizen. From Sir John Butters, the departing Commission chairman, he took over the distinctive car registration plates ‘FCT 1’ and retained their use until his death, after reportedly first having to fend off an attempt by the wife of the Prime Minister S.M. Bruce to secure the prized low number!⁷ The plates, duly changed to

‘ACT 1’, appeared firstly on an Armstrong Siddeley, followed by a Vauxhall, a Chevrolet, and finally a pioneer-model Holden car.⁸

As a concession to demands by the city's residents for representation in the control of local affairs, the Government created a Capital Territory Advisory Council. Daley became a nominated member of this new body and retained membership for the next 22 years. Although the Council was quickly confronted with ‘a routine in which its recommendations were accepted if they conformed with government policy and rejected if they did not’,⁹ he served three terms as chairman (1930-32, 1944-46, 1947-52).¹⁰

By the time Daley began his association with the Advisory Council, Canberra – with the rest of Australia – was just beginning to feel the effects of the Depression. Among the changes brought about by an economy-minded government was the amalgamation of the Department of Home Affairs with that of Works and Railways, to form the new Department of the Interior. As Assistant Secretary (Civic) in this new organisation, Daley found he was left with responsibility for city administration only, while territorial works and lands – including forestry, parks and gardens – passed to other officials in the department; other areas, like health and law, remained under different departments altogether:

The interests of the city, complained Daley, were being subordinated to other considerations and the status of many Canberra experts had been reduced ... Daley lost heart and applied for positions outside Canberra. Disenchantment ... blunted his administrative edge ... Slowly his responsibilities were whittled away by censorious superiors.¹¹

In December 1938 Parliament authorised an additional body called the National Capital Planning and Development Committee, which was established the next year to inquire into and report on any matter relating to the planning and development of Canberra which the Minister for the Interior might refer to it. Daley, who had urged this step as a means of bringing to the Government’s attention any proposals which might diverge from the intentions of the original Griffin plan, duly became a member by virtue of his departmental position.

The new committee lacked the powers Daley wanted for it (he had envisaged something akin to the Washington Planning Commission,¹² although he never personally visited the United States capital). While purely a body of advice and review, the NCPDC’s existence nonetheless ‘strengthened his protective role during the war and post-war years when the approved plan was under the threat of temporary buildings and other expedients.’¹³ Within a short period after his retirement, however, the committee was largely an irrelevance in its efforts to monitor and scrutinise the Department of the Interior’s plans for the development of Canberra, being treated with scant respect and often circumvented.¹⁴

In the small community for whom the infant city was then home, Daley played an active and prominent part in cultural affairs and social life almost from the moment of his arrival. He was instrumental in the creation in 1927 of the Canberra Society of Arts and Literature, and served

as this organisation's president. The next year he became a founding member of the Rotary Club, eventually serving here, too, as president in 1941-42.

An accomplished musician, he was also a member of an early musical group called the Stomberra Quartette (later Quintet) which included some prominent Canberra citizens – Professor J.F.M. Haydon from the Royal Military College at Duntroon; W.G. Duffield, the director of Mount Stromlo Observatory, and his wife; and Sir Robert Garran, the Solicitor-General. Daley 'provided on the piano not only the accompaniment but some of the parts for which the players and instruments were unavailable'.¹⁵

Becoming vice-president of the Canberra Musical Society, formed in 1928 through the amalgamation of local philharmonic and orchestral groups, in 1932 Daley began a lengthy term as president with this group as well, serving for the next 21 years. In the latter position it fell to him to make arrangements for local concerts produced by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, including the many international artists who visited Canberra. One of his daughters recalls that:

He would meet them at the railway station, host them throughout their stay, and proudly show them 'OUR' capital city. These artists included such famous people as Richard Tauber, Arthur Rubenstein, Lotte Lehmann, and troupes such as the Italian Opera Company, the Borovansky Ballet, the Comedy Harmonists, D'Oyley Carte Company and the Vienna Boys Choir. Many of these visited our home, delighting our family with their music. Rubenstein delighted us by playing our home piano, Dad's beloved Ronisch baby grand.¹⁶

Although a regular worshipper at the Anglican Church of St John the Baptist at Reid, when asked in 1934 to fill in as organist (unpaid) for six weeks at the newly-built Presbyterian Church of St Andrew, purely until a permanent appointment could be made, Daley duly obliged.¹⁷ In the event this honorary service continued for 18 years, until 1952.¹⁸ Apart from playing at services and choir practices, and special occasions such as weddings and funerals, he undertook all necessary maintenance of the organ since the nearest repair services were in Sydney.

In 1930 Daley joined the Council of the Canberra University College, serving there for the next 28 years. When moves began for the creation of the Australian National University at Canberra (which ultimately absorbed the University College in September 1960), he became a member of the ANU's Interim Council in 1945-50. In 1940 he helped found the Young Men's Christian Association in Canberra, providing leadership for that organisation as president for two years. (His absence overseas in 1965 was to represent Australia at a meeting of the YMCA World Council in Tokyo in August of that year.)¹⁹ He was for many years also chairman of the local Scout Association.

With his special knowledge acquired at the centre of local affairs, Daley was also able to contribute to public understanding of the process through which Australia's national capital had been brought into being. He gave freely and willingly of his time in preparing copious replies to

requests for information from researchers and other interested parties from around Australia and overseas, and contributed to publications on the subject.

In 1951 he provided a paper on 'The Canberra plan and its development' for the Federal Congress on Regional and Town Planning which was duly included in the conference's published proceedings. Along with many other distinguished local names, he wrote a chapter for a book prepared for the 30th meeting of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science (ANZAAS), held in Canberra in January 1954. His section, entitled 'The Growth of a City', charted the course of the national capital scheme and outlined aspects of its administration.²⁰ As one writer observed, 'These modestly impersonal accounts effectively disguise the importance of Daley's own role'.²¹

On his retirement in 1952, Daley found time to devote himself to a still wider range of activities. The next year he sailed with his youngest daughter to spend six months in Europe. During this time he represented Canberra Rotary at a convention held in Paris during May, attended by 10,000 visiting Rotarians, before returning to London for the celebrations associated with the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in June. Apart from further tours of the Continent, he also represented the Canberra University College at the Quinquennial Congress of Commonwealth Universities in Cambridge, before sailing from London for home in November.²²

Back in Canberra, Daley became a founding member of the Canberra & District Historical Society brought into existence on 10 December 1953. Predictably perhaps, he also took on a leadership role in this group by serving as president in 1959-61, relinquishing the position in time to undertake a leisurely overseas trip which included visits to relatives living near the Persian Gulf and a tour of the Greek Isles.²³ With his own unique perspective of the past, he continued to make a notable contribution to recording the history of the city and its surrounds – not least through presentations at historical society meetings.²⁴ His willingness to recount anecdotes of Canberra's past to anyone with time to listen made him something of a local legend. He was, however, reportedly disappointed when suggestions from about 1955 that he should be commissioned to write an official history of Canberra failed to be taken up,²⁵ a failure which in time prompted him to begin writing the memoirs which formed the 'As I Recall' series.

In his scholarly interest in matters historical, Daley was largely following in the footsteps of his father, Charles, who – at the time of his death in Melbourne in 1947, at the age of 88 – was one of the oldest members of ANZAAS, and a noted author, naturalist and historian. A frequent visitor to Canberra in his later years, Charles Daley senior had addressed the Rotary Club on Canberra's early history in the days of the Overlanders. Perhaps inspired by his father's interests, Daley himself published occasional pieces such as a 1933 paper in the *Victoria Naturalist* on 'Rock Shelters at Gudgenby River, Federal Territory'.²⁶

Daley's passionate interest in Canberra was shared by his wife, Henrietta (always known as 'Jessie'), who died before him, in Sydney, on 10 November 1943. Described as 'an outstanding figure in a comparatively small band of women imbued with purpose and displaying a capacity for organisation that was instrumental in many of ... [Canberra's] public bodies coming into being', she also 'exerted useful influence' in welcoming new citizens to the national capital during

the period of large-scale public service transfers.²⁷ She played a leading part in the Women's and Infants' Welfare Committee of the Canberra Social Service Association, from which the Canberra Mothercraft Society was formed, and was one of the first office-holders of the Society (eventually becoming president).

Joining her husband in the affairs of the Society for Arts and Literature, Mrs Daley took an active role in the Society's dramatic productions section, and also participated in the activities of the Musical Society. Prominent also in the Young Women's Christian Association, she gave active support to the Canberra Volunteers' Welfare Association, the Canberra Women's Voluntary Services, the Canberra Ladies' Choir, the Girl Guides' Association (of which she was first commissioner), the Canberra High School Parents' and Citizens' Association (of which she was the first vice-president), and the Royal Canberra Golf Club Associates (holding the positions of vice-president and president). At the time of her death she was still president of the ACT branch of the National Council of Women which she had helped form in May 1939.²⁸

Daley remained active to his final days. Giving his time increasingly to the benefit of cultural associations in the Australian Capital Territory, it was not uncommon for him to attend two to three meetings a day for various bodies in which he was involved. On the Friday of his death, he had attended a committee meeting of the ACT Council of Cultural Societies just hours earlier. The previous day he had kept a regular engagement providing piano entertainment for about 100 elderly people at the Senior Citizens Club in Turner.²⁹ At these weekly afternoon gatherings of the 'Thursday Club' he played classical music and led 'singalongs' of old-time melodies, often featuring new and topical lyrics which he had written himself.³⁰

The passing of Canberra's 'Grand Old Man' was marked with a funeral at St John's Church which was hugely attended. After the service, pupils from Campbell High School (with which he had been closely associated, having written the school's song) joined with representatives of Rotary, the YMCA and other organisations in forming a guard of honour as the funeral procession left the churchyard.³¹ The cortege, flanked by a police motor cycle escort, then proceeded through the streets of Civic as a special mark of respect.

Daley was survived by two brothers – Frank Stanley (b.1892), a prominent Melbourne engineer whose career included senior posts with General Motors-Holden and government defence factories, and Edward Alfred (b.1901), who retired in 1961 as Director-General of Medical Services in the Royal Australian Air Force with the rank of air vice-marshal. He also left four children: a son, Geoffrey, and daughters, Margaret ('Meg'), Nancy and Joan; the third child, a boy named Arthur, had died four years after the family's arrival in Canberra, aged six. To the surviving son went the task of sorting a vast array of documents and papers which packed Daley's former home.³²

Within the present-day city there are several reminders of Charles Daley's remarkable legacy to Canberra. In 1967 the C.S. Daley Memorial Gardens were established alongside the Griffin Centre in Civic, which houses many cultural and social organisations. Extensions to the YMCA Recreation Centre in Civic which were dedicated in 1968 included a 100-seat meeting hall named in Daley's honour.³³ The ACT Chapter of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects

annually offers the C.S. Daley Medal for meritorious design in domestic building, recalling the honorary associate membership bestowed on him by the RAlA in 1963.³⁴ His association with the ANU is also commemorated by a road named in his honour which runs past the main residential halls and colleges.

The articles comprising 'As I Recall' are re-published here with the permission of Daley's three daughters, his surviving children. This project has been undertaken by the Canberra & District Historical Society both to commemorate the link between Daley and Canberra, and to ensure that his unique record of the city's history becomes better known to present-day residents. Publication has been greatly assisted by a bequest of a life-member and former president of the Society, the late Mrs Pat Wardle, who often spoke with warmth and affection of Charles Daley.

Chris Coulthard-Clark

Canberra , March 1994

The Foundation of the Capital



Lady Denman naming the federal capital 'Canberra'

THE BEGINNING OF THINGS

How often do we hear the remark, 'Oh, Canberra was the result of the rivalry between Sydney and Melbourne'. Such a comment, however, represents but a superficial view of the question of a site for our nation's capital.

Demands were certainly made by the New South Wales Parliament that Sydney should be the seat of government, but no serious attempts were made by Victoria to designate Melbourne as the permanent capital. In a spirit of sarcasm, following pressure for Sydney, Sir Henry Braddon suggested that the capital be 'in some suitable place in Tasmania', Sir Alexander Peacock 'within the colony of Victoria', Sir George Turner proposed St Kilda and Sir Josiah Symon, Mount Gambier.

These sallies paved the way for Turner's serious and successful motion that the capital should be 'within federal territory', a decision of the [Constitutional] Convention for which there were weighty practical, political and aesthetic reasons. Most federal leaders, such as Parkes, Barton, Turner and Symon, realised that, whilst in a union the capital city of one of its integral parts might conveniently serve as the national capital, such an arrangement in a federation would be inequitable and a likely source of conflict, as powerful local forces would tend to influence the national point of view.

This was actually the case, for 26 years, as a result of the final bargain made at the 1899 Premiers' Conference that, whilst the capital was to be within New South Wales, 'distant not less than 100 miles from Sydney', the Parliament would sit in Melbourne pending its establishment at the seat of government.

As a result, Victorian influences became unduly prominent in federal affairs, and they were often directed towards maintaining the status quo, delaying a final decision as to the site, and then obstructing progress towards the preparation of Canberra for the role as the city where the federal government would function in its own territory, free from provincial atmosphere.

On the other hand, Victoria has provided an example of how the sovereign powers of a State in a federal system may become obscured, resulting in confusion in the public mind and a gradual weakening of its legislative and executive machinery, when its capital is also the seat of a federal government, a condition from which recovery has been extremely slow.

In setting up its seat of government in an independent territory, thus leaving the State capitals unhindered to express, in a complementary scheme, their own particular traditions, aspirations and functions, the Australian Commonwealth has followed a sound basic principle, irrespective of any questions of inter-state rivalry, over the choice of a site.

LEGISLATIVE STEPS TO A CAPITAL

First Choice Dalgety

Many people have expressed interest in the legislative, as well as the practical steps that were involved in commencing to build, on virgin soil, a new city, especially a city that was to be the capital of a nation. I must confess that this question intrigued me, an inexperienced youth, when,

on the inauspicious first day of April 1905, I found myself attached officially to a small group of earnest men in the central Public Works Branch of the Department of Home Affairs, who were deep in consideration of this problem.

A few months earlier, Parliament had ended the first round of the 'battle of the sites' by determining that the seat of government should be within 17 miles of Dalgety, on the Snowy River, and, at the Commonwealth's request, District Surveyor Charles Scrivener, on loan from the State Lands Department, had made a report on available city sites in the Dalgety neighbourhood and on suggested limits for the federal territory. The New South Wales Government had also reserved crown lands in that area from alienation.

It seemed to us that the way was almost clear to proceed. Before much progress had been made in the study of the engineering and planning requirements for Dalgety, however, strong objections were voiced to its selection by the New South Wales Parliament, and a political dispute of great intensity arose, the action of the Commonwealth being challenged on constitutional and other grounds. New South Wales refused to hand over the area selected, its Premier, Carruthers, contending that the State 'must be an agreeing party to a grant of territory, and, even in respect of acquisition of territory, a consulted and consulting party.' Prime Minister Deakin replied that his government could not admit the claims of the State to control the action of the federal parliament.

Much correspondence ensued, high legal opinion was marshalled on each side, and a deadlock reached. Strong feelings were aroused, both sides stood firm, and serious consideration was given to a suggestion from New South Wales that the matter be put before the High Court, or even the Privy Council, after a challenge to the action of the Commonwealth in driving a survey peg as a token of rightful possession of the Dalgety area.

Meanwhile, forces had been working towards a compromise. During the years 1906 and 1907 a number of Members of Parliament visited the Canberra district and many regarded it favourably. The New South Wales Government also indicated its preference for the Canberra area and it arranged for its engineers to prepare preliminary reports on its resources for water supply, sewage disposal, drainage and building materials. It became evident that a practical rather than a legal review of the position was required; the Commonwealth desired an area much larger than the 100 square miles mentioned in the Constitution, as well as access to the sea, and New South Wales a location nearer to Sydney than Dalgety.

In October 1908, therefore, ballots were again taken in both houses of the Federal Parliament, as a result of which Yass-Canberra – a grouping made to consolidate support – was determined as the district in which the federal capital would be located. In the Senate, it was a close fight as two sites left in the ballot – Tumut and Yass-Canberra – received 18 votes each. In this dilemma, the President held a further ballot in which Yass-Canberra received 19 votes and Tumut 17. Senator J.H. McColl, of Victoria, who had actually nominated Tumut, voted this time for Yass-Canberra, an unexpected defection for which he was never forgiven by the anti-Canberra group.

Parliament's decision was embodied later in the *Seat of Government Act 1908*, assented to on 14 December 1908, which provided that the Canberra territory should contain 'an area of not less than 900 square miles, and have access to the sea'. On this basis negotiations were opened with New South Wales, in a more generous spirit, and the services of District Surveyor Scrivener were again provided to undertake a thorough investigation, under instructions from the Minister for Home Affairs, Hugh Mahon, of the Yass-Canberra area.

This examination was to cover (1) a preliminary reconnaissance of the whole district, embracing the catchment area for water supply; (2) a topographical review of portions shown to possess the requisite characteristics for the Commonwealth territory; and (3) a contour survey of the suggested site or sites for the city. The Minister stressed the ideal requirements from practical and aesthetic standpoints, stating that 'the Capital should be a beautiful city, occupying a commanding position with extensive views, and embracing distinctive features which will lend themselves to the evolution of a design worthy of the object, not only for the present, but for all time ...'.

On 25 February 1909, Scrivener, with characteristic expedition, submitted his report to the Minister in which he regarded 'the Canberra site as the best that can be obtained in the Yass-Canberra district, being prominently situated and yet sheltered, while facilities are afforded for storing water for ornamental purposes at a reasonable cost.' He suggested alternative sites for weirs to create the ornamental waters. In regard to the limits of the territory, he pronounced the inclusion of the whole of the catchment areas of the Cotter, Queanbeyan and Molonglo rivers 'to prevent them from pollution before flowing through the city' – the total area being about 1,015 square miles.

THE FATHER OF CANBERRA

John Gale

Who was the 'Father of Canberra' – that is, the man who made the first suggestion that the first constitutional seat of government should be located in Canberra? This honour has been ascribed at various times, to several persons. Owing to my long association with the federal capital project, it is quite a common experience for me to be inaccurately presented to visitors in this guise often in a jocular strain, by friends and acquaintances.

The man upon whose shoulders the fatherhood of Canberra has most frequently been placed, with due seriousness, is Sir Austin Chapman, who had a long and honourable career, first as a member of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly, and, from the inception of federation until his death on 12 January 1926, as a member of the Commonwealth House of Representatives. He held ministerial office many times, occupying the portfolios of Defence, Trade and Customs, Postmaster-General and Health. His electorate of Eden-Monaro included several of the sites that were closely considered for the capital, such as Bombala, Dalgety (chosen in 1904), and Canberra (substituted in 1908).

Sir Austin, therefore, actually represented the Canberra area in the Federal Parliament until 31 December 1910, when it was taken over officially as the seat of government, and its residents

lost their voting rights. But Sir Austin had supported the claims of Dalgety, and when the selection was reviewed in 1908 he definitely sponsored Dalgety against Canberra. Although his claim for Dalgety did not finally succeed, fate favoured his political fortunes, as, by the choice of Canberra, the capital was still to be placed in his electorate, enhancing his reputation and compelling his interest.

Some years ago, a proposal was made by his admirers that a statue of Sir Austin Chapman should be erected in the capital in memory of the 'Father of Canberra'. It was my duty to oppose this suggestion as Sir Austin was not entitled to be so described, although he had, over the years, done valuable work to further the development of the capital after Canberra had been approved as its location. He would not have sought the title, and it was a great surprise to those promoting the scheme for his statue when I quoted from one of his own speeches in which he declared that, if any man were entitled to be known as the 'Father of Canberra', it was the veteran Queanbeyan journalist, John Gale.

John Gale died on 15 July 1929, three months after entering his 100th year, when he had received the medallion of a life-membership of the Australian Provincial Press Association from its President, the Hon. T. M. Shakespeare, and also a greeting from the London Institute of Journalists, congratulating him as 'the oldest working journalist in the British Empire'.

Born in Bodmin, Cornwall, on 17 April 1830, and educated at Bristol and Monmouth Grammar Schools, John Gale after some newspaper experience with the Welsh *Monmouthshire Mercury*, came to Australia on missionary work for the Methodist Church, but in 1860 he founded a newspaper in Queanbeyan, *The Golden Age*, later the *Queanbeyan Age*. He was an eager worker in the public interest, and he served too, for three years, in the New South Wales Centenary Parliament of 1888, coming under the notice of Parkes, the Father of Federation. He travelled extensively in country areas, was a keen angler and collaborated with Frederick Campbell of Yarralumla to introduce rainbow trout into New South Wales.

One day, on his rambles, he climbed what is now Capital Hill, and admired what he thought would be a fine site for a city. It was this area, then known as 'the Queanbeyan site', that he succeeded in having put forward with strong support of a committee of his townspeople, and in response to the Government's invitation for suggestions, in October 1899, for consideration by Alexander Oliver, a Royal Commissioner appointed to report on the suitability of about 40 sites that were proposed.

Although disappointed by the passage of the *Seat of Government Act 1904*, by which Dalgety was selected, Gale was by no means daunted, even in the face of an Act of Parliament. His pamphlet, 'The Federal Capital, Dalgety or Canberra, Which', published in 1907, was widely circulated, being sent to every Commonwealth and State legislator. Its significance was given more weight because of the official objections of the New South Wales Government to the site at Dalgety. Gale had the opportunity, also, to interview many politicians, in particular J. C. Watson, former Labor Prime Minister in 1904, whose quiet but insistent advocacy of a site in the Canberra district fortunately resulted in its substitution, in 1908, for Dalgety.

John Gale lived to see his vision realised, and he was invited to attend the opening of Parliament House at Canberra, on 9 May 1927, when he was presented to Their Royal Highnesses, the Duke and Duchess of York, alert and vital in his 97th year.

John Gale was a man of strict integrity, of unusual strength of character, of wide human understanding, with the experience of an exceptionally long working life. He had earned the respect of his professional colleagues, and the affection of his community for his long and devoted service on its behalf.

With such qualities and record, who would wish to dispute his right to be acknowledged as the 'Father of Canberra'?

COMMONWEALTH TAKES POSSESSION

Charles Scrivener's proposal for an area of approximately 1,000 square miles for the federal territory, around a site at Canberra for the city itself, was carefully examined by an advisory board which consisted of David Miller (Secretary, Department of Home Affairs), P.T. Owen (Director-General of Works), W.L. Vernon (Government Architect of New South Wales) and Scrivener himself. It endorsed generally the recommendations of the report, and, after further surveys had been made, fixed the actual city site, on 15 June 1909, in an area of three miles square, with its northern boundary between Mt Ainslie and Black Mountain, and the River Molonglo running through its centre. The proposed territorial area included the town of Queanbeyan and a large extent of country to the south-east of it, with provision for the port at Jervis Bay.

The New South Wales Government rejected this suggestion for the territorial boundary, owing chiefly to its objection to the inclusion of Queanbeyan within the federal project, but after consultation, it agreed to hand over 900 square miles west of the Goulburn-Cooma railway, and, at the same time, to give the Commonwealth certain control of the catchments of the Queanbeyan and Molonglo Rivers within the State, and to protect these areas, itself, from pollution.

An agreement was drawn up on this basis, and was signed by Deakin, as Prime Minister, for the Commonwealth, and by Wade, as Premier, for New South Wales.

It is of special interest that, upon the urgent suggestion of my own chief, Col. P.T. Owen, the agreement contained a clause giving the Commonwealth the right to use the waters of the Snowy River for the generation of electricity. His foresight thus established the possibility of the Commonwealth's action in proceeding with the huge Snowy Mountains scheme.

The right of the Commonwealth to construct a railway through the State to the port at Jervis Bay was also included, and the Commonwealth undertook to safeguard the waters of the Murrumbidgee River in their course through the Territory.

The terms of the agreement were ratified by legislation in the *Seat of Government Surrender Act 1909*, of New South Wales, and the *Seat of Government Acceptance Act 1909*, of the Commonwealth, and the long controversy over the site was seemingly ended. On 24 April 1910, the Deakin

administration was succeeded by Fisher's second Labor Ministry, and this, to our consternation, brought to office, as Minister for Home Affairs, the fustian figure of King O'Malley, of whom I propose to write more fully on a later occasion.

He had concurred originally in the choice of Dalgety, and he took no active part in the selection of Canberra. By a freak of fortune, he happened to arrive as Minister just as the capital site question had been settled, and our preparations in the Department enabled positive action to proceed towards Commonwealth control of the area. He was required to bring forward in Parliament a bill to provide for the provisional government of the Territory. This covered the power for the Governor-General to make ordinances, arrangement for the temporary continuance of State laws, State services and State lower courts, and other machinery details.

One important clause, inserted as an amendment by O'Malley, established the principle of leasehold tenure for the Territory. It was a strange coincidence that the first suggestion for the adoption of leasehold had been made in Parliament, in 1901, by O'Malley, and that, when the time came, ten years later, for the Commonwealth to take over control of the Territory, King O'Malley arrived, as the Minister concerned, to implement his early proposal.

In the consideration of this bill, there were still some Victorian 'die-hards' on the site question. Dr Carty Salmon unsuccessfully moved that the second reading be postponed until after a referendum of the people had been taken on the question of the site, and a motion by James Mathews that the proclamation of the Act should not be issued until 1 January 1920 was also defeated by a two-to-one majority in this last-ditch attempt at stalling the project.

The way was now clear for the Commonwealth to take over the selected Territory from New South Wales, so, on 5 December 1910, a proclamation was issued by the Governor-General, the Earl of Dudley, under the provisions of the Seat of Government Acceptance Act 1909, which duly vested the Territory for the Seat of Government in the Commonwealth on and from 1 January 1911.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Such unconcern as Juliet felt when, thinking of Romeo, she cried, 'What's in a name?' is not at present found in Canberra, as many people have either written or telephoned me to ask questions about the origin or meaning of our place names. There have also been letters in the press, evincing quite a keen interest in this subject, but indicating, in some instances, little acquaintance with the character of our scheme of nomenclature.

Under the Commonwealth Constitution, the proposed federal area was termed 'The Territory for the seat of Government', but this long title was not often used, and the title 'Federal Capital Territory' replaced it in general reference, but not by statutory enactment. Later, it became desirable to adopt a name that would be more precisely indicative, especially for overseas use, and, in 1938, an Act of Parliament prescribed the name 'Australian Capital Territory'.

The story of the selection of a name for the capital city is generally well known. Suggestions were made from far and wide, and we had a list containing about 750 names in our office. These embraced many place names, those of animals (Kangaroo, Opossum, Kangaremu, Blue Duck);

trees and flowers (Acacia, Banksia, Wattle in many combinations, and Eucalypta); abstractions (Eureka, Climax, Perfection); femininity (Eve and Venus); political allusions (Caucus City, Liberalisma); Cooee and its echo Cooeeoomoo; classical forms (Apexia, Federata, Maxurba, Victoria Deferenda Defender); statesmen (Gladstone, Disraeli, Asquith). Local leaders' names were prominent, such as Barton, Deakin and Quick. The Prime Minister, Fisher, was favoured in Fisherdale, Fisherburra, and the subtle Piscatoria, and Sir Joseph Cook, in 'Cooksia', 'Cookaburry' and 'Cookaburra', whilst 'Cooked Fish' suggested a political fusion of both names. There was, of course, 'O'Malley', 'Malleyking' and his own suggestion 'Myola' that Fisher favoured as an alleged Queensland Aboriginal name, meaning 'meeting place', but this was dropped like a hot coal when the Cabinet realised that it was practically an anagram of O'Malley's own name. There were interesting attempts at building up State capital titles, such as 'Admelsalva', the ironic 'Sydmelbane', and 'Sydmeladeperbrishd' to collect all of them. 'Circle City' had allusions to the Griffin plan, and 'Thirstyville' came from someone chafing under O'Malley's liquor restriction policy. 'Canberra', and many variations of it, were also seen.

When 'Myola' was dropped, O'Malley countered with 'Shakespeare', but the Government took a logical and unembarrassing way out by choosing the long-used name 'Canberra', and this was announced by Her Excellency Lady Denman to an expectant public at noon on 12 March 1913, immediately after the ceremony of laying foundation stones of the commencement memorial on Capital Hill.

For the naming of divisions, public places and streets it was felt that a definite procedure should be instituted under which the haphazard methods often adopted would be avoided and dignified and appropriate names be chosen. We examined many schemes, including the somewhat cold American system of using numbers for avenues and streets. Griffin essayed a scheme in the 1918 edition of his plan, but it paid no tribute to Australian traditions and had many practical difficulties. In 1928, the Canberra National Memorials Committee was being set up, and our suggestion that it should also advise on the general question of city nomenclature was adopted. This committee comprised the Prime Minister, the leader of the Opposition in both Houses, two other Ministers, the Secretary for the Interior and one of his officers, and two outside persons of standing.³⁵ At its first meeting in 1928, this committee adopted a general scheme put forward by the Federal Capital Commission. This had been worked out by the first secretary of the committee, D. S. Burgess and myself, with valuable help from Sir Ernest Scott (Professor of History, University of Melbourne) and G.F. Mann (Director of the Sydney Art Gallery and a sound historian), both members of the Memorials Committee.

The committee as a whole made only two serious emendations of our scheme. It had hoped to have the wide thoroughfare now known as London Circuit called by the descriptive name of 'The Hexagon', but the Prime Minister, the Hon. S.M. (later Lord) Bruce, said that we must have a connection with the mother city of the Commonwealth, London, so the present name was chosen. We proposed, also, to retain Griffin's title 'Civic Centre' for the main commercial division, but Bruce objected to the name as an 'Americanism', so we changed it to the somewhat imprecise term 'City'.

For the avenues enclosing the main government triangle, we chose names from the city's motto 'For the King, the Law, and the People', and we have, therefore, King's, Constitution and Commonwealth Avenues. In the names of places and streets, titles were adopted that emphasised a national viewpoint, and to commemorate persons well known in the annals of Australian exploration, colonialism, administration, politics, commerce, science or letters. It was agreed that, for the main divisions, or suburbs, the names of the founders of Federation should be selected, except in cases where local names had already become long-established, such as Ainslie, Duntroon and Yarralumla. In this category, the name of 'Parkes' was given pride of place in the government triangle, as 'the Father of Federation'.

THE FIRST CANBERRA DAY

On the original Canberra Day, my erstwhile and flamboyant minister, King O'Malley, for whom it appeared as a magnificent personal achievement, uttered the prophecy, 'The chronicler of the future will look back upon the twelfth day of March, 1913, as marking an epoch in the affairs of the Commonwealth of Australia, second only to the historic occasion of the landing of Captain Cook.'

It might be noted, incidentally, that O'Malley's egotism led him to anticipate the work of the Governor-General and Prime Minister Fisher at the foundation stone ceremony by arranging, three weeks earlier, an impressive function at Canberra, at which he drove in the first peg of the city survey, on Capital Hill. To temper this arrogance somewhat, he brought along also the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Mr Charles McDonald, to drive a second peg – *arcades ambo* (blackguards both).

To those of us to whom it was a duty, and to many other Australians, the ceremonies of the laying of foundation stones seemed to be valuable steps towards fulfilling the constitutional obligation to provide adequately, and without further delay, for the establishment of the Seat of Government in its own Territory. There were many others, however, in and out of Parliament, who had opposed the choice of Canberra, and, indeed, any action at that stage to move the Parliament from its intended temporary home in Melbourne. Only one State Premier (from New South Wales) attended the Canberra Day naming ceremony. South Australia was represented by her Chief Secretary.

Even in New South Wales there were strong opponents of the selected site. Sir William Lyne, a former Premier, and later a Federal minister, advocating Tumut in his own electorate, said of Canberra, 'that place will never be the Federal Capital.' He did not live to learn that one of its future suburbs [Lyneham] would bear his name.

Poynton, of South Australia, had stated, 'I should regard its selection as the greatest blunder. If it [the Capital] is located at Canberra, it will not grow.' Later we observed the ironic situation that Poynton, as Minister for Home and Territories, was required to take a leading part in the post-war drive to resume active progress of the Canberra programme, in 1921.

The naming ceremony on 12 March 1913 gave the *Bulletin* ample scope for its venom. Under the heading of 'A Fantastic Christening', King O'Malley and Fisher are depicted as high priests

at Canberra. O'Malley is holding the child (the capital) in his arms and he tells Fisher, richly garbed in garments embroidered with kangaroos, rabbits and lizards – O'Malley's also shows roosters – that all the suggested names are in a hat, from which the Governor-General will draw one out. But they have forgotten to bring the christening water to Canberra, and O'Malley explains that men have been sent out, with divining rods, to see where it may be found. This involves a delay of ten years! Again, the Cotter is described as the river where 'the trout are suffocated with mud and captured by hand.'

Another of its cartoons, by Vincent, was associated with a clever playlet, with Lord Denman in uniform, and Fisher, O'Malley and Hughes dressed as troubadours with a banjo, singing alternate verse and chorus about O'Malley's proposed choice of 'Myola' as the name for the capital.

That the old-established name of Canberra has proved to be a happy solution is now quite definite. Australians, on Canberra Day, have the splendid opportunity each year to honour those national ideals for which it now stands so firmly, and which they must teach the coming generation likewise to cherish.

The Problematic King O'Malley



The birth of a capital: the winning design of W.B. Griffin is announced. King O'Malley is seated in the foreground.

THE CASE AGAINST A SUBURB NAMED O'MALLEY

On Canberra Day [12 March 1966] in an otherwise excellent address to the gathering at the Commemoration Stone on Capital Hill, the Minister for the Interior, Mr Anthony, made the startling announcement that one of the new suburbs in the Woden Valley was to bear the name of the former Minister for Home Affairs, Mr King O'Malley.

As one who was required to work for several years under O'Malley's regime, I feel that the present National Capital Memorials Committee could not have undertaken adequate research into available records if it put forward to the Minister the proposal that O'Malley's name should be used in a position of honour in the capital. He himself treated it with contumely and disrespect, and to the advancement of it he contributed nothing.

It is difficult to outline O'Malley's background. He came upon the Commonwealth Parliamentary scene in 1901, from Tasmania, but almost everything about his life remains mysterious. Was he born in 1854 or 1858? He had mentioned both years. Was he a British subject, and as such eligible to sit in the Federal Parliament? I heard him make two statements on this subject, the first that his home was a building astride the United States-Canadian border, and that he was born in a room that was on Canadian soil; the second, that, when his birth was imminent, his father sent his mother into Canada, wanting him to be a British subject. Late in life, O'Malley admitted to his biographer that he was an American by birth. So he was a confessed impostor in our Parliament and Executive.

He claimed special experience in the field of finance, training first under an uncle, who was a New York banker, and, after a disagreement with him on important financial policy, on his own account in insurance and real estate business. In order to secure land, when grants were being made to religious institutions, he started a new sect amongst the Indians, and claimed to be 'Bishop of the Waterlily Rock-bound Church: The Redskin Temple of the Cayuse Nation' – a title he often used in his personal correspondence.

He told often the story of how, with the aid of an accomplice, he worked 'miracles' by obtaining so-called signs from heaven in the shape of coloured lights, set off by his accomplice on a nearby mountain. Not to be outdone, he emulated Moses, ascending the mountain and returning, as he had foretold his congregation, with tablets of stone upon which were engraved the tenets of his religion. He was found out by the Indians through the failure of his accomplice, and had to leave the district in haste.

He married a young organist of his former flock, but she died of galloping consumption, a disease that he also contracted. As the result of bad health, he came to Australia in a freighter, landing in Rockhampton, Queensland. His own account continues thus. Instead of going into the town, he wandered along the seashore, finding a cave in which he lay down to rest. He was awakened by an Aboriginal, who picked him up and carried him to his gunyah, thus saving him from drowning at high tide. His consumption was arrested by open-air life in the camp, and by eating certain purple berries known to the Aborigines.

When his strength returned, he walked from Rockhampton to Adelaide, meeting notabilities en route in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Hobart. He sold insurance in large amounts to Anthony Hordern, Otway Falkiner and others, and conferred with Edmund Barton on Federation! Arriving in Adelaide in 1893, he dealt in real estate and insurance, and, in 1896, entered the State Parliament as Member for Encounter Bay and an 'Independent Christian Socialist'. He lost this seat, he said, owing to opposition from liquor interests, as he had condemned the drink-traffic evils, having become a teetotaler after his marriage.

After a visit to Western Australia 'to persuade that State to join the Federation', he proceeded to Tasmania, at the suggestion of Chris Watson, Leader of the Australian Labor Party, and was elected to one of the seats in the first Commonwealth Parliament, in 1901. There his wild shock of hair and full beard, and his extravagant style of dress drew attention to him at once. He wore a flowing American frock-coat, a large Texan hat, heavy horn-rimmed glasses, a prominent pearl and diamond tie-fastener, and a massive gold watch-chain. He usually carried a large gamp umbrella.³⁶

His speech was a heavy drawl, with reliance on forceful and unusual adjectives, and reckless exaggeration. 'I represent Darwin, the most intelligent constituency in the Southern Hemisphere, the blue-riband electorate of the Commonwealth.'

Following Emerson's advice 'hitch your waggon to a star', O'Malley appropriated many important proposals as his own suggestions, but in this Canberra was an exception. In 1909, before his succession to office, he had this to say about the proposed acceptance of the present Australian Capital Territory: 'This is a crime unparalleled in history. Neither the records of plundered provinces, nor of the most cruel of ancient rulers, disclose such dictation as that to which the Federal Parliament has had to submit upon this question at the hands of the Parliament of New South Wales.'

Again, 'This is a proposition to establish the capital in a district which, at times is so dry that a crow desiring to put in a weekend vacation there would have to carry its water-bag.'

'I do not wish to see its [Australia's] capital established in an undesirable place.'

During a later debate, O'Malley endeavoured to persuade Parliament to stay in Melbourne, saying 'Surely honourable members are satisfied with the present home of the Parliament, surely we have every comfort which Christian men could have in a Christian land? Why,' he asked, 'should we leave a healthy, prosperous, successful city like Melbourne, where the rents are low, and the people are healthy and intelligent, and where we have libraries, great newspapers and the best of society?' He advised, 'When we old roosters have been planted, let the young men who are coming on move to the Federal Capital.'

These were his sentiments as a private member. But later, he induced Caucus to take from a Labor Prime Minister the right to select his team, and, to public astonishment, he obtained office by a vote of Caucus becoming Minister for Home Affairs in 1910. He had hoped to be Treasurer – 'I could run the Commonwealth for about one eighth what it costs to run it now' – but Fisher, as Prime Minister, also took the Treasury portfolio.

As Minister for Home Affairs, O'Malley saw a new opportunity in the Federal Capital project, which, without any aid from him, had reached the stage of active progress. He turned a somersault and commenced by saying, 'Canberra will be a city to rival London, Athens and Paris – the Gotham of Australia,' and again, 'I cannot understand why Australians should oppose this wonderful scheme, seeing that the land belongs to the people'.

One of O'Malley's first duties was to launch an international competition for a design for the city. For such competitions, one or usually three technically-qualified persons hold the appointment as adjudicator, and his or their decision is final, so far as concerns the quality of the winning design. In this case, however, O'Malley insisted upon a revision of the conditions to constitute himself as the adjudicator, with a Board of Assessors to report to him upon the designs. His department told him, as did also a deputation from the Institutes of Architects, that he should not be the technical adjudicator, but he was adamant on this point. In consequence, the British Architectural, Civil Engineering and Town Planning Institutes asked all their members throughout the world to refrain from competing, so we had the frustration of seeing a competition largely confined to foreigners at a time when British experience and progress in city planning were at a high level.

As a Minister, O'Malley departed from the usual ministerial function of dealing mainly with policy, and by interfering in all manner of detail in the Department caused uncertainty and confusion everywhere. His direction that all works were to be executed by day labour caused almost a revolution, as the Department had to provide for carrying out all the minor functions of the contractor. This actually increased the cost of most works, although O'Malley asserted that it cut out the 'boodeliers' profit'.

What it did do was to afford him wide opportunity for the direct employment of large bodies of men. Many came from his electorate to obtain their reward for giving him their vote, and I had the unenviable task of finding jobs for most of them. They used to wait for long periods in the departmental lobbies to see the Minister, who generally failed to call them, and made his exit through the back-door of the caretaker's quarters.

The Ministers had the power to appoint temporary staff, and O'Malley, under this guise, had his own informers, who secretly wrote to him, damaging the reputation and character of loyal supervisors trying to obtain efficiency. Again, against the advice of the Permanent Head, O'Malley often appointed 'consultants', at high fees, whose reports the Department never had the advantage of perusing.

During O'Malley's two periods of office the atmosphere of the Department was decidedly unhealthy, but when he left finally in November 1916, action was taken immediately to get rid of his myrmidons. The air gradually became sweetened again, and some order was restored in the departmental machinery.

In his personal affairs, it was well known that O'Malley owned slum-property in Melbourne, and officers of the Metropolitan Board of Works personally confirmed to me that these properties were so much below standard that the Board decided to cut off their water supplies.

Repeated attempts to force O'Malley to comply with minimum standards had gained only such assurances as, 'Tell your roosters that I'll put a bathroom to every third house.'

Instances of O'Malley's unsuitability both as Minister and as a custodian of this country's traditions, could readily be multiplied, and confirmed from his private papers, which came into the possession of the National Library, and in which, with contemporary knowledge, it is easy to read between the lines. It is little wonder that a leading Melbourne daily uttered the intriguing query, 'Is the Commonwealth to be made a laughing-stock for all time because the Caucus elected this egregious person as Minister for Home Affairs?'

Now the Minister for the Interior is about to dishonour Canberra in perpetuity by this harrowing reminder. Why not adopt 'Groom' for the suburb, the name of a really distinguished and honourable Minister and Speaker, who did more for the capital project, up to 1925, than any other Minister? His life, in public and private, stands as a shining example. The placing of Groom's name on a street – where it is now – does not give due recognition.

The Minister ended the speech which contained the O'Malley announcement by quoting, as his own conviction as well, the words of the Governor-General, Lord Denman, spoken at the original 1913 ceremony – 'The traditions of this City will be the traditions of Australia. Let us hope that they will be traditions of freedom, of peace, of honour, and of prosperity; that here will be reflected all that is finest and noblest in the national life of the country.' That is not consistent with the name of O'Malley.

THE IMPACT OF THE KING

Andrew Fisher's second Ministry, of which King O'Malley was a member, was sworn in at Government House, Melbourne, in the evening of 29 April 1910. Early next morning, Russell, caretaker of the Department of Home Affairs, was finishing his breakfast in his flat at the rear of the building at 8 a.m, when the front door bell rang vigorously. Opening the entrance door, he was astonished to find before him the tall and bearded figure of King O'Malley, with his long flowing coat, a flashing diamond in his shirt-front, a heavy gold watch-chain across his waistcoat, a Texan hat enhancing his height, and an oversized, unrolled umbrella. This figure grabbed and pumped the caretaker's hand, saying, 'Good morning, brother. I'm King O'Malley, your new Minister. Where do I do my little bit?'

Swallowing his surprise, and perhaps his contempt – Russell had formerly been a vice-regal butler – the caretaker ushered O'Malley to the Minister's room on the first floor. King O'Malley hung up his hat and umbrella, took off his coat – a true worker – and sat down at the desk which still carried some of the outgoing Minister's papers. Russell explained the working of the telephone switches and bell connections and then left.

Soon afterwards, he heard a bell ring and, upon his appearance, was asked, 'Where are the roosters, brother?' 'Roosters?' gasped Russell in amazement. 'Yes,' rejoined King, 'the roosters, the fellows who work here; I can't raise any of them.'

When informed that the office did not open until nine o'clock, King exploded with: 'Nine o'clock, that won't do me; they'll soon be starting at eight! Then he added: 'How do they check

in?’ Upon being told that they signed a time-book at the pay-office counter, he asked for the book. Russell produced it and O’Malley, in his childish handwriting, scrawled his signature in inch-high letters at the top of the page – ‘King O’Malley – 8 a.m.’ – a practice that he afterwards continued.

It can readily be imagined how this precipitate entry of O’Malley, deliberately calculated to cause sensation, affected the dignified Secretary for Home Affairs, Colonel Miller, upon his own arrival at 9 a.m. It was customary for an outgoing Minister to introduce his successor, usually about mid-morning, taking the opportunity to say farewell to a gathering of senior officers, thank them, commend them to the new Minister, and then retire.

King O’Malley never secured a real grasp of the Department’s work, although he acted as if he were personally directing all matters of detail.

His much-vaunted training and experience in financial and business methods were never discerned by us, and his erratic and clowning behaviour brought his important office into ridicule, as well as tending to demoralise a well-organised department. In these circumstances, Colonel Miller found proper administration a matter of great difficulty, and he was glad to leave the mounting chaos and take up his post as Administrator at Canberra.

The departmental time-book afforded O’Malley an avenue in which to display his expert hand, so he directed that a red line be drawn across the page at 9.05 a.m., and that all officers signing below the line report to him personally.

At interviews, O’Malley often worked himself into a tantrum, and pointing to the photographs of his ministerial predecessors on the walls, he would declare, ‘Don’t think I’m like them, animated rubber stamps, fogbound in a shoreless sea of red tape; I run my department.’

‘I want our officers to stand erect, with their chests thrown out like ancient Greek statues, instead of trembling before Ministers.’

On leaving office, in June 1913, he placed on record a very eulogistic statement in regard to his officers’ loyalty, ability and zeal, but, when he assumed his second term, in the Hughes Ministry in October 1915, his attitude had completely changed, as he had, in the meantime, come under the sinister influence of Griffin (see below).

RETURN OF O’MALLEY

With the advent of the first Hughes administration, on the 27 October 1915, when Andrew Fisher succeeded George Reid as Australian High Commissioner in London, the ministerial kaleidoscope gave a backward twist, sending us once again the flamboyant King O’Malley to administer Home Affairs.

As seen by the public, the King was much the same publicity-monger, and, in Parliament, ready with casual comment on any subject, such as ‘Red-tape is the monkey-wrench in the machinery of efficiency’; or, with reference to a Labor Government in New South Wales, ‘Everything is going to be right now, the Christians are in power over there’; and again, regarding the use of the Snowy River, ‘I don’t know whether the States would allow us but we could always

bring the snow down in tubes to Yass-Canberra'. When Catts remarked that his Sydneyite constituents wanted to obtain as many trading advantages as possible from the capital, O'Malley said 'The Capital will be a suburb of Sydney.'

So the public were still entertained, but, for the departmental officers, it was quite a different story. It will be remembered that O'Malley, when he left office in June 1913, made a public statement eulogising the officers of Home Affairs Department for their excellent service under him. When he returned to his portfolio, however, almost two and a half years later, he was full of hostility towards them. What was the reason? The answer is 'Walter Burley Griffin'.

In 1912, O'Malley had set aside Griffin's plan in favour of the Departmental Board's design. He had not known Griffin, of course, since the latter did not come to Australia until Kelly³⁷ invited him in 1913. Although Griffin was doing well with Kelly's ministerial support, he was shrewd enough to cultivate O'Malley's acquaintance, particularly later during Archibald's³⁸ succeeding term, when Griffin's influence was waning. He and O'Malley had a good deal in common; they were both Americans – Irish Americans – and while Griffin chafed under Archibald's unresponsiveness, O'Malley, also, had not taken with good grace Archibald's substitution for himself when Fisher's third Ministry was formed.

Griffin's friendship with O'Malley was, therefore, easily used to turn the Minister against his officers, as elements unreasonably opposed to Griffin's schemes, to which O'Malley gave firm support – a reversal of the attitude of Archibald. King pretended that he had discarded Griffin's plan, in 1912, against his own better judgement, because of official pressures. As Senator Story said in Parliament, of Griffin, 'he has evidently got King O'Malley by the ear.'

The Minister's change of policy was immediately evident. He instructed all officers that they were to furnish any information and assistance desired by the Federal Capital Director of Design and Construction, stating that he desired 'to eliminate all methods and forms of red tape in this regard, with a view to facilitating the progress of the City.' He directed, on 1 December 1915, that no operations at Canberra were to be initiated without Griffin's advice. He took the unusual step, in April 1916, of securing from Cabinet approval to renew Griffin's agreement for a further term of three years, although it was not due to expire until 18 October.

The final move by O'Malley against his officers was made on 3 May 1916, when he placed J.D. Brilliant, a foreman at Canberra, a non-professional employee, in full charge of all works in the Territory, and of all local works staff, including the engineers, thus removing all control from the Director-General of Works and giving Griffin a free hand. Owing to the war, however, and consequent shortage of funds, very little could be accomplished.

A stupid act of O'Malley, in August 1916, was to re-open the international competition for a design of Parliament House, which had been withdrawn when war broke out. Strong criticism of his action came from Britain, and one of the first acts of the reconstituted Hughes Ministry of 14 November 1916, was to announce on 24 November that the competition was indefinitely postponed. O'Malley was not included in the Cabinet. At the election of 1917 he was defeated and did not stand for Parliament again.

THE KING AS MANAGER

One of King O'Malley's delusions, or assumed credentials, was an expert knowledge of business efficiency, and he flourished this flag in and out of Parliament, without effective recognition, for years.

About 18 months before he achieved office, he told the House: 'I would not change places with any Minister. The country has lost more than I have – it has lost my knowledge, which I have still got'.

At this time, however, he succeeded in persuading Caucus to rule that it would choose the personnel of a Labor Ministry, thus depriving its leader of the traditional right to select his team. He tried, unsuccessfully, to have the portfolios likewise allotted, hoping to become Treasurer and so 'be in the money'. On assuming office, Fisher took the Treasury himself and we enjoyed O'Malley in Home Affairs.

One factor raising O'Malley's standing in Caucus was his successful advocacy of an increase in the allowance to Members, from £400 to £600 per annum, in 1907. He asked for permission to pitch a tent in Parliament House grounds, on the plea of hardship, owing to the inadequacy of the allowance.

As public works came within his portfolio, they supplied the King with a wide field for personal intervention in detail and, of course, the publicity he craved.

When he took office, we were commencing the erection of the first block of Commonwealth Offices in Treasury Gardens, Melbourne. O'Malley, after morning tea, often walked from his Department in Russell Street, to view progress on the excavations. Standing on the footpath overlooking the lower floor, he would stop the work, hailing the labourers with 'Good morning, brothers, how are you today? How are the roosters treatin' you?' This was his idea of increasing the efficiency of day labour and he directed that, as a general policy, federal works were to be executed by day labour. This direction caused a revolution in public works routine. Although we had used day labour occasionally in special cases, such as works inside the forts, the general policy had been to call tenders and let contracts, which needed only a small staff for their supervision. Now, we had to embark upon the manifold activities of the contractor, involving purchase of materials, storekeeping, transport, timekeeping and payment of wages, costing, and more detailed supervision, and to do these things, moreover, as far as possible, over the length and breadth of the continent. This system afforded O'Malley a grand opportunity to give jobs to all sorts and conditions of men, especially those from his electorate who came in substantial numbers to claim their 'reward'. Many of these men I had to post to Canberra, often to the dismay of our local officers.

It was no uncommon thing to receive an order from the Minister to discharge an efficient foreman, and replace him by a poorly-qualified but militant unionist, who would observe a benevolent attitude towards the workmen on the grounds that the Government was an 'ideal' employer.

The most galling feature of this business was the constant demand by O'Malley for data designed to prove to Parliament that day labour was cheaper than contract – an undemonstrable proposition. But he could blandly tell Parliament: 'I am here not as a huckster, but to preserve the rights of the people of Australia'.

THE KING'S IDEA OF RECORDS

King O'Malley's insatiable hankering after publicity led him, in December 1910, to introduce his famous 'Digest', a special record of all the activities of his department, to inform himself, or one suspects, his many callers on any subject, particularly the progress of works. From this record, also, a bimonthly schedule – pronounced, if you pleased, 'skedell', was compiled, printed and issued widely in Australia and overseas.

One morning, a messenger delivered to me three heavy books, bound in full calf, with the best hand-made ledger paper, and with a red morocco loose cover, bearing in heavy gilt the announcement: 'This Digest System was designed by the Hon. King O'Malley, Minister for Home Affairs'

At this time we had developed the head-office works record on the card system, based upon fortnightly progress reports from branch offices.

Upon my explaining this modern system to the King, he replied that cards were obsolete and that the books must be used, and must be always kept in his room. The books, designed by some 'expert' from his electorate, without knowledge or investigation of our working arrangements, were useless.

The Director-General of Works saw the Minister and pointed this out and the King directed that a new set of books be obtained with suitable rulings and self-indexing provisions. The new books, of course, bore the same legend and were equally expensive.

As the books had to be in the Minister's room whenever he was there it required many manoeuvres to secure them for posting current information each day. When the King went over to Parliament House, we abducted the books and, at other times, carried out the posting at night.

One morning, I found a rather elderly man, with dyed hair, a flower in his buttonhole, wearing spats and carrying a stick and yellow gloves, sitting in my room. He rose, saying, 'I'm Gresham, Sir, reporting for duty'.

Astonished, I said, 'Who told you to report?' He replied, 'The Minister, Mr King O'Malley, I'm to keep his Works Digest'.

More astonished, I went downstairs to see the Minister, who received me, as usual, with: 'Well, brother, what can I do for you?'

When I mentioned Gresham's name, he said 'Ah yes, a fine rooster – was chief of staff on a leading newspaper; he'll do a much better job on my Digest.'

I told the Minister that two permanent officers were engaged on this work.

‘Sack ‘em, sack ‘em’, said the King, and when I said that these men were under the Public Service Commissioner, the King became angry and said: ‘Aren’t I running this Department? I’ll soon get the “boy” to fix this Commissioner of yours.’

I said no more, and the King paced up and down his room, hand on brow, deep in thought.

Suddenly punching the table, in final decision, he said: ‘Keep it in “dooplicate”.’

So kept in duplicate it was until the King left office with a change in government. We reverted to the card system, and Gresham, who was a dubious character who had promoted gambling among the staff, immediately received his notice.

One of the elaborate fortnightly ‘skedells’ issued laboriously and under the King’s signature, lies before me. It is ‘Dedicated to the Federation of the English Speaking Peoples into one world-wide cause, with one universal hope and destiny.’ It contains 288 printed pages, of which 52 exhibit portraits of King George V and Queen Mary, and all members of the Fisher Government, Members of all Ministries since 1901, all Senators and Members of the House of Representatives in 1913, all State Members, Justices of the High Court and the State Supreme Courts, all Permanent Heads, Press representatives, British, Canadian, South African and New Zealand statesmen, Australian governors, and high commissioners, Lord Roberts and Kitchener, prominent Americans, and many others. There are also pictures of Canberra, the six State capitals, important buildings in all States, and the Commonwealth seal and its flag.

The text of the schedule is likewise voluminous and largely irrelevant, and it is careful to include, in full, the speeches made at the naming ceremony of Canberra, on 12 March 1913, featuring the King’s lengthy address and it refers to his action in forestalling the Governor-General’s official opening by organising a ceremony three weeks beforehand, at which O’Malley drove the first peg of the survey marking the central axis of the City. It contained, also, reprints of numerous letters from distinguished people, acknowledging the receipt of other schedules and politely thanking the King.

Many of these publications were broadcast, and they afforded O’Malley the opportunity to inform the world, at the public expense, of his eminence as a statesman, and his apparently disinterested zeal in contributing to the sound development of his adopted country.

MORE GLIMPSES OF O’MALLEY

‘Could you tell us some more King O’Malley stories?’ is a request made by a number of readers. It might have been thought that the old scamp had been given quite a sufficient airing, but, as it is a festive season, perhaps we can have another peep at some of his antics.

The flamboyance of his style in speech was also a feature of his correspondence, which, under the flimsiest pretexts, he carried on with people of note overseas, as well as in Australia, sending them copies of his monthly digest, which has already been described. One day he had before him the photograph of an ex-Attorney-General of the State of New York, named Edward O’Malley. King wrote to him, sending a copy of the current digest, and claiming relationship. After a long dissertation on his own family he said, ‘I am satisfied we are relations, because you

have a splendid head of hair, and all the O'Malleys are noted for the amount of hair on their heads; they never go bald.' From the photograph of Edward O'Malley, it looks to me as if that gentleman wore a skilfully contrived wig.

In replying, Edward O'Malley referred to the approaching coronation of King George V, and the Minister, in a long letter of acknowledgement, confessed, 'Being a Republican, I will not avail myself of the opportunity of seeing this grand pageantry, reminding one of a 10th century Chinese junk, stranded in the tide-way of 20th century progress.' He went on, 'It is true that the King rules in theory; in practice, he is as utilitarian as the comb on a sick rooster.'

In replying to a letter from a well-known Professor at Yale University, King commenced, 'The Arch-Bishop of the Water Lily Rock-Bound Church of the Redskin Temple in the Cayuse Nation welcomes your epistle of the 25th ultimo. Being only a working man, struggling for my crust, you can quite understand that I haven't a great deal of time at my disposal.'

O'Malley was very short-sighted, and had to bend low in reading papers. One day, he sent for me suddenly, and, on reaching his room, I noticed the Member for Newcastle, David Watkins, sitting convulsed with laughter. The Minister had the large Defence Works Digest open on his table, and he jumped up, flourishing his arms, as usual, and started to rage at the inefficient manner in which my officers kept the record, demanding that they be 'sacked' forthwith.

When he calmed down a little, he proceeded to satisfy my curiosity as to what this was all about. It appeared that Dave made the customary gambit, 'Well, King, how's the digest?', to which O'Malley would assert, 'Splendid, can give you anything. Name your job and I'll tell you how it is going.' Dave proffered 'Cessnock Drill Hall'. King turned the self-indexing book to 'C', found 'Cessnock', read eagerly across the columns and said, 'Work will be commenced next week.' 'Rubbish,' retorted Dave, 'I opened the new building last Saturday.' Explosion, and angry call to me to come down.

Interrupting King's mounting verbal torrent, I managed to interpolate 'Mr Watkins is right, the work is complete,' and pointing to the extreme right of the wide page, I showed the red tick that indicated completion. Owing to his defective sight, King, in crossing over the page, had dropped to another line, and to a different work. I left quickly to conceal my own amusement, but Dave Watkins' roar was something good to hear.

King had to dramatise everything. One morning he summoned me upon a very routine matter. Entering his room, I noticed his desk chair was empty, and then, from behind a folding wooden screen, came an awful moan, and 'O, my head, O, my stomach.' Hurrying around the screen ready to help, if I could, I saw the Minister rolling on his couch. Quite suddenly, King rose from the couch, went to his desk, and noted the details that I gave him. This performance, I am sure, was just a piece of showmanship that he could not resist 'putting over'.

MINISTERS IN CONTRAST

W.H. Kelly, W.O. Archibald and K. O'Malley

In large government departments, public servants, with their knowledge and actual experience, represent the continuity factor in the organisation. Ministers come and go, and they differ markedly in knowledge, ability and wisdom. The more popular, departmentally, are those who are glad to take their officers' advice, as a general rule, but others deem it their function, however scanty their experience in the particular affairs of their departments, to give a considerable amount of direction, sometimes at the instance of outside 'experts', and often with unfortunate results.

Upon the fall of the Fisher Ministry, in June 1913, and the advent of the Cook Ministry, we lost King O'Malley, and he was followed in Home Affairs, in turn, by two Ministers, W.H. Kelly and W.O. Archibald, who presented a contrast in training, experience and personality – the attitudes and decisions of each having important effects upon Canberra. The Home Affairs portfolio was actually taken, in 1913, by the Prime Minister, Joseph Cook, who delegated its functions to Kelly, an Assistant Minister.

Kelly belonged to a leading Sydney family, was educated at Eton, and had been Member for Wentworth since 1903. He was familiarly known as 'Motor Kelly', on account of a hobby for motor cars, and also as 'Oxford Kelly' because of his persistent use of the famous 'accent' that is noticeably absent from most genuine Oxonians. He affected a Chesterfieldian manner in debate [after Lord Chesterfield?], and it was not easy to tell him anything; he usually 'told you', believing that he knew most of the answers.

On the other hand, his successor, Archibald, born in London, graduated from the Port Adelaide waterfront. He had served in the State Parliament from 1893 to 1910, and became Leader of the State Labor Party from 1905 until 1908. Since 1910 he had been Federal Member for Hindmarsh. He was almost at the opposite pole from Kelly. Short and stocky, a veritable 'ball of muscle' from his early stevedore activities, he made no pretensions, and was ready to listen. He was hardly ever seen in the Department without an old pipe in his mouth, and he liked to walk slowly up and down in his comfortable office, ruminating, and, at intervals, spitting tobacco juice on his nice carpet, to the despair of the women cleaners.

It was Kelly who brought Walter Burley Griffin to Australia, in 1913, hoping, as he said, 'to secure his services and advice for two or three years – the latter, I trust – in connection with the establishment of the Capital.' In Parliament, he had expressed his high admiration for the professional officers who had been dealing with the Capital project, and for the Members of the Board whose plan O'Malley had adopted as an alternative to Griffin's. Kelly said, however, of the officers, 'town planning is not their speciality,' being unaware, apparently that at least one of them, J.S. Murdoch, had given this subject close attention for a longer period than Griffin had. Kelly's idea was that Griffin and the Board would discuss the problem thoroughly and agree upon a compromise, in the light of the economic and other criticisms levelled at both the designs.

The conference proved abortive, so Kelly administered the *coup de grace* to the Board and appointed Griffin as 'Federal Capital Director of Design and Construction', under an agreement that did not sufficiently clarify his relationships with the departmental officers. Kelly told the House that 'the Government will be able to have the erection of buildings supervised by its own

Officers', a statement that led to much future trouble. Kelly reversed the decision of O'Malley to adopt the Board's plan, and agreed to Griffin's design, subject to some amendments. He approved, also, of the issue of Griffin's revision of the conditions, prepared by departmental officers, under O'Malley in 1912, for an international competition for Parliament House, and this was advertised on 30 June 1914.

On 17 September 1914, just after the outbreak of war, Fisher's Ministry took office. Strange to relate, O'Malley was not included, but W.O. Archibald took the portfolio of Home Affairs. He was not personally very keen about the proposed federal capital, principally on account of the expense involved. One of his first actions was to cancel the international competition for Parliament House.

Griffin, who had done well with Kelly, fared badly with Archibald, who was not impressed by his proposals, and only darkly understood his involved written and verbal reports. Archibald's practical mind, however, did concern itself with estimates of cost, and his dealings with Griffin, in this respect, induced a poor opinion of the latter's capacity to control practical operations with economy, and indeed of his personality. He even alluded to Griffin as 'a Yankee Bounder', and, later in Parliament, stated that Griffin's re-appointment was 'an absolutely profligate waste of public money' as he considered that there were competent Australian architects who could carry out Griffin's design.

As a result of these differences with Griffin, Archibald called on the professional officers of his department, thus enlarging the gap that already existed over the plans for the capital. This had the effect of delaying most of the activity at Canberra, and, in any case, at that stage, the war requirements gradually lessened the funds available.

Creating a City



The survey team: F.J. Broinowski, L. Morgan, A. Percival, C.R. Scrivener, W.G. Chapman, P.L. Sheaffe.

MILLER: OUR FIRST ADMINISTRATOR

The members of the first Commonwealth Cabinet in 1901 faced the problem of setting up their central staffs for the transferred departments, such as the Post Office and Customs, and of bringing into existence entirely new departments, such as the Treasury and Home Affairs. In these tasks, some Ministers naturally turned for assistance to the trained public servants with whom they had worked under the State, prior to 1900. For example, Sir George Turner of Victoria was the first Commonwealth Treasurer, and we find that senior posts in his department went largely to men from the Victorian Treasury.

Similarly, in the case of the Department of Home Affairs, its initial Minister, Sir William Lyne, ex-Premier and Treasurer of New South Wales, called heavily upon the public service of that State for senior posts in his department. In respect to its permanent head, he delayed making a nomination, pending the return of Colonel David Miller from the Boer War.

Miller took up his appointment as Secretary, Department of Home Affairs, on 20 November 1901. The Department's functions were wide, and included public works, land and surveys, important ingredients in the Seat of Government project for which it was also responsible. Miller soon showed his ability as an organiser, and developed the various branches of his department on a sound basis. He was alert and vigorous, set a high standard of duty and endeavour for himself, and was impatient of slackness. Some considered him over-strict as a disciplinarian, and his system as savouring too much of military precision and red tape.

Like others, I was often irked by his strictures, but found him scrupulously fair. In his room, one day, a senior officer sought to implicate me unfavourably in a matter with which I was entirely unconnected. Miller, keenly observing my natural resentment, barked out: 'I see fight in your eye – leave the room.' Leave I did, sensing the quality of the drubbing that my senior was to receive – but not in my presence.

Miller had a sonorous voice, an impressive military manner and was decisive in his dealings. Behind his apparent austerity, he had a sense of humour, and he was ready to give kindly advice and encouragement where genuinely needed.

A well-prepared scheme for the administration of the Canberra territory had been drawn up by David Miller in 1910, but it was not until 8 August 1912 that he was appointed by King O'Malley as resident Administrator, to co-ordinate and take charge. He had excellent supporters in P.T. Owen, as Director-General of Works, and Charles Scrivener, as Director of Lands and Surveys. His difficulties included the quite unpredictable vagaries of the Minister, King O'Malley, who had chosen to dub him 'the gilt-spurred rooster'; the strenuous fight over the City plan (Miller, as well as many others, honestly believing that the Griffin scheme would be found to be too elaborate and costly for Australia's requirements as then visualised); and, finally, the First World War that dislocated all preparations.

Col. Miller and his family, like many others, lived at Acton under canvas, pending the completion of The Residency, now the Commonwealth Club,³⁹ and experienced really pioneering conditions.

Much has been written and said about the tensions between the Miller and the Griffin camps. Not the least important factor in this situation was a lack of balance in Griffin's personality, another was the now-evident circumstance that he should have been brought into consultation before his design was officially set aside in 1912, even though the competition conditions distinctly excluded employment of the winner. When Griffin did come out in 1913, with his temperament the situation was for him already intolerable. It must be remembered that the departmental criticisms of Griffin's plan were mainly economic and not generally directed to its technical quality. It transpires that he was right.

In March 1914, Miller, for the Cook Government, formulated a scheme for placing the Territory under a three-man Commission, making it to a large extent self-supporting, and free from immediate political control. Such a scheme did not eventuate, however, until 1925. Miller retired from the Public Service on 31 August 1917. Owing to changes in Canberra control, and to his earlier military experience, he spent most of his final two years of service on important work for the Defence Department in Australia.

For various reasons, the Public Service does not produce men of Miller's type today. Although he was somewhat formal, and even pompous at times, in style, he set high ideals of loyalty and service before his department, and his influence did much to promote the adoption of a broad-based and adequate general scheme for establishing the nation's capital as a proud city, and a continuing source of inspiration for the Australian people.

ENTER THE POSTMASTER GENERAL

When the Hon. W.H. Kelly, on 15 October 1913, announced in Parliament that he had invited the Federal Capital competition winner, Walter Burley Griffin, to visit Australia, William Webster, Member for Gwydir, rose and asked 'What is to become of Colonel Owen, the Director-General of Works and the man who is absolutely in charge of these works at the present time?' 'Do the Government propose to duplicate the officers of the Works Department or to humiliate the local Officers? If they do, they will certainly introduce discontent into the service and that must involve inefficient administration.'

This solicitude by Webster for the Works officers was understandable, and his words became truly prophetic. But if Kelly's action in dismissing the Departmental Board, for this lack of agreement, and handing design matters over to Griffin constituted a 'humiliation' for the officers concerned, this was as nothing compared to the 'humiliation' brought upon them by the erstwhile solicitous William Webster, then Postmaster-General in the Hughes Ministry that took office in October 1915 – '*autres temps, autres moeurs*'.

On 18 May 1916, during the debate on the budget, William Webster launched upon the Works officers the fiercest attack, probably, ever made in the Parliament against public servants. He accused them of spurning and attempting to degrade Griffin, 'not only in the eyes of his profession, but in the eyes of those who were responsible for his appointment.' He said: 'These men were encouraged (presumably by O'Malley) to pirate the plans of other men, and to adopt them to their own use.' This was strange language, as he was aware of the Departmental Board's

plan when he was so solicitous for the officers in 1913. Moreover, he knew that the designs were the absolute property of the Government.

Webster, however, was not a man for half-measures. Having made a volte-face he became precipitate. He criticised and condemned almost every work already commenced at Canberra. The power house was on the wrong site, the railway from Queanbeyan was badly located, the outfall sewerage scheme a waste of money, as sewerage should be treated in the City area and effluent poured into the lakes, the brickworks were in the wrong place, the Cotter Water Supply Dam should have been built elsewhere, and the cost of all the works was excessive.

He read a fulsome account of Griffin's training and accomplishments and compared it most favourably with a terse statement of the training and experience of the Works officers, stating no man would say that the knowledge of Murdoch, the Chief Architect, was commensurate with that of Griffin. Strong exception to this statement was taken by several Members on both sides of the House, some of whom suggested that he should pillory the Ministers responsible and leave the officers alone. Webster said he did not need their advice, 'his duty was clear', and, leaving the Canberra scene, he proclaimed that almost every large postal work carried out since Federation by the officers concerned was unsuitable for its purpose and excessive in cost. 'I cannot rely,' he said, 'on men who have carried out work in this way. I go to Griffin because he possesses an ability to grasp any problem in architecture that I have not met in any other man.' In doing this he contended that he was saving the public thousands of pounds in redesigning the internal portion of the Melbourne Post Office.

In making these statements Webster ignored the fact that Griffin was not brought out to deal with such matters, which, under the Government's statutory organisation, were the responsibility of the Works Branch. He had no authority for his admitted breach of procedure. Incidentally, I might say that we received, later, Griffin's plans and specifications for the Melbourne Post Office work. They were very incomplete, and the specifications had to be rewritten.

During Webster's tirade against the Works officers, their own Minister, King O'Malley, sat in silence, obviously a party to the plot. This prompted the remark by Sir Joseph Cook: 'There appears to be quite an understanding between the Postmaster-General and the present Minister for Home Affairs.' When another Member pointed out that any question of waste or inefficiency at Canberra was actually O'Malley's own responsibility, King shed his customary masterful demeanour, weakly, and untruthfully, averring, 'They did not carry out my instructions.' It was clear that O'Malley and Griffin had persuaded Webster to make the attack, Griffin animated by a desire to ruin the careers of the officers who had honestly disagreed with his schemes, and also, as a result, to obtain commissions to carry out larger postal works.

Cook contended that Webster's statement constituted 'the most scathing indictment of his own Government.' Referring to Webster, he said 'apparently he has had time, in between attending conferences and receiving the censure of his employees, a trip to New Zealand, and the administration of the most difficult Department, to investigate the affairs of the Department of one of his colleagues and to attempt to sheet home these cases of alleged gross culpability,

amounting to almost criminality...This is a British country and these men must be given a chance to defend themselves.'

The Prime Minister, Mr Hughes, was in Europe on war matters, but Tudor, senior Minister in the House, reported next day that a Royal Commission would be appointed to inquire into Webster's allegations, as well as the speeches of Archibald, previously Minister for Home Affairs, who designated Griffin's renewed engagement as 'a profligate waste of public money'.

A DISCREDITED COMMISSION

As a result of the serious charges made in Parliament by the Postmaster-General, William Webster, against certain senior professional officers of the Commonwealth Works Branch, in respect to the federal capital and to their relations with Walter Burley Griffin, the Hughes Ministry decided to appoint a Royal Commission to investigate these allegations and incidental questions raised, including speeches by a former minister, the Hon. W.O. Archibald. It was stated that the services of a judge would be sought, but the Commissioner selected, on 14 June 1916, was Wilfrid Blackett, K.C., of Sydney. He commenced his hearings on 18 July and finished them on 21 February 1917, furnishing his final report on 17 April 1917.

Webster took charge of the presentation of his case, and Col. P.T. Owen, Director-General of Works, had the unpleasant responsibility of directing the refutation of the charges, on his behalf and that of other members of his staff. The officers whose reputations had been assailed applied for the services of counsel to appear for them. This was refused, Webster airily saying, 'These are professional men; let them defend themselves.'

From the outset, the scales were weighted against the officers. Their Minister, O'Malley, had all important files and plans relating to the federal capital impounded and placed in his custody, so that officers had no convenient opportunity to peruse them. The documents were freely available to Webster and Griffin. All kinds of minor incidents, over a period of more than five years, were made the occasion of question and cross-examination by Webster, who, in an officious and disagreeable manner, aped the style of prosecuting barrister. He was an opinionated, arrogant, and little-qualified person.

Another disability under which the officers laboured was the refusal to allow the expenses of professional witnesses of high standing, and they found it difficult to present independent counter to the testimony of half a dozen or more 'experts' who, being engaged by O'Malley as 'consultants to his Department', at high fees, certainly earned these by adverse criticism, without exception, of the designs adopted for the water supply, sewerage, power, railway, brickworks and other services; of the accounting and stores systems; and of the cost of practically every work, which was described as excessive, by comparison with that in more settled places, making no adequate allowance for the special conditions at Canberra, adducing inapposite cases, or even displaying a superficial, uninformed or studied approach.

On the question of relations with Griffin, three Ministers gave evidence: W.H. Kelly, who was responsible for bringing Griffin to Australia; O'Malley, who had later become Griffin's strong supporter; and Archibald, who had formed a poor opinion of his character and abilities. The

Commissioner was evidently impressed by the evidence of O'Malley's experts, as his findings were definitely against the officers on all of the issues. He decided, also, that they had acted to frustrate Griffin, especially after Archibald's policy was so directed. It might seem surprising that the Commissioner did not suspect the co-ordinated 'line-up' of O'Malley's team, and the fairly obvious Webster-Griffin-O'Malley axis.

I was travelling from Sydney on the Melbourne express one evening when an unknown fellow-traveller addressed me, saying, 'Aren't you an officer of the Federal Works Department?' Upon my assent, he continued: 'I'm very sorry for Owen, Hill, Murdoch, and others, over these charges by Webster.' I remarked, 'Yes, they have been viciously attacked and placed in a difficult position.' He said, 'Have you seen the evening paper? The name of the Commissioner has been announced. They're gone.' It may be imagined how this proffered opinion, before the Commission had started, staggered me.

Fortunately for the officers concerned, there was a reconstruction of the Hughes Cabinet, over the conscription issue, in November 1916, and O'Malley ceased to be a Minister. If he had remained, some of the officers would certainly have 'gone'. In February 1917, W.A. Watt, a former Premier of Victoria, became Minister for Works and Railways. He said, in reply to a parliamentary question by J.H. Catts, O'Malley's friend, that he disagreed with many of Blacket's opinions, and that he had referred his reports for investigation by three experts. Their findings were not presented to the Parliament, but they served to re-establish the officers in the estimation of the Government.

In a speech in the House on this matter, the Hon. J.E. Fenton said, 'I agree with the Treasurer (Sir Joseph Cook) that the designer of the Federal Capital City is pretty expert in the political world, as well as in his picturesque landscape architecture...The Minister for Works and Railways said the men he had consulted were amongst the best experts in the community and they practically voted the Blacket report to be a mere piece of humbug.'

GRIFFIN'S GOVERNMENT AREA PLAN SHOULD REMAIN

On several occasions I have been asked whether Canberra has been developed strictly in accordance with the Walter Burley Griffin design and, if not, what important alterations have been made. Whilst the main axial lines of Griffin's plan have been maintained, it is true that some very important variations have been made, apart from the temporary expedients arising from the policy, earlier, of deferring many permanent works. The lake, at long last constructed and called after Walter Burley Griffin, does not follow his more formal treatment of the three central basins shaped by him to link with his main avenues. Its form follows more directly the natural contours; in fact, it tends to resemble more the lake proposed in the Departmental Board's scheme of 1912 – at first adopted – later set aside.

Among the alterations made on the Sulman Committee's recommendations, between 1921 and 1925, was the abolition of Griffin's proposed Market Centre and principal Railway Station at the eastern terminus of Kings Avenue, on the site now occupied by the Russell Defence Offices. Another variation suggested by the committee and adopted, was that shopping facilities

should be consolidated into definite blocks both at City and in the suburbs as developed, instead of being extended at great length along the avenues, as indicated in Griffin's layout.

When the planning and development of Canberra were carefully reviewed by the National Capital Planning and Development Committee appointed in 1938, and under the chairmanship of Mr B.J. Waterhouse, a leading Sydney architect, several changes of major importance were brought into effect. Griffin's railway, to be taken north over the Molonglo River and then continued in a cutting through City, and emerging as a surface line to Yass, was eliminated from the design as an uneconomic scheme. Two significant consequential amendments were the abandonment of the higher level large East Lake and the transfer of Griffin's proposed industrial area from the north to the south of the city, at Fyshwick. Apart from the absence of railway service, it was now felt that a new main outlet from Canberra to the north unexpectedly became available by taking the Federal Highway through Gearys Gap and along Lake George; for aesthetic reasons, the northern approach to Canberra should not be through an industrial district.

As the result of the studies made by the present National Capital Development Commission of the layout of the important triangular Governmental Area, proposals have been formulated, on the basis of Lord Holford's report of 28 December 1957, that are in wide conflict with Griffin's co-ordinated scheme for this vital focus of the capital, and to which I feel certain he would never have subscribed.

Charles Scrivener, the surveyor who was directly responsible for the selection of the city site, praised it for the availability of elevated sites to afford distinction to more important buildings. In the international competition of 1911 for a city design, the competitors were requested to note that the 'Houses of Parliament should be placed so as to become a dominating feature of the city.' For this reason, Griffin placed the legislative building on Camp Hill between the present East and West Block Offices, where it would command the landscape. He thought Capital Hill to be somewhat too elevated and too large for the practical purposes of Parliament, and suggested for it a symbolic structure as the apex of the whole architectural scheme. From Parliament House on Camp Hill, the various official buildings in an orderly ensemble were to be provided on successive lower terraces down to the lake level.

The scheme now under consideration provides for placing Parliament House not on a dominating elevation, but on the lowest level that it could be accorded – namely, on the lake shore. This is to turn Griffin's scheme 'back to front', place unimportant buildings in a dominating position on Camp Hill, spoil the vista, and in my view ruin the grander effect he visualised for the Government area. It may be picturesque to give Parliament House a water frontage like that of the Houses of Parliament at Westminster, but there is no real analogy. Moreover, the presence of the existing Parliament House, an indifferent structure built forty years ago to last for about fifty years, should not be allowed to dictate policy as to the permanent layout which, I suggest, should be restudied on the basis of Griffin's scheme.⁴⁰

In a federation, with the States also having sovereign powers, it is important to emphasise strongly in the landscape the emblem of federal legislative authority and the *raison d'être* of the foundation of the city.

PLANNING AND FRUSTRATION

Few people realise that the Griffin plan, as left by the author in 1920, was nothing more than a skeletal diagram, indicating the fundamental conception of the layout and the location and zoning of the important centres of future activity. For practical purposes, this skeleton had to be clothed with the details of engineering services, and of the official, commercial and residential buildings and their settings that make up a city's broad face and landscape in the third dimension.

When the Sulman Committee took up its responsibilities in 1921, it found that a good start had been made with many basic engineering services, such as roads, power, water supply, sewerage and drainage, so far as mains were concerned, but of course there was little reticulation as areas, according to the approved plan, had not yet been laid out. In its first report, the Committee advised that the expenditure at that date on the capital had been £1,796,964 (£1,056,964 for works and services, £740,000 on land acquisition). The Committee's scheme for transfer of the seat of government to Canberra, based upon the government's directions as to economy and speed, provided for doing this in three stages. The first stage, to cover three years, proposed the actual establishment of Parliament at Canberra, together with the whole of the administrative departments or branches that should be more closely associated with their Ministers. The estimated cost of the first stage was £1,799,000, spread over three years, and providing for a population of 6,000, including 1,260 public servants, their dependents, and the service community of commercial residents. The Committee's estimate was made in detail for the provisional parliament house, provisional administrative offices, many official buildings, such as post office, telephone exchange, hostels, houses, schools and civic offices, together with the complete servicing of the developed areas with water supply, sewerage, drainage and power, as well as a liberal scheme of tree planting, forestry, and the provision of recreation facilities. The estimate also included the cost of moving the capital from Melbourne, with the enormous quantity of records and equipment belonging to the Commonwealth.

For the second stage, providing for the transfer of the remaining departments with an additional 1,000 public servants, and a total population of nearly 18,000, the additional cost was estimated at £1,294,000, suggested to be spread over at least three years. This stage was to include some important permanent features such as Government House, administrative offices, railway to Yass, and a regulating dam on the Queanbeyan River. For these items, detailed estimates were also made and submitted.

The third stage was conceived as a further lengthy period, during which the Government, at its discretion, might proceed with the larger permanent buildings, ornamental waters, high-level bridges, the permanent railway, and other features desirable in a capital city, when the economy allowed.

The Committee expressed the opinion that, in the long run, charges in respect to rates, services, and land rentals, would, as the city developed, suffice to pay interest on the expenditure involved. Finally, the importance was stressed by the Committee of maintaining continuity of effort, especially throughout the first stage, to avoid dislocation of the programme, and thereby additional expense.

The Committee's report was presented to Parliament, and ordered to be printed, on 17 August 1921. It was not till 15 December that the Committee received advice that the Government had approved of the general principles of the scheme it had set out. However, in collaboration with the Director-General of Works and his senior officers, it proceeded at once to develop the details necessary to implement the scheme. Unfortunately, the funds asked for were not adequately provided. The estimated expenditure for the first year was £417,400, but only £200,000 was made available, and, of this sum, a certain amount was to be set aside to be spent on unskilled work to employ returned soldiers.

So, from the beginning, there was a degree of frustration, and it became impossible to execute the scheme in the balanced manner contemplated, or within the time schedule proposed. The members of the Committee would have lost heart, if they had not had the interest of working out details and plans for the many works involved in the programme.

WHEN ACTON WAS A COUNTRY HOMESTEAD

Apart from its attractive natural setting, Acton will always occupy a unique place in the history of the capital. It was the choice of the first white settler in this district, Lieutenant Joshua John Moore, in 1823, and, after the area became the site for the capital, in 1911, it was the first land of the Territory acquired by the Commonwealth. It was the location of the first administrative buildings from which the Territory was controlled for fifty years. Moreover, it was the area that gave us the name 'Canberra'. the change to 'Acton' occurring in the 1840s, when Jeffreys succeeded Moore in the title.

The old Acton homestead was the main settlement on the estate in 1911, when almost a century of pastoral occupation ended. It represented a typical Australian rural scene, rather a beautiful one, with its background of wooded hills, its clear undulating expanse northward, and, on the south-west, the winding Molonglo River, girt with its lovely willows.

From the commencement of the 'official' period, 1 January 1911, there was soon a substantial change in the Acton scene, though much of its rural character was long retained. The homestead became the residence of Charles Robert Scrivener, Director of Lands and Surveys and, right opposite, the first administrative building was erected in 1912, flanked on the north-west by a Works Office, a Post Office and a Commonwealth Bank. Adjoining these, a large nursery was established, where the first experiments were made by Weston in testing indigenous and exotic flora for future city and forest planting. It was retained for years as a pleasant park and a working base, after the main nursery moved to Yarralumla, and it contained many magnificent and rare trees that had to be sacrificed for hospital extensions.

Further along the ridge Bachelors Quarters (afterwards Lennox House) and eight timber residences facing east were erected, greatly appreciated by officers previously living under canvas. A residence for the Administrator, Miller was built at the same time, as well as the first hospital on the University site. Coming from the rail head at Queanbeyan, we had to cross the river by ford at Lennox Crossing (now submerged) to reach the Bachelors Quarters. A primary school, later removed to the main road to provide a recreation hall, and later the Trades Hall, suddenly disappeared in 1964, after being a landmark for 40 years.

Upon the post-war revival of activity, the road from the ford looked less like a bush track, as a low-level bridge appeared and more buildings were provided, one for the police and another for consulting rooms for two young doctors attached to the Hospital. They lived at the Bachelors Quarters and their wing was known as 'Macquarie Street' for many years. After 1925, the Federal Capital Commission greatly increased the size of the administrative building and the hospital, and erected a few more houses on the ridge, but the attractive character of the area was not impaired. Indeed, it was improved by the planting of more eucalypts to match the existing flora.

The provision of the permanent hospital, just before the Second World War, introduced a new and pronounced note to the landscape, but it involved the demolition of the old Acton homestead, from which I was able to secure and preserve the stones that now form its memorial fountain at the main hospital entrance.⁴¹

To anyone like myself, who had lived and worked in Acton for over 40 years, the major operations in the building of the University, the great expansion of the hospital, and the formation of the lake, although acknowledged as inevitable, were regarded with mixed feelings, as so many old associations became shattered, to say nothing of the years of dust and din to which we were subjected. Like Horace of old, we often longed for some 'Sabine farm' far from the *Fumum et opes strepitumque urbis*.

However, the main beauties of Acton, with generous open spaces, ample trees and gardens, and no overcrowding of buildings, can, with public vigilance, be well preserved, so that it may continue to be one of the charming areas of the capital.

SULMAN: THE "FATHER OF TOWN PLANNING"

In its selection of a chairman to lead the Advisory Committee appointed in 1921 to revive activity in establishing the federal capital at Canberra, the Government could hardly have made a better choice than John (afterwards Sir John) Sulman, FRIBA, MITPI, consulting architect and town planner of Sydney.

The Minister for Works and Railways, a Queenslander, Sir Littleton Groom, who was concerned with the matter, had known the Commonwealth Chief Architect, J.S. Murdoch, very well in Brisbane before Federation, and entertained a high opinion of his capacity and good judgement. It was after consultation with him that Sulman was approached and agreed to accept the position, for which, he declared, he would accept no remuneration.

I met Sulman on becoming Secretary of the Advisory Committee and for five years I enjoyed close experience of his exceptional capacity as a chairman, his accurate technical knowledge in many fields, his wide culture, and, above all, his astonishing energy and vitality at the age of 72.

Born at Greenwich, London, in 1849, John Sulman served his articles with H.R. Newton, a London architect, and studied at the Royal Institute of British Architects and the Royal Academy, winning the Pugin Travelling Scholarship in 1871, which gave him an early opportunity to study the European masterpieces in architecture, and acquire a broad base for his future cultural interests. He practised in London, and, as might be expected of one who had been attracted to the Pugin tradition, he displayed his knowledge of Gothic style in the design of a number of churches.

Largely for health reasons, Sulman came to Australia in 1886, and he developed a sound practice in association with Power, an engineer. Over many years, the firm of Sulman and Power designed and executed many notable buildings in Sydney, and elsewhere in New South Wales, as well as in other State capitals and in New Zealand. After 1908, Sulman confined himself to practise as a consulting architect, and devoted himself also to the development of interest in town-planning, in particular to the advocacy of better housing and re-planning schemes under garden-city principles. In the academic field he played a pioneer role. He was P.N. Russell Lecturer in Architecture from 1887 to 1912, and Vernon Lecturer in Town Planning from 1916 to 1927, both in the University of Sydney. His lectures published in 1921, under the title *An Introduction to the Study of Town Planning in Australia*, constitute one of our earliest textbooks in this field.

In public life, he was the first Chairman of the Town Planning Association and President of the Town Planning Board of New South Wales; from 1899 a Trustee of the State National Gallery, becoming its President in 1919. In his youth, John Sulman had enjoyed the friendship of William Morris and other artists and this led to a keen interest in painting and a knowledge of its technique and history, as well as that of the plastic arts, qualifications that enabled him to render great service to the Gallery. Sir John had important interests in the Edith Walker Homes, and also in the press, as Director and later President of the Daily Telegraph Newspaper Company of Sydney.

Shortly after the Yass-Canberra district had been chosen in 1908, as the site on which the future capital could be built, John Sulman published a striking series of articles in the press on the subject, commenting favourably on the potentialities of that district, especially in regard to water supply, and he set out, and illustrated in much detail, many fundamental principles in town-planning, which he considered essential in application to the building of a modern capital city. For this task he urged that the best available assistance should be obtained, 'looking beyond the boundaries of the Commonwealth to countries with long experience in city-planning'. This advice was followed by the Government in the holding of the international competition in 1911, for a design for Canberra.

John Sulman was a man of striking personality. In appearance, he was tall, spare, and wore a pointed beard. He held strong opinions on most subjects but, as chairman, he was tolerant in

hearing other views, and he had great facility for summing up the merits of a question. These qualities, and his extensive experience, were of great benefit to the Federal Capital Advisory Committee, and his valuable services, given voluntarily, were acknowledged by the King in creating him a Knight Bachelor in 1924. He gave up his consulting work in 1928 and he died in Sydney on 18 August 1934, at the age of 85 years.

His name will ever be remembered as the father of town-planning in Australia, and by the endowments providing for the periodical award of the Sulman Medal for buildings of merit, and the Sulman Memorial Prize for the best entry in alternate years for a subject painting or a mural decoration. These legacies are a fitting reminder of the high standard that John Sulman always set for himself and ever strove to set before others, in the pursuit of the liberal arts and, generally, in that of living graciously.

MANUKA, THE INITIAL CITY IN CANBERRA

It is not often recalled that the area that now constitutes the Manuka Shopping Centre might have become the main commercial focus of Canberra.

Walter Burley Griffin, in his winning competitive design, made provision for an 'Initial Town' located around what are now Manuka Oval and the present shopping development nearby. He contemplated 'a completely organized small town, not merely for construction forces but for a variety of interests', pending the construction of bridges and the extension of the railway across the river towards Yass.

This was quite a natural provision for a planner to make, but no trace of it remained in the design, as later developed and approved. One reason for this was the 'second thought' on Griffin's part that if the original civic and commercial development became firmly developed south of the Molonglo River, it would be difficult, or impracticable, to shift it to the north side, and thus the broad outline of the whole plan might be impaired.

A more convincing reason for Griffin, however, was the fact that the design of the Departmental Board upon which the original construction of the city was actually inaugurated in 1912, provided for Canberra's main development to occur on the south side of the city, the only important projected features on the north being the University at Vernon, and the Hospital at Acton. When King O'Malley reversed his attitude in 1915, and supported Griffin's plan, its author so provided that development would proceed simultaneously on both sides of the river, thus ensuring the integrity of the design.

An important objection voiced by Griffin to joining the Federal Capital Advisory Committee in 1921, was that Colonel P.T. Owen, Director-General of Works, was to carry out construction of the city and that he had attempted earlier, as a member of the Departmental Board, to destroy Griffin's design and that from the advantageous position of executive control, the same policy would be ruthlessly followed. This was logical thinking enough on Griffin's part, but it is remarkable how, at times, situations can drastically change and what irony fate can seem to infuse into them.

Although Sulman, De Burgh and Ross were aware that the directions from the Government to their committee were that the Griffin design was to be basic to their work, these three gentlemen after a special visit to Canberra, before our first regular meeting had been held, sent a joint recommendation, prepared, I am sure largely under the strong influence of Sulman, to the Minister (Sir Littleton Groom) that involved limiting the city's development, even at that stage, to the south of the river. They were absolutely sincere in their belief that the nation should not be called upon to embark upon the heavy expense of implementing Griffin's wide layout, which they and thousands of others at the time feared would not be required for generations, if at all.

The man who opposed this belated suggestion of his three colleagues most strongly was Colonel Owen. As a loyal public servant, he respected the Government's decision to proceed on the Griffin design but ironically enough, although he bore no love for Griffin (who had attempted to ruin his career, professionally and personally) Owen, too, had some 'second thoughts'. Being essentially fair-minded, he had begun to see merit in the general conception of Griffin's scheme, and its application to the site.

The Minister made it clear that no departures in principle from the adopted plan would be entertained, but that the Committee could suggest minor adjustments, such as Griffin himself had progressively made for topographical and similar reasons. This initial 'démarche' almost wrecked the Committee at its birth, but fortunately, under Groom's tactful handling, wiser counsel prevailed and the stipulated basis was accepted upon which to formulate detailed proposals, and work them into a co-ordinated practical scheme.

OUR DEBT TO SIR LITTLETON GROOM

The actual work involved in setting up, organising and administering our national capital has been, and is now, done by public servants, and those whose services they may co-opt in the task. On the other hand, the policy decisions behind their activities must be made in the field of politics, which – to quote the Prime Minister [R.G. Menzies] – is 'the highest civil vocation to which a man may be called'.

I have often been asked what political figure has played the most important part in securing the establishment of the capital, as provided for in the Constitution. Some may say Austin Chapman, others King O'Malley or Sir George Pearce, but my belief is that it was Sir Littleton Groom whose vision, persistence and ability, at critical periods, prevented the project from being laid aside, perhaps for generations.

My first personal acquaintance with Littleton Ernest Groom was in 1905, when he succeeded Dugald Thomson as Minister for Home Affairs, of which department I was an officer in its Public Works Branch. I remember well the very favourable impression Groom made upon us by his obvious sincerity, ability and great energy, and by his keen interest in the project for the building of the federal capital.

From the Chief Architect, J.S. Murdoch, with whom I constantly worked, and who, as a former Queenslander, knew the Groom family well, I learned much about Littleton's early scholastic brilliance, at school and at the Melbourne University, where he graduated, both in Arts

and Law, with high distinction, his rapid progress at the Bar in Brisbane, and his work as a Crown Prosecutor and an Acting District Court Judge. He was born in Toowoomba, where his father had founded a newspaper, become mayor, a member of the Queensland Legislature for forty years, its Speaker for five years, and the representative of the Darling Downs electorate in the first Commonwealth Parliament. Groom senior died during 1901 and it was natural that his son should succeed him in the Federal House.

Littleton's inclination, training and family tradition eminently fitted him for parliamentary work. When he left the University of Melbourne, where he had been a resident student of Ormond College, its distinguished Master, Sir John MacFarland, afterwards Chancellor of the University, wrote to his father and said 'we have never had a student who has shown more public spirit'.

This early interest in public affairs made him conspicuous at the University and was to characterise his whole life.

Amongst the many important measures with which Groom, as Minister for Home Affairs, had to deal was the Seat of Government Bill, designed to overcome the situation created by the opposition of New South Wales to the selection of Dalgety, chosen in August 1904. As a constitutional lawyer, Groom gave a masterly summary of the legal position and reiterated the view that the Commonwealth could not accept dictation from the State.

Although he succeeded Isaacs as Attorney-General in 1906, he still retained his interest in the capital, and he handled the final stages of the compromise by which Canberra was substituted for Dalgety. After filling other portfolios during the war period, Groom resumed his personal responsibility for Canberra, as Minister for Works and Railways in March 1918. He obtained his great opportunity to lift the project out of the doldrums and prevent its being shelved, perhaps for years. He had the difficult task of concluding Griffin's appointment, after the latter refused to act on the new Federal Capital Advisory Committee, under Sir John Sulman, our leading town planner, when he said 'I will not act, Mr Minister; a Board has length and breadth, but no depth.'

At this stage, I had come to know Sir Littleton very well, as we were both old Ormond Collegians, and he called on me officially and frequently to assist him in his work at the House with work estimates and debates on special subjects.

When the Sulman Committee was set up, Groom sent for me and asked me to become its secretary, which I agreed to do. He gave strong support to the Committee which formulated, in 1921, the scheme of development that was actually carried out, but owing to lack of funds spread over seven years instead of three.

Sir Littleton was always interested in the United States capital, Washington, and its control by an independent commission, and I compiled much information for him on this subject. He was anxious to borrow this idea for Canberra, and remove it from the political influences, especially from Melbourne, that had delayed its progress over the years. In 1924, he persuaded the Government to bring in the Seat of Government Bill to set up a Commission. The final drafting and passing of the measure through Parliament gave us much anxiety, but the Commission took

over the Territory on 1 January 1925, and its great achievement was to move the Parliament to its proper home, thus bringing to fruition the object for which Groom had striven so hard.

It was fitting that, having been elected Speaker, in January 1925, he received the generous gift of the magnificent Speaker's Chair from the British Parliamentary Association, and, on 9 May 1927, at the Opening of Parliament House by Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York, he represented the parliamentary institution in its highest tradition.

Littleton Ernest Groom was a man of the highest principle, a courageous and devoted servant of his country, a great churchman, and tireless in his ambition to fulfill the high ideals of public life that he cherished.

He lies at rest in St John's churchyard, and his life and example should ever be an inspiration, not only to the people of Canberra, but to all Australians.

FEDERAL CAPITAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE REVIVAL

As part of the post-war policy to resume activity at the federal capital, the Government decided, in 1920, to set up an advisory committee of experts in town-planning, architecture and engineering.

When referring to the proposed committee in Parliament, the Minister for Works and Railways, Sir Littleton Groom, stated that, as the House had decided that the capital should be placed in such a state that the seat of government and the departments attached thereto should be transferred to Canberra, it was therefore the duty of the Government to take such steps of a sound and businesslike character, that the work could be carried out as speedily, economically, and efficiently as possible.

This policy was duly implemented by an Executive Council Minute of 22 January 1921, which created the Federal Capital Advisory Committee of five members under the chairmanship of John (afterwards Sir John) Sulman, consulting architect and town planner. Other members were E.M. De Burgh, the chief engineer for Water Supply and Sewerage of New South Wales; Herbert E. Ross, architect and engineer, of the firm of Ross and Rowe, Sydney; Colonel P.T. Owen, Director-General of Works, and J.T.H. Goodwin, Commonwealth Surveyor-General.

The Executive Council Minute indicated that the Committee was appointed 'with a view to enabling the Federal Parliament and the Central Administration of the Commonwealth Government to be carried on as early as practicable at Canberra (and on the basis of the acceptance of the plan of layout of the Federal Capital City by Mr W.B. Griffin).' The Government wished to make clear that there was to be no more dispute and delay in respect to the plan of the city that was to be followed.

The Committee was directed to inquire into and advise upon a number of matters in relation to the construction of the city – buildings, works, services, surveys, and so on.

This provided a very heavy responsibility for the Committee, but it was not, of course, responsible for actual construction or administration. At the same time, it will be noted that the two Commonwealth officers who were concerned with the control of works, surveys, and

administration of the Federal Capital Territory, were members of the Committee, and this ensured that the highly-qualified experts in the spheres of architecture, town-planning, and engineering – in fact, the whole Committee – would be in the closest touch with the progress of the works that they recommended, and with the policies being pursued in relation to the development of the capital.

It was at this stage, in January 1921, that my services were made available to the Committee as its secretary. One morning, the Minister, Sir Littleton Groom, sent for me and said that he would like me to take up this post, adding that, so far as he could ascertain, I appeared to be the only officer who possessed the qualifications asked for by the Committee's chairman, Mr John Sulman. He indicated that these were: competence as a shorthand-writer, as the chairman wished to have very full records of the discussions; a knowledge of the history of the capital project in its political and practical aspects; and a close acquaintance with the technicalities and terminology of architectural, engineering and town-planning procedures.

This was a somewhat unusual collocation, but it so happened to fit my experience as a works administration officer of 16 years' standing. When I joined the Department of Home Affairs, in 1905, the policy was against the employment of women, and, as appointees, we were warned that we must soon become competent, either as book-keepers or shorthand-writers and typists, or our annual increment of £20 might be withheld. As we commenced on a salary of £40, this was an important consideration. Becoming deeply interested in all aspects of public works policy and practice, and with the help and encouragement of fine men like the Director-General of Works, Colonel P.T. Owen, whose secretarial work I performed, and the Chief Architect, J.S. Murdoch, with whom I was in constant association for many years, I undertook definite studies in architecture and building construction, engineering subjects, and in town-planning.

My particular build-up, therefore, appealed to Sulman and his committee, and this brought me more fully than before into the expanding federal capital project, with its unique and attractive interests.

DE BURGH'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE CAPITAL

If the Federal Capital Advisory Committee (1921-1925) had the advantage of an outstanding personality in Sir John Sulman as its chairman, he was fortunate, on the other hand, in the calibre of those who were his associates in the onerous and important task, after the First World War, of evolving a scheme, practicable in the circumstances of the time, for setting up the national capital as a going concern at Canberra.

The first of his colleagues I should like to mention is Ernest Macartney De Burgh, M.Inst.C.E., not only on account of his outstanding qualifications and experience elsewhere in the civil engineering problems pertinent to the capital, but also because he had already made exhaustive studies in the Canberra district for the State Government, during the years 1907-9, and later as a consultant to the Commonwealth.

De Burgh was born at Sandymount, Ireland, on 18 January 1863 and received his training and Diploma of Civil Engineering at the Royal School of Science, Dublin. After some

experience on railway construction, he came to New South Wales in 1885 and joined its Public Works Department, in which he had a distinguished career. As engineer in charge of bridges, he built important bridges over the Murray, Murrumbidgee, Hunter and other rivers. Incidentally two of his bridges are in the Australian Capital Territory, one at Tharwa, the other on Commonwealth Avenue (recently demolished when the lake was formed and the high-level bridge constructed). He studied dam construction and water-supply systems in Europe, and was associated with the extensive Burrinjuck, Murrumbidgee Irrigation and River Murray Control schemes. For a time he was chief engineer for Harbours and Water Supply, and in 1913 became chief engineer for Water Supply and Sewerage, designing and executing the great storage reservoirs at Cordeaux, Avon and Nepean for Sydney's water schemes, and others throughout the State, as well as dealing with the ever-expanding sewerage schemes and their related problems.

When the Yass-Canberra District was favoured as a capital site, in substitution for Dalgety, it was De Burgh who first examined the potentialities of the Cotter River, as a source of both power and domestic supply, and it was on the basis of his investigations and advice that the Director-General of Works, Colonel Owen, and his chief engineer, Thomas Hill, formulated the storage scheme that was carried out and has served Canberra, and later the Town of Queanbeyan, for upwards of 40 years.

To this wide and sound experience of engineering, there was added the unusual strength of De Burgh's personality. He was a most convincing exponent of his point of view, and a ruthless and logical examiner of every question before him. Often a drastic critic in expression, at the same time he possessed that characteristic Irish wit and humour that removed the sting, but left the logic. He was adept at dealing with politicians, and it was a delight to hear him giving advice, in racy manner, to the ministers and many members of Parliament whom we encountered at Canberra and Sydney during the five years of the Committee's existence.

At the request of the Committee, De Burgh prepared reports that reviewed the federal capital water supply and sewerage proposals, as at 1 January 1921. Indicative of the man himself, they are clear, concise, complete and authoritative, in fact models of their kind. In regard to the sewerage scheme, his report was an effective reply to the proposal put up by Griffin and Calder E. Oliver, an engineer retained by King O'Malley at a high fee, for establishing large treatment tanks within the city to treat all the sewage, disposing of the effluents into the lake. This proposal had been turned down quite definitely by the Parliamentary Works Committee in 1915, but was recommended by the Royal Commissioner, Blackett, in his report of 1917. De Burgh showed that the Commissioner had not called most of the expert witnesses who had testified before the works committee, and that, with the exception of Griffin and Oliver, those that he did call, did not change their opinion previously expressed. De Burgh concluded his review with the somewhat sly and ironic observation that, in any case, Griffin's locally-placed tanks could not, under the law, have been constructed as a new work, without a further reference to the works committee, which had already opposed their introduction, and a subsequent Parliamentary approval. Of course, the outfall scheme, taking the sewage from the city to Weston Creek for treatment, was duly

carried out, and De Burgh's co-operation was of immense value to the Works Department in the establishment of the treatment works.

The contribution of De Burgh to the engineering problems of the capital was very substantial, and his name will be honoured amongst its pioneers. On his many visits to Canberra, he was often accompanied by Mrs De Burgh, who was an experienced gardener.

COMMITTEE BEGINS ITS TASK

The task handed to the Federal Capital Advisory Committee by the Government, in January 1921, was no easy assignment. It was required to appraise the existing data, plans and works in relation to the capital – a 10 years' accumulation – and then devise a practicable scheme for establishing the seat of government at Canberra at an early date.

This had to be done within the somewhat narrow limits set by the Government which excluded, for the time being, many works and features of a monumental character for which, however, due allowance had to be made ensuring that there was no departure in principle from the plan for the city that had been adopted.

It became my responsibility, as the secretary of the Committee, to unearth and assemble for scrutiny the mass of relevant documents and plans. Although I was well acquainted with the subject, it was quite another matter to find out what had been prepared by Griffin during the years when he conducted a separate office in Melbourne, with his own staff and practically no contact with us, except by correspondence.

I was authorised to take over all official matter in his office, and this was classified and recorded, and then transferred to Sydney where the Advisory Committee had been provided with an office on the 4th floor of the Customs House. Most of the plans were related to town-planning features, such as sections of roads and avenues, engineering details, and studies in the development of the general city design. The only plans for structures were some designs for a small type of cottage that was considered to be unsuitable for Australian conditions, especially at the capital city.

The Committee embarked upon a study of the capital project from its inception at Canberra, and then made careful examinations of all works that had been carried out at the city site, and for the basic services. These embraced the power house, the Cotter dam and reservoirs, roads, bridges, temporary buildings of many kinds, such as workmen's camps, hospital, stores, some residences and manufacturing plants, such as brickworks, joinery and cement products, as well as large quantities of equipment, machines and stocks of timber and building materials. The Committee had been asked to assess the practical value of these elements, and their usefulness in the resumption of active construction, in view of the many adverse criticisms made by the Blackett Commission and others.

One of the tasks allotted to me was to obtain from the various Commonwealth Departments information regarding the numbers of their officers who would be removed to Canberra, the size of families, the office space or working areas required for the particular department's activities. This proved more difficult, as there was opposition, or at best, reluctance, to supply the

particulars asked for. All my actions presaged the imminence of that evil day – the move to the ‘bush capital’ – which they all dreaded, and where, according to the propaganda of the Melbourne press, everyone would be unhappy, living in the alleged desolate and inhospitable area that had been selected for the capital.

In order to secure replies to my letters, in a number of cases, I had to ask my own Minister to secure a Cabinet direction to all Ministers to instruct their permanent heads to collaborate in the supply of information. Because of this situation, I certainly lost much goodwill amongst my service colleagues, and I was constantly met with the sarcastic greeting ‘here’s Mr Canberra’.

Under the energetic leadership of Sir John Sulman, and the devoted day-by-day attention given by Colonel Owen, Director-General of Works, and his many loyal officers, good progress was made in the Committee’s review of the whole position of the capital, its readiness for its second task of formulating a detailed scheme for the works and services involved in the transfer of Parliament and the relevant administrative departments on a practicable working basis, and with an approximately accurate estimate of the cost of the numerous items involved.

The Committee submitted its first general report to the Minister for Works and Railways, Sir Littleton Groom, covering these heavy requirements, on 18 July 1921, within a period of six months of its appointment. No mean achievement considering the responsibility involved, and the complexity of the subject.

COLOURFUL CANBERRA COLLEAGUES

Towards the end of 1920, when the proposal to appoint the Federal Capital Advisory Committee was announced, a large number of professional and non-professional aspirants came forward seeking selection, many of them, as usual, seeking support from their political friends or acquaintances.

Having chosen the distinguished architect and town-planner, Sulman, as chairman, and the well-experienced De Burgh as the principal engineering member, it was necessary to find a suitable professional practitioner to replace Griffin whose stipulated conditions for the renewal of his engagement were incompatible with the Government’s policy. Experience with him had indicated weaknesses in the practical field; and a lack of realisation, on his part, of the varied and complex requirements of the project to bring into actual being a new city, especially a capital city, however good its initial design may be. A further important factor in the situation in this post-war period was the decision that the arrangements be made for transferring the seat of government, as early as practicable, on the basis of economical and utilitarian provisions, while the more monumental features of the approved design were to be postponed to a later stage when a more favourable financial background might justify their execution.

In these circumstances, the Government’s choice fell upon Herbert E. Ross, architect and consulting engineer, of Sydney. He and his architect partner, Ruskin Rowe, were directing one of the largest professional practices in New South Wales, and they had earned the reputation of sound practical judgement and good design, as well as ability to handle large projects. The best-

known of these is the large granite-based Savings Bank in Martin Place, Sydney, originally built for the State Government.

Herbert Ross received his education on a broad basis of applied science in Scotland, and he was well acquainted with the varied problems in engineering, particularly in relation to mining, in different parts of the world. Although well-versed in architecture and construction, he was a most resourceful engineer, and he was much in demand as a high-level technical consultant, and a referee in important cases of litigation.

An example of his initiative is the famous Bulolo case, in New Guinea, where he was consulted by representatives of an American dredging company over the location and construction of a road, in the difficult country from the coast to the field at Bulolo, near Wau, for the transport of the heavy dredge components that were too heavy to be flown in by the Junker planes. Ross suggested to the Swedish dredge-builders modifications of their design that would reduce the weight of the parts to the carrying capacity of the planes. The suggestions were adopted and saved the company not only an expenditure of more than £100,000 on the road, but also the considerable delay involved in its construction.

Ross had a valuable knowledge of building materials and their manufacture, and working in metal was one of his several hobbies. As a visitor to the charming home that he built at Darling Point, I used to admire the attractive bronze fittings that he made at the front gates, and the well-designed and fitted cathedral glass of a large domed lantern-light in the roof of his well-stocked library. He was a wide reader and loved the possession of good books and pictures.

With his pleasing personality, he was a co-operative colleague. Very observant, he had an admirably critical approach to all problems, and his great fund of ideas and experience in resolving difficulties proved to be of the utmost value to the deliberations of the Committee.

It was a sound and convenient arrangement to complete the Advisory Committee membership by the inclusion of Colonel P.T. Owen, who, as Director-General of Works, became again responsible for the constructional activities at the capital, and Colonel J.T.H. Goodwin, Surveyor-General, who, at the time, was in charge of lands and surveys and administrative activities at Canberra, other than works.

I have elsewhere dealt, in some detail, with Colonel Owen's contribution and devotion to the federal capital project [see [below](#)]. He was, perhaps, the most dedicated of all persons to this task for twenty years. At the Advisory Committee's suggestion, the Minister moved Colonel Owen to Canberra in 1923, so that he could devote the whole of his time to the work, completing many of the basic engineering works, commencing the construction of Parliament House, completing the Hotel Canberra, and other buildings, and generally laying valuable foundations upon which others have built, and are still building. It was due to Owen's suggestion that the Ministers, in 1909, obtained from New South Wales, by statutory agreement, the right to use the waters of the Snowy River for hydro-electric purposes.

Colonel Goodwin was educated at the Melbourne Grammar School and he pursued his profession as surveyor and engineer in Victoria and in Western Australia. He held a militia

commission in the Submarine-mining Corps, in Melbourne, and joined the Department of Home Affairs as Property Officer in 1910, succeeding Scrivener as Surveyor-General in 1916. Although less experienced and alert than his colleagues, he had nevertheless a tenacious side to his personality.

CANBERRA'S FIRST ENGINEER

Colonel Percy Thomas Owen

Early in 1904, Colonel Percy Thomas Owen took up the important office of Director-General of Commonwealth Works, and he became immediately concerned with the federal capital project, first at Dalgety, and later at Canberra, to which he gave outstanding and devoted service until his retirement in 1929.

Educated at Sydney Grammar School, Owen was trained in mechanical engineering at Mort's Dock, and he also studied architecture. In 1884 he entered the Army Engineers Corps in Sydney and, later, undertook with high distinction the Royal Engineer Course at Chatham, England. He served in the South African War, 1899-1900, and was then transferred to the Engineer Staff at the new Commonwealth Defence Headquarters in Melbourne. His distinguished work in this field commended him, in 1904, for the post of Director-General of Works, Department of Home Affairs.

When work first commenced at the capital site in 1910, Colonel Owen prepared a graduated scheme for the city's construction, and he was the government's constant adviser on all technical aspects of the proposal. He was particularly concerned with the questions of power, water supply and sewerage, and the schemes that he formulated were duly carried out.

Owen was a member of the board that reported on the competitive designs for the capital and prepared an amended plan that was adopted in 1913. Despite his differences of opinion with Griffin, Owen faithfully honoured the Government's ultimate decision to revert to Griffin's design. After the hiatus of the war, and the appointment of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee, under Sir John Sulman's chairmanship in 1921, Owen firmly opposed suggestions of his colleagues for serious departures from the Griffin plan. He gave very fine service to this Committee, and, on its recommendation, he took up residence in Canberra, in 1923, to direct, personally, and accelerate the progress of construction.

By Owen's foresight, many valuable preparatory steps had been taken affording practical and economic advantages to the capital, such as the laying down for seasoning of large stocks of our more important joinery timbers; arranging for an expert survey of the resources of the Territory for building materials; enlisting the aid of the State [NSW] in reserving areas of neighbouring hardwood forest; and establishing brickworks on the shale beds at Yarralumla.

The failure of the Government to include him as a member of the Federal Capital Commission, appointed in November 1924, was a severe blow to Owen, after his long and responsible service, but the new Commissioners, none of whom had had any association with the capital, wisely persuaded him to remain in Canberra as their Chief Engineer, and his wide

knowledge, his influence, and enthusiasm for the new city, proved to be most valuable assets at that strenuous period.

Owen resumed his special study of the Queanbeyan and Molonglo Rivers, in relation to the Lake Scheme, and in association with State experts, in readiness for the time when its provision might become practicable. He considered it necessary to provide a dam for storage and regulation on the Queanbeyan, and possibly on the Molonglo also. In carrying out the Lake Scheme, these features have been cheerfully omitted, but I feel that, in time, this will have to be reviewed, and storage on the Queanbeyan, at least, provided.⁴²

Colonel Owen retired in 1929 and died a few years later in Wollongong, where he was born. He was often resolute in discussion but he was quite incapable of bearing any personal resentment towards an opponent afterwards. He was considerate to his staff, and he afforded me, as his secretary for several years, unusual opportunities for widening my knowledge and experience in responsibility. For Canberra, his interest, affection and enthusiasm never waned, and he never spared himself in his devotion to her cause. It would be appropriate to establish a fitting memorial to his unique personal achievement in this city.

THE MAN WHO WAS STUNG TWICE

A friend remarked to me the other day that, owing to the amount of rain during the recent flowering period, and the consequent absence of bees, we would probably have poor fruit crops this season. This reminded me of an occasion when there were many bees in Acton, and I recounted a story of Colonel Owen, his famous Lanchester car, and a works employee, John London, who was badly stung while good-naturedly endeavouring to remove a swarm of bees from a ventilator in the colonel's bedroom.

In 1923, the Minister for Works and Railways, the Hon. P.G. Stewart, approved of a recommendation of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee that the Director-General of Works, Colonel Owen, should be stationed at Canberra to maintain continuity of construction and accelerate its progress. The Residency, at Acton, had been made available as headquarters of the Committee, and we all had rooms there. This building had been erected for the first Administrator, Colonel Miller. After he left, in 1915, it had been used as flats for some married officers. I remember well taking the Committee's Chairman, Sir John Sulman, over to see it, in 1921. We had a rather unpropitious advent, for on the front doormat we beheld a half-devoured lamb, obviously brought up from the then racecourse by a large dog, owned by one of the outgoing tenants – an ominous greeting, or perhaps a protest. The Committee, however, enjoyed comfortable quarters for four years.

Colonel Owen duly transferred to Canberra and lived at The Residency, occupying a room on the upper floor. He brought with him his unorthodox Lanchester motor car, – a vehicle purchased from H.V. McKay who had obtained it from a State Governor. Its engine was planted in the middle of the front seat, and half of the driving wheel was on a hinge that you turned back to enter. It had full epi-cyclic gears and was almost hand-made throughout, in Lanchester's best tradition.

The Colonel had been trained as a mechanical engineer and loved to handle the working parts of any machine. One weekend he dismembered the Lanchester's complicated engine and transmission but could not piece it together again. Local mechanics, and even a man brought from Sydney, failed to solve the riddle, so the Colonel cabled the makers in England for directions and a blueprint. These took several weeks to arrive, and meanwhile the car languished in the garage, the subject, as you might imagine, of some local badinage, as it was missed from the landscape.

After this background, let us return to the bees. One evening, after the Colonel got his car going, he went out to dine with some friends. Our steward, Jack Priston, went upstairs at dusk to ensure that the bedroom was ready for the night and he noticed several bees buzzing around, observing that they were coming through the bedroom ventilator from a swarm on the outside. Jack was a marvellous fellow who had been a batman to an English general, and had served similarly with an admiral. He could cook, dryclean, serve drinks, do almost anything, but dealing with a swarm bees was not in his curriculum vitae, so he rushed across the road to the Bachelors Quarters, since Lennox House, seeking help.

He encountered London, who said he didn't know much about bees but 'he would give it a go'. Jack produced a ladder, a pail of water and a mop, and London attacked the swarm under the eaves. It was not too easy at first, but he happened to dislodge the queen bee. She settled, however, on the rear portion of his anatomy, followed immediately by the bulk of the swarm. As his attack had angered the bees, they commenced to retaliate and he received copious stings that soon made him mad. He quickly reached the ground, and began to tear off his clothes, running down the drive just as the Colonel's headlights were coming towards him.

The Colonel stopped the car, and was demanding an explanation of an almost naked man in strange attitudes when he got his answer from a bee that stung him on the nose. He yelled to Jack to bring a hose to wash off the bees from London's rear, and then drove London up the road to the hospital, now one of the University buildings, where Gertrude Lawlor, a sympathetic matron, gave them both attention.

London's case was quite serious and he had to stay in bed for several days. He fell in love with the nurse who waited on him, and they were married, afterwards departing from Canberra.

Towards the end of 1955, the National Library received from its office in London a musical setting of ten verses, composed by John London, telling graphically the story of the bees that caused his marriage, which he indicated had not turned out too well. The song is of the patter variety, its interest, beyond its moral, being chiefly historical. It is held, accordingly, in the Library's archives. London's claim, that it was the first song written about Canberra, is dubious. Here are its last two stanzas:

And now: her tongue stings worse than any bee alive,

Since we got married, and have children five;

At home, she reigns as Queen; and I 'm the Worker in the hive.

*Now 'Honey' is sweet, my lads, yet warning take from me,
If you've little 'bees and honey' for your little 'honey bee;
She'll swear she swarmed with sweethearts, before she settled down,
Like the Queen Bee on me, at the Residency, up in Canberra town.*

THE COMMISSION BEGINS A NEW ERA

The Federal Capital 1925

The transition from the administration of the Australian Capital Territory by several government departments to a unified system of control by the Federal Capital Commission, which assumed its responsibilities on 1 January 1925, was a complicated procedure, requiring goodwill, tactful handling and considerable innovation as the new commissioners had commercial rather than public service notions about organisation.

Moreover, the new order involved the creation of fresh types of activity in fulfilling the statutory responsibilities of the Commission and all these modifications had to be made concurrently with the obligation to accelerate the pace of development not only on the constructional field, but also in the expansion and inauguration of those features essential for a modern social community of a high standard.

Another complicating factor was the admission of private enterprise, as the result of the recently concluded first sale of commercial and residential leases, with new problems of record, finance and supplies.

The Commission organised its activities in five departments. The secretarial department dealt with staff, correspondence, records, internal audit, contracts, education, health, police, legal matters, ordinances and registration. The accounts department was responsible for all revenue and expenditure recordings, practical financial dealings, factory and stores systems, the production of balance sheets and criticism of the economic working of the whole organisation. The lands department was concerned with leasing city and rural lands, the administration of many local government ordinances, control of stock, dairies, cattle testing and rural policy over the 940 square miles of the Territory. Control of all constructional work was entrusted to an engineer's department and it dealt with architecture, roads and bridges, sewerage, water supply and electrical services, transport control, housing of workmen and general industrial matters. To a commissariat department was delegated the task of controlling hotels, liquor, cafes and quarters.

At the time of the Commission's appointment the existing staffs of the several departments in Canberra comprised 109 administrative, clerical, professional and general division officers. The Commission took them over as the nucleus of its own staff, which it had to build up considerably to meet the requirements of the expanded programme of activities.

It was expected that the commissioners would have had consultations with the Sulman Advisory Committee whose advice the Government had largely acted upon for the preceding

years, but this did not occur. It would have been a good thing, I feel, to have had the benefit of the experience of the Advisory Committee, as a whole, made available to an entirely new body not conversant with the problems.

The Advisory Committee desired to present to the Government and the Parliament a full report of its activities for the period 1921-24 and this task was entrusted to me, making my first year with the new organisation unduly heavy, and my working days very long, often from 6 a.m. until 10 p.m. In the report, which was duly presented to Parliament, I sought to place on clear record, not only the wide range of matters on which the Committee had given its advice, but also its concern that the best ideals of modern town planning would be maintained at the capital, and that 'no purely economic or immediate considerations or compromises would be permitted to stand in the way of the development of the capital on sound practical and aesthetic lines'.

For its accountant the Commission chose Mr W.N. Rowse, of the Prime Minister's Department, who in earlier years as an accounts officer of the Home Affairs Department had spent some time in Canberra in the initial stages of its construction. He was particularly interested in cutting red tape methods, using mechanical appliances and expediting all procedures in relation to accounts. By undertaking to pay accounts, except those under query, within three days of receipt, he secured discounts from commercial firms that more than covered the annual cost of his entire branch, including its important costing and stores section. This was possible because of the extensive purchasing requirements of the Commission, and also the fact that its procedure was not governed by the Treasury regulations, requiring the use of particular forms and routines that spelled delay.

In all of the Commission's departments a sense of challenge was felt – there was a difficult aim that had to be achieved against time. This produced an unusual spirit among the staff, almost the mutual experience of being engaged in an attractive adventure, in response to the call and the example of the Chief Commissioner, Sir John Butters.

CABINET MEETS IN CANBERRA

Although various Ministers had visited Canberra on numerous occasions after its selection as the seat of government in 1908, and its official inauguration and naming in 1913, it was not until 1924 that a meeting of the Federal Cabinet was held in the Australian Capital Territory. This took place on 30 January 1924, at Yarralumla, now the residence of the Governor-General but at that time used as a guest house for Members of Parliament, senior public servants and distinguished visitors.

In order to familiarise them with their future place of meeting and, maybe, of residence, members were permitted to bring their families to Yarralumla as guests of the Government for one week, and many availed themselves of this privilege.

There were still evidences of hostility to the move to Canberra, and the proposal to hold a meeting of Cabinet there was fostered by Sir Littleton Groom, then Attorney-General in the Bruce-Page Government, and formerly, on two occasions, the Minister responsible for the development of the federal capital project. The Prime Minister at the time was absent overseas,

and Dr (afterwards Sir Earle) Page, as Acting Prime Minister, agreed to this somewhat novel idea for a Cabinet meeting, as a gesture of confirmation and confidence, in assurance that the scheme for the transfer of the seat of government from Melbourne in 1927 would be duly carried out.

Of the nine Ministers who attended the meeting, one only, Sir Austin Chapman, whose electorate adjoined the Territory, and who was keenly interested in setting up the new capital, did not live to see their hopes fulfilled on 8 May 1927, as he died on 12 January 1926.

An interesting episode was associated with this first Cabinet meeting. At the instigation probably of their parliamentary representative, Sir Austin Chapman, the Mayor of Queanbeyan and his aldermen, with their wives, came out to Yarralumla to pay their respects and offer their congratulations to Dr Page and his fellow Ministers on this important event. To meet the deputation, the Ministers moved out to the front verandah of the homestead, which was a pleasant feature with its climbing roses and wistaria. The Mayor duly stepped forward, at the head of his team, the members of which were introduced and formally received by Dr Page.

The Mayor was exceedingly deaf, and he also appeared very nervous, which led him to forget the opening gambit of his evidently rehearsed speech. After saying, 'Mr Acting Prime Minister and Members of the Government,' he hesitated and turned to his adjoining alderman with a distressed look, and the alderman, in a loud whisper behind his hand, said, 'On this auspicious occasion.'

The Mayor failed to hear this friendly cue and the alderman repeated the words, this time quite loudly speaking into the Mayor's ear. This was audible, of course, to all members of the Cabinet, and to all of us who were present, and it caused much silent amusement. However, the Mayor took up the appointed phrase and, with the aid of further prompting, managed to get through his speech, which mentioned the part that Queanbeyan had played, especially by its distinguished pioneer, John Gale, who was the first to suggest Canberra as the site for the capital, and who manfully carried on the fight to a successful conclusion in 1908.

As a token of goodwill, a gift from the council, in the shape of a gold pen, was presented by the Mayor to Dr Page, and he pledged the co-operation of the town of Queanbeyan in the task of building the future city. The Acting Prime Minister smilingly and fluently acknowledged the gift and expressed the Government's appreciation of the interest of the Municipality of Queanbeyan, and the courtesy of its Mayor and aldermen in coming to mark what was an historic event.

Then there was a surprise: the ladies were to play their part also.

The mayoress, with her supporters, came forward and made a presentation to Mrs Page. When she, too, began her speech with 'On this auspicious occasion', we were naturally intrigued, but there was no repetition of the lapse of memory. She delivered her greetings quite graciously, earning general applause from the gathering. With Mrs Page's expression of thanks this somewhat unusual ceremony ended, and the Cabinet went inside once more to resume its important deliberations.

RESURRECTED RAILWAY

One of the vexed questions that arose over the selection of Canberra as the site for the capital was the manner of its future connection with the main Australian railway system. It was determined, in 1909, that the inevitable early link with the Goulburn-Cooma line at Queanbeyan for constructional purposes would not meet future requirements, so it was decided that a connection with the main southern line at Yass was essential. The State of New South Wales, in its eagerness to have the capital site moved from Dalgety, and located 100 miles nearer to Sydney, gave ready assent to the proposal for a line from Canberra to Yass, and bound itself by statute in its *Seat of Government Surrender Act 1909*, to collaborate by constructing a railway from a point near Yass, on the great Southern Railway, to join with a railway, when built by the Commonwealth, within federal territory and to its northern boundary.

A survey was made to locate this railway, and a suggested route for its passage through the city was indicated on the contour plan that we issued for the international competition of 1911 for the city design. Competitors were free, however, to adopt alternative locations. Griffin varied the route in his plan, providing for the line to come over the Molonglo River on a causeway that would serve also as a dam to raise the water level to form his extensive Eastern Lake. His main railway station was to have been where the present Russell Offices are located, and the line was to proceed in tunnel and cutting through Civic Centre, with a deep level City station on Ainslie Avenue about the site of the [Monaro] Mall⁴³ The line was to continue northwards close to Northbourne Avenue, gradually coming to the surface and, passing his industrial area, turn to the west, and past Hall to the boundary of the Territory. A report of the Public Works Committee in 1915 endorsed the location proposed by Griffin but considered that temporary surface lines should be used until development warranted the provision of the permanent railway.

During the earlier constructional period, railway service on the temporary locations was used, first to bring in materials, particularly coal for the power house at Kingston, from 1914, and for passenger traffic in 1923. This last development necessitated the provision of a railway station at Kingston, then Eastlake, and this was placed on the site of a co-operative store that was moved to a nearby site. An extension of the railway across the river to Civic Centre was made by Griffin, about 1918, the crossing being on a trestle bridge. Owing to war conditions, this line received little use, and when the bridge was destroyed by the 1922 flood, this connection ceased.

After a careful inquiry in 1924, the Public Works Committee reported its conviction that no necessity existed, at the time, for a through railway from Yass Junction to Canberra. After the Parliament was transferred to the capital in 1927, the alternative of making a first-class motor road to Yass was adopted to meet the convenience of many of its Members. Thus the question of permanently settling Canberra's railway connection was again shelved for many years, and the later improvements in road transport, and especially the substitution of travel by air, tended to leave the solution of the problem still in abeyance.

In 1950, after deciding to recommend the elimination of Griffin's proposed huge Eastern Lake from the plan, the Federal Capital Planning and Development Committee, of which I was the Executive Member, again raised the railway issue, traversing the various aspects of the

problem with the Commonwealth Railways Commission and its officers. As a result, the Committee recommended that Griffin's scheme to carry the railway northwards through the city in a cutting be abandoned. With the whole-hearted support of the Commonwealth Railways Commission, it suggested, further, instead of building the anticipated line to Yass, which, it was averred, would never pay for the proverbial cost of 'axle-grease', that the standard of the line from Goulburn to Queanbeyan, and onwards to Canberra, be improved to provide the permanent rail access.

This suggestion involved siting the main rail terminal on the south side. The existing Canberra Railway Station, so much out of keeping with the standards required, and otherwise generally adopted for the national capital, is a source of wonder to visitors and a theme of apology constantly on the part of citizens.

SPECTACLE AT THE OLD STATION⁴⁴

A railway station building was hastily erected for the royal visit in 1927, when the Duke and Duchess of York elected to arrive by train. This building has been the scene of some important events, of which the most spectacular, perhaps, was the triumphal arrival of Mr J.H. Scullin as Prime Minister and Leader of the Labor Government that took office on 22 October 1929, after the party had been in opposition for almost 13 years.

I happened to be returning to Canberra, after some duty in Melbourne, and when I arrived at Spencer Street to board the express the crowd was so dense, both inside and outside the platform enclosure, that it was most difficult to push through and find one's compartment. Mr and Mrs Scullin were, of course, the cause and the centre of this concourse, and there was continuous cheering and shouting 'Good old Jimmy!' and similar goodwill epithets, rising in a vast crescendo as the train moved out.

This demonstration proved to be but the prelude to similar ones along the route to Canberra. In those days the express stopped at Seymour, Benalla and Wangaratta. At each of these towns the platform was packed with excited people calling for 'Jim' and proffering floral and other gifts, in one instance to the accompaniment of a band playing 'For He's a Jolly Good Fellow'.

At Albury I hurried across the platform to make my change, and place my luggage in my sleeper of the Canberra section of the second division of the Sydney express (which was shunted at Goulburn and attached to the southbound train to Canberra). Then I proceeded up the long platform to the refreshment room for a cup of coffee. It was not easy to make headway through the crowd also seeking the Scullins. There was the same cheering and a brass band reinforced their tributes with the assertion 'See, the Conquering Hero Comes'. In many years of travel through the Albury station I have never witnessed another such scene.

When I returned to the Canberra section of the train, Mr and Mrs Scullin were standing in the central doorway, acknowledging the tributes of the crowd. I nearly missed the train, as it was almost impossible to reach the door, where the Scullins had to make way for my entry. Once aboard, I found that I could not reach my compartment as most of the vestibule, as well as the whole of the corridor, was filled with beautiful floral and other gifts to the new leader and his

popular and talented wife. The express moved out amidst wild cheering and music from the band, and some of us assisted the conductor and the Scullins to dispose of the gift bouquets and packages sufficiently to admit of reaching our berths. We did not readily lapse into slumber, however, as there were vociferous demonstrations at Orcairn about midnight, and at Wagga and Junee in the small hours.

At Queanbeyan, where we breakfasted, there were many supporters to greet the new Prime Minister, but the great surprise awaited us at the Canberra Railway Station, where a large section of the city's population seemed to have assembled to tender its hearty welcome to Scullin. So great was the pressure on the Canberra platform that disembarking took some time, and this enabled one to obtain a clear view of this unexampled outburst of enthusiasm.

There was a significant contrast to this tribute to Mr Scullin. I had observed at Albury that the special coach of the Governor-General had been attached to our section of the train, and this meant that Lord Stonehaven was also returning to the capital. If His Excellency thought the demonstration had been promoted on his behalf he was quickly disillusioned, for his presence was ignored. In fact, owing to the density of the crowd, the military secretary, Captain Curtis, much to his annoyance, was unable to secure a passage way for the vice-regal group to proceed to the usual station exit-door, so it took the somewhat undignified alternative of jumping down at the end of the platform, and thus reaching its waiting cars, entirely unnoticed by a democratic crowd giving its fervent welcome to its Prime Minister.

Although the journey between Canberra and Melbourne by train in the twenties had its discomforts, these were as nothing compared with those on a journey by road. In 1926 I set out with my brother in his Morris-Cowley car, one morning in July, for a road journey to Melbourne – my first – and it occupied four days.

When nearing Ginninderra Creek – with no bridge at the time – one of a group of men in a paddock adjoining the road where two draught-horses were tethered shouted: 'We'll be down shortly!' This seemed enigmatic, but he was right. We became firmly stuck in the mud of the ford, and the men and a horse pulled us out 'for a consideration'.

The car then ran badly, and we lost time taking down and drying out the magneto indispensable in those days near Yass. The night was spent at Gundagai, where a howling gale, with cold and sleet, raged all night and caused alarming vibration, as well as noise, in the wooden hotel where we stayed, inhibiting much sleep. On the far stretch after leaving South Gundagai next morning we had difficulty twice in fording small swollen creeks, but managed by backing the car through.

We arrived in Albury late on the second night. In the morning, the car would not start, so in freezing weather and on a cold concrete yard we had to take down the carburettor and the magneto again to get rid of the damp. After a rough trip to Wangaratta, we found the Ovens and King Rivers in spate, and the bridges into the town impassable, so we took occasion to diverge eastward and pay a visit to friends on a grazing property.

The following day we crossed into Wangaratta and proceeded steadily on the unformed main Melbourne-Sydney road, that wound itself at times in and out of tree-clumps along the three-chain reservation. Occasionally there was a stretch of macadam surface, in a more or less depreciated condition, over which our small car rattled with nerve-racking effect. Near the township of Avenel, between Benalla and Seymour, the road was very bad, and we managed to become stuck once more in a pipe-clay patch. Above the spot, on the railway line, several men were sitting down. They looked like railway fitters, but they were merely casuals, making a few pounds by helping to push or tow cars out of that 'porridgy' spot on the road.

In these days, when the main roads have been well located, graded and laid down with proper surfaces, and with bridges or culverts where streams cross, it is hard to convey a proper idea of the difficulties suffered by early motorists. The Commonwealth Road Grant programme did much to improve the old situation and, in 1930 and onwards, steps were taken to improve the road connection to Yass and Goulburn from Canberra, after which travelling by car greatly increased, culminating in the establishment of fast bus services through Canberra to the other capital cities.

WHEN THE COACH STOPPED AT HALL FOR LUNCH

In these days, when one can fly from Canberra to Sydney in less than an hour, and to Melbourne in two hours, and return home within one day, it is not easy to appreciate the very different conditions that prevailed in earlier days. The alternatives for conveyance in, say, 1925 were rail and road, the latter quite an ordeal in respect to comfort and safety. Rail connection for passengers was available first in May 1923, via Goulburn and Queanbeyan. The journey from Melbourne, leaving at 5p.m., took about 17 hours, with the change at Albury to a sleeper, if specially booked, otherwise to a seat. At Goulburn, the Canberra rail cars were unhitched and awaited a down train from Sydney to Bombala, that made long stops, for no apparent reason, at Tarago, Bungendore and Queanbeyan, where an indifferent standard of refreshments was available while waiting for the arbitrary signal for an engine to appear and pull the Canberra cars to Kingston, towards midday. To avoid part of this wearisome journey and loss of time, we used to arrange for a car to be sent to Yass to meet the train there about 5.30a.m. and thus arrive in Canberra for breakfast.

At an earlier stage, this route from Yass to Canberra was completed by coach, driven for years by Pat Sheedy, of Queanbeyan. There was a stop at Murrumbateman for breakfast and Hall for lunch, and, up to 1916 (when his licence expired) at 'Mons Lazarus' One Tree Hotel, to patronise the last remaining inn of the Territory, after King O'Malley's 'no-licence' ukase. In this fashion, one arrived in Canberra well into the afternoon, so the day was practically gone. The advent of the motor car, bringing us to Canberra for breakfast, at 20 mph, over a road full of ruts, pot-holes and, in winter, ice on the creek crossings (there were no culverts then) at least permitted a meeting or a day's work at the capital and a return to Yass the same evening, leaving about 10 p.m. to catch the second division of the express to Albury at 1 a.m. and arrive back in Melbourne at midday.

For years, the Cooma Mail, returning to Sydney in the evening, arrived in Goulburn, a short time after the second division of the express for Melbourne went through that junction. Our many attempts to have its arrival expedited so as to make rail connection from Canberra possible were unavailing; according to the New South Wales Railway authorities, it was 'not practicable'.

At last one weekend, the Minister for Railways, stranded in Canberra, found that, because of this lack of a timetable adjustment, it was not practicable for him to go by rail to keep an appointment in Albury. We had him sent by car to Yass to join the train that he would have missed in Goulburn. He soon had the anomaly rectified, and we received notice from the Railway Department that, as a result of timetable rearrangement, the Cooma-Sydney Mail would arrive in Goulburn half an hour earlier, thus admitting of connection with the second division of the Sydney-Melbourne express. This cutting of red tape caused no one the slightest inconvenience. Some time after this improvement, when returning to Melbourne after a meeting in Canberra, I proceeded to Goulburn by the Cooma Mail in order to avoid the alternative of a cold windy trip in a Ford T-model car to Yass. I had telegraphed to Sydney for a sleeper and knew the car and berth allotted.

Arriving at Goulburn with barely five minutes to make the change, I hurried over the high-level bridge to the opposite platform, which I found in darkness. The express train came in, but there was no sign of the conductor of my carriage or of any light. He should have been at the door, with the light on, awaiting me. However, I opened the door and jumped in, and, as I managed to slide open the door of the end four-berth compartment in which my sleeper was located, the train started with a heavy jolt that caused me to fall full-length to the floor of the compartment, and a 16-stone drunken passenger to roll out of an upper berth fairly on top of me.

My yell of discomfort awoke the two other occupants, one of whom put on his reading-lamp and then helped to extricate me. Upon my release, I went in much anger along the corridor to find the missing conductor. There he was all right, also dead drunk, stretched out and snoring on a mattress on the floor of his cubicle.

As a frequent traveller, I knew most of the conductors on the main line, and this one was quite a decent chap. It transpired that the 'drunk' who had fallen on me had enjoyed a good win on the Sydney races, and the conductor had foolishly accepted his warm invitation to 'celebrate' on the way from Sydney. My enraged presence had a somewhat sobering effect upon the conductor, who was full of mumbled apologies, as well as of apprehension that I would report him to his department for negligence. As I declined to take the berth allotted to me, the conductor made some amends by giving me an empty two-berth compartment, for which the occupants had not arrived. I had, therefore, a comfortable sleep and special attention from the conductor at the Albury changeover in the morning, so I decided to take no further action except to warn him of his foolishness and to withhold the usual tip.

As distinct from the present short-time air flights, these earlier and drawn-out journeys by train provided, over the years, more opportunities for incidents, grave and gay. One afternoon I was due to set off for Canberra from Melbourne, and had booked a sleeping berth on the car

proceeding via Goulburn to the capital. At the last moment, before leaving my office, I found that our chief architect, J.S. Murdoch, had been asked by telegram to attend our meeting. We travelled together to Albury in the Spirit of Progress but, as he had been unable to obtain a sleeper, he asked the conductor, whom we both knew well, and whose name was Jack Point – also somewhat of a jester – to find him a good seat in an ordinary compartment.

Jack said, ‘Mr Murdoch, let me make up a bed for you on the floor of the van; it would give you a better chance to rest’. Murdoch agreed and duly moved into the van on a comfortable mattress, amongst a varied assortment of boxes and other freight. Next morning, when I was having a stretch on the platform at Tarago station, Murdoch came along and related a strange experience in his improvised bed in the guards van. He said he had been suddenly awakened by a weird noise, almost against his ear, and at first thought that it must be the Last Trump. Then, as fuller consciousness returned, he realised it was a cock in a crate, performing his usual matutinal vocal exercise.

DUNTROON: A CAPITAL CORNERSTONE

The first Commonwealth constructional works undertaken in the Australian Capital Territory were at Duntroon, for the establishment of the Royal Military College. In the Public Works Branch we had been deeply interested in the statutory provision made in 1900 for setting up a Military College, and in the immediate endorsement of this policy by Lord Kitchener’s visit. This meant, for us, the new experience of works planning and development on a large scale. Our interest was heightened when the Fisher Government decided that the college should be ‘at or near the Federal Capital Site’, and that the Commandant-designate, Colonel Bridges, and the Director-General of Works, Colonel Owen, our own chief, were to visit the capital site and select a location for the College.

Bridges favoured Duntroon, but Owen had always been attracted by the Murrumbidgee River and favoured the long slope to that stream from Tuggeranong. The Minister for Defence, Senator Pearce, came to settle the question. It was a period of cold westerlies, and, at Tuggeranong, while Owen was descanting on the supposed advantages of the site and the proximity of the river, the Minister, pulling his overcoat closer about his ears, suddenly said, ‘Colonel Owen, what is the meaning of “Tuggeranong”?’ The Colonel didn’t know, but the driver of the conveyance, an old identity, called out ‘Senator, they say it means “windswept”.’ ‘That’s what it means, all right,’ pronounced the Minister. ‘We’re not coming here; we’ll have to get shelter from these cold winds’ So Duntroon, in the shelter of Mt Pleasant, was chosen. It was soon after characterised by the New Zealand Commander-in-Chief, General Sir Alexander Godley, on a visit, as ‘a lonely and out-of-the-way spot’.

A lease of 370 acres of the Duntroon estate was obtained from the Campbell family on 7 November 1910, and plans were actively prepared for the many works required. To enable the College to function earlier, it was decided to provide the cadet blocks, classrooms, hospital and other accessory buildings in temporary framed-construction, pending the completion of the permanent buildings on a site further to the east. Residences for the Commandant and senior

staff, however, were to be of permanent character, and the fine old Duntroon homestead used as Officers' Mess.

Many conferences with Brigadier-General Bridges, Colonel Parnell, and other senior military officers occurred at our Melbourne office, Colonel Owen and our Chief Architect J.S. Murdoch being present, and, as a stenographer, my services were in demand, a rewarding experience for me. I was much impressed with General Bridges' knowledge, ability and drive. He did not waste words, was brusque and had little time for ordinary courtesies. He would obviously be a stern disciplinarian, and I heard him say to Murdoch, in regard to training and sports facilities, 'I'm going to send the cadets dog-tired to bed every night'. Among the long list of official requirements, we were intrigued with the word 'Manege', which we found was a riding school, as every cadet was to become a competent horseman.

Great expedition was achieved in executing the various works, and the College was officially opened by the Governor-General, Lord Dudley, on 27 June 1911, the cadets of less than a week's standing putting on a creditable parade. The outbreak of war in 1914 halted the scheme for the permanent buildings, but it led to the provision of many more temporary structures, most of which remained until 1931.

In 1922 there was an interesting proposal put to the Government that, now the war was over, and the League of Nations set up, the College might be used as the capital, the gymnasium serving as Parliament House. The Commandant at the time, General Legge, mournfully conducted a procession of Ministers, Members and Advisory Committee and pressmen around the College. As I knew the College well, I went to sit down in the gymnasium and, to my astonishment, found there the Prime Minister, the Rt Hon. W.M. Hughes, doing the 'wheel' on a horizontal bar. As he stopped for breath, a young journalist, anxious for a scoop, came up, notebook in hand, and said, 'Mr Prime Minister, what do you really think, yourself, of this proposal?' Billy, still out of breath and balancing, glared at him, then venomously spat out 'Bah'. The pressman ran like a hare. Whilst mentioning the gymnasium, it is of interest to note that its floor was carried on special springs, the use of which was suggested by the Prince of Wales, later Duke of Windsor, during his visit in 1920.

WHEN DUNTROON WAS A SUBURB

The suggestion of using the Duntroon settlement, temporarily, as the capital was seen to be impracticable, so for the time being, the College continued its course, subject to some reductions in staff, as a result of the Government's retrenchment policy in defence.

Three members of the staff who left in 1922 I knew quite well. Professor R.J. Barnard, mathematician, had been a tutor at my own college, Ormond, at the Melbourne University. He was a typical absent-minded professor, as we noted when designing his quarters, in 1912, and he was reputed to have even left his wife behind, on one occasion, at a railway junction. However, he was well liked at Duntroon.

Another popular character was Major Shappere, instructor in mounted drill and riding. During a visit to Canberra in 1921, I attended a Saturday race meeting at Acton, held to raise

funds for Legacy. I knew nothing about racing, but I had promised to patronise a 'tote' run for the good cause by some of the Home Affairs officers. Major Shappere, in red jacket and black velvet cap, mounted upon a grey horse, appeared to be in charge of the course, and I asked him for advice about the horses. He said 'lend me your card' which I did, and he ticked off a horse in the list for each of the six races. I backed these on the 'tote' and they all won. 'Shap', as he was called, certainly knew the horses of the district. It was my first and last venture on the turf, as I hesitated to risk spoiling such a perfect record.

My third departing friend was Dr F.W. Robinson, of the English Department, who produced the interesting and authoritative social history of early Canberra and the Church of St John the Baptist, entitled *Canberra's First Hundred Years and After*. Dr Robinson joined the staff of the University of Queensland, where he did excellent work.

In some respects, the retrenchment at the College was carried too far. We had installed fire hydrants around the Duntroon built-up area, but, in a review of the Works Estimates, provision for laying the special water main to the reservoir to connect them was eliminated, according to a list of items deleted by the Minister for Defence.

After a visit to Duntroon, I was returning to Melbourne with several Ministers and we had a reserved compartment on Spirit of Progress from Albury. Discussing various Duntroon matters with his colleagues, the Minister for Defence angrily referred to the precarious position of the College in relation to fire protection, as pointed out to him by the Commandant, owing to the absence of the fire water main. My Minister said, 'Daley, who was responsible for this absurd situation?' Embarrassed, I did not answer immediately, whereat the Minister for Defence cut in with, 'Well, who was the stupid idiot?' I said simply, 'You were, Sir,' and, amidst the roars of laughter from his colleagues, I explained what had happened. It did not surprise me when, a few days later, we received a special warrant from Treasurer's Advance to cover the cost of the main.

When the Scullin Government came to office in 1929, it decided, for economy reasons, to retrench the College still further, and move it to Victoria Barracks, Paddington, Sydney, where it remained for six years, being known as The Royal Military College of Australia, Duntroon Wing, Victoria Barracks, Paddington, Sydney'. At the end of 1930, at a somewhat doleful ceremony, I took over officially from the Commandant, Brigadier Harrison, the Duntroon area, and then turned it into a Canberra residential suburb. I arranged for the dilapidated Cadets' Barracks, now 20 years old, to be demolished and sold, and for the library and classrooms of better construction to be transferred to Kingston, where they were used for many years as part of the Canberra Technical College.

The College suffered many disabilities in the congested area of Paddington, and it is significant that, in his early report on the locality for the future College, General Bridges said, 'It must not be near – much less within – a large city such as Sydney or Melbourne'. It was not surprising, therefore, that the succeeding Lyons Ministry ordered the return of the College to Duntroon. It was then necessary to provide new buildings for the cadets' residence and their classrooms. I suggested that these should be erected on the site further east originally designated for the permanent development, on account of its more effective shelter, greater suitability for

building on level ground, and provision for easy expansion. My efforts, however, were unavailing against the wishes of the military authorities, who regarded the old parade area as 'hallowed ground'.

The return of the College to Canberra presented us with an acute housing problem, as the tenants whom we had put into the former College houses in 1931 had to be found other accommodation. One of them was the Hon. R.G. Casey (later Lord Casey), for whom a house was erected in Griffin's domain area, Acton, later allotted to the Canadian High Commission. Another was the Hon. C.L.A. Abbott, who became my neighbour at Acton for a while, then going to the Northern Territory as Administrator. Most of the other tenants were transferred to newly-developed housing sections in Ainslie.

'THE KERBING AND GUTTERING CASE'

In his final report to the Government in 1929 the Chief Commissioner, Sir John Butters, explained how the Federal Capital Commission had been charged 'with the responsibility of bringing into existence a modern city within a limited time, under conditions without precedent'. He indicated that quite apart from the extensive work of constructing the city and its services, the Commission had to provide, within its own organisation, practically the whole of the administrative machinery normally found in the whole of the public departments of a State, a shire and a municipality. It also had to act as 'the ground landlord, the house landlord, and the transport authority', and to assist substantially the development of social and recreational features required by a large urban population.

These novel conditions involved a programme of legislation, adjusted to circumstances, that is probably without precedent in Australia.

The Attorney-General's Department assisted the Commission's legislation staff by providing an experienced legal officer to work within its organisation, in close touch with the process of reviewing obsolete State laws and procedures of 1911, and introducing new features to meet the unique conditions of the capital and its territory.

Legislation for the Australian Capital Territory was and still was in 1965 mainly by Ordinances made by the Governor-General-in-Council, under the provisions of the *Seat of Government (Administration) Act*, and subject to disallowance by either House of Parliament. The Federal Capital Commission, however, had the power to make regulations and by-laws itself. An indication of the volume of work involved in carefully developing laws of various kinds for the capital is shown in the Commission Annual Report for the year 1928-29. In that year, 24 new ordinances were promulgated and 22 prepared and submitted for consideration. Six were consolidated and reprinted. Fifteen sets of regulations were made and drafts prepared and submitted for a further 29. This work necessitated much research, and also many decisions on matters of policy, before final drafting could be completed. Enforcement of the numerous laws, particularly those of a minor regulatory character, required constant attention, and, for this purpose, a branch of the Crown Solicitor's Office was established in the Commission Offices to deal entirely with Canberra matters, in close touch with us.

One of the most important cases in which the Commission was concerned was that widely known as 'The Kerbing and Guttering Case'. On 20 October 1927, the Commission purported to make regulations termed 'Roads and Footpaths Regulations', under the Building and Services Ordinance, to require lessees to contribute towards the cost of forming the road, kerbing and guttering and footpaths adjoining their leased land. Strong local opposition arose against these regulations, and it was contended that they were invalid and that such charges could not be applied in leases.

As a test case, the Commission proceeded against the Laristan Building and Investment Co., a lessee of shop and office sites in Sydney Buildings, City. The action was heard in the High Court, Melbourne, before a single Justice, Sir Owen Dixon, afterwards the very distinguished Chief Justice of that tribunal. The question was raised as to whether, on a technicality, the Court had jurisdiction, since an amendment of the Judiciary Act to make this clear had not been proclaimed. A previous provision of the *Seat of Government Acceptance Act 1909*, which had conferred on the High Court jurisdiction in respect of the Territory, had been repealed, in anticipation of the proclamation of the amending Judiciary Act, which had been delayed. Mr Justice Dixon cut through this tangle and held that he was warranted in assuming jurisdiction and stating his conclusion on the merits of the case. He held that the Commission's Roads and Footpaths Regulations were invalid as they were made under the Building and Services Ordinance, based on the *Seat of Government (Administration) Act 1910*. Under this the Governor-General could not delegate a power to the Commission that would override and be repugnant to the requirements of the *Seat of Government (Administration) Act 1924-1928*. Under this, ironically, the Commission could have made valid regulations or by-laws, but subject to disallowance by Parliament.

The regulations actually made were not subject to the approval of Parliament and any power conferred to make them was invalid. The matter hinged, therefore, upon a pure technicality. The Commission had acted through a wrong channel on what it was fully empowered to do through another. However, much capital was made out of the dismissal of the case, on the suggestion that the decision affirmed a principle that leasehold land could not be subject to the charges proposed. Consideration was given to the advisability of remaking the regulations through the correct procedure, but, in view of the public feeling that had been generated, the Government requested that the matter be dropped. The difficulty was overcome by considering the cost of the services provided in making any future land valuations.

At times, humour, as well as irony, was injected into these legal matters. I was waiting on a Minister one day, in the Senate, with one of our Bills, when, after the second-reading speech, some good questions were asked by a legally-trained Senator. Instead of referring to me for the answers the Minister, who as merely a representative in the Senate of my Minister in the Lower House, was not personally versed in the subject matter, said, in effect, 'Mr President, as I have explained, this is quite a formal matter and its sole object is to facilitate the Attorney-General's Department'.

At this I was aghast, but the querying Senator did not press the questions, and the Bill passed through all remaining stages. As I left the Chamber, the Senator who had raised the questions did likewise, and, in the corridor, he pulled me on to a settee to obtain the information that he had failed to obtain from the Minister. At that moment, who should come along the corridor but the well-known head of the Attorney-General's Department, Sir Robert Garran. As he stopped to greet us, I said, 'Sir Robert, you've just been facilitated in the Senate'. He smiled and said courteously, 'Perhaps you mean "felicitated"?' I replied, 'No, you ask the Senator here. A Bill has just been passed and the Minister in charge of it asserted that its object was to "facilitate" your Department, whatever that means'.

After a fuller explanation, and a good laugh over the incident and its implications, Sir Robert went on to see the Prime Minister, and I was able then to satisfy the Senator's queries as to the operation of the new law.

Another amusing incident occurred over the sale of a Canberra house. Owing to an oversight in the City Area Leases Ordinance, in 1925, the ownership in a Canberra lease, in the case of insolvency of the lessee, did not devolve upon the Public Trustee, as was the case in New South Wales. The Public Trustee in Sydney, nevertheless, sold the house to a man from Yass. When I raised the point that this might not pass a good title to the purchasers, I was rudely told to 'mind my own business' in a letter from the trustee, As I was Registrar of Titles amongst other duties at that time, I was unable to pass the title when the dealing came before me.

A few weeks later the trustee, with his cap very much in his hand, called on me and inquired what I was going to do about the matter, about which he had apparently taken advice from someone conversant with the Ordinances. I said 'I intend to take your advice – mind my own business'. It was a good lesson for him as he had the reputation of being a very arbitrary person – almost 'a law unto himself' in New South Wales.

LAST DITCH STAND BY VICTORIA

One of the effects of the outbreak of the First World War, in 1914, was to slow down, and then almost suspend, developmental activities in connection with the building of Canberra. Although substantial engineering work had been performed by the end of 1916, in relation to water supply and sewerage, roads and power generation, the annual appropriations gradually diminished.

Apart from maintenance, for the financial years 1917-18, 1918-19 and 1919-20 the amounts spent on construction were £4,233, £936 and £3,575 respectively, or a total of £8,744. This did not include, of course, the expenditure on the Molonglo Camp and the proposed Arsenal at Tuggeranong, both of which were in the war category.

Concentration on the problems of the war had occupied the attention of Parliament and the Government, and, accordingly, tended to consolidate the position of Melbourne as the provisional federal capital, and thus raise the hopes of Victorian and other opponents of the capital at Canberra that, despite the constitutional settlement of the site question in 1908, the laying of foundation stones and the naming ceremony in 1913, and the considerable expenditure

on the provision of basic services, the transfer of the seat of government might be postponed indefinitely or reviewed entirely.

This situation reached explosive proportions in 1920, when the Government sought an increased vote to resume constructional activities at Canberra. Victorian members alleged that only a few Sydney interests were in favour of the Parliament moving to Canberra. Typical of this belated attempt to set aside the whole project was the remark of Sir Robert Best, Member for Kooyong, 'I cannot find out who it is that wants this Federal Capital.' He was told quickly that it was the representatives of New South Wales and he replied 'the people of New South Wales have not demanded the move, and to them the matter is of no moment.' This infuriated several New South Wales members and Sir Austin Chapman read a telegram received by him from a Sydney paper urging immediate action to honour the constitutional pledge in regard to the capital, and requesting him to 'hold up all Parliamentary business until definite action be taken to absolutely consummate the capital.' The Member for Illawarra, Mr Lamond, complained that in Melbourne 'we are in the unfortunate position of being sojourners in other people's houses, and are under the influence of the Victorian press – the most narrow-minded, short-sighted, niggardly, and un-Australian press in Australia.' Other Members supported this view, charging breach of faith over the contract entered into with the people of New South Wales, and one of them said that, if the immediate steps demanded were not taken to bring the capital city into being, and hearken to the cry of the people of New South Wales, the Government should be replaced by one that would honour the compact. If this were not done 'New South Wales would take steps to throw off the incubus of Federation.'

Victorian opponents countered by raising the economy issue, as the result of the war, and they attacked an item of £150,000 for Canberra in a loan bill. Senator Guthrie quoted from the Treasurer's speech on the budget, 'There is considerable public opinion which is urgently asking for economy in the shape of large reductions in Government expenditure. With this there should be no quarrel.' Guthrie said, 'In face of this, we are setting out to waste a very large sum on a bush capital, at a time when all the material required is at a cost higher than it has ever been in our history.' Senator deLargie, of Western Australia, remarked 'It will still be a bush capital when it is completed.'

Guthrie contended that the attempt to go on with the capital project was being engineered by the Millions Club and the Federal Capital League of Sydney. He argued that the war had changed everything, and it was not wise to proceed with a project on which 'no less than £173,800 of the people's money has been squandered.' He protested that he was not taking a parochial view, and that he would not object if the capital were taken to Sydney.

Senator Fairbairn, Victoria, said that the whole population of the capital would be officials and that 'nobody is going to live at Canberra if he can possibly help it'. He admitted, subsequently, that he had never visited the site, but asked what class of people Senators expected would live there.

Senator Pratten replied that there would be ‘the butchers, the bakers and candle-stick makers’ and the hundred and one different people who make up a large city, and Fairbairn retorted, ‘There will not be a candle in the whole place, but no doubt there will be a lot of “gas”.’

The Minister for Works and Railways warmly defended the Government’s policy of resuming activity in the building of the capital, and announced that an Advisory Committee would be appointed to review what had been done, prepare a scheme for transferring the Seat of Government as early as practicable, and generally advise the Government in relation to the whole project.

THE MOVE TO A ‘HORROR CITY’: 1926

In approaching its unusual and vital task of removing some hundreds of public servants with their families from Melbourne to Canberra, the Federal Capital Commission took steps to impress upon the transferees that their co-operation in the affair, and their understanding of all the elements involved, would be decidedly in their own interests. They were told the Commission was trying to make every provision for their comfort, so that all essential requirements would be met and the move made with the least possible inconvenience to each officer.

Because of the long-sustained and hostile Melbourne press propaganda against Canberra, most public servants thought the new ‘bush capital’ was in a dreary and waterless waste – the domain of rabbits, snakes and vultures with little or no amenities. So the feelings at the prospect of living under such supposed conditions ranged from disfavour to dismay.

My appearance among my public-servant friends, who referred to me sarcastically as ‘Mr Canberra’, was an unpleasant reminder of the evil day to come. I half-seriously challenged some senior officers, who should have known better, with disloyalty, suggesting that, if dissatisfied, they should resign, and they were wrongly influencing their juniors towards a contempt for the Constitution.

One day after such banter and a declaration that their negative attitude towards the transfer would lead nowhere, I suggested that they should form a representative service committee, to confer with us and to ascertain fully all relevant conditions and discuss the details involved. It was my contention that public servants, if they were organised wisely, could induce the Government to make all adequate provisions at the capital for education and for social and sporting amenities. Such a committee was duly set up with a senior Treasury officer as its very practical secretary. After the Commission began its work the Chief Commissioner and his officers in Canberra found it to be an excellent vehicle for obtaining information of a more personal character, as to housing requirements, and leisuretime pursuits. Conversely, this Canberra committee did much to counteract misleading reports and, most importantly, to consolidate public service views in a positive direction, accepting the capital as a *fait accompli*.

Members of the committee, of course, paid visits to Canberra and at the suggestion of Sir John Butters a number of their wives came also to make a qualified domestic scrutiny and offer suggestions from a woman’s point of view. One thing about which the women were concerned was the absence of a gas supply for cooking, to which, at that time, most of them were

accustomed in Melbourne. Electric stoves, they said, were slow and ineffective for many operations.

Sir John Butters, an experienced electrical engineer, would not swallow these objections and arranged for a woman skilled in cooking with electricity to come to Canberra and demonstrate to the Melbourne ladies. Everything they had declared could not be done – such as the ‘browning’ of a joint – she immediately performed with success. Much of the objection to electric cooking was therefore dispelled, although some ‘die-hards’ afterwards used one-fire stoves or kerosene cookers.

An interesting feature of the housing situation was the agreement by the Government, made at the instance of the Commission, to take over at a fair market valuation the residence owned in Melbourne by a transferee, and to credit the amount involved in the officer’s account in respect to the purchase of a house in Canberra.

For the general information of [officers] the Federal Capital Commission, in April 1926, prepared and distributed a fairly elaborate booklet, containing notes on most matters of interest to the transferees. It explained the features of the city and the territory, its climate and landscape and full details in relation to housing, with plans of many types. It told of the provisions made for education, sport and cultural pursuits, medical and hospital services, public worship, friendly societies and lodges, all city services, tourist facilities, and most important of all, the sources of supply of provisions and household necessities.

Because of the care and foresight with which all preliminary arrangements were made by the Commission, the earlier transfers for which it was responsible were carried out, despite forebodings, with little difficulty or inconvenience. It was a surprise to see how the transferred officers, in general, settled down smoothly and comfortably in their new surroundings and soon developed friendly relations and congenial interests. They stayed, if necessary, at one of the hotels until their furniture arrived, when they found it carefully installed, together with immediate supplies of food and firewood, with friendly advisers at hand. At intervals they were given, as departments or branches, a welcome at a social gathering, as a definite gesture to receive them into the community life of the capital.

The first public servant to be moved was an officer of the Parliamentary Library, Mr Whittle, who came in charge of an early instalment of its valuable collections. Asked by the Press if there had been any competition for the honour of being the first man to move, he replied ‘certainly not – but there will be keen competition to be the last’. But he soon settled down comfortably.

The details of the removal were arranged like a military operation, in fact the Commission secured the services of an experienced army service officer, Colonel W.P. Farr, to take charge of this activity and to control the federal capital transportation branch in close touch with the Commission’s Canberra organisation.

An office was established at 31 King Street, Melbourne, and this became a bureau of information for public servants. The fullest available particulars about the capital and its territory were available, both in photography and printed description. A well-informed Commission

officer was located at the bureau to discuss any matter with the transferees, especially to deal with their housing requirements. He had contour maps of all developing subdivisions, and plans of the many types of houses being built, or which could be built if selected.

The Commission was prepared to build for a purchaser to its own various plans or to plans supplied by the future owner; if desired, the public servant could engage an architect to design and arrange independently for a registered builder to construct a house. Finance was available to help building on the 99-year leaseholds, either from the Commission – for terms of 20 to 25 years, with a minimum deposit of £100 and repayments on a rental-purchase basis – or from the Commonwealth Bank. The latter scheme required that the residence be built by the Commission, the advance to be up to 70 per cent of the value, with interest at 5 1/2 per cent a year; repayments in instalments to be spread over 20 years. To help the approved cases, the Commission would finance portion of the deposit required by the bank on second mortgage, with interest at 7 per cent a year for a period of five years.

At this time, 1926, houses built by the Commission cost from £900 for a one-bedroom dwelling to £2,375 for a comfortable three-bedroom residence in Forrest.

Landscape and Gardens



T.C. Weston holds a tree for Lady Baden-Powell to plant [with Jessie Daley beside her]. C.S. Daley is on the [far] right.

WESTON: FOUNDER OF OUR FLORAL BEAUTY

No aspect of Canberra has done more to promote interest, and even admiration, than its millions of trees and shrubs, and its effective development as a garden city. Long before the international competition of 1911 for a city design, in the Public Works Branch we had taken a keen interest in the garden city movement inaugurated by Ebenezer Howard, and resulting in the establishment, first of Letchworth, and later of Welwyn,⁴⁵ the details of which we studied eagerly, for it was the general expectation that the new capital, wherever built, would, above all things, be an exemplar in Australia of the garden city principles.

After Canberra was finally chosen as the site for the seat of government and Colonel Miller, as its first Administrator, in 1912, drew up his general scheme for the organisation of all services, he provided accordingly for an officer in charge of afforestation, to be responsible for the establishment of a nursery for the propagation of trees, shrubs and plants for both afforestation and the city streets, parks and gardens.

For this important post he selected Thomas Charles Weston, who had come to Australia in 1896 and joined the New South Wales public service. He had received his training in horticulture in some notable gardens in England, and at the famous Drumlanrig Castle, the seat of the Duke of Buccleugh, in Dumfriesshire, Scotland. In 1898 Weston was in charge of Admiralty House Gardens, and, in 1908, was responsible for the Federal Government House grounds, Sydney. He became Superintendent of the State Nurseries at Campbelltown, and it was from this post that he came to Canberra, as adviser in 1911 and 1912, and was transferred permanently in 1913.

The first nursery was planted at Acton, on the site of the newer hospital buildings and an extension westward into portion of the present Lake area. In this nursery, Weston carried out experiments to ascertain the types of flora suitable for this climate, and he established valuable data for future use. This nursery at Acton, for many years, was a most attractive park, having well-grown specimens of many exotic trees, the destruction of which gave a pang of regret to those of us who had enjoyed their beauty and shade for years.

In 1915 Weston established the main extensive nursery area at Yarralumla, where most of the stock was raised for the millions of plantings in the city, and afforestation to restore cover on the surrounding hills, such as the pine forest at Stromlo and the native eucalyptus groups at Mt Mugga and Mt Russell. Varieties developed by Weston for the city beautification and landscape design were skilfully chosen to obtain pleasing effects, in contrast, by assembling species differing in form, colour and blossoming time.

Weston's work laid a splendid foundation for those who followed him. He was systematic and accurate in recording the results of his research. The Director of the English Botanic Gardens at Kew, who visited Canberra in the thirties, told us that Weston's records were unique in the history of horticulture.

In person Weston was somewhat reserved, but he displayed alertness and could be very forthright when the occasion demanded. He was not adequately classified for a long period by the Public Service Commissioner, and it was not until the coming of the Federal Capital

Commission in 1925 that intervention on his behalf, at a very high level, secured for him a salary more reasonably in keeping with his wide experience and his important allotted responsibilities.

For the earlier portion of his term at Canberra there was no reticulated water supply available so Weston was anxious to develop varieties of trees that would thrive on the average rainfall. He believed strongly in cultivation of the soil, and his motto, often heard, was 'irritate, don't irrigate.' He was of the opinion that lawns would never flourish in Canberra, and he designed gardens for the Hotel Canberra that consisted mostly of rockeries, with hardy succulent plants. This fairly outraged the Commission Chief Architect, J.S. Murdoch, who planned the building, and he had Weston directed to provide for the grass plantings that have been quite successful. Two favourable factors assisted this result – the plenitude of water, and the introduction, thanks to CSIRO, of new types of grass that better suited our climatic conditions than the English rye, blue Kentucky, or similar softer varieties.

In March 1927 Weston retired, but at the opening of Parliament House on 9 May in that year, he was presented to their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York, and awarded an MBE in recognition of his long, valuable and exceptional pioneering work in laying the foundations for the spectacular arboreal beauty of our capital city.

THE GARDEN TRADITION

If Thomas Weston truly laid unique foundations for the beauty of tree and flower that has been achieved in Canberra, there were others to follow him who built well on those foundations, exercising skill and judgement in the planning and artistic selection of types.

The Federal Capital Advisory Committee under the chairmanship of Sir John Sulman, reporting in 1921 upon what it found in the capital at that stage, praised the resources assembled by Weston, and made suggestions as to their use in ornamentation of avenues, streets and parks. It raised, too, the important question of the provision of arboreal shelter from the strong north-westerly winds. As the result of its recommendations, Haig Park was planted across the northern city area, extending from east to west; additional shelter at Westbourne Woods, Yarralumla; at the Power House, Kingston; and the lovely Telopea Park and other areas that we enjoy today in their mature conditions.

Tests undertaken in 1952 indicated that, as a result of these and later plantings, the wind pressure at the testing stations at the Forestry School, and at Acton and Duntroon, had been diminished by nearly 25 per cent – a great practical benefit to our residents, quite apart from the enhancement of landscape effects. By the end of 1924, when the Sulman Committee's activities were taken over by the Federal Capital Commission, 1,162,942 trees had been planted, at a cost of £20,406

The Federal Capital Commission, under Sir John Butters, continued this active policy of tree-planting; and, with the closer development of the Governmental Area and its neighbourhood, it became possible to add brighter garden colourings as a contrast to the trees. In 1926 the grounds of the Hotel Canberra were ablaze with dahlias, and 25,000 tulips were already bedded along Commonwealth Avenue, their subsequent massed effect doing much to establish Canberra's

reputation for horticulture, and offset the effect of earlier, repeated attacks by the Bulletin and other journals upon it as a dustbowl and a barren waste. A separate forestry branch was also set up by the Commission to place this activity upon a commercial basis as well as provide cover for the denuded hills near the city.

It was during the period of control by the Commission, 1925-30, that particular attention was given to landscape effects in avenues and copses. In this work, a fine contribution was made by A.E. Bruce, a well-trained Scottish horticulturalist whom the Commission appointed, in 1926, first as Weston's assistant, and next year as his successor as Superintendent of Parks and Gardens.

Bruce was keenly appreciative of the fine researches and practical tests that Weston had carried out. He duly continued these, but he also made his own valuable contribution, owing to his stronger sense of the importance of landscape planning, not only in the lovely street effects that we see with oaks in Torrens Street, Braddon, with acacias and golden poplars in Barton, atlantic cedars in Reid, amongst many others, but in the development of points of emphasis by the mass use of taller varieties, like Lombardy poplars, or the Roman cypress. His selection, for Flinders Way, of the now popular prunus, with its attractive blossom, its soft copper-coloured foliage and its red fruit, in alternation with white and rose hawthorns, has given us a feature of great perennial interest in its colour sequence.

The enthusiasm of the newly-arrived citizens for forming and cultivating their gardens has often been mentioned. Our federal capital pioneers exhorted them to embrace this avenue in which to take their own individual share in the team-work of building the capital city. It urged them, especially, to develop back as well as front gardens, and to plant fruit trees, as 'fruit means healthier children and a sturdier race'. The residents, as a whole, caught this spirit, and worthily worked towards making Canberra a real garden city – an aspect that surprises and delights visitors today when driving through our residential areas.

One of the things about which we had to undertake considerable tutelage for the newcomers was the prohibition of front fences. Many felt insecure with merely a hedge, but this uncertainty gradually passed off, and the hedge-lined streets soon presented a trim appearance. Responsibility for cutting the hedges, for many years, was undertaken by the Commission and the succeeding administration. The second superintendent of Parks and Gardens, Mr Bruce, with that genial personality often hidden by a Scot under a superficially dour mask, was the firm friend of these early residents, advising them freely and personally in relation to all their gardening problems.

Bruce gave strong support to the Canberra Horticultural Society, of which he was a president, and his help to the new residents in establishing their gardens was readily accorded and widely appreciated. It was very unfortunate that an unreasonable official attitude lost us his services, in the mid-thirties, when the City of Sydney eagerly appointed him as the Superintendent of its Parks and Gardens.

The work of Weston and Bruce was well supported by John Hobday, who had charge of the nurseries, and produced the stock required for their enormous planting programmes. Hobday, in

his turn, became Superintendent of Parks and Gardens, and he carried on the traditions that had been laid down by his talented predecessors.

THE TULIPS THAT DID NOT COST £3,000

Commonwealth Avenue, when the Hotel Canberra was opened on 10 December 1924, and the first sale of leases was held two days later, was an interesting, if not picturesque, sight. Down the centre, now a tree plantation of deodars and atlantic cedars, there were almost continuous great heaps of slag from the large sewer tunnels that were being constructed underneath. An enclosing wire fence extended along each side, and on this Weston had trained climbing roses of the Dorothy Perkins variety, a somewhat incongruous assembly. On the Hotel Canberra site there was first a massed show of dahlias, and the small avenue trees were in position.

In the spring of 1926, there was the blooming of 25,000 tulips that did much to gain interest for Canberra as a coming garden city, although it is not particularly suited climatically for tulip growth on a wide scale as in Holland and the English Midlands. One unexpected aspect of the tulip growth was the appearance of the eel worm that seriously damaged the bulbs, and, in fact, led eventually to the discontinuance of their use for open display.⁴⁶

In 1931, when the whole country was suffering from the effects of the economic depression, and unemployment was rife, a friend of mine in Melbourne sent me a newspaper cutting, reporting remarks by the President of the Chamber of Commerce, the Hon. J.A. Boyd, an experienced businessman who had been in the Victorian Parliament, and later represented Henty in the Commonwealth Parliament. He had developed the characteristic Melbourne attitude of that day towards Canberra, and he evidently thought that the tulips were fair game. He was reported as saying that those administering Canberra had no sense of proportion, as when people were starving, they could spend £3,000 in buying tulips from Holland.

Astonished at this, I sent him a letter, advising that the only expenditure in obtaining tulips had been £3/10/-, not £3,000, and that this was the cost of bringing to Canberra, years before, a quantity of tulip bulbs presented to the capital by the Dutch Government. These had been the progenitors of the large number on display. With my letter I included a certificate from the Auditor-General's Inspector that what I stated was correct. I suggested to Mr Boyd, as a public man, that, if the Press report was correct, he had seriously misled the people, and that he should make another statement indicating that he had spoken under a misapprehension. He neither acknowledged my letter nor made a statement. I had a letter published in another journal refuting the imputation.

As an indication of how these statements, not the tulips, germinate, I was called upon to reply, several years afterwards, to similar statements alleging extravagant expenditure at Canberra, one of which was that, in the depths of the depression, we spent £30,000 on buying tulips!

The tulips in Commonwealth Avenue were replaced by smaller beds of roses. These presented also a colourful spectacle between the small growing trees in the spring and autumn.

Their contribution was taken over by the National Rose Garden in front of Parliament House when the avenue trees increased in size.

The association of roses with the capital, as mementos of the tour of the Duke and Duchess of York for the opening of Parliament House, led to the display at the Royal Horticultural Society's show, in London, of three new varieties called 'Renown' (after the royal couple's ship), 'Canberra' (after the new city), and 'Lady Betty' (after the Duchess). 'Renown' is a beautiful cerise rose, shaded with cardinal; 'Canberra' a pale vermilion, with gold petal reverse; 'Lady Betty' is a deep salmon, shaded with yellow. With the 'Rose of York' prominently featured at Canberra's opening ceremony, the rose, in endless variety, has been a favourite since with Canberra garden lovers.

THE TREE THAT KEPT CANBERRA FROM 'EVIL'

Early in 1926, Mr W.B. Carmichael, of the Highland Society of New South Wales, suggested that public bodies throughout Australia should make a contribution towards the beautification of the national capital, and thus permanently identify themselves in a vital manner, by presenting trees for plantation in its main avenues and public gardens. The Federal Capital Commission welcomed this proposal, and agreed to collaborate and adjust its planting schemes accordingly.

Mr Carmichael proceeded to enlist support for his scheme, and many representative organisations agreed to take part. These included such bodies as the Institute of Engineers, the Associated Chambers of Commerce, Rotary Clubs, the Australian Corporation of Public Accountants, the Town Planning Association, the English Speaking Union, and the Commercial Travellers' Association, amongst many others. The proposal therefore created much interest in Canberra at a time when this was certainly needed.

For the inauguration of the scheme, the Commission made available the main route from Canberra to Queanbeyan, now known as Canberra Avenue, as its greater length would provide a large number of tree positions.

As the promoting body, the Highland Society of New South Wales decided to import a rowan tree from Scotland, together with a quantity of its native soil, and stage a spectacular ceremony for its planting. This rowan tree was accorded a place of honour at the north-western head of the Avenue, and, significantly, adjoining the site for the future Presbyterian Church of St Andrew.

On Saturday, 11 September 1926, a delegation from the Highland Society arrived in Canberra from Sydney to plant the rowan. The party included the president, Mr Duncan Carson, vice-president, Mr James M. Pringle, treasurer, Mr S.J. Carruthers, and the promoter, Mr W.B. Carmichael.

The 'braw Scotch day' began at 10a.m. at the Hotel Canberra, where a pipe band skirled a welcome from the local Highland Society, and then all proceeded to the site, a member of the local Society, Mr W. Tillie, leading and holding on high the flag of Scotland. The Chief Commissioner, Mr (later Sir John) Butters received the visitors at the site, where a considerable crowd had gathered. The soil from Scotland was officially laid under the tree by Mr Carson, assisted by a colleague, Mr McKennon, and then Mr Carson, directed by Mr A.E. Bruce,

Assistant Superintendent of Parks and Gardens, duly planted the rowan. The whole company, led by Mr Robert Christie, sang, feelingly, the well-known Scotch ballad, 'The Rowan Tree'. In addressing the gathering, Mr Carson told us many things about the rowan tree, and referred to the Scotch belief that it was supposed to have a beneficial effect against witchcraft. He expressed the Society's hope 'that the rowan tree planted today may keep Canberra free from evil'.

Several other speeches were made, and before the assembly dispersed after the singing of 'Auld Lang Syne', the senior life vice-president, Mr Pringle, recited the following verses, composed for the occasion by the Secretary of the Society, Mr J.D. Robertson:

This Scottish soil – in which we plant our tree,
An emblem of Auld Scotia ower the sea,
Wha's berries red, to Scotsmen aye will be
A glint of hame –
Will bring remembrance a' oor Ain Countrie,
Frae whence we came.
And as the years pass ower this new-born State,
This bit o' Scottish soil, laid at her gate,
Will aye denote – that Scots wha ne'er abate
Their love for hame.
Still proudly strive to guide Australia's fate
To world-wide fame.

Sad to relate, this historic rowan tree, that flourished for over thirty years, suddenly commenced to fail and ultimately died, so its Scotch vigil down the presentation avenue, to keep us 'free from evil' must now be exercised by St Andrew's Church, aided by the nearby statue of Robbie Burns.

MAPLES FROM THE WHITE HOUSE

Recent visits to Canberra by parties of the Young Australia League revive the memory of a significant band of Young Americans. The Founder of the League, J.J. Simons, of Perth, enlarged his area of operations on several occasions and took a group of Australian youths on a tour of the United States. The Americans were so impressed with this plan that they invited Mr Simons either to come himself or to send one of his trusted lieutenants to organise a similar movement in their country. He arranged to send E.R. Marie, who had often brought an Australian party to Canberra. Marie organised a group of young men from various American centres to make a tour of Australia. They were required to take photographs, make notes, and give talks on their experiences upon returning to their own districts.

This group came to Canberra, and brought with them two maple trees from the nurseries of the White House, Washington, to present to Canberra with President Hoover's compliments. I arranged for the trees to be planted, with due ceremony, in detached plots at either end of King Edward Terrace, in the Government Triangle.

The youths were very interested in our trees, especially the wattles, so I gave each of them – I think there were twenty-four in all – a seedling Cootamundra wattle to take to his home town. In response to the President's friendly gesture, two young kurrajongs were entrusted to Marie's care for transmission to Washington, with our compliments. There are, of course, certain quarantine restrictions attaching to the admission of plants to most countries, and certificates are required to the effect that international agreements have been complied with. The maple trees brought a clean sheet with them and were admitted accordingly. We arranged for the Canberra seedlings to contain no soil, their roots were packed in sphagnum, and the Chief Quarantine Officer for Plants in Canberra provided a certificate to the effect that they were free from disease and that the provisions of the international regulations had been followed.

For some time after the group had left, I had heard nothing about these tokens of goodwill from Canberra, but, on Marie's next visit to us with an Australian party, I asked him what had happened to the plants. He said 'Didn't you know? They were destroyed, probably thrown into the harbour at San Diego, where we landed.' Astonished, I replied, 'Surely not; tell me the story.'

Marie then explained that all the plants were in good order on arrival, but the United States Customs authorities objected to their entry, despite the fact that they had a clearance under the international code. Marie told the officers that they were gifts and that two were return presents for the White House. At this, he was given a short period in which to obtain consent from the State Department for the entry of the plants. He telegraphed the Department but received no reply, so the plants were confiscated. It may have been in mute protest against this cavalier treatment that the two maples from the White House have not done very well in Canberra.⁴⁷

We have not had the best of fortune with trees that have been brought to Canberra – for example, the Scottish rowan mentioned above – but it is significant that the British oak and the cricket bat willows, that were brought from the Royal Botanic Gardens, England, and planted by the Duke and Duchess of York on 10 May 1927, the day following the opening of Parliament House, are growing well.

Along the Potomac River Park, in Washington, is a world-famous plantation of Japanese cherry trees whose blossoms in the spring make a glorious spectacle. This lovely feature was the achievement of the wife of President Howard Taft and the Mayor of Tokyo. In the thirties, the Japanese offered to present a number of these trees to Canberra so that our capital could also have 'a cherry-blossom drive', but their offer had to be declined as such trees were subject to 'fire blight', prevalent at the time, and the plant quarantine authorities were afraid of the risk of its introduction here.

TREES FAILED TO STIMULATE CANADIAN CRICKET

One of the earliest [tree-planting] ceremonies occurred in October 1926, during the visit of the United Kingdom Branch of the Parliamentary Association, under the leadership of the Rt Hon. the Marquis of Salisbury, KG, and Mr Arthur Henderson, MP, Labour Party Representative. Each of these delegates planted a tall poplar in the inner courtyard of Parliament House. Lord Salisbury, with due dignity, put in one or two spadefuls of soil around his tree, but Arthur Henderson, doing a labour job, stole the limelight by taking off his coat, shovelling a large amount of earth into the hole, and stamping it down thoroughly, while Lord Salisbury looked steadily down his nose during the sustained applause from the gallery. Other members of the visiting party planted cypresses in the House grounds.

The first planting by Royalty took place on 10 May 1927, the day after the opening of Parliament House. His Royal Highness the Duke of York planted a cedar of Lebanon at Government House, and a British oak and an Australian bunya-bunya pine, one in York Park, the other in King's Avenue. These were planted late in the afternoon, during thundery conditions, the heavens threatening to fall at any moment. Her Royal Highness the Duchess of York made her contribution with an English cricket bat willow and a white gum, a native of the Australian Capital Territory, both planted in coppices.

Other coppice plantings were inaugurated by His Excellency the Governor-General, Baron Stonehaven, and it was arranged later that all Members of Parliament who so desired, might plant a tree in large coppices that were established between Commonwealth Avenue and the Lake, near the Offices of the Canadian High Commission.

Following the stirring example of the Highland Society in importing and planting its Scottish rowan, representatives of many Chambers of Commerce, branches of the English Speaking Union, and Rotary Clubs, on the same day, 11 September 1926, planted their trees on Presentation (Canberra) Avenue, and other bodies afterwards joined in the project, filling up the Avenue to McMillan Crescent.

It would [have been] appropriate to complete the original scheme and have a memorial notice placed somewhere in the Avenue, as was done in similar circumstances on the northern side of the city, in Limestone Avenue, where the planting was undertaken by the Australian Natives Association, which also erected, in the central plantation, two masonry seats bearing an informative inscription, where the visitor may rest and contemplate the attractive long lines of eucalypts and kurrajongs.

The earlier reference to the cricket bat willow reminds me that, when Arthur Mailey brought his famous team to Canberra in the early thirties, occasion was taken to have some willow trees planted by him and some other members of his team, in Manuka Circle, on the south side, adjoining the Oval. In this coppice, at the same ceremony, willows were also planted by the Minister for the Interior, Sir Archdale Parkhill, and myself. Arthur Mailey was taking his team to Canada, and I sent with him, as a gift to the Mayor of Ottawa, some cuttings taken from cricket bat willows growing in Canberra, and raised from cuttings originally sent to us from the Marylebone Cricket Club, at Lords, London. I received a pleasant letter of acknowledgement from the Mayor, but the gift does not appear to have achieved its purpose of stimulating Canada

to join in the cricket fellowship that is so valuable a link between many of the nations of the Commonwealth.

PRESERVING OUR LANDSCAPE

A distinguished visitor, Mr Arthur Adell, president of the American Institute of Architects, has forcefully reminded us of the insidious manner in which ugliness can intrude into the development of our cities, and urged that we jealously conserve the natural beauty of our landscapes.

In this connection, favourable references have been made in the press to the Canberra expedient of locating power and telephone lines, under which 'Walter Burley Griffin strung the wires along back yard easements to keep the streets aesthetically clean'. Although he would, probably, have endorsed such a principle, Griffin had nothing to do with the actual building-stage development of Canberra, as his association with it ceased on 31 December 1920, at which date his plan had not been 'put on the ground', and the residential subdivisions had not been built upon or even 'laid out'.

The proposal for bringing in these services at the rear of allotments for obvious aesthetic reasons, at a time when the more desirable alternative of laying them underground was ruled out on account of its much higher cost, was put forward by the Federal Capital Advisory Committee. It was adopted in 1921, endorsed by the Federal Capital Commission and became standard practice, except in specially important areas, such as Parkes – the Government centre – where undergrounding was imperative. The Postmaster-General's Department [now Telecom] has done much, also, to minimise the extent to which its telephone and telegraph lines in Canberra are carried on poles.

The most valuable features, perhaps, in our city's landscape are our lovely soft, purple hills, Black Mountain, Ainslie, Majura, Red Hill and Mugga, and it is, I feel, essential to preserve them, as far as is humanly possible, in their natural condition. Their dark masses provide an effective foil to the variegated colouring of the urban development in the amphitheatre that they enclose. Griffin considered them too dark. One day, when walking with him in the grounds of Yarralumla House, I mentioned what a fine prospect it would be looking from there, across the glistening water of the Western Lake, towards Black Mountain, and he said 'it's too dark, I'm goin' to pa-aint it'. He then explained the scheme – utterly misguided in my opinion – to substitute coloured plants on the hills for their lovely dark natural foliage – one to be yellow, another red, another green.

One morning in the early thirties, I happened to be in the office of the secretary for Works and Railways and, quite by accident, learnt of a proposal to open a large stone quarry on the city face of Mt Ainslie. I raised a strong objection to this, and was told 'the Minister has approved, we have the money, and are going ahead right away; we must replace the Mugga quarry where men are developing silicosis'. It was my unpleasant duty to have the matter brought immediately to the notice of the Prime Minister, Hon. J.H. Scullin, who agreed with me and had the proposal quashed, another obscure site being chosen for the quarry. On two other occasions it was

necessary for me to take similar action to prevent groups of houses being erected too high upon the slopes of Mt Ainslie and Red Hill for purposes connected with aviation. The television towers and buildings erected on Black Mountain, although carefully located and treated, are an unhappy development, but of course, there is a tendency towards complaisance in the so-called interests of scientific or commercial progress. This attitude, however, produced the ghastly results seen in the midlands of England, and it should awaken us to the necessity for firm and continual community vigilance if we are to enjoy our natural landscapes and preserve them for posterity.⁴⁸

FLOOD PREVIEW OF LAKE

The Federal Capital Commission, in the first few months of its existence, encountered a major problem in the highest flood recorded for the Molonglo River. This occurred on 27 May 1925, and was due to a cloudburst near Captain's Flat and heavy rain generally over the catchments of the Queanbeyan and Molonglo Rivers.

We had already experienced a high flood on the Molonglo River on 27 July 1922 – note the significance of the 27th day of the month – and it caused the collapse of the trestle railway bridge erected by Griffin. Besides, it so damaged the second lightly-constructed road bridge leading from Commonwealth Avenue as to necessitate its replacement by a heavy timber structure of the standard de Burgh pattern over the main waterway, a timber beam bridge over the billabong, and a bank and roadway 2,000 feet long.

These provisions served requirements until the flood of 27 May 1925. The design involved protection of the long earth bank, on its upstream side, by vertical sheet-piling in heavy timber, but this part of the work had not been done, thus leaving the bank with little or no protection against erosion.

As the 1925 flood was more severe than that of 1922, it caused great damage, dislocating activities in the city for days and involving weeks of work in restoring conditions to normal.

Communication between the two sides of the city was cut off and contact between Queanbeyan and Yass broken. The railway to Queanbeyan was heavily damaged and unusable, and telephone and telegraph services suspended.

At the time, I was living at the Hotel Canberra, and on the morning of 27 May I went to the Commission offices at Acton by car, over the Molonglo bridge, noting that the river was in considerable spate and rising rapidly. In the afternoon, I decided to walk back to the hotel and, upon arriving at the bridge found that the water was almost level with the decking. I crossed the bridge, a little wet, and, on the south side, discovered that only three feet remained of the roadway, and the bank was being rapidly eroded by the pressure of the flood waters and by heavy tree trunks. Hurrying across the narrowing road, I stopped at a safe distance and saw the bank breached and the gap in the road quickly enlarge to about 30 feet.

It was a thrilling experience, for the appearance of the river was remarkable, as it was bringing down haystacks, parts of buildings, dead animals, and years' accumulation of rubbish of all kinds.

Next morning, up early, I went to inspect the condition of the river and saw several yards of water between Commonwealth Avenue and our Acton offices.

Suddenly I realised that there was a man near the offices making army signals with flags across the wide expanse. Hurrying back to the hotel, I found someone who could read and return the signals, and duly received directions from the chairman of the Commission, [Mr.](afterwards Sir John) Butters, for me to have a survey made of the available food on the south side of the city, as he was having done on the north side. The chairman thought that our isolation from outside supplies might last, perhaps, for a week or more, and the position become serious.

In surveying the position on the second day, I found it impossible to cross Yarralumla Creek to the west, and Jerrabomberra Creek to the east, so, with the railway out of commission, we were really hemmed in.

The cadets at the Royal Military College, however, came to the rescue with customary efficiency, and restored connection with Queanbeyan by constructing a pontoon bridge.

Fortunately, the flood waters receded substantially in three days, enabling me to reach the office at Acton, and assist more effectively in the work of re-establishing services and assessing the very extensive damage that occurred at the lower levels.

One man, in a house at The Causeway, being disturbed in the night by the wind and rain, essayed to get out of bed and stepped immediately into two feet of water, the level throughout his house, and those of several others. Another man drove his car into the dip in the road at the northern end of Telopea Park and was drowned.

The flood served to provide much valuable information to the Commission from the topical angle. This 1925 flood also served to give us an excellent idea of the approximate appearance of Canberra under the future lake system, and there was a general procession of residents to the higher levels to view the attractive spectacle.

Building Provisional Parliament House and the Administrative Buildings



Turning the first sod of the provisional Parliament House, 28 August 1923, Joe Lea operating the steam shovel.

THE PHANTOM COMPETITION

The holding of an international competition for the design of Parliament House at the seat of government has been in contemplation almost from the inception of the project. In 1912, King O'Malley, after approving of the Departmental Board's plan for the new city, requested his officers to prepare suitable conditions to govern a worldwide competition for the Parliament's new home, and these were duly formulated. In 1913, however, the position was affected by Kelly's adoption of Walter Burley Griffin's design for the layout of the capital and the appointment of Griffin as its Director of Design and Construction.

Griffin addressed himself immediately to the task of initiating the competition for the Parliament House, drawing up fresh conditions that varied considerably from those prepared under O'Malley's instructions. He had no consultations with the Australian Institutes of Architects, an omission that they resented. His conditions provided for a single competition, to be adjudged in London by a jury of five architects, comprising John Burnet of London; Victor Laloux of Paris; Otto Wagner of Vienna; Louis H. Sullivan of Chicago; with G.T. Poole of Perth, an Australian, as chairman.

It was stipulated that the cost of the building was not to exceed a million pounds, and eight premiums were granted, ranging from £2,000 to £250. The successful competitor was to be engaged as architect for the building, which was to be placed on Griffin's chosen site, on Camp Hill, and not lost down on the lake. All architects competing were required to register their entry.

The conditions were issued in July 1914, but owing to the almost immediate outbreak of the First World War, the Minister for Home Affairs, the Hon. W.O. Archibald, MP, on 25 September withdrew the competition, after an assurance by the President of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects that this would cause no hardship, as no appreciable work would have been done in the limited time available. During 1915 opportunity was taken to revise the conditions to make them more suitable for architects of British countries. Then, in 1916, at Griffin's suggestion, O'Malley enjoying his second term of office persuaded Cabinet to reopen the competition in its previous form, except that citizens of enemy countries were debarred. Strong exception to this action was taken by the Royal Institute of British Architects, and Sir John Burnet refused to act as one of the adjudicators, in view of the state of war in which many architects were involved. The competition was re-announced on 2 August 1916, but a change of government in November of that year led to a review of the matter and the indefinite postponement of the competition.

When the Government resumed construction of the capital in 1921, on the basis of an economy programme, including a provisional Parliament House, numerous letters from registered competitors complained of breach of faith, many alleging that some work had been done and that time and money had been spent upon designs. At the request of the Minister for Works and Railways, Sir Littleton Groom, the Federal Capital Advisory Committee, under Sir John Sulman, reviewed this question, and finding that no legal but a possible moral obligation subsisted, suggested that all registered competitors be invited to send in their designs, in whatever form they desired, for consideration by a Board of Adjudicators, and that premiums equal to half of those of the original competition be awarded.

After considerable delay, and later consultation with the Federal Council of the Australian Institutes of Architects, the Government, whilst not admitting any liability, finally decided to set aside £3,000 for allotment, in an equitable manner, amongst registered competitors who had performed work in connection with the preparation of designs. The assessors were Messrs G.T. Poole (chairman of the original competition), W.S.P. Godfrey (nominee of the Institutes of Architects) and J.S. Murdoch (Commonwealth Chief Architect).

Responsibility for most of the practical arrangements to give effect to the Government's decision fell upon my shoulders, providing some interesting experiences. There were 215 competitors registered, from many countries, who had to be notified to send in their studies, if they so desired, within three days, so as to afford no time for performing additional work. No public notification was made, and the local addressees were the last to receive their letters under a complicated time schedule.

Replies were received from 92 of those registered, of whom 63 submitted work in various stages of preparation and a number submitted evidence of work done. Awards ranging from £100 to £10 were duly made in 78 cases. The answers received indicated general appreciation of the Government's move, some disclaiming any reward, and characteristic of the spirit of these was the suggestion 'if you have any money to spare, give it to your returned soldiers for the magnificent job they did.'

No copy was made of any work sent in, all entries being returned to their owners, thus ending this 'ghost' competition, one significant episode in the march towards the provision of a permanent home for our Parliament.

STEAM SHOVEL MADE HISTORY

In the list of official buildings required at the federal capital, the structure to house the Parliament and its incidental facilities was naturally the most important. However, after the abandonment of the world-wide competition for a permanent building, the Sulman Advisory Committee developed a scheme for provisional buildings. The Committee, at a meeting in 1921 with the Minister, Sir Littleton Groom, listened with interest to his proposal that a conference hall, in framed construction and with galvanised iron walls, be erected to accommodate a convention to review the Constitution. On 5 May 1921, the Advisory Committee submitted to Groom a scheme for such a building, but the Minister did not succeed in having the convention proposal approved. The Committee then arranged with the chief architect, J.S. Murdoch, to develop the scheme, in consultation with the parliamentary authorities, into a project for a provisional Parliament House, to provide for legislative requirements for many years.

The site selected was astride the main city axis, to afford a commanding view of the gardens of the governmental area. At the same time it was to be clear of the location for the permanent buildings, including Parliament House, according to Griffin's plan. The estimated cost of the provisional building, on the suggested site of some 3 1/4 acres (for which the Commonwealth paid about £16) was £174,000. The expenditure of up to £2 million was possible for a structure of the monumental character envisaged in the early stages.

The Advisory Committee's scheme was referred to Parliament by its Public Works Committee for investigation. It aroused keen controversy, and conflicting views among the witnesses whose opinions were sought. Architects urged that a permanent building should be substituted, even if, for some years, only a shell could be afforded.

For the Committee, the Chief Architect prepared alternative sketches, showing how a permanent structure might be placed on the summit of Capital Hill (Kurrajong), instead of its lower spur, Camp Hill, as selected by Griffin. Murdoch suggested the provisional building, if approved, be located on 'The Knoll', a slight eminence near the Molonglo River.

The Public Works Committee, although leaning towards the permanent alternative, in its report left the difficult decision to Parliament itself. Influenced by time and economic factors, Parliament, on 26 July 1923, declared for the provisional building.

Because of evidence given to the Public Works Committee by Members of Parliament and officials, the Committee increased the area of the provisional building by one-third, and its estimated cost from £174,000 to £225,000

The Minister for Works and Railways, Mr P.G. Stewart, turned the first sod of the excavation on 28 August 1923. He asked me whether something more spectacular than an ordinary spade could be used. Inspired by a photo received from Canberra, showing Joe Lea operating his steam shovel, I suggested to Mr Stewart that he use the steam shovel. He thought this an excellent idea, and, aided by his early seafaring experience with winches, he carried out the function with aplomb, and to the delight of a large audience. This made history, as it was probably the first time on record that a steam shovel had been used for such an official purpose.

AN EARLY ARCHITECT

John Smith Murdoch

One of the finest characters of the older generation of Commonwealth public servants was John Smith Murdoch, Chief Architect of the Commonwealth. It was he who conceived and prepared the design for the Commencement Column, on Capital Hill, the base of which contains the three foundation stones, laid by the Governor-General, Lord Denman, the Prime Minister, Andrew Fisher, and the Minister for Home Affairs, King O'Malley, on 12 March 1913.⁴⁹

Murdoch's idea was to make the monument symbolic, not only of federation but of the relationship of Australia to Great Britain and the other self-governing dominions. The stones of the hexagonal base represented the six States. From these would rise the main shaft, bearing an entablature signifying the Commonwealth of Australia. This stone, in its turn, would become the support of an obelisk, of British granite, with four sides facing north, south, east and west, emblematic of the widespread British Commonwealth. Engraved buttressing stones around the entablature were to come from six of the then Empire centres. Unfortunately, this Commencement Column, for various reasons, was not completed and a great opportunity was lost.

Murdoch received his early architectural training in Scotland under Sir A. Marshall Mackenzie, of Edinburgh, and through the South Kensington Schools of Science and Art. He came to Australia in 1886, working at first in private practice, and, in 1893, joining the staff of the Government Architect in Queensland, where he acquired wide experience under its varied conditions.

It was in 1904 that he was transferred to the Commonwealth Service, in the Public Works Branch of the Department of Home Affairs. The following year, when I also joined the Works Branch, I was placed under Mr Murdoch's direction, and I had the great advantage of working with him, or, later, in some association with him, until 1930, when he retired as one of the last Federal Capital Commissioners. I found him a man of wide culture and human sympathy, and he inspired me to undertake studies in architecture and town planning. He was a bachelor and gave me much of his time, frequently walking with me around the city of Melbourne to analyse the features of the more important buildings, examining the designs and articles in the British and American technical journals, and setting before me a high standard of values in conception and practice. He was fond of music and drama and his influence in every direction was stimulating and beneficial to us juniors.

During the first quarter of the century, his was the main influence in the development of the large programme of building that was undertaken by the Commonwealth, and he earned the respect and confidence of his profession, not only throughout Australia, but also in Great Britain, where he was honoured by the Royal Institute of British Architects with its Fellowship. He was responsible for many improvements in the plan, greater accommodation and reduced cost of Australia House, London, for which, strange to relate, his old chief, Sir Marshall Mackenzie, was the architect.

Anzac Square, in Brisbane, and Forrest Place, in Perth, were born of his suggestions, and Commonwealth Offices, Treasury Gardens, Melbourne, were designed by him. His contribution to the building of the national capital was also extensive and of much distinction. He laid out the Royal Military College, Duntroon, and the Royal Naval College, Jervis Bay, and planned their buildings. He encompassed successfully the difficult task of designing our 'provisional' Parliament House. His plan for the Members' Hostel (which became the Hotel Canberra) was a notable contribution to the garden-city character of our city, and he embodied some of the same features in the Hotel Acton [Acton House], Hotel Kurrajong and Gorman House. Many of the earlier houses of Canberra were built from Murdoch's designs, and he gave most valuable assistance to the Federal Capital Advisory Committee (1921-24) and to the Federal Capital Commission (1925-30), becoming one of its members when he retired, in 1929, from the important post of Director-General of Works.

Through his knowledge, ability and integrity, Murdoch stood high in the estimation of his colleagues and of governments. His work and character were often praised in Parliament, many Members meeting him intimately in his constant duty to give evidence and advice to the Public Works Committee, and admiring his courageous and consistent stand for high quality in

everything. At the opening of Parliament House, in 1927, he was invested with a CMG by the Duke of York.

Murdoch was incapable of any mean action or ungenerous thought, and his quiet and constant benefactions to charity, and assistance to public servants in misfortune, were known only to a few.

MORE CONFUSION

As the result of the passing of the *Public Service Act 1922*, the position of Public Service Commissioner was abolished and replaced by a Board of three Commissioners, vested with wider powers and responsibilities in relation to the general control of the service. To the chairmanship of the new board was appointed Major-General Sir Brudenell White, formerly the distinguished Chief of the General Staff of the Australian Military Forces.

One day in June 1924, Sir Brudenell sent for me – we were then located in Melbourne – and said, ‘The Public Works Committee has called me as a witness in connection with its inquiry into a proposal for a building to house secretariats of departments in Canberra. Who was the genius who suggested such a hare-brained scheme?’ After a pause, I answered, ‘I was.’

Sir Brudenell seemed somewhat taken aback, so I asked, ‘In the circumstances, what is the alternative?’

‘What circumstances?’ he asked; so I said, ‘In view of your comments, I assumed that you knew the situation.’ He remarked, ‘I know nothing about it; please tell me the story.’

Then I explained the dilemma in which the Sulman Advisory Committee found itself, owing to two apparently inconsistent decisions of the Government.

First, there was to be a provisional Parliament House – it was, at the time of which I write, under construction and certain to be ready for use at the date decided upon for the transfer to the capital. Secondly, there were to be administrative offices, of permanent construction, their design the subject of an architectural competition. But there was no possibility of their being ready for several years, and much beyond the date of the transfer of the Parliament. In these circumstances, as Secretary I had made a review for the Sulman Committee of the numbers of officers of departments due for transfer, according to our 1921 scheme, of which the Government had previously approved. The scheme involved 1,071 officers, including the Parliamentary staff.

The only solution seemed to be reduction in staff so that each department could be represented by a small secretariat. The secretariats, involving about 160 officers, would be housed in a temporary building until the completion – at much longer range – of the permanent administrative offices.

The Sulman Committee adopted this view and asked the Commonwealth Chief Architect, J.S. Murdoch, to design a suitable temporary building. He proposed a scheme for a structure in brick, of provisional character to match Parliament House. Incorporated with it were to be the Post Office and Telephone Exchange.

The design was to be on the basis of units 21 feet by 14 feet, so that, at a later time, the structure could be used as offices for Members of Parliament, somewhat similar to the provisions for that purpose in Washington, USA. This would, Murdoch said, involve two such buildings, one on each side of Parliament House. This scheme was favoured by the Minister, and had been referred for investigation by the Parliamentary Public Works Committee.

So much for the problems. Sir Brudenell thanked me for my information and I withdrew. He duly appeared before the Public Works Committee, and, to my astonishment, said, 'On the data that is already in my possession, my view is that a small general secretariat could be most economically and efficiently conducted. I cannot see that there is any insuperable difficulty in the way of drawing up a definite scheme.'

The construction of the first Secretariat Building (with Post Office and Telephone Exchange) estimated to cost £39,000, was put actively in hand and completed early in 1926.

With the usual lack of consistency of policy in Canberra affairs, the Government decided to abandon the secretariat scheme, as previously approved. In November 1925, it requested the Federal Capital Commission, then in control, to provide for the permanent accommodation of most departments, involving about 1,250 officers, at Canberra by June 1927.

To meet this change, the Commission began to build the second Secretariat Building (so-called), now known as Commonwealth Offices (West Block). The name of the first Secretariat Building was changed to Commonwealth Offices (East Block).

CHEQUERED HISTORY

The first administration building was erected on the balancing site near King's Avenue. The scheme developed by the Federal Capital Advisory Committee, and approved in 1921, did not include any building of a monumental character. The proposals provided for provisional structures located on open land clear of Griffin's central layout for the permanent buildings. They were to accommodate the administrative departments, following the same economic considerations and policy under which a provisional Parliament House was decided upon.

As the result of pressure from the architectural profession, and its criticism of the failure to go ahead with the competition for the design of the permanent Parliament House, approval was given by Parliament to a suggestion of the Public Works Committee. This was that the accommodation for the public departments should be in the form of two buildings of permanent construction, and that a competition for their design be held. An earlier decision was that the next elected Parliament should meet at Canberra in a provisional Parliament House. This later direction that departments were to be housed in buildings of a permanent character, and subject to a public competition, requiring longer time to implement, posed a major difficulty for the Advisory Committee.

The Committee duly set about preparing details for the approved competition. It appeared to me that, in the circumstances, the sites for the two permanent buildings should be those detached from Griffin's co-ordinated central group about the main axis, in order not to prejudice the

freedom of architectural treatment, at some future time, of such main group. This view was adopted by the Committee, and the two detached sites were officially approved.

Much more research was involved in preparing for a permanent, instead of a provisional, building project. But with the usual warm co-operation of the Commonwealth Chief architect, Mr J .S. Murdoch, who, with Sir John Sulman and Professor Leslie Wilkinson, was to be one of the adjudicators, we invited competitive designs on 24 May 1924, throughout Australia.

Ninety-four entries were received, and the winning design was that of the distinguished Sydney architect, George Sydney Jones. The conditions provided for the winner to be appointed as architect for the first building, to be erected on the eastern site, the Commonwealth having the right to use the design itself when required for the balancing building on the western side of the axis. Mr Sydney Jones proposed to prepare working drawings for this large building, based upon his designs, but unfortunately he died before much progress had been made.

The Federal Capital Commission, which meantime had taken control, then arranged for another architect, acting as a kind of professional executor of Sydney Jones, to take over the task of completing the plans and supervising the construction of the building, in the interests of Mr Jones' family. To achieve expedition, it was arranged that one contract should be let for the heavy concrete foundations, which were to be put in while the more detailed drawings for the superstructure were in course of preparation. A contract for the foundation work was let and this section of the project was started in October 1927, and was reported by the architect as ready for final inspection on 30 April 1928.

Owing to various developments which will be explained in my next article, the Government, at this stage, directed that the further construction of the building be postponed.

LOOKING INTO FOUNDATIONS

Financial stringency in 1928 was one of the reasons for the Government's direction to postpone the erection of the superstructure of the first permanent administrative building in Canberra after the contract for its foundations had been reported by the architect as complete. The discovery that the specified amount of cement had not been used by the contractor in the foundations was another factor. Instead of the mixture comprising one part of cement to six parts of aggregate, the proportion was found to be one part to nine. Federal Capital Commission officers found this out in a check of the weight of cement actually taken to the job – 1,094 tons instead of 1,725 tons. This was confirmed by actual tests of the concrete in position.

The architect said he had given approval to change the mix he had specified in the contract approved by the Commission. This important change he had not discussed with his clients. The Commission deducted about £4,000 from payments due to the contractors, and in its anxiety over the situation, it set up a special expert committee to make a report on the foundations. This committee advised that, although the cement content as specified had been reduced, and the concrete was, therefore, not as strong or as uniform as should have been expected, it was amply strong to carry the building contemplated.

Commonwealth law authorities expressed the opinion that there was not evidence sufficient to sustain an action against anyone concerned. At this stage we negotiated an agreement with the executors of George Sydney Jones, the winner of the competition, under which for a payment they transferred all their rights and property in the plans to the Federal Capital Commission. This enabled the work of construction to be resumed at a future date without any embarrassment from the architectural standpoint.

In the mid-thirties, approval was given to review the plans of the administrative building and the Chief Architect, E.H. Henderson, substituted a well-designed, simple facade for the more expensive classical treatment conceived by George Sydney Jones. Further tests were made as to the strength of the foundations, and these disclosed more weaknesses than had been previously evidenced. As a result, a special authority was granted to improve many of the piers, at a cost of £2,358.

Owing to the great need for better office accommodation, the new plans for building were proceeded with and there was a good chance of its completion being approved as well as the erection of its fellow structure on the west side of the city axes, but the outbreak of the Second World War prevented such development.

In 1943, the Minister for the Interior, Senator Collings, directed his architects to resume preparation of the plans for a building which without departing substantially from Sydney Jones' floor layout, would be enlarged to five floors, with a cafeteria and a full basement. The Public Works Committee took evidence on this proposal in 1947, and the scheme, as revised, was approved. It involved taking out the whole of the much-disputed foundations, in order to put the full basement treatment – decided upon to provide storage, garage accommodation, and, possibly, protection from bombings. The huge masses of concrete from the original foundations were stacked on a neighbouring area and, for several years, gave the casual impression of a new Stonehenge.

The fine building that now stands on the eastern side was not completed until 1955, the project presenting 30 years' unique history of changing policy, with frustration constantly for those most concerned.

'CUCKOO IN NEST' FOR 38 YEARS

Bureau of Census Displaces the National Library

The removal of the Bureau of Census and Statistics to the new Treasury Building [at the time of writing being completed near Commonwealth Avenue] brings to mind interesting circumstances under which it secured its accommodation in the West Block Offices in 1928.

On 28 November 1925, the Federal Capital Commission, which had assumed control of the Territory and its development on 1 January 1925, was informed by the Government that it had found it undesirable to proceed with the original secretariat scheme (whereby a secretariat or nucleus of each department would be temporarily established at Canberra, sufficient to assist the minister with parliamentary work and provide a link between that work and the general

administration of the department in Melbourne), and it was anxious that transfers of departments to the capital be made, as far as possible, on a permanent arrangement.

To meet this request, involving much more office – as well as residential – accommodation, and also to make provision for housing the National Library, the Commission proposed that the second office block, to balance East Block, be immediately provided. Approval was duly given to this suggestion and West Block Offices were created accordingly.

In this building it was decided to house the National Library in the northern wing, the remainder of the block being allotted to the departments of the Prime Minister, Home Affairs, Treasury, the Attorney-General, and the Official Secretary of the Governor-General. This disposition was made by 31 December 1927, the departments concerned being duly transferred from Melbourne.

At that stage, some important and more or less self-contained branches of the public service, such as the Electoral Office, the Public Service Board, the Superannuation Fund Management Board, the Bureau of Census and Statistics, and the Pensions and Maternity Allowances Branch had been left in Melbourne, their removal being projected for a much later period. In April 1928, however, the Government decided that they should be transferred to Canberra as soon as practicable, so arrangements were made to house them in rented accommodation in Sydney and Melbourne Buildings, then erected by private enterprise at City.

The northern section of West Block Offices had been specially built to meet the requirements of the National Library, then emerging more definitely, but notwithstanding this preparation, it was not destined to remain for long in its quarters in West Block. Late in 1928 it was moved out to make way for the Bureau of Census and Statistics, which for some reason the Government wished to have close to the Treasury – to which it had been officially attached – instead of occupying rented offices at City, as arranged.

It became, therefore, a kind of ‘cuckoo in the nest’, for about 38 years, while the National Library, incontinently pushed out of its premises, became a species of ‘poor relation’, suffering more discomfort, perhaps, over a longer period, than any other Commonwealth instrumentality in Canberra. It had to provide for its ever-growing collections and its dedicated purpose to give a modern library service to students, public departments, and to the general public, and to do all this in various temporary structures of unsuitable character. It is true that it succeeded in having a small section of a permanent building erected for its own purposes in King’s Avenue, Barton, opened in 1936. It is noteworthy that the foundation stone of this building was laid by the Poet Laureate, John Masefield, but no further units were built.

By its privations, and the excellent and imaginative services that it has provided for Australia and its capital city, the Commonwealth National Library may surely be regarded as having faithfully and fully earned its prospective enjoyment of the well-conceived and magnificent home that, at long last, will soon be ready for its occupation,⁵⁰ under conditions probably superior to those now obtaining in the case of its erstwhile usurper, the Bureau of Census and Statistics.

THE MEMBERS' HOSTEL

Hotel Canberra

In an early conference with the Federal Capital Advisory Committee in 1921 the Minister for Works and Railways, Sir Littleton Groom, raised the question of living accommodation for Members of Parliament in Canberra, and proposed that a suitable hostel be provided for them. He was anxious that this should be built as soon as possible so that it might be available for his much-advocated conference on constitutional amendment – a scheme which, however, did not eventuate. The Advisory Committee duly included in its first general report provision for a hostel and also ten residences for Members of Parliament and their families.

A site for the hostel was selected on the west side of Commonwealth Avenue, reasonably convenient to that for the provisional Parliament House, and I was asked to explain the proposal to the Commonwealth Architect, Mr J .S. Murdoch, in Melbourne, and convey the Committee's request for preparation of a plan for a hostel to accommodate 200 people, and 'to be in conformity with the general design of Canberra as a garden city'.

It was my custom, for years, to have lunch in Fitzroy Gardens, opposite our Melbourne offices, with a group of which Murdoch was a member. At lunch, about a week after my discussion with him about the hostel, he drew from his pocket an ordinary-sized envelope, on the back of which he had sketched in pencil a layout plan for the building. It was quite unusual, providing for a central portion for administration, dining and recreative facilities, having grouped around it ten separate pavilions, five on each side. These contained bedrooms and private apartments, and connected with the central building by covered ways, enclosing garden courts, thereby emphasising the 'garden-city' elements in a rather charming manner. He explained how the arrangement allowed each bedroom or suite to have a clear and pleasant view of a proposed larger garden surrounding the whole hostel.

He asked, 'Do you think they [my committee] would like it?' I replied that I thought they would, an opinion that proved to be correct when the sketch plans, properly set out, were supplied. The Committee recommended that the hostel be built, at an estimated cost of £120,000, and the scheme was referred, as required, for examination by the Parliamentary Public Works Committee.

It endorsed the general proposal, but suggested that, in the first instance, accommodation be provided for 100 guests only, in five pavilions, On 29 July 1922, Parliament adopted the report, and the work was immediately put in hand.

During the term of the contract, the Advisory Committee became convinced that the remaining five pavilions, on the southern side, would be required; the Government agreed, and the hostel contract was extended to provide for 200 guests, as originally planned. The central and northern portions of the hostel were opened for business on 10 December 1924, and were filled by those attending the first sale of leases, two days later, on 12 December – a notable day in Canberra's history.

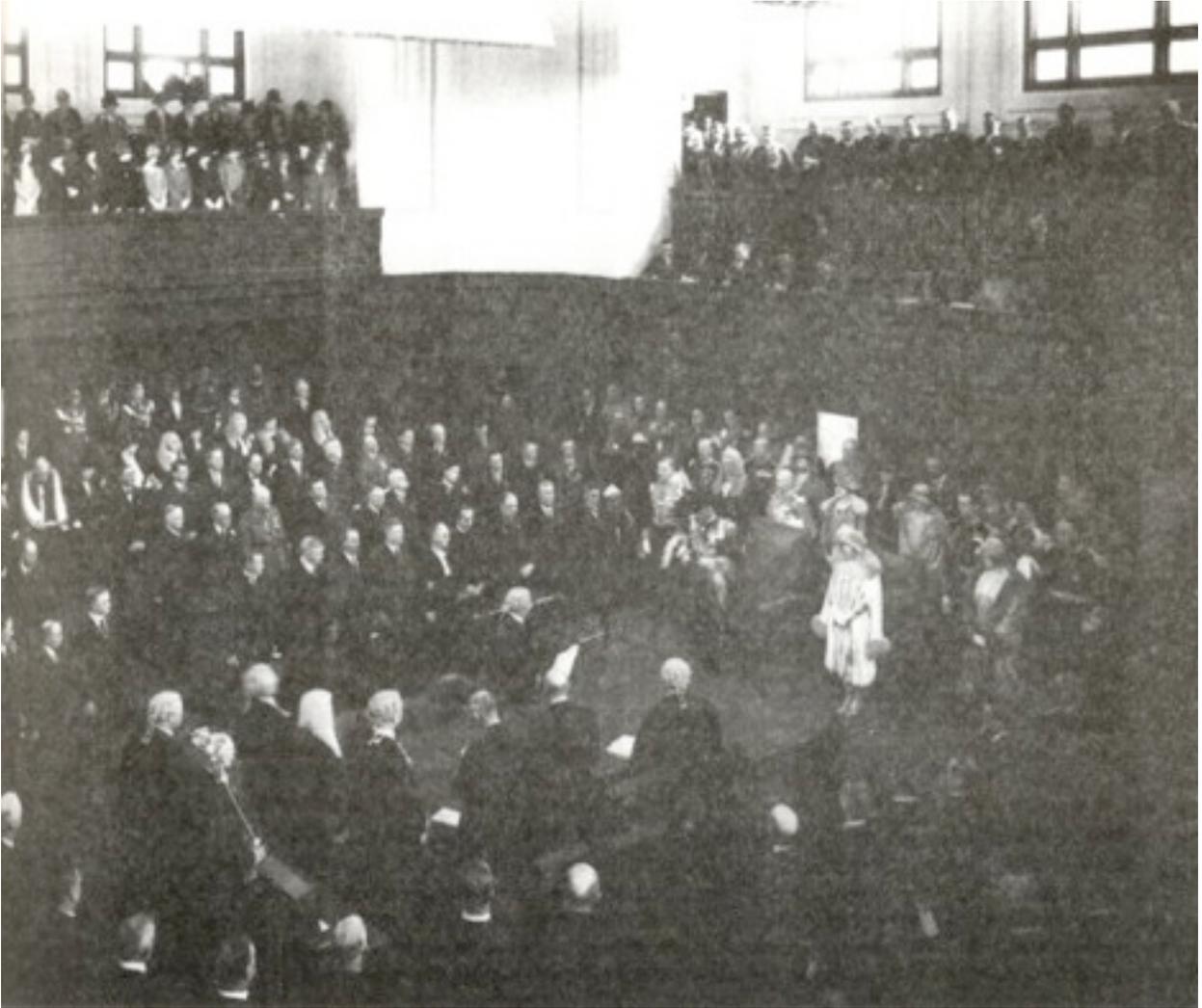
Meanwhile on 3 November 1924, the Federal Capital Commission had been appointed to assume control of the Territory as from 1 January 1925. It did not like the designation 'hostel', so it immediately changed the name to 'Hotel Canberra'. Furthermore, it soon became evident that, owing to the short and indeterminate character of parliamentary sessions, it would be quite uneconomic to reserve the hotel exclusively for Members of Parliament. So it became a public residential hotel – not quite normal, at first, as it had no liquor licence. This was added, however, at the end of 1925 – the termination of 18 years of 'no licence' policy for the Territory.

Members of Parliament had a priority in booking, but all of them did not choose to live at the Hotel Canberra, some preferring the Hotel Wellington, and a large number the Hotel Kurrajong (hostel no. 2) which catered especially for their requirements, and became the abode of two Prime Ministers – Curtin and Chifley.



Group of workmen at the provisional Parliament House, early 1927.

The Opening of Parliament House, 1927



The opening of Parliament House in Canberra by the Duke of York, 9 May 1927.

CANBERRA EXPANDS FOR ROYAL VISIT

Some of the diverse operations of the Federal Capital Commission after taking up its statutory responsibility for control and development in 1925 have been recounted in this series.

Keen interest was centred, naturally, on its most important task – the completion of the details involved in the inauguration of the first meeting of the Parliament at Canberra, and the official opening, by the Duke and Duchess of York, of Parliament House, on 9 May 1927. This date was the 26th anniversary of the occasion when the Duke's father, then himself Duke of York, performed the opening ceremony of the first Commonwealth Parliament, in the Exhibition Building in Melbourne in 1901.

After it had analysed the approved development programme for the city, prepared by the Sulman Advisory Committee in 1921, the new commission took immediate action to accelerate engineering and building activities, bringing in outside architects to supplement the efforts of its own staff and that of the Department of Works and Railways.

It was during this period that lessees were beginning to build on their commercial blocks at Kingston, City and Manuka, and on many residential sites. At that stage 434 sites, of a capital value of £516,628, had been leased under the provisions of the City Area Leases Ordinance. This development greatly increased the demand for labour and materials, but good progress was being made nevertheless.

By the early months of 1927 a fair showing was evident on the Canberra plain. Under the Commission's own programme, Parliament House was completed and furnished, as were also the East Block offices, the post office and the telephone exchange. A large portion of West Block offices also made an impressive sight.

The remodelling and furnishing of Yarralumla House, as provisional residence for the Governor-General and the royal visitors for their brief stay, were finished in April, and the Prime Minister's residence designed by Oakley and Parkes of Melbourne, and supervised by them, was occupied early in May.

The Hotel Canberra, with its early well-developed gardens, and the growing plantation of Commonwealth Avenue, presented an attractive picture. The Hotel Kurrajong was occupied, and hotels Ainslie, Wellington and Acton were handed over for use. Beauchamp and Brassey guest houses were almost complete.

The Commission's housing programme comprised 550 residences, of which about half were completed. Evidence of development also showed with private enterprise at Forrest, Telopea Park, Kingston, Acton, Westridge, Braddon, Reid and Ainslie. The extensive tree-planting of roads and park areas provided pleasing punctuation in the wide landscape.

On the physical side, therefore, despite some difficult problems, the Commission was satisfied, early in 1927, that things would be in reasonable readiness for the great occasion of the royal visit and the official opening ceremony.

The occasion, however, demanded extensive organisation of resources at the functional level, and in compliance with traditional procedure and protocol. As a basis for this task, the Chief Commissioner had written to the Minister and asked for the Government's programme and the details to which the Commission's activities had to be adjusted.

Time went on and no reply had been received when, one morning, Sir John Butters was discussing this matter with me. He remarked, 'I don't think the blighters have any programme, and are waiting for someone to give them a lead. We can probably do that as well as anyone else. Well, let's have a go at a draft programme.'

This we did, and the draft duly went off to the Minister in Melbourne. It secured a reasonably prompt response, and the approved programme, after allowing for the procedural adjustments, turned out to be subsequently in accord with Sir John's draft suggestions.

A special royal visit section was set up within the Commission's organisation under the control of Mr H.R. Waterman, assistant secretary of the Commission. With him were associated eleven committees, upon which senior officers of the Parliament and of Commonwealth departments served with commission officers. These committees dealt with such phases as Parliament House arrangements, transport, accommodation, stands and decorations, military arrangements and public entertainment.

The armed services were to play an important, spectacular part at the opening ceremony and the review. The Minister for Defence nominated a distinguished soldier, Brigadier General C.H. Brand, to organise their activities, and he made several visits in the preliminary stages to Canberra. After one of these conferences with us, I had a visit from Brigadier Heritage, Commandant of the Royal Military College, Duntroon, who came into my room excitedly with the query, 'What's old "horse-face" been doing up here?'

At my look of bewilderment, he said, 'You know "horse-face" Brand. What's he butting in for?'

I explained that General Brand had been selected by the Minister for Defence for liaison with us over royal visit matters and that any further information might, perhaps, be obtained from his department.

Representation of the armed forces was so arranged by General Brand to allow all units in the Commonwealth to have some participation, with their colours. More than 2,000 men took part. From the navy there were 400 sailors, with a detachment also from HMS *Renown*, the royal couple's vessel; 40 cadet midshipmen from the Royal Naval College, and there were other naval cadets from many centres. Army units came from the Royal Military College, the Royal Australian Garrison Artillery, the Royal Australian Engineers, the 7th Light Horse Regiment (escort to the royal party), Royal Australian Field Artillery (whose two batteries fired the gun salutes), and 1,200 representatives of the Citizen Forces. The RAAF strength was 380 men and 15 aeroplanes.

All the arrangements for these services proceeded without a hitch, thanks to General Brand's careful organisation and selection of capable and experienced commanders to carry out the programme with fine precision.

Brig-General Brand was a man of sound practical wisdom. After his retirement from the Army he became a Senator, and later, as chairman of the Public Works Committee, he was ex officio also a member of the Federal Capital Planning and Development Committee, in whose activities, on behalf of Canberra, I found him a keen and capable colleague.

PARLIAMENT'S FIRST SESSION WAS A COLOURFUL OCCASION

As the time drew near for the royal official opening of Parliament House, and Parliament's first Session, on 9 May 1927, activity in Federal Capital Commission circles, as well as in the newly-established commercial areas, reached almost fever-heat.

Apart from the 2,000 or more servicemen, there were many people involved in catering, transport, and all manner of other services. Visitors began to arrive in large numbers, filling up extensive car parks, and, in many cases, staying with Canberra residents who had invited their relatives to attend the historic celebrations at the capital.

There was much shopping to provide for all the needs of the visitors, as well as to obtain clothes and accessories for the occasion.

The issue of official invitations provided us with difficult problems, some of which had to be settled at the highest level. The small size of the Senate Chamber, where, according to custom, the opening of the parliamentary session had to take place, necessitated a severe restriction of invitations to the ceremony. In addition to the royal party, the Governor-General and his suite, Governors of the States, representatives of parliaments of several dominions, foreign consuls-general (there was no representation in Australia at ambassadorial level), the Prime Minister and Cabinet, members and officers of Parliament and the Press, there were 500 guests specially invited by the Government. For this distinguished company, its reception, accommodation and transport to and from residences, and functions, the Commission had made precise arrangements. This portion of the heavy programme was most efficiently carried through without any serious hitch by Commission employees and many others brought from Sydney and Melbourne, with a large number of first-class vehicles. Crossley cars were used for the royal party, and were driven by Air Force drivers.

In order to broaden the public's part in this historic function, the main proceedings were divided into two parts, the outside ceremony of Opening the Building, followed by the Opening of the Parliament in the Senate Chamber. Two large stands were erected at right angles to the Parliament House frontage, to accommodate 6,000 people. Sections were reserved for visitors from the various States, and for local residents, proportional to their respective populations, except of course a more generous allotment for those living in the Territory.

Canberra, even in those days, presented a colourful picture. All routes of approach to Parliament House were decorated by masts and streamers, and the House itself was gay with

large flags and floral decorations. All stands, bright with bunting, bore the Duke's colours (scarlet and gold), and all hotels, guest houses and official buildings were well beflagged.

Their Royal Highnesses, the Duke and Duchess of York, arrived in Canberra by train on 7 May, and were met at the new railway station, decorated by Venetian masts and streamers, by the Governor-General, Lord Stonehaven, the Prime Minister, Mr Bruce, and the Chief Commissioner, Sir John Butters. They proceeded to Government House at Yarralumla, where they lived during their stay. The weather was cold and showery, causing apprehension to all concerned in the proceedings for Monday, 9 May.

Rehearsals for the principal events had taken place to ensure smoothness and confidence for those taking responsible parts. Over the weekend the Duke was also rehearsed. The Duke was very co-operative but reserved in manner. On the other hand, the Duchess was more sociable, and her friendly attitude and personal charm immediately endeared her to all those who met her. This established that universal and lasting affection for her that has been so well evidenced during her subsequent visits to Australia as the Queen Mother.

Fortunately, the vital morning of 9 May dawned sunny – a happy augury for the new capital embarking upon its dedicated purpose. The area in front of Parliament House presented a remarkable scene. People arrived in crowds – the Press estimate was between 35,000 and 40,000 – the public watched with interest the arrival of troops and officials, and later, the more fortunate filled the stands and seating nearer to the House. Military bands began to play at 9 a.m. and enlivened the waiting period until 10.30 a.m. when their Royal Highnesses arrived in the traditional open horse-drawn carriage. They were received at Parliament House steps with a royal salute and then were greeted by the Governor-General and Lady Stonehaven, and the Prime Minister and Mrs Bruce. His Royal Highness, accompanied by the several chiefs of staff, inspected the guards of honour, provided by the Navy, Army and Air Force midshipmen from the Naval College, and the Corps of Staff Cadets from Duntroon.

Mounting the steps, their Royal Highnesses were received by the President of the Senate and the Speaker. Then the National Anthem was sung by the great Australian soprano, Dame Nellie Melba. The temperamental artist objected to singing into a microphone. But we arranged receivers in the large tassels of the canopy decorations, so, unobserved by her, suitable amplification of her singing was secured. Led by the Canberra Philharmonic Society, the whole assemblage repeated the anthem, after which the Prime Minister publicly invited His Royal Highness to open Parliament House, handing him the key. Later a golden replica was presented to him as a souvenir of the occasion.

Unlocking the massive front door, the Duke declared the building duly 'opened'. This was followed by a brief united religious service, conducted by the heads of the Anglican, Presbyterian and Methodist denominations. After entering the building, and a brief rest in the library, the Duke entered King's Hall, and unveiled a statue of His Majesty King George V – his father. The statue was the work of Australian sculptor, Sir Bertram Mackennal, and was a duplicate of a similar statue that the sculptor had provided for the Viceroy's palace at India's capital, New Delhi.

At 11.20 a.m. the invited guests took their seats in the Senate Chamber with the Senators, while members met in the House of Representatives. Then, as customary, the President sent a message to the Speaker, inviting the members to the Senate. They arrived led by the Sergeant of Arms with the Mace. Meanwhile the Senate Usher of the Black Rod bore a message from the President to the royal and vice-regal party to come to the Senate Chamber, to which he led them in procession.

When all were seated, the Clerk of the Senate received from the Governor-General and read His Majesty's Commission, appointing the Duke of York to act for him in the opening ceremonies. His Royal Highness then rose and read the message from His Majesty the King, marking the importance of the occasion, and expressing his good wishes to the people of the Commonwealth and hopes for their progress and prosperity. The language of the message sounds archaic today, when such phrases as 'another chapter in our Empire story' and 'a page glorious for Australia and the whole Empire' need adjustment to the changes of the times.

As the King's message concluded, a fanfare of trumpets from the main entrance of Parliament House was played by trumpeters from the royal vessel, HMS *Renown*, and a 21-gun salute was fired.

The proceedings within Parliament House were amplified and broadcast, by arrangements with the Postmaster-General's Department and Australian Films Ltd, and were relayed successfully throughout Australia.

For the entertainment of the outside public, members of the New South Wales Mounted Police performed an interesting programme. Bands also contributed musical items. Very extensive police control was provided throughout the whole of the royal visit, some hundreds of members of the New South Wales Constabulary being present by agreement with the Commissioner, Mr James Mitchell. Representative quotas were provided from the police forces of the various States, in accordance with a policy to give as wide a Commonwealth character to the occasion as possible.

The Federal Capital Commission prepared a souvenir booklet on Canberra. A copy bound in leather, with the Commission's colours, blue and gold, was presented to each of the 520 special guests as a memento of the historic event they were privileged to witness.

THE MAHARAJAH UPSETS THE EARL

One of the many responsibilities that fell to my lot on the occasion of the opening of Parliament House, on 9 May 1927, was to maintain contact with a number of officers of the Federal Capital Commission who were acting as ushers, where required, and giving assistance and information to the invited guests. I arranged that one of these ushers would always be within my sight for any emergency tasks.

At the conclusion of the opening ceremony in the Senate Chamber, at midday, the Duke of York held an investiture in the Senate club room, where a small dais had been provided for the royal party. Those who were to receive honours formed a procession which moved slowly past the dais where the Duke officiated. In addition to those whose honour was being granted for services

in connection with the establishment and opening of the capital, such as the Prime Minister (Companion of Honour), the President and Leader of the Senate, the Chief Commissioner (Knight Bachelors), and several senior Commission officers, as well as some of the Department of Works and Railways, there were awards to lord mayors of certain capital cities, and to others whose honours had been bestowed but not actually received.

While standing in this long queue, I noticed an Indian maharajah in the corridor, passing and re-passing the door of the club room and anxiously looking in, so I signalled to one of my ushers to go and ask him if he required any help. The maharajah, however, shook his head.

A few moments afterwards, the Duke and the royal party, emerging from an internal room, took their places on the dais. Just as the Prime Minister, Mr S.M. Bruce, as the first recipient, was about to move forward there was an unscheduled interruption, for the maharajah, hurriedly entering the room, and carrying a large jewelled chain, went up to the Duke with the apparent object of placing the chain on his shoulders. The Earl of Cavan, leader of the Duke's suite, quickly intervened, as violence to the Duke's person might conceivably have been involved.

After some whispered explanations and confusion, the Duke, the Earl of Cavan and the maharajah withdrew to the inner room and returned shortly afterwards, the Duke wearing the proffered gold chain – a gift from the Indian delegation evidently unversed in the requirements of protocol – the maharajah and another colleague, who had somehow materialised, looking most happy at having accomplished their impromptu task. After this, the first investiture to be held at the seat of government continued.

The Chief Commissioner, Sir John Butters, received the accolade as Knight Bachelor and there were a number of officers whose service to the new capital were recognised by royal awards. They included Colonel P.T. Owen, CBE, previously Director-General of Works, later Chief Engineer of the Commission; the Commonwealth Chief Architect, and designer of Parliament House, J.S. Murdoch, CMG; the secretary of the Federal Capital Commission, C.S. Daley, OBE; the Chief Engineer of the Commonwealth Works Department, Thomas Hill, OBE; the architect of the Capital Commission, H.M. Rolland, OBE; and the award of MBE was made to W.E. Potts, the Assistant Chief Engineer, Federal Capital Commission, J.H.G. Connell, principal civil engineer, Commonwealth Works Department, Colonel J.T.H. Goodwin, formerly Chief Lands Officer of the Commission, T.C.G. Weston, Canberra's first superintendent of parks and gardens, and F. Priddle, Superintendent of Construction, Parliament House. H.R. Waterman was awarded the MVO for his excellent work as secretary of the Canberra royal visit section.

The Federal Capital Commission was very sensible of this acknowledgement by the Duke of the work, not only of its chairman and senior officers, and of those of the Department of Works and Railways who had given valuable service over a very long period to the federal capital project, but also of its whole organisation, throughout which there had been a keen sense of devotion to any historic and difficult assignment.

During the investiture, most of the invited guests inspected the new building and then assembled in the luncheon room and took their seats as allotted by the Prime Minister's Department. The royal party, vice-regal groups and lieutenant governors and their wives formed a procession from the corridors of the Senate to the official luncheon. Their royal highnesses were conducted by the Prime Minister and Mrs Bruce. The atmosphere was, naturally, less formal and somewhat of a relief from the official tension of the ceremony in the Senate chamber. The only 'toast' was that of His Majesty King George V.

The important afternoon function was the review, which was held in the large open area west of Hotel Kurrajong. At that time this area formed a unit containing no plantations, roads or structures as it does today.

After the official luncheon, the Duke and the Governor-General, Lord Stonehaven, changed into riding kit and proceeded on their mounts to the saluting base, on the west and higher side of the area, where all the invited guests were seated.

The second review in Canberra's history was more impressive than the first, held with mounted troops on 12 March 1913, when the city received its name, and the salute was taken by the Governor-General, Lord Denman. The salute at the 1927 review was being taken by a member of the royal family, a larger number of troops were to take part, and they were representative of all units of the armed forces of the Commonwealth, whose colours, flying in the afternoon sun, gave brilliancy and gaiety to the scene.

In a position of honour were the local returned soldiers of the AIF, and some ex-South African veterans; several hundred in all led the parade. A naval unit from HMS *Renown* appeared, together with five bands to provide the march music. The well-trained Navy, Army and Air Force units and cavalry detachments, comprising altogether over 2,000 troops, passed the Duke with splendid bearing and order, while formations of the Air Force flew overhead. It was a brilliant and inspiring spectacle, the organisation of which was carried through smoothly in the best tradition.

The large gathering included, in addition to the 500 special guests, people from the whole surrounding district, as well as from State capitals and other more distant parts of the Commonwealth. There was one tragic incident, however, when one of the aircraft crashed during the manoeuvres, causing the death of Flying Officer Ewen.

As a compliment to the Duke, and as permanent memorial of the historic occasion, the area in which the review was held was later named York Park by the Federal Capital Commission.

NOVEL CHANGE FOR THE SENATE

Each of the Canberra functions on 9 May 1927, in which their royal highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York appeared had its distinctive and interesting features, but there will be some who will have a vivid memory of the brilliant evening reception held at Parliament House by the Ministers of State.

They were received in King's Hall by the Prime Minister and Mrs Bruce. Overseas representatives delivered messages of goodwill and greeting from their respective governments, some of them reading illuminated scrolls which they afterwards handed to the Prime Minister. In contrast to the scenes of the morning the guests – the men in uniforms or white tie and tails, and many in national dress with their ladies – were much freer to move about, gather in friendly groups, or greet visitors from other lands. The entertainment provided included a concert in the Senate Chamber and a film showing in one of the party rooms.

The arrangements for the concert had been another of my responsibilities. With the co-operation of J.C. Williamson Theatres Ltd, and Farmer and Co. Ltd (then operators of broadcasting station 2FC), a programme was devised featuring three vocalists from Sydney – Beryl Walkley, Alfred O'Shea and another – and the local Stromberra Sextet, led by Mr W.P. Banfield, violinist of Stromlo, and including Miss Shamley, violin, Mrs A.D. Campbell, cello, Professor Haydon, viola, Mr Duffield, bass, and myself as pianist. The concert programme was divided into two parts so that each artist or group would appear twice and the whole was to be broadcast over land-line from Sydney on 2FC, from 9.30 p.m. Mr Ewart Chapple was the announcer and also accompanist for the three visiting artists.

For the Commission I had purchased several grand pianos and one of these was brought to the Senate chamber and placed on the dais where, in the morning, the Duke of York had read the King's message. It was a novelty – never since repeated – to see the sedate Senate chamber transformed into a concert hall.

As we were about to begin the concert, which had been announced over the air, a message came asking that it be postponed for half an hour, as the Prime Minister had extended the reception function in King's Hall to enable the reading of the greetings by overseas representatives. This posed a problem as we were already on the air, so I helped the announcer, who had to keep going, by dodging into the hall every few minutes and bringing him items of interest from the reception.

This unexpected delay reduced the broadcasting time for the concert, so I told the artists that we would do the first half of the programme only. The Stromberra Sextet duly opened with our instrumental group of pieces, Miss Walkley sang her first bracket of songs, and then Alfred O'Shea, after contributing his first part items, went on deliberately and sang also the numbers he had listed for the discarded part II – a truly temperamental tenor. This want of courtesy on the part of O'Shea consumed the available time, to the discomfiture of the final performer, whose items did not go to air.

A splendid supper was provided for the official guests in the newly completed refreshment rooms of Parliament House and in many of the other rooms incidental refreshments were available. As the parliamentary refreshment room staff had not yet assumed their responsibilities in Canberra, the catering for the reception and the official luncheon was performed by the Commissariat Department of the Federal Commission, led by its experienced superintendent, Mr W.F. Farrow. Over the royal visit period, Mr Farrow's burdens were enormously increased. In addition to the Hotel Canberra and other residential establishments already in use, he had to

provide for the opening and conduct of Hotel Kurrajong, Hotel Acton, Hotel Ainslie, Hotel Wellington and Beauchamp House, to accommodate the official guests, and the many public servants and temporary employees concerned in the many activities connected with the official guests. Mr Farrow was required also to supply much catering for incidental occasions, such as the RS&SILA [Returned Soldiers and Sailors Imperial League of Australia, now the RSL] reception for the Duke, and dances and entertainments at the hotels. This large programme was well and punctually carried out, despite the slender nature of local resources at the time, and reflected due credit upon Mr Farrow and his Commissariat Department.

On the morning of 10 May, the Duke and Duchess held a public reception on the steps of Parliament House, 'public entree without a card or restriction', according to the programme. Members of the public were allowed to file past the royal couple, but acknowledgement had to be confined to a salute, a smile or curtsy. One of the highlights of this occasion was provided by Mr H. Marshall, the private secretary of the Chief Commissioner, whose wife had recently presented him with twin boys. He fashioned a broad tray, slung it from his shoulders and, mounting the twins securely upon it, walked proudly past the royal pair, to their obvious interest and amusement, as well as that of the bystanders. The incident received wide publicity, one Press report declaring 'it was a great sight to see Pa "marshalling" his family forces and bearing his precious burden of infantile innocence past the royal party, his twins crowing their hardest – winners all the way – and himself the hero of a glorious day'.

Their royal highnesses had another heavy programme for their final day at the capital. Before the public reception they had met the Federal Capital Commissioners and their ladies, and the Duke had planted a cedar in the Government House grounds. Her Royal Highness planted a cricket bat willow, brought from the Royal Botanic Gardens [Kew], England, and also an Australian white gum, both placed near the intersection of National Circuit and Canberra Avenue.

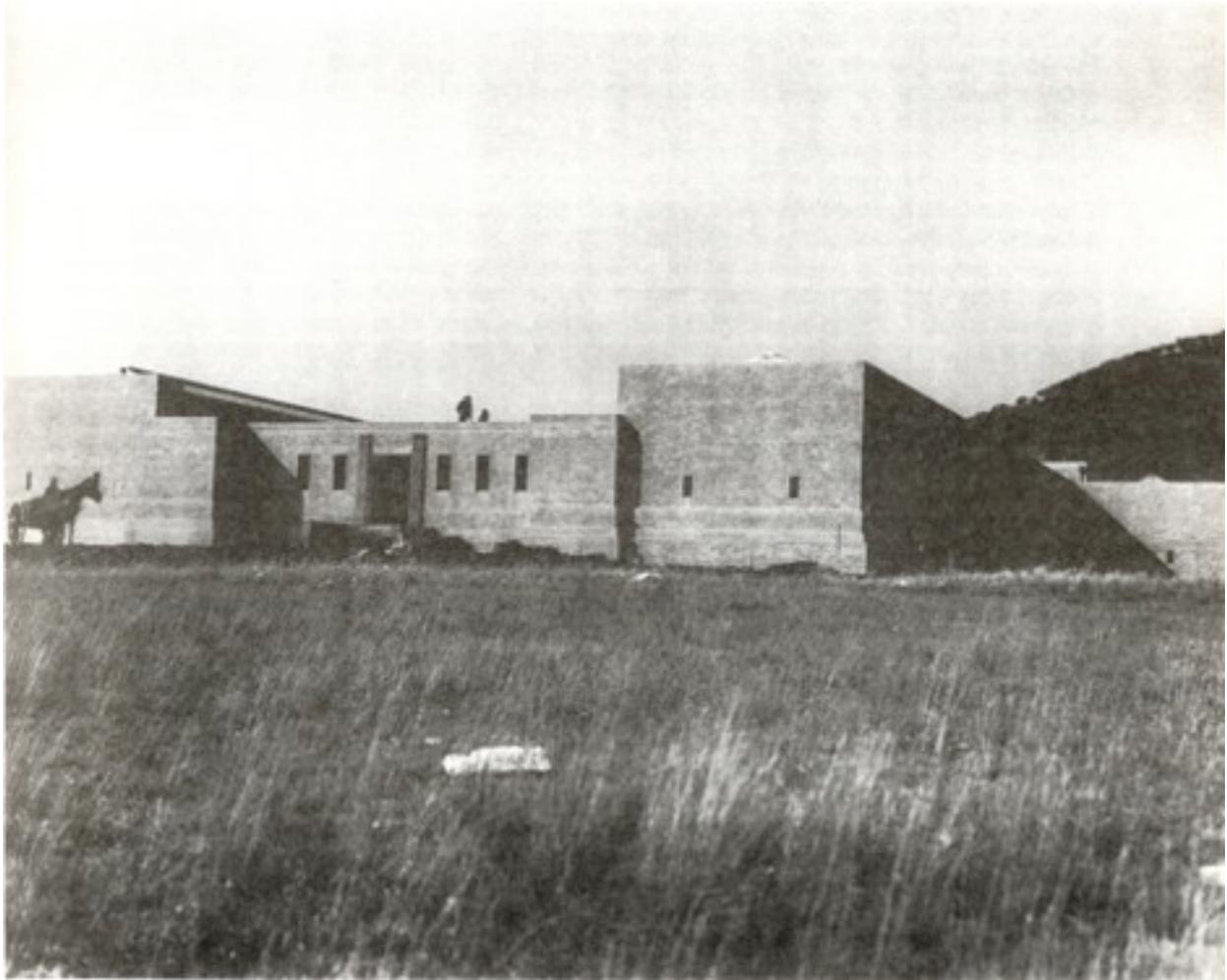
There was a tour of part of the city, after which the Duke, accompanied by General the Earl of Cavan, visited the Royal Military College, Duntroon, lunched with the Commandant, Brigadier F.B. Heritage and his staff in the officers' mess and, later, at a colourful ceremony on the parade ground, presented the King's Colour to the College.

Members of the RS&SILA met the Duke at tea at Parliament House later in the afternoon, and afterwards the Duke, as his last official act of the long programme, planted two trees, one an English oak from Kew Gardens, England, and a bunya-bunya pine, near the western end of King's Avenue. I have never seen more expedition at a planting ceremony. This was caused by the weather which, after being especially fine for the whole of the earlier functions, began to break, a heavy storm appearing with flashes and rolling thunder-claps. The Duke was obviously anxious to avoid being drenched to the skin, so he performed the plantings 'like lightning'.

After a private evening at Government House their Royal Highnesses left Canberra Railway Station for Melbourne at 9.30 p.m., thus ending what will be regarded in many respects as the most significant series of functions ever to be held at the national capital.

The Australian War Memorial

The Australian War Memorial under construction.



A WAR MEMORIAL IS BUILT

The Australian War Memorial occupies one of the finest building sites in the capital, and it is, perhaps, the dominating institutional feature of the city's landscape.

Late in 1921, the chairman of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee, before one of our meetings at The Residency in Acton, showed me a letter from Sir Littleton Groom, then Minister for Works and Railways, in which he asked the Committee to collaborate with representatives of the War Museum Committee in selecting a site and drafting conditions of an architectural competition for an Australian War Memorial, which the Government had decided to erect at Canberra. The memorial was to be unusual in character, as, in addition to its dedication to the memory of those who had fallen in the service of their country, it was to house the extensive collection of war relics, trophies, pictures and records that had been temporarily displayed in Sydney, and, later, in the Exhibition Building in Melbourne.

Sir John said to me: 'It won't be easy to find a suitable site for such an important institution, in view of the commitments of Griffin's plan'. This remark, of course, set us studying the plan, and, at our meeting, I suggested to the Committee that the site of Griffin's 'Casino' at the north-east terminal of the main city axis, be adopted. This, as I indicated, would provide an arrangement similar to that in the plan of New Delhi, which located the All-India War Memorial as a terminal feature of the proposed ceremonial avenue, then called 'King's Way', with the commanding structure of the Viceroy's Palace as the other terminal of the axis, at a distance of nearly two miles, approximately that between Griffin's 'Capitol' and his 'Casino', along the main city axis.

The Advisory Committee decided unanimously to recommend the Casino site, and we conferred with Dr Charles Bean, and Major (afterwards Lt Col.) Treloar of the War Museum, whose committee cordially endorsed the selection, which the Minister duly approved. The quadrant-shaped site comprised about 30 acres, and these adjoined the considerable extent of parklands of Mount Ainslie, against the dark tree-covered slopes of which a light-coloured stone building would stand in effective contrast.

Dr Bean, who was probably the 'father' of the whole museum and memorial project, had shown me a sketch he had made of a design for a building, recalling the Parthenon of Athens, but the policy provided for holding a competition, as promised to the architectural profession. Preparation of the conditions of the competition was entrusted to me, with assistance from the Commonwealth Chief Architect, J .S. Murdoch, and Major Treloar, who had the onerous task of compiling the complex schedule of requirements for displaying the wide range of exhibits. The central feature was to be a Hall of Memory, in which would be inscribed, in bronze, the names of the fallen.

The competition was confined to Australian architects, and the premiums amounted to £2,250. A limit was set to the cost of the project, and the successful architect was to be commissioned to supervise the execution of the work. The adjudicators were Sir Charles

Rosenthal (Chairman), Professor Lew [Leslie?] Wilkinson, and J.S. Murdoch (Chief Commonwealth Architect).

After some delay, on account of the incidence of other Canberra competitions, that for the War Memorial was finally launched. When the designs came in, the adjudicators were unable to make an award, as no entrant provided a satisfactory scheme within the cost prescribed. The adjudicators were faced with a dilemma. As a way out, they recommended that the architect who had submitted the most brilliant design and the one whose scheme came nearest to meeting the economic requirements be engaged in collaboration to produce a design that the Government might be able to accept. This was duly arranged, and after a great amount of difficulty, an acceptable scheme was evolved as the basis for a building contract.

It was one thing to suggest that two architects should work together but quite another to effect this harmoniously on personal grounds. One architect was young, imaginative and unconventional, the other was much older, conservative and conventional. We had almost asked oil and water to mix. In the final result the younger architect left the field mainly to his older colleague, who, incidentally, put forward the idea that the names of the fallen be written on bronze tablets in the cloisters, leaving the Hall of Memory as an inner, and more symbolic shrine.

In the completion of the Memorial, as it stands today, many devoted artists, sculptors, and technicians, as well as administrators, have played a significant part, and in concert they have produced a unique monument, worthy of its high purpose, and one that has evoked general approval and admiration.

After the 1939-45 war, the National Capital Planning and Development Committee, of which I was the executive member, recommended that the War Memorial building be extended laterally by two wings, to accommodate the increased collections that had accrued. In 1952 amendment of the Australian War Memorial Act permitted the memorial to feature exhibits and records of all wars in which Australian troops had participated.

BATTLEFIELD CARILLON

A Memorial to the Second World War

It is astonishing how, at times, official consideration of an important matter may go completely 'off the rails'. This is what actually happened to a proposal to provide a campanile and carillon as a separate memorial to the Second World War.

Whilst waiting one morning in 1950 for the Secretary of the Interior to come back to his room, I noticed with dismay a file on his table, the top paper of which was a communication to Gillett and Johnston, Bell Founders of Croydon, England, accepting their quotation for supplying a carillon for a campanile to be erected in the grounds of the Australian War Memorial. When the Secretary returned, I asked who had put forward this proposal, and why it had not been referred to me as adviser on Canberra's building and development. He said 'Oh, it's a scheme approved by Cabinet on the recommendation of the Battlefield Memorials Committee, a body set up, on the suggestion of the Imperial War Graves Commission, to report on the provision of

memorials at the principal Australian War Cemeteries'. He explained that the list of memorials suggested by the committee included one at the national capital.

I exclaimed 'Canberra is not a battlefield; at least not of that kind', and I indicated that the action taken was out of order, as any such proposal for the capital, after preliminary examination by the Planning Committee, should have been sent to the Canberra National Memorials Committee for investigation and report to Parliament, and this had not been done. Moreover, I expressed the opinion that a second memorial on the site was inappropriate, pointing out that Cabinet had already resolved that the scope of the existing War Memorial should be deemed to cover both world wars. I added, further, that the site was a bad one acoustically, on account of the prevailing winds, for a carillon.

The Secretary shrugged and said 'Well, it's too late now; the Government has approved and a contract has been let'. My rejoinder was 'I don't think so; we must somehow have it cancelled'.

Back in my own office, I telephoned Colonel Treloar, director of the War Memorial, who told me that Dr Bean and he, as well as the members of his board, had opposed the scheme for a second war memorial but were over-ruled, and believing that the Cabinet decision to provide one was irrevocable, they had secured a compromise by agreeing to the provision of the carillon as part of the existing War Memorial, instead of having it on another site in the city. My next move was to confer with the National Capital Planning and Development Committee, of which I was executive member, and these outside experts fully agreed with my views. We decided to send a strong report to the Minister for the Interior in opposition to the scheme, and he became concerned, especially as there had been a breach of the usual procedure, out of which political capital might be made.

As a way out, we suggested that he remit the matter formally for a report by our committee, requesting it to have a joint meeting with the War Memorial Board and the Battlefields Memorial Committee. I proposed that our chairman, Mr B.J. Waterhouse, OBE, should chair the meeting. The Minister adopted our advice, and we had a pretty tough meeting – a verbal battlefield indeed.

The joint meeting disclosed that considerable misunderstanding had occurred over the proposal, to which there was strong opposition on the part of the War Memorial Board, on the real merits of the situation. The National Capital Planning and Development Committee, therefore, reported to the Minister its opinion that the first necessity of the War Memorial was additional accommodation for the increased collections and records of the Second World War, and that priority should accordingly be given to the scheme for adding lateral wings to the present building. The Committee considered that a campanile and carillon should only be provided later, if they appeared to be justifiable as features of the building architecturally. It suggested that the contract already let for the carillon to Gillett and Johnston be cancelled, and that the firm be compensated for any actual loss sustained. The Committee's recommendations were approved by the Government.

An interesting sidelight to this affair was the visit to Canberra of Mr R.F.A. Housman, of the firm of Gillett and Johnston. He was a delightful old man, steeped in the art of bell-founding and its accessories, and ready to talk about them with great patience and courtesy. When he heard that I was an organist, he almost took me to his heart, and suggested that I should be the first to play the carillon. It grieved me, rather, to have to tell him that my influence was being thrown into the scale against the particular scheme for providing the carillon as a second war memorial. However, he accepted the Government's decision with good grace. In 1953, I visited him with my daughter at his home in Croydon (England), and he treated us splendidly, showing us over the works, and allowing us the freedom of his beautiful garden for almost a whole day. He had then retired, but still hoped to see a carillon, or some bell campanile, in our city, a subject upon which he told me that he had made suggestions to the Prime Minister. We may still see and hear a carillon in Canberra, but not as a war memorial,⁵¹

Some Memorable People



On Capital Hill. William M. Hughes, C.S. Daley and P.G. Stewart

UNPREDICTABLE BUT POPULAR KNIGHT

Sir John Harrison

It is the many odd ingredients that go to make up a personality, quite as much as, or even more than, evidence of unusual business capacity, that we retain mostly in memory. This was particularly the case with the second member of the Federal Capital Commission, Sir John Harrison, who had been a successful builder in Sydney. He was decidedly an individual, and generally unpredictable in his attitudes and decisions, but he displayed a normal good humour, for which he was very popular. As a knight, of course, he attracted attention, and his great height, and proportionate bulk, also promoted interest. For a large man, he was unusually alert and nervous in manner, invariably in a hurry.

His impetuosity was often embarrassing. One day, we had delivered to us a 14hp Armstrong-Siddeley sedan, for the use of the Second and Third Commissioners, and Sir John immediately took off the car for a test. He came back shortly afterwards and said ‘not bad, she does 70 alright, but won’t start easily in second’. This appalled Saunders, our principal chauffeur, who pointed out the warning pasted on the windscreen, not to drive the car above 20mph for the first 500 miles. As for starting in second – that was outrageous!

Sir John was a keen bridge player and one of my difficulties arose from his habit of ‘digging up a bridge four’ – composed generally of Commission officers who hesitated to refuse – to play late in the evenings and well into the early hours, with consequent ill-effect upon the next day’s efficiency.

Russian pool, at billiards, was another of his predilections, and, as a modest exponent of this field, I was frequently dragooned into a game, despite other demands, when Sir John, a large cigar constantly revolving around his mouth, would carry on like a schoolboy. He was a cigar addict, and it was not an irrelevant query when a lady asked me who was the gentleman ‘who “eats” cigars’.

There was a certain vanity in Sir John’s disposition. He was Deputy Chairman of the Commission, and, almost invariably, when Commissioner Gorman and he were in Canberra, and the Chief Commissioner, Sir John Butters, happened to be away, Sir John Harrison would call a Commission meeting. He would bounce into my room and say ‘Daley we’re having a Commission meeting this afternoon’. I would ask ‘What is to go on the agenda?’ and he would wave his hands and remark, ‘Oh, you can fix up an agenda for us’.

On one of these occasions, I repaired to Commissioner Gorman’s room to tell him of the meeting, and to ask him if he had anything to submit. In addition to the list of items for ratification that were always awaiting attention, Gorman, land and estate specialist, said, with a grin, ‘I’ve got a draft report here on land policy in regard to returned soldiers; we’ll try it out on him’.

Sir John assumed the chair with due decorum, we confirmed minutes, polished off formal items, and Gorman commenced reading his long survey of the rural situation. It was a hot and trying afternoon, and Harrison gradually lost interest. Finally, to the measured tones of

Gorman's recital Sir John slumped in his chair and went off into a doze, quite unnoticed by Gorman, who went on carefully reading until a decided snore caused him to look towards the chair. He ejaculated: 'The chairman's asleep; this is too much', and, getting up, he left the board room, to be occupied only by the somnolent chairman and myself.

After a few minutes, a further slump in his chair awoke Sir John, who, blinking and bewildered, asked 'Where's Gorman?' I said, 'He must have gone for his pen' and Sir John directed 'get him back'. Ringing for a messenger, I sent him to Gorman to say that we were now ready for him, and Clarence returned, winked at me, and finished reading his draft report, due consideration of which was, of course, postponed until the next Commission meeting.

In 1926 there were severe bushfires along the Murrumbidgee River, involving heavy costs to the Commission in money and man-hours. Sir John Harrison declared that wax matches were a menace and the cause of many fires. At his instance, the Commission made a by-law prohibiting their use or possession in the Territory, under penalty. Sir John sent a messenger to one of the stores to ask for wax matches, and, when a boy returned with a box, he took steps to have the storekeeper prosecuted and fined as an example.

One evening two Melbourne businessmen at the Hotel Canberra asked me to introduce them to Sir John Harrison, who, at the time, was dining. I sat talking to the visitors while we were waiting for him to come out, and I noticed one of them lighting a cigarette with a wax match. I warned them of Sir John's obsession in that regard, and told the story of the bushfires. After Sir John had been introduced, the wax match owner started a tale of bushfires, and he soon had Sir John expatiating on his favourite theme, roundly denouncing the evil wax match.

Then the other visitor offered Sir John a cigar, which was accepted with alacrity. The donor took one himself, and then, feeling in his pocket, said 'I'm afraid I've mislaid my matches'. Sir John immediately plunged his hand into his own pocket and to, his astonishment and confusion, brought out a box of wax matches, surreptitiously planted there by the other visitor. It was a rare moment, but Sir John generously acknowledged that the joke was 'on him'.

Many stories could be told about Sir John, but it should be made clear that his wide knowledge of the building trade, and his unflinching interest in Canberra, were invaluable in the successful execution of the Commission's heavy and urgent programme. His name should be remembered specially amongst those who figured in the strenuous activities that led to the transfer of the Seat of Government, and large sections of the federal administration in 1927-28.

THE BITTER END

Sir Robert Menzies

Although there is an undoubted growth of interest in matters historical, some people appear to focus their attention on the modern scene. One of these, recently, when others had commented favourably on my 'recollections' of King O'Malley, said 'the past is over and done with, we live in the present', and, turning to me he asked 'why don't you give us something more up-to-date? What about a story on Bob Menzies?' I replied 'I'm now concerned with the 1920s. I may be catching up with him in due course.'

Strange to relate, shortly afterwards, on the evening of the recent Senate Election, I dropped into the Albert Hall, towards midnight, to observe the well-arranged scheme by which the progressive voting results were being posted, in much detail all around the walls, and summarised on the stage. In the centre of the hall sat the Prime Minister [Sir Robert Menzies], with some of his political staff, concentrating upon the changing figures. Finally, when he decided to leave, he noticed me and remarked 'I've been reading your articles; you're going back 50 years'. He passed on before I could reply, and I wondered whether the Prime Minister himself was taking the same view as my inquirer already mentioned. I doubt this, but I was reminded of a previous occasion upon which the Prime Minister, shortly before the fall of his government in 1941, had quite a trying time in the same Albert Hall, but made a very fine speech in appealing for support for a worthy war effort. I shall tell the story.

It was due to the initiative of Her Excellency, Lady Gowrie, who, as Commonwealth president of the Red Cross Society's Fund Raising Campaign, convened its national meeting in Canberra, and invited Sir Robert (then Mr) Menzies to be the guest speaker. The wives of the State Governors all attended and spoke, and business reports were also made by the treasurers or secretaries of each State organisation, and of the Australian Capital Territory, the Northern Territory and of Papua.

All this routine business took a long time to transact, and, as speaker after speaker rose to play his or her part, it became fairly obvious that the Prime Minister, who should, in the circumstances, have been 'put on' first, or asked to come later, was unutterably bored. The 'last straw' was reached when the Tasmanian representative, after presenting his State's report on its wartime activities and contributions, decided this was a good opportunity to tell the large Canberra audience something of the attractions of the 'Apple Isle' as a tourist paradise. If he could have seen the Prime Minister's demeanour during this recital I am sure that he would have collapsed where he stood.

After this interlude, Lady Gowrie cleared the deck for Mr Menzies to speak. Responding with an alacrity doubtless born of exasperation, he said 'Your excellency, madame chairwoman, ladies and gentlemen, I see that I am at the bitter end', a remark that fairly electrified an audience likewise pretty well bored also. He then continued on as follows: 'Before I address myself to the subject of the war work of the Australian Red Cross Society, I wish to refer to the remarks of the gentleman representing Tasmania, who has seen fit, on this occasion, to introduce the subject of his State. My recollection of visiting Tasmania conjures up a breathless hurrying down Flinders Street, Melbourne, in a taxi to board the Loongana, proceeding down the River Yarra in apprehension, across Port Phillip Bay in trepidation, passing through The Rip almost in terror, then pushing the call button and shouting "steward, quick".'

At this the audience was convulsed with laughter, and gave a great demonstration of its admiration of its Prime Minister's ability to 'do justice' to a rather remarkable occasion.

A PIONEER SCIENTIST

Dr B. T. Dickson

Amongst those who have played a prominent part, and provided wise leadership in most of the earlier, and some of the later, community activities of our growing capital, Dr B.T. Dickson, CMG, occupies a place of special honour.

Dr Dickson's identification with so much of Canberra's official and community life has been so close that it is not easy for us oldsters to picture the local scene without his presence. He came to us in 1927, with his wife, son and daughter, taking up the important post of the first Director of the Division of Plant Industry of the CSIRO, after a distinguished academic record at Queens University, Canada, and Cornell University, both as a student and graduate, and as the holder of Professorial Chairs at McGill University. He had also a special record of service with the Canadian forces in the First World War, later commanding the 1st British Army School of Agriculture in France in 1918-19.

With his remarkable energy and capacity, Dr Dickson soon developed the Plant Industry Division, gathering around him able assistants, such as Dr Angell and Dr Barnard, who followed his example in contributing much to our earlier social advancement.

On the official scientific level, Dr Dickson's division achieved a well-earned reputation for many successful research projects, such as those related to water-blister in pineapples, bunchy-top bananas, bitter pit in apples, and blue mould on tobacco, and the introduction of valuable plant varieties, especially some new grasses that helped to stabilise our local lawns. Leadership in these fields led to Dr Dickson's membership and high office in such bodies as the Australian National Research Council, the Australian Institute of Agricultural Science, and representation at international conferences.

Since his retirement, after 24 years' service with CSIRO, Dr Dickson's service[s] have been in demand as a member of UNESCO Arid Zone Committee, with which he has visited the drier areas of the world, as United Nations' Adviser to the Desert Research Institute of Egypt. Owing to his wide overseas travel, he possesses exceptional knowledge of more remote areas of the globe in regard to which he is always ready to give fascinating talks. One of these, on the subject of Women of Other Lands, he gave to Rotary, and he has never been able to 'live it down'.

Amidst all his responsible professional occupations, Dr Dickson has found time to give outstanding service to Canberra citizen bodies, generally in positions of heavy commitment. He was a committee colleague of mine, for example, in the Canberra Society of Arts and Literature, founded in 1927, and he was particularly interested in its dramatic work, especially in promoting play-reading groups in the various hostels. Later, for 10 years from 1932, he was president of the separately-formed Canberra Repertory Society, for which he was also producer, a lead-performer, and, with his unusual skill as a draughtsman, the designer and painter of most of its scenery.

As president of Legacy he found an avenue for his genius for friendship in a worthy cause, and his leadership of the Australian Royal Society provided congenial scientific associations.

Before her death, Mrs Dickson also gave her husband great assistance in his many social and professional activities. She, too, had her own special interests, and she played in the string section of the Musical Society's Orchestra. She acted, also, as the society's devoted and competent

secretary for several years when I was its president, and she carried out valuable and well-informed duties in that pioneer period.

Of the many interests to which Dr Dickson devoted his time and his wide knowledge, two important ones may be mentioned, as they are fields in which I have been privileged to be in his company. The first is the Canberra University College. We were delighted when he joined our council, for he brought to our deliberations valuable experience from the academic angles. When our distinguished foundation chairman, Sir Robert Garran, retired in 1953, Dr Dickson became his very worthy successor.

There were many difficult problems before us at that time, and Dr Dickson's eminently practical mind constantly introduced realism when discussions became unduly tenuous and theoretical. He was ever conscious of the need to translate ideas into practical terms, and for this alone, he was an excellent chairman, not only of the College Council, but whenever he directed a meeting.

The other field in which Dr Dickson rendered conspicuous service, and became widely known, is that of Rotary. Joining the Canberra club in the early thirties, he found the atmosphere ideal for his capacity for friendship and co-operative effort. After serving as president of the club, he was elected district governor, thus widening his opportunities for service, acquaintance and fellowship. Apart from his valuable work in this district, he visited Rotary Clubs in many countries, and has carried out many assignments for Rotary International. [Dr Dickson died in 1976.]

WHO WAS RUSSELL?

One morning an irate Commandant of the Royal Military College burst into my office at Acton and complained 'Our Department has referred to "Mt Russell" in the Duntroon area. There is no such feature, the name is Mt Pleasant' I assured him that there was, officially, no Mt Russell, and I agreed that any reference should properly have been to Mt Pleasant, the name by which the eminence had been known for perhaps a hundred years.

When the contour survey was being done, I explained, the surveyor, Charles Scrivener, placed one of his trigonometrical stations on that hill, in 1909-10, and had called the station 'Russell', for some reason that we had never been able to determine with certainty. This name appeared on Scrivener's map of 1910 which, unfortunately, did not also indicate that the spur was Mt Pleasant. This has been the cause of much confusion in popular reference.

The term 'Russell Hill' came to be applied to a large portion of the area now forming the suburb of Campbell, especially the large valley through which Blamey Crescent passes westerly towards its junction with Constitution Avenue. During the depression of the early thirties, this valley became full of 'humpies' and sub-standard structures, occupied by indigent pensioners and others who were, for the most part, unemployed, and had nowhere else to live. For humanitarian reasons, this undesirable settlement was tolerated as a 'depression necessity', and some services were provided, including a recreational hall and educational facilities, pending the time when normal city expansion south of Anzac Parade would require the whole area to be cleared for

permanent subdivision. This was long deferred owing to the high cost of providing the essential engineering services, especially sewerage and drainage.

What was known as 'poverty gully' and sometimes as 'hangman's gully' (because of two reputed early hangings there) has now become part of one of Canberra's very attractive suburbs, favoured particularly on account of its fine views over the lake and the western mountain scenery.

It has been suggested that the name 'Russell', applied to the trig. station on Mt Pleasant, was that of a hospital orderly, Corporal H. Russell, AAMC, on the Duntroon staff, with whom some of the survey staff had resided. This could hardly have been the case, as the name 'Russell' appears on Scrivener's map of 1910, and Corporal Russell did not join the College staff at the Hospital until 12 February 1912.

Reference has also been made to the New South Wales Astronomer, Henry Chamberlain Russell, as a possible source of the name. He was noted for his work in the development of meteorological equipment and he would certainly have been known to Scrivener. As he died in 1907, however, it seems unlikely that his name would have been used in 1910 for the comparatively unimportant purpose of a temporary trig. station, unless, perhaps, some of his special equipment had been used to obtain weather data, thus bringing up his name in a casual manner. It was the common practice of surveyors to mark their trig. stations with ordinary descriptive names, such as 'Bald', 'Shale', 'West of School', 'Junction', 'Gap', 'Gravel', 'Kurrajong', 'Churchspire' – to quote some of those actually appearing on the 1910 contour map. There are also personal names of 'Sullivan', 'Vemon', 'Rottenbury' – the matter depending mostly on the whim of the surveyor, or, perhaps, his field assistant. One of Scrivener's field assistants who worked at the Russell trig., and is still in Canberra, cannot account for the name adopted.

A third explanation put forward is that it is the name of a Senator. This is of interest as there were two Senators of that name, neither of any particular distinction, in the first decade of the Commonwealth Parliament. The first, William Russell (1906-12) was from South Australia, a strong supporter of the selection of Canberra, who visited the site on three occasions and knew Scrivener, of whom he said in Parliament in 1909, 'I have the greatest faith in Mr Scrivener'. The second was Edward John Russell (1906-22) of Victoria, who just as strongly opposed the selection of Canberra as 'an apanage of Sydney'.

It so happened that, during a visit to Canberra, these two Senators together ascended what they termed Mt Ainslie (and what was more likely to have been its lower spur, Mt Pleasant) to view the country, forming diverse opinions regarding it. Surveyor Scrivener may have known of this ascent, from local hearsay, and being somewhat intrigued by the story, and wanting a name for the said trig., selected that of 'Russell'.

When, in response to a hurried inquiry, I was recently informed of the names selected for new suburbs, and asked to comment, I was unaware that the name 'Russell' had been assigned to the comparatively small area in which the Defence buildings, known as 'Russell Offices', are situated. In my opinion, it is unfortunate, even scandalous, that this name, in view of its long

unsavoury association with ‘poverty gully’, was revived at all, especially as there were names of some great contributors to Federation still available for use in accordance with the principles that were endorsed by Parliament in 1928.

HE PLAYED HIS PART IN A VARIETY OF WAYS

William Morris Hughes

During the past week, I was showing several visitors around the developments that have occurred in the Woden Valley, and one of them, looking at the bronze panel of William Morris Hughes on the fountain in the suburb that bears his name, asked ‘What sort of a man, really, was Billy Hughes?’ – a simple question, forsooth, but one demanding a very complex answer.

If any man played his part in life in an endless variety of ways, it was ‘Billy’, rising as he did from obscurity to become a dynamic national figure, an intrepid fighter, and a leader who placed the name of Australia high in world estimation. Personally, he was unpredictable, difficult to live with and to work for; resourceful, a savage opponent, and, some would say, even unscrupulous; yet displaying, on occasions, many unsuspected facets of dignity, real humanity and humour, as I had often witnessed during the 45 years in which I had known him.

In the bewildering field of politics he was a species of human tornado. Many never forgave him for disregarding some of the precepts and decisions of the Labor Party, which he had done so much to build up in his earlier years. He never hesitated, however, to ignore smaller issues and lesser loyalties in the pursuit, with burning zeal, of those that he regarded as of supreme national importance. For this he holds, probably, a record for expulsions and execrations, but he has a firm place in the hearts of the majority of the Australian people.

As one who met him, over the years, in many situations, I prefer to pay tribute to his achievements for Australia during and soon after the First World War, for which he was affectionately known as ‘The Little Digger’; and to his drive and ability that served to stimulate all Britishers in their time of dire need. It was in full acknowledgement of these vital qualities that he was requested to assume a position of leadership in Britain, a request he declined, feeling that his place was in his home, Australia.

After vacating the unique position that he had occupied as a national leader from 1916 to 1923 he appeared to find difficulty in adjusting himself to the role of a back-bencher, under the Bruce-Page and Scullin Governments, and his great reputation brought him back to office, 11 years later, under Lyons, Menzies and Fadden, and he was made a member of the Advisory War Council from 1940 to 1945.

Although he had originally favoured Sydney as the federal capital, and as late as 1909 had attempted to have the Yass-Canberra selection set aside, Hughes later respected the Canberra choice and became a strong supporter for its development, as soon as practicable, as the seat of government. After the first sale of leases, in December 1924, he selected a site in Mugga Way, Red Hill, for his own residence, but later gave it up.

Before the transfer of the Parliament in 1927 he often visited Canberra, coming down from Sydney with Dame Mary and daughter Helen, in his famous Flint car. Despite his reputation as a reckless driver, he was gentleness itself when he took my wife and her small infant, and Dame Mary, on short journeys around the Territory.

He was keen on physical exercise and had a qualified masseur as his constant personal attendant. He played golf, but not seriously, rarely doing 18 holes with his friend, Sir Robert Garran, whose wisdom and knowledge he greatly respected. To the exasperation of regular golfers, he was often seen doing practice shots with his mashie, hitting in reverse direction against those finishing their round on the 18th hole. When he happened to undertake a full round, he was usually noted with disfavour for holding up the field while he made a prolonged search for his ball in the rough and failing to wave through following players.

He liked billiards and we often had a game on the Hotel Canberra tables. He was not a very good player, but he hated to lose. We used, frequently, to stack the balls in his favour to help him keep up a decent average.

The caustic quality of Hughes' comment became proverbial, but his humour was often engaging, as, when a Member rose in the House and asked the Minister for Trade and Customs if the Government had placed an embargo upon the export of polo ponies to India, Hughes was up like a shot, forestalling his Minister, and saying 'the answer is "neigh".'

My last personal association with 'Billy' was in 1951, when, as director of the Jubilee Celebrations, I persuaded him to attend a pageant on Canberra Day, when we re-enacted the original ceremony in 1913 of laying foundation stones and naming the city 'Canberra'. My Minister, Mr Anthony, delivered an address, and I had asked Mr Hughes to move the vote of thanks. Anthony was also Postmaster-General.⁵² 'Billy', taking up the microphone, instead of thanking the Minister, attacked him for the delays in the provision of telephones in his electorate, to the amusement of the large gathering, which included the Governor-General.

About a year later, 'Billy' died. I attended his funeral, in Sydney, and was surprised at the enormous crowds that took part in the procession or lined the long route from the city to the Northern Suburbs Cemetery – an obvious and deeply-felt tribute to a great leader whose name will ever brightly embellish our national scroll.

A FIGHTING LADY OF CANBERRA

Helen Barton

One of the best-known characters in Canberra in the late twenties and thirties was Mrs Helen Barton, who conducted the first regular Territory omnibus service, and also provided hire-car facilities for local requirements. She was a remarkable woman, tall and somewhat gaunt in appearance, and produced an unusual effect by always wearing very large drooping earrings. She possessed an unquenchable fighting spirit, and most of my officers literally quailed at her approach. She was a veritable descendant of the amazons of old.

Before I knew of these aggressive traits in her character, Mrs Barton had been quietly introduced to me by the third Commissioner, Clarence Gorman, who said that she had been one of the unsuccessful tenderers for a contract for the cartage of crushed metal from the Mugga quarries to our construction works. She was anxious, he said, to settle in Canberra, as her contract for transporting blue metal for the Sydney underground railway had terminated. He asked if I could suggest an avenue for her transport business in Canberra, and I remarked 'There is a good opening for a passenger service between Canberra and Queanbeyan, but this would involve omnibuses.' 'Oh, that's no difficulty', said Mrs Barton, 'I can change my lorries for buses.'

Some months later, Barton's Safety Coach arrived at the Hotel Canberra, operated by Mr Barton, a British ex-serviceman, efficient as a mechanic, a careful driver, quiet, courteous and obliging, presenting a character in marked contrast to that of Mrs Barton, who, of course, was the dominating figure.

As pioneers of a new community enterprise, the Bartons were given accommodation at the Hotel Canberra at a reduced rate in accordance with the Commission's policy at the time, and were permitted to park their safety coach in the enclosed garage area at the rear of the hotel. The coach ran from Ainslie to Queanbeyan, at first carrying passengers for any intermediate distance. When the Commission later instituted its own City Omnibus Service, the safety coach was not permitted to carry passengers travelling only on city sections. This restriction, imposed under the newly inaugurated Motor Traffic Ordinance, early in 1927, was accepted with little equanimity by Mrs Barton, although she had been warned of its imminence when she came to Canberra.

Another disability that she suffered was the granting by the NSW authorities of a licence to another omnibus operator to work from Queanbeyan. We felt that it was inexpedient to refuse this operator permission to enter the Australian Capital Territory, despite Mrs Barton's contention that she was entitled to a traffic monopoly for the route. Many and strenuous were the clashes between Mrs Barton and the Registrar of Motor Vehicles, and she wore out the patience of the Commissioners, who finally refused to see her, and the Minister, to whom she was continually complaining in writing about her victimisation.

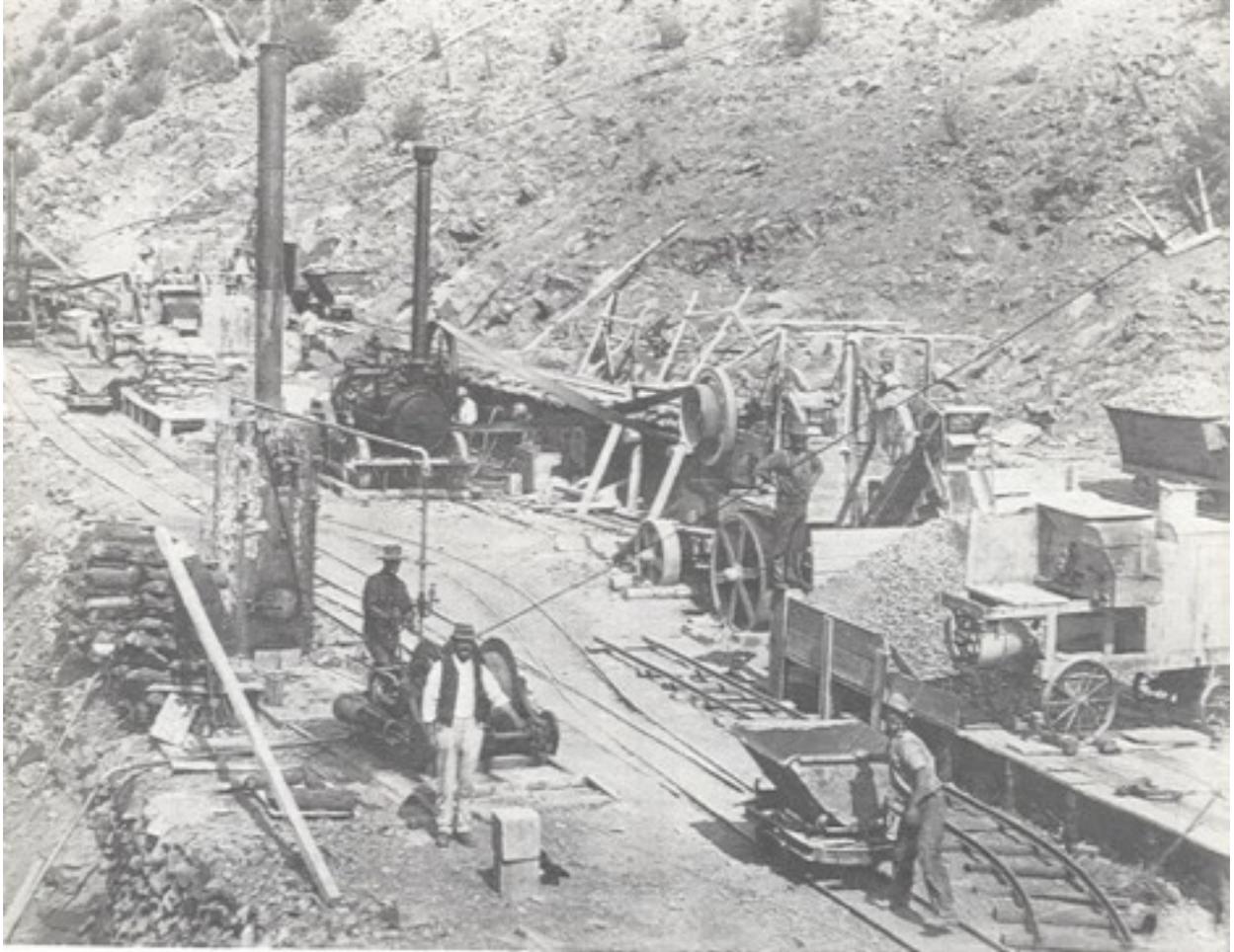
Late one afternoon Mrs Barton called to see me about her hire-car, for which she wished to have a plate similar to those on private vehicles, 'so that my clients may feel as if they are riding in their own car'. Disdaining my explanations as to policy and invidious treatment, she continued her arguments so emphatically, and so late, that I took my hat, left her in my office, and went home to dinner. Next morning she was again announced, and I refused to see her, whereupon she told my office boy that she only required my signature, as a justice of the peace, to witness a document. I said 'All right five minutes only.' She duly produced an authentic document, I witnessed her signature, and getting up, she said 'I was very upset at our interview, last night. If I hadn't forgotten my handkerchief I would have cried.'

When driving her hire-car to a call one night in heavy fog, she missed the low-level bridge at Lennox Crossing (now submerged in Lake Burley Griffin) and plunged into a waterhole about nine feet deep. Somehow she managed to break out of the car, under water, and, stanching the

bleeding of a severed leg artery, crawled across the then golf links to the Hotel Canberra, where, fortunately, I was entertaining three medical friends, who went to her assistance.

Despite her fighting disposition, and the tough atmosphere in which she lived, she was basically a good citizen, silently performing many deeds of kindness to those in need. She was also well versed in musical knowledge, and appreciated culture in others. She was truly a strange and complex character, and one standing out firmly amongst my recollections of real personalities in Canberra's earlier years.

The Canberra Community



Working on the Cotter Dam.

THE FRANCHISE LOST AND REGAINED

Dr Watson and Dr Alcorn

The move towards granting full voting rights to the Member for the Australian Capital Territory in the House of Representatives has aroused interest in the history of the franchise, so far as the Territory is concerned.

Before 1 January 1911, when the Territory was taken over by the Commonwealth, the residents of the territory area, as part of New South Wales, had voting rights at the local government level for shire councillors, and at the parliamentary level for the election of members to both State and Federal legislatures, in the latter case, of course, including the Senate. When, in 1843, under an Act of the Imperial Parliament, an elected legislative council was set up for the Colony of New South Wales, the first political representative of the electorate including the present Territory area was Terence (after Sir Terence) Aubrey Murray, of Yarralumla. He was the father of Sir Gilbert Murray, the distinguished classical scholar, and of Sir Hubert Murray, Lieutenant Governor of Papua for many years.

After the new constitution of 1855, Murray represented the Territory in the Legislative Assembly, of which he became Speaker. Finally, he was again nominated to the Legislative Council in 1862, and was president until his death in 1873.

Another representative of the Territory was William Forster, who held office as Premier and Colonial Secretary, in 1859-60. Three members of the de Salis family successively represented the Territory in the Legislative Assembly, and E.W. Sullivan, of Springbank (now submerged in the Lake) sat in Parliament for 19 years.

Sir Granville Ryrie was the representative from 1906 to 1910, and J.J. Cusack was the sitting member when the local State franchise was lost upon the transfer of the Territory to the Commonwealth.

From the inauguration of the Commonwealth the area of the Territory was included in the Federal electorate of Werriwa, whose representatives to 31 December 1910 were first A.H.B. Conroy, and then D.R. Hall. Over this period, the residents also enjoyed the privilege of voting for the Senate.

The power given to the Parliament, under section 122 of the Commonwealth Constitution, in respect of Territories, includes the allowance of representation in either House of Parliament, 'to the extent, and on the terms which it thinks fit'. The small voting population of the Territory, as compared with that of the average electorate, was undoubtedly a main factor in the unwillingness of the Parliament to act under section 122 and restore the franchise to territorial residents.

After the definite setting up of the Federal Capital Commission as a corporate municipal authority, in 1925, the Territory soon ceased to be more or less a large constructional project, and gradually assumed the general features of a settled community. Upon the removal of Parliament and many departmental groups to Canberra in 1927, the claim for restoration of voting rights

and participation by citizens in the control of the Territory became increasingly vocal, and, in 1928, as an intermediate move, the Government made an amendment to the *Seat of Government (Administration) Act 1924*, to provide that the third member of the Commission should be elected by residents having a prescribed status. Four candidates were nominated: Dr R.M. Alcorn, J.S. Crapp, J.T.H. Goodwin and Dr J.F.W. Watson. A total of 951 votes were cast and Dr Watson was elected with a majority of 63 final votes over Dr Alcorn, on the preferential count. As he had previously referred in favourable terms to the Federal Capital Commission, praising its 'organising ability' and 'the community spirit adopted as its policy' we looked forward to a period of valuable co-operation with him. We were sadly mistaken, however, as, from the outset, he assumed the role of destructive critic, demanding drastic changes in policy and in the Commission's administrative machinery, which he viciously attacked, without proper knowledge or experience.

This provocative attitude naturally brought him into conflict with his two fellow commissioners, and especially the chief commissioner, Sir John Butters, whose organising ability and drive had been a predominant factor in the progress and development that the Commission had undoubtedly achieved in the difficult tasks involved in the removal of the Parliament to the Seat of government and many of the public departments, and in providing quickly the very diverse elements of administration for the Territory at the national, State, and local government levels.

Under the terms of his election to office, the third commissioner was not authorised to assume executive duties, but a more judicious and tolerant approach to his tasks as an elected representative could have established a good basis for the careful consideration of the local problems and for recommendations to the Government.

Unfortunately the breach widened and, after about six weeks in office, at the end of a very acrimonious commission session, on 18 February 1929, Dr Watson sent in his resignation to the Governor-General. That evening, I had an appointment with our Minister, Mr C.L.A. Abbott, at Parliament House, on quite another subject, but, as he joined me in his office, where I had been awaiting him, he flipped an envelope across his desk, saying 'this will interest you'. Upon opening the envelope, I saw that it was Watson's resignation, and said 'the commission meeting today must have been too much for him', whereat the Minister remarked 'I don't know about the commission meeting, but at his interview with me I told him a few home truths which he resented'.

When I asked 'What are you going to do about the resignation?' the Minister said 'Accept it before the ink gets dry'.

Dr Watson, who had considerable abilities as an historian, and had made a large contribution to the *Historical Records of Australia*, was nevertheless a most difficult man with whom to conduct business, and, in a way, was his own enemy. He appeared to think that his resignation from the Commission would cause a major political convulsion, but he was wrong. Little notice was taken of the matter, except in purely local circles, and many of his supporters queried his action in

resigning from his elected position without consulting his electorate and the Representation League which had asked for a voting representative on the Commission.

An election to fill the vacancy was held on 20 April, and, although Watson stood again, he was defeated by three votes by his former opponent, another medical man, Dr Alcorn, who proved to be as unco-operative as Watson had been, declaring that the abolition of the Commission was his main objective. He remained in office, however, despite threats to resign, for a year, until 30 April 1930, when the administration of the Territory reverted to departmental control. Watson's reaction to his defeat was to petition the Governor-General to summon Parliament, to remove Abbott from office and impeach Prime Minister Bruce and the Attorney-General, Latham, for conducting an illegal government in the Territory.

It was unfortunate that, in their first essays at electing civic representatives, Canberra voters should have, perhaps unwittingly, selected men whose lack of balance, tact and tolerance rendered them quite unsuitable for impartial discussion of current problems.

After the demise of the Commission, the citizens of the Territory were granted a vehicle for the expression of their views through the Advisory Council, to which they elected representatives to sit with the public servants responsible for dealing with the administration of the capital and its territory. The Council was authorised to advise the Minister upon any matter affecting the Territory, and he could also seek its advice. This body, in enlarged form [was still active at the time of writing]. The views of its elected members are too well known to require further comment, beyond saying that, over the years, it has done much valuable work for Canberra, despite its frequent disappointments and frustrations, and has been a means of inducing its members and many others to study the peculiar problems of the national capital as a growing and vital factor in the Australian scene.

It was not until 1948 that the Government was induced to grant parliamentary representation to the Territory by the election of a member of the House of Representatives. He was not to have full parliamentary status, but could vote on a motion for the disallowance of a proposed Territory law.

The first member so elected was Dr L.W. Nott, Superintendent of the Canberra Hospital. He had earlier represented Herbert division of Queensland in the House of Representatives in 1925-28, and [was] a popular member of the Advisory Council for many years. He was defeated in 1951 for the Parliamentary seat by Mr J .R. Fraser, who has worked hard in the interests of all sections of the Territory population.⁵³

START OF AN ACT LEGAL SYSTEM

Many people have expressed an interest in the changes that occurred in the legal system in the Australian Capital Territory when it came under Commonwealth control on 1 January 1911.

In anticipation of the change, and to secure continuity, convenience and economy, it had been provided in the *Seat of Government Acceptance Act 1909* that all laws in force in the Territory at the date of its acquisition by the Commonwealth should continue in force, so far as applicable, until other provisions be made. This applied to common law and equity, as well as to statute law.

It proved necessary to make some other provisions, almost immediately, and the *Seat of Government (Administration) Act 1910* was passed for this purpose, coming into operation on 1 January 1911. It formed the basis for our legal system by providing that the Governor-General could make ordinances for the Territory (subject to disallowance by either House of the Parliament); declaring that certain State laws, especially those imposing rates, taxes or duties (except in the case of death duties) should no longer apply to the Territory, and enacting that the several inferior courts of New South Wales were to have and exercise jurisdiction in the Territory subject to any ordinance made by the Governor-General.

At its inception, therefore, the law of the Territory consisted of certain Commonwealth statutes, a few ordinances and regulations and, where other provision had not been made, New South Wales law in force prior to 1 January 1911.

There were no separate courts in the Territory but cases heard in the Supreme Court of New South Wales afterwards became matters for the High Court, and less important issues came before the District Court of Queanbeyan, the Court of Petty Sessions at Cooma, or the Police Court at Queanbeyan. These somewhat inconvenient arrangements continued until after the transfer of the Parliament in 1927.

Much difficulty arose also, particularly in the lower courts, from the fact that many of the State laws were amended after 1911, and such amendments did not apply to the Territory; so the New South Wales judge, or magistrate, acting in Territory jurisdiction, had to proceed according to law that was obsolete in his State, and for which proper procedure was often lacking.

This remoteness and uncertainty continued in many instances until 1930, when the first Court of Petty Sessions with much wider powers than usual was set up in the Territory. It was constituted by a magistrate who came to Canberra regularly from Sydney, and by one or two special magistrates, residing locally, with power to deal with minor cases. This arrangement continued until 1950, when the first full-time resident magistrate was appointed.

Action to supplant the New South Wales pre-1911 legislation by Territory laws proceeded very slowly. Of necessity, the early new ordinances covered minor administrative and local government categories, such as animals and bird protection, careless use of fire, public health, stock, traffic, rates, rural leases, and registration of various kinds. Later, more involved matters were covered, as, for example, probate, companies, workmen's compensation, marriage and education.

In developing draft legislation, the staff of the Federal Capital Commission carefully considered parallel enactment throughout the British Commonwealth, in America, and leading Western practice. This applied, for instance, to motor-traffic control.

Before 1 February 1927, when the First Motor Traffic Ordinance became law, it was necessary for all Territory vehicles to be registered in the State, mostly in Queanbeyan, and the fees went to the New South Wales Treasury. The provisions of the Motor Traffic Ordinance were, for some time, considerably in advance of all State legislation, and, by conference with State traffic authorities, we were able to effect reciprocally, simpler procedures in regard to

visiting motor vehicles, acknowledgement of licences, mechanical checking of vehicles, and standards generally.

Serious difficulties sometimes arose in relation to more important litigation in cases that previously would have come before the Supreme Court of New South Wales, but were debarred from a hearing in the High Court for technical reasons. The High Court, probably undesirous of increasing the scope of matters for which it was to become a court of first instance, failed to make the necessary rules of court, and the machinery for bringing certain actions before the court was lacking. An example of this difficulty was divorce and matrimonial proceedings, so, for some years, those seeking relief in this field had to establish residence in a State, and proceed under its laws. The administration of deceased persons' estates was also of dubious legality, owing to faulty machinery.

I have referred previously to the unsatisfactory conditions relating to the sale of liquor, the Territory being under a 'no licence' policy, imposed by King O'Malley. These and similar matters were placed on a much more satisfactory basis by ordinances passed from 1929 onwards. Any problems involving the High Court were disposed of by the passing of the *Seat of Government Supreme Court Act 1933*, and the establishment of a superior court of record especially for the Territory.

A curious situation arose in respect to old State land grants and conditional purchase leases. The State Lands Department continued to apply to these holdings various amending provisions of New South Wales laws made after 1911, apparently not having altered their departmental record, at the time of transfer of the Territory. The anomaly was not brought to notice, as all records were in Sydney, until 1933, by which time the ownership of many of the properties had changed, either by transfer, inheritance or surrender, and the existing titles were apparently invalid.

In consultation with the Attorney-General's Department, it was decided that the existing positions should be declared to be valid by an Act of the Commonwealth Parliament, and the *Seat of Government (Administration) Act 1933* was accordingly passed.

The process of supplanting State laws in the Territory is still proceeding, and has thrown a heavy burden upon those people responsible for the formulation of the provisions of the necessary legislation, and its actual drafting, which needs the utmost care. This work has to proceed concurrently with the constant amendment of existing Territory enactments and preparation of new laws that modern conditions constantly call forth – a task of much concentration and responsibility.



The suburbs spread out. Canberra from Red Hill c. 1930

FIRST CITY LEASES

After the post-First World War resumption of activities associated with the building of Canberra in 1921, constant representations were made to the Government by various bodies and individuals, mostly from Sydney, that the city lands should be thrown open for business and residential development by private enterprise.

At the Minister's request the Federal Capital Advisory Council submitted a number of reports on this subject. In its original scheme it had suggested that the leasing of the city land should be deferred until the construction of the First Stage programme (three years) was well advanced. It took the view that the city lands constituted one of the principal assets of the Commonwealth at the capital, and that there would be less prospect of inducing the public to take up leases at good rentals while there might remain in their minds any uncertainty as to how and when the city would be occupied as the Seat of Government.

A better basis, it considered, would be established for rentals when further development and proper services – water, sewerage, electricity, roads and tree-planting – were available. It believed

also that a large influx of subsidiary population could not reasonably be expected until the official occupation of the capital was imminent. Moreover, the committee felt that the admission of private enterprise at too early a stage, with the necessity for building on the leases, inevitably would divert funds, available labour and materials from the main and immediate purpose laid down by the Government – the transfer of Parliament and the administration as early as possible.

These views were adopted by the Government and the leasing of land to the general public accordingly was deferred until 1924 after a resolution of Parliament had fixed an approximate date for the transfer to Canberra.

At the Government's request the committee suggested the areas in which leases might be granted, in accordance with the policy laid down in the *Seat of Government (Administration) Act 1910*, which excluded the granting of any estate in freehold. The Government announced that the first sale of leases would take place in October 1924, by auction, in Canberra.

An unexpected difficulty occurred, however, as the Crown Solicitor, when asked to draft suitable forms of lease for the regulations, pointed out some serious defects and omissions in the existing City Area Lease Ordinance 1921-1924. This did not cover fully the Advisory Council's recommendations as approved by the Government.

This setback involving further delay and a breach of the Government's promise particularly angered Senator Pearce, to whom the Crown Solicitor had reported as Minister for Home and Territories. The Senator gave me regular roastings on the telephone, under the mistaken notion that I was partly responsible for the inadequacies of the Ordinance. In fact, I had had nothing to do with the framing of this particular Ordinance, for which the instructions had been given to the draftsman by Colonel Goodwin, the Surveyor-General, and which had been signed for submission to the Executive Council by Senator Pearce himself.

Pearce gave me no time to explain anything, so I requested the permanent head, Walter Bingle, to intervene and clarify the situation with the Secretary for Home and Territories, J.G. (after Sir John) McLaren. Senator Pearce, of course, made no apology, but he directed Col. Goodwin, then in Canberra, to return to Melbourne at once and to attend an urgent meeting with the Crown Solicitor and myself to review the terms of the Ordinance. Goodwin arrived, furious, and believing that I had instigated the whole thing to discredit him. The review was a very unpleasant task, to which Goodwin, fortunately, made little contribution.

An entirely new Ordinance was drafted, and after scrutiny and passing by Sir Robert Garran, the Parliamentary Draftsman, it was hurriedly put through the Executive Council and gazetted. It had to lie on the table of both Houses of Parliament, being subject to rejection if a motion to that effect were carried. For this reason the Government was not in a position to announce at that stage the date for the postponed auction sale.

No adverse motion was carried in Parliament, so the Government fixed 12 December 1924, two days after the opening of the Hotel Canberra, as the eventual date for the important function, of which a further account will be given as a sequel to this article.

FIRST AUCTION IN CANBERRA

For those of us concerned officially with the long-awaited first offer of Canberra City land for occupation by private enterprise, on a leasehold tenure, historic 12 December 1924 was a day of excitement.

The arrangements for the auction sale had been made by the Commonwealth Surveyor-General, Colonel Goodwin, and wide publicity given to the occasion. The principal auctioneer was C.H. Crammond, of the firm of Richardson and Wrench of Sydney, and with him were associated the three members of the Queanbeyan firm of Woodger and Calthorpe, who, for weeks before, had been showing prospective buyers around the 289 residential and 204 business blocks to be offered at the sale.

Camp Hill, Griffin's site for the future permanent Parliament House, between the present Commonwealth Offices, East and West Blocks, was chosen as the location for the rostrum. There was a fine panoramic view.

The Bruce-Page Government was represented by the Chief Whip, Major C. (afterwards Sir Charles) Marr, who mounted the rostrum on that very warm morning, introduced the auctioneers, and invited every one of the 300 persons present 'to take a piece of Canberra away in his pocket'.

The veteran politician, Sir Austin Chapman, no longer in office, reminded the audience that to Mr John Gale, of Queanbeyan, belonged the credit for the original suggestion that Canberra should be the site of the capital. Sir Austin had fought for, and almost secured, Dalgety as the capital site, but the substitution of Canberra for it, in 1908, still left the capital in his electorate.

An initial difficulty for the auctioneer, Mr Crammond, was to dispel impressions given in a somewhat devastating attack on the conditions of the proposed leases that had appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald* and was written by W.P. Bluett, of Brindabella, a local correspondent. Bluett attacked the provisions for non-transfer before compliance with the building covenant, and said that if a lessee set up, say, a chemist's business, the shop would have to be used for that purpose for 99 years. He declared that the Canberra lease would become 'a drug in the market' unless government financial aid became available. On the morning of the sale, the *Herald* fired another shot, stating 'the consensus of opinion today is that the Federal Ministry has been unwise in yielding to political pressure and submitting leaseholds in the territory at auction so early in the city's progress'.

It was a good thing that we had arranged for Mr Cyril Davies, then of the Commonwealth Crown Solicitor's Office, Melbourne, to come to Canberra, in case of legal difficulties. He was able to assure Crammond that there was nothing in Bluett's contentions, so the auctioneer announced that such adverse publicity, on the eve of the sale, 'was grossly untrue, unfair, and un-British in spirit'. He then proceeded to show how mistaken were the views taken in Bluett's story. For example, he said, the chemist lessee could sell his building 'to butcher, baker or candlestick maker'.

The blocks offered were located at Eastlake (now Kingston), Manuka Centre (Griffith), Blandfordia (Forrest), Red Hill, Civic Centre (City), and Ainslie (Braddon and Reid). Of the 393 lots presented, 147 were sold at prices ranging from £6 to £58 per foot for business sites, and from 10/- to £3/4/- for residential blocks, representing a capital value of £60,340. Of the remaining blocks, 149, including the whole balance of the business sites, were soon subsequently disposed of.

The first block offered, a business site at Kingston, valued at £650, after spirited bidding, was knocked down to J.B. Young and Co., of Queanbeyan, for £2,050, and the first residential lease, in the same locality and valued at £220, was secured by the well-known land promoter, Henry Halloran, for £400.

Blandfordia sites went up to £470. At City, the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney took a block at £2,050, and the Bank of Australasia, one at £1,550. Woodger and Calthorpe bid £700 for their office block in Northbourne Avenue.

The only Member of Parliament to purchase a site at the sale was Senator Sir Walter Kingsmill, who secured one at Red Hill for £350. The Hon. T.M. Shakespeare obtained a residential block in Red Hill, and also the minor industrial site on which to found the *Canberra Times* and his printing establishment.

EARLY POST OFFICES

The action of the National Capital Development Commission in marking the site of the old Ainslie Post Office by placing a commemorative plaque on one of the new blocks of bachelor flats – to be known as Kanangra Flats – will be appreciated by many who have an interest in the past as well as the present. The Canberra and District Historical Society made the suggestion for commemorating historical sites in this fashion.

It is inevitable, where a definite city plan is developed over what was earlier rural country, that old landmarks must disappear. We have additional examples of this in the famous old St John's Rectory in Reid, and the Acton homestead, the first home in Canberra, on the present hospital site, and kept in memory by the small fountain constructed of stones from the original building.

The old Ainslie Post Office came into more active use when the early work of establishing the national capital was commenced in 1911. At that time it was called Canberra Post Office, this name having been in use from 1 January 1863, when a local postal service was first established near St John's Church, Andrew Wotherspoon, the schoolmaster, being the original Canberra Postmaster.

It was on 1 April 1880 that the Canberra Post Office was removed to the building now the subject of the commemorative plaque. Mr E. Booth was the Postmaster and he also conducted a general store. This new location of the Canberra Post Office was more convenient as it was on the main road from Yass to Queanbeyan.

On 1 November 1912, a post office was opened at Acton, where the Territory Administration had been set up, and, in June 1913, it was decided to change its name to Canberra Post Office.

This involved the adoption of a new name for the old post office on the Yass-Queanbeyan road, and it was called, for the first time, Ainslie Post Office, as from 2 June 1913. At that date it was conducted by Mrs H.H. McIntosh, and present at the ceremony of unveiling the plaque [in March 1965] was one of her sons, Mr J.G. McIntosh, a teacher at the Canberra Technical College, who was born in the post office building.

On 21 March 1927, Canberra Post Office was removed from Acton and established in East Block Offices, Parkes.

The first post office set up in what is now the Australian Capital Territory was at Ginninderra, early in 1859. In 1882 it had as Postmaster and Telegraph Master, a lad of 16 years, named F. Colls, who was there until 1886 when he transferred to Coolamon. This post office at Ginninderra eventually lost its importance and its activities were gradually taken over by a new post office in the growing village of Hall.

The old Ainslie Post Office was practically the forerunner of the Post Office now known as Canberra City [in 1965 located in Melbourne Buildings] It was so named early in 1929.

SUED FOR DEBT

When Colonel Miller retired in 1916 from the position of Secretary, Department of Home Affairs, he was succeeded as permanent Head by Walter D. Bingle, who had been acting in that position for several years while Miller was administering the Federal Capital at Canberra. Walter Bingle was one of several New South Wales public servants who, at the inception of the Commonwealth, were brought over to staff the Department of Home Affairs by the first Minister, Sir William Lyne.

Bingle had acted as a Minister's private secretary, and also had training in the New South Wales Lands Department. He did not have the confident drive of Miller, being more reflective in temperament and easily moved, but he was dignified, of pleasing personality and kindly disposition, and possessed a good sense of humour when relaxed. For reasons that I never quite understood, he had for some years been Marshal of the High Court, a position concerned with the execution of certain directions of the Court, and which seemed to involve only occasional and somewhat nominal duties. This post he continued to hold.

For the federal capital project he had little personal enthusiasm, and it was rather ironical that he was required to handle in Melbourne various difficult aspects of this subject, amidst the vagaries of the Minister, King O'Malley, and the disagreements with Walter Burley Griffin, which culminated in a Royal Commission, some unpleasant incidents and serious reflections on the Department and its senior officers – a situation most distasteful to a man of Bingle's temperament.

One subject of contention was the water supply scheme from the Cotter River, particularly as to whether the more costly gravitation scheme instead of the tentative pumping scheme should have been adopted. At the stage to which I am now referring, the Cotter water had not yet been delivered to the city, as funds to connect the mains from the pumping plant at the source [that] had been installed were not provided owing to the commitments of the First World War. The

pumps, designed and supplied by the well-known specialists Messrs Gwynne and Co., of London, could not therefore be tested, and a final payment under the contract was being withheld.

One morning, a breathless messenger came to my room with an intimation that the Secretary wished to see me immediately. I followed the boy down to a lower floor of Commonwealth Offices – we were then in Treasury Gardens, Melbourne – and upon entering the Secretary's room, found Bingle pacing up and down, wringing his hands, and obviously under strong emotion. His telephone receiver had been thrown down on his blotting pad, and from it there was proceeding a loud current of forceful speech.

To my natural curiosity, Bingle almost sobbed out, 'It's dreadful, Daley, we've been sued – sued for debt – a public disgrace to my Department, and me, a Marshal of the High Court'. He went on, 'Get a cab right away and go down to the Crown Solicitor's office, and see if you can stop this thing proceeding any further. I've been getting nowhere with him on the telephone. I'll tell him you're coming.' Whereat he picked up the receiver, interrupted the flowing periods, and said he was sending me down to discuss the matter.

As he hung up, I, in complete bewilderment, asked, 'What is the case?', and Bingle replied, 'Oh, I forgot, it's about non-payment to Gwynne's agents for pumps at the Cotter'. I said, 'That's not so serious. Under war conditions the contract provisions would probably be regarded as being suspended'. In reply he urged me to get away at once. I did so, hailing a hansom from the rank near our office.

The Crown Solicitor, quite an erudite person, was, at the same time, not too practical, and moreover a most voluble speaker – in fact a veritable exemplar of *cacoethes loquendi*. Once started upon a subject, he found it difficult to stop, and there was an arranged technique by which his senior staff came to the rescue of the inquirer and 'took over', giving definite advice in the particular case. I duly appeared before The Crown, as he was jocularly called, and who, after his session with Bingle, was still in top gear, so I endured half an hour's exposition of the water supply systems of Australia, other parts of the world, and his own country house in the Dandenong Ranges.

According to schedule, we were at last interrupted by the next senior officer, who said, waving a paper, 'There is an urgent matter here, Sir, for your attention; perhaps I can fix up details with Mr Daley, now that you have explained the position to him'. 'Oh, yes', said The Crown, taking the paper, 'that will be all right. You will excuse me, Mr Daley, won't you?'

Of course I would, and after a few minutes explanation and discussion with the second officer in his room, we arrived at a solution, proposing that the Department pay the balance of the contract amount, subject to Gwynne's agents giving an indemnity to the Commonwealth, in the event of the pumps when they could be tested not providing the specified performance. This advice was accepted by both parties, and the amount in question paid – the summons, to Bingle's great relief, being withdrawn.

Shortly afterwards at the request of the British Government we built the Molonglo Internment Camp for housing enemy nationals from the Far East. As an adequate water supply

was essential, we charged the cost of connecting the Cotter mains to the pumping plant against the financial authority for the Camp. The Cotter water thus commenced its first entry to Canberra, the pumps behaved splendidly, the indemnity was discharged, and everyone was satisfied that the Department had acted honourably to its creditors.

WATER SUPPLY RUNNING DOWN

The oft-quoted oracular utterance in Vergil's *Aeneid*, *facilis descensus Avemo*, and its English adaptation 'it's easy to run downhill', may be applied to a water supply, and in its metaphorical sense actually does so in relation to the present-day condition of the water supply of Canberra. At one time regarded by many as the very exemplar of a perfect supply, its condition today, quite apart from the racket of fluoridation, is the subject of very general condemnation, a descent from quality that puzzles and disgusts the older generation, which delighted to drink it, and bathed in it with pleasure and a feeling of security.

When allotting to District Surveyor Charles Robert Scrivener the task of finding a suitable site for the capital in the Yass-Canberra region, the Minister said, in relation to water supply, that 'it must be of sufficient magnitude to place the question of volume at all seasons, and purity, beyond doubt'. In his report of 25 February 1909, Scrivener stated 'As a source of water supply, the Cotter River is equal to all demands that may be made upon it, even by a population of 200,000, with a per capita consumption of not less than 100 gallons per diem, but as a source of power it is not promising'. The technical board, of which he was a member, asked Scrivener to check his observations by a closer detailed survey of the Murrumbidgee, Molonglo, Queanbeyan and Cotter rivers, both for power and supply.

In the review of this matter, there was the advantage of reports sent by the New South Wales Government from several of its highly qualified engineers, including A.L. Lloyd, S. Weedon, L.A.B. Wade, W. Corin, and E.M. De Burgh, of whom De Burgh, perhaps, was the most important figure. Corin had examined the hydro-electric possibilities of the Cotter, as this was his special field. In respect to power, Scrivener expressed the view that, if a large amount of power were required at a moderate cost, it could be obtained from the Snowy River with its greater potentialities for the purpose.

In his final report, adopted by the board, Scrivener said 'there is a supply of perennially clear and pure water in the Cotter River, the catchment of which is about 170 square miles. According to the 1908 records, the supply at the point of gauging, is sufficient for the domestic and civic requirements of a population of 250,000.'

For the combined purposes of power and supply, however, the board considered that it could not be anticipated, with certainty, that the Cotter River would meet demands for a greater population than 50,000. This was because of the necessity to [curtail] the effective catchment by locating the weir higher in the valley. For water supply only – apart from power – the board accepted De Burgh's advice that a pumping scheme from a dam at a much lower level presented advantages over a gravitation scheme, with its greater cost and loss of interest, until the population exceeded 50,000.

It was decided that the physical features and conditions of the Molonglo or the Queanbeyan rivers were not favourable for the generation of electricity by water power to any large extent, though these rivers might later contain important water storages.

Approval was given accordingly for the adoption of the Cotter scheme on an initial pumping basis and the work was commenced in 1913. The actual designs were prepared under the Chief Engineer, Thomas Hill, by H.G. Connell, MCE, of the Department of Home Affairs, and he came to Canberra to superintend the execution of the work. Under him was one of the Department's most experienced Clerks of Works, Thomas Oxenham, who carried out concrete works for years at the forts of Port Phillip Bay. The Cotter Dam was designed for a height of 100 feet, but, before it was finished, in 1916, Griffin was largely responsible for reducing the height to 60 feet. In 1951, the Dam was raised to meet the requirements of the growing population, and further provision more recently made by constructing the Bendora Dam, at an elevation to command a gravitation scheme. Still another dam is projected, to be called the 'Corin' Dam [completed 1968]. In view of our rapidly expanding development, I feel that the choice of the name 'Corin' is not entirely a happy one, and that a selection should have been made that would be a memorial to one of those who really contributed to our water supply scheme. Corin was Chief Electrical Engineer of New South Wales, but he was never employed by the Commonwealth, in this regard, and his scheme was not adopted. It was at De Burgh's request that he examined the hydro-electric potential of the Cotter Valley. Other civil engineers, as indicated, also made reports to the State. If it were desired to accord honour to a New South Wales engineer, in respect to our water supply, the name of E.M. De Burgh immediately suggests itself. He was an early consultant of the Commonwealth, and he was selected as a member of the Federal Capital Advisory Council in 1921, for which body he made an exhaustive review of the whole question of water supply and sewerage of Canberra. He was eminent in relation to the design and execution of most of the important water supply schemes of the State for many years.

It would have been more acceptable, I think, if the name of Colonel P.T. Owen, Director-General of Commonwealth Works from 1904 to 1925, had been chosen. He actually put in the Cotter scheme and gave outstanding devotion to the whole plan for the capital until his retirement in 1927.

In present circumstances, it is of interest to dwell upon De Burgh's statement 'It is impossible to imagine a catchment from which a purer supply could be obtained. The water is soft, and bright and clear in colour, though occasionally heavy freshes produce a slight turbidity. Generally, the water is of the highest quality for a domestic supply, and the inclusion of the whole of the catchment of the Federal Territory ensures its protection against contamination in the future'. What has man done to it?

A TRUE FAIRY STORY

The Cement Scheme

Public servants are plagued by many frustrations of which little is heard by the community at large. The story of the Fairy Meadow Cement Scheme provides a good illustration.

In August 1912, the Director-General of Works, Colonel Owen, concerned at the high cost of cement in Australia (18/- a cask, as compared with 4/- in America), and realising that large quantities would be required for the Cotter Dam, the Power House, the sewer tunnels and other works in the Federal Territory, had a survey and tests made of the abundant limestone and shale deposits of the district. As a result, he recommended that the Commonwealth should establish a cement factory at Fairy Meadow, near Tarago, estimating that by so doing a saving of 10/- a cask would probably be effected. Owing to a change of government, the project was shelved for two years, but in April 1915 the Commonwealth acquired compulsorily 56 acres of land at Fairy Meadow for the undertaking, which was duly approved by the Public Works Committee.

Soon after this proposal was first mooted, however, a group of investors, including some Territory residents, calling themselves Hazeldell Ltd., and scenting a good profit, stepped in and purchased 4,130 acres at Fairy Meadow, the subject of a Crown Grant in 1866 and embracing the area that they knew was designated for the cement works. For this land they paid about £2/10/- an acre.

When the Commonwealth took the 56 acres, by compulsory process, it generously offered the company £1,200, or about £21/10/- an acre, but the company claimed £100,000 for loss of interests and £600 for severance. A New South Wales Supreme Court Judge found in favour of the Commonwealth, on its contention that limestone was a mineral reserved to the Crown and not, therefore, to be included in the land value. The company appealed to the Full Supreme Court, which reversed Judge Ferguson's findings in regard to the question of the limestone, and ordered a new trial in respect to its valuation.

The Commonwealth, in its turn, appealed to the High Court, which upheld the Full Court's decision against the Commonwealth. Upon this, the Commonwealth took the matter to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council and the Attorney-General of New South Wales intervened, supporting the Commonwealth, as the State was interested in the application of its Mining Act of 1906, which had declared limestone as a mineral open to access by the public, and therefore of no special value to the owner of the land. Their Lordships of the Privy Council, in 1921, advised His Majesty that the appeal failed, with costs against the Commonwealth.

It was then necessary to have a new Supreme Court trial, on the basis of the Privy Council's findings to determine the value of the limestone. A single Judge then awarded the company £12,500, on 14 May 1923. Dissatisfied, the company appealed to the High Court against this assessment, the case being heard in August 1924. The High Court upheld the assessment of £12,500, Mr Justice Starke dissenting and pointing out that the company, in 1913, acquired 4,130 acres for £10,000, that it returned £12,000 as their value to the Taxation Department in 1914 and 1915, but for 56 acres only, in 1915, it claimed £100,000.

Mr Justice Isaacs, afterwards the first Australian Governor-General, commented at length, drastically, on this 'startling example of protracted litigation' due in large measure 'to an archaic legal survival that still exists in New South Wales, though abandoned for over 40 years ... in England and Ireland ... and in every other Australian State'. He asked 'must we allow this huge pile of litigation once more to go spinning on its apparently interminable course of doubt, delay

and expense?' His reference to an archaic legal survival alludes, apparently, to the failure of New South Wales to adopt the simplified procedures introduced by the English *Judicature Act 1875*, by which there was, practically, the fusion of Common Law and Equity.

Thus it was that these 56 acres of poor land, worth under £2/10/- per acre, and which owing to legal difficulties, the war and the unreasonable delay, were never used for the purpose to which they were acquired, actually cost the Commonwealth approximately £32,000, or in the vicinity of £572 an acre.

How did we get on for cement while this marathon legal battle was being waged? Well, we had some unexpected good fortune. When war was declared against Germany, in August 1914, there were in Australian waters two of that country's merchantmen, the *Apolda* and the *Hamm*, heavily laden with excellent cement. They were promptly taken as prizes of war, so we secured some very good and extremely cheap cement for the Territory works – an ironic and fortuitous benefit from that dire calamity, the First World War.

WHERE IS THE ARSENAL?

On a previous occasion, I have referred to the frustrations suffered by responsible public servants in devoting time, thought and energy to projects that have come to nothing. The proposed Arsenal at Canberra was another of these.

Before the federal capital proposal had matured, steps had been taken to establish, for defence purposes, a cordite factory at Maribyrnong, Victoria, and a small arms factory at Lithgow, New South Wales. The Public Works Committee, in 1915, on the assumption that the Commonwealth should be self-contained in respect to the supply of munitions for war, and that the Arsenal should be complete in itself, recommended that this important establishment should be located in the Federal Capital Territory. For this purpose, the Committee suggested a site about two miles north of the Civic Centre, in Griffin's industrial area, near the contemplated route of the Canberra-Yass railway. Alternative sites under consideration included one on the Molonglo River, east of the present Fyshwick industrial area, another at Tuggeranong on the Murrumbidgee River, and a fourth at Tharwa, also on the same river.

The Government approved of the proposal for moving the munition activities from Lithgow and Maribyrnong, and for developing a great Arsenal near Canberra. It decided to refer the vexed question of the site again to the Public Works Committee. The Minister concerned at the time was King O'Malley, and he could not resist displaying some of his characteristic flamboyance when, in writing to the chairman of the Committee, he said, 'I need hardly remind the Committee that they will investigate a problem not only for the living present but for future unborn generations, and that they will best guard the hopes of democracy by submitting such a proposition as will relieve the city of fear at once of the incendiary and of the military despot, who might seize the Arsenal and train his guns on the Parliament House.'

The Committee duly recommended the adoption of the site at Tuggeranong, and active steps were taken to initiate the development of the large project in its various divisions, several committees being set up for the purpose. Tuggeranong Station, long the home of the

Cunningham family, was acquired. A delegation, led by Colonel Owen, Director-General of Works, went to India to study the munition factories established there. On its return, there was intense activity in planning the various factories, accumulating building materials, and preparing the site, including the planting of trees for shelter.

An important committee was that appointed to advise the Government on the layout of the Arsenal town. This was under the able chairmanship of Major A.J. Gibson, acting general manager of the Arsenal, previously Professor of Engineering at the University of Queensland, and later a partner in the firm of Sir George Julius, Poole and Gibson, of Sydney. Other members of the committee were Colonel P.T. Owen, J.T.H. Goodwin, Surveyor-General, and J.C. Morell, Victorian Government Town Planner. In addition, C.C. Reade, Government Town Planner for South Australia, and W.B. Griffin were nominated as consultants. The committee asked for my services as its secretary, and this was approved.

The whole project was secret and of great urgency, and the committee worked assiduously from August until December 1918, preparing a design for the town, with an estimated population of 15,000, and considered schemes for its control and management, examining the effects respectively of service by government control, by private enterprise, under a co-operative system, or by some combination of these. In this study, we were assisted by Professor Meredith Atkinson, of the Department of Economics and Sociology of Melbourne University.

For the development of this large undertaking, officers of the Department of Defence, Works and Home and Territories worked long hours and they were assisted by engineering consultants such as G.D. Delprat, B.H.P. general manager and F.W. Clements, a leading electrical engineer, who gave their services voluntarily, and by E.M. De Burgh, chief engineer for Water Supply and Sewerage, New South Wales.

Suddenly, in December 1918, the Government ordered that all activities on the Arsenal project cease, pending further advice from overseas. We prepared a report to put on record the work performed by the committee and were thanked for our services. Nothing more was heard of the Territory Arsenal upon which the sum of £29,456/9/4 was the recorded expenditure, to say nothing of the personal contribution of time, skill and devotion of a considerable team of men.

HOW THE CAUSEWAY GOT ITS NAME

In the Canberra scheme of nomenclature there are a number of names that excite particular curiosity, as their use is not self-evident. One of these is 'The Causeway', in relation to which I have had many inquiries. The term 'causeway' generally refers to a raised road or embankment, often to one crossing water, for example, the causeway connecting the island Singapore to the Malayan mainland. It is thought that the word came into English through the French *chausée* from the Low Latin *calciare* to pave a road, often with limestone.

In the Canberra scene, the word was first introduced by the designer of the city, Walter Burley Griffin, when he essayed a scheme of nomenclature in the 1918 revision of his city plan. Although most of his place and street names were superseded by those put forward by the Federal Capital Commission and gazetted in September 1928, 'The Causeway' was a descriptive

title that we decided to retain. It was used to designate the main avenue leading north from McMillan Crescent, crossing the Molonglo River by embankment between East Basin and Eastlake, to join Constitution Avenue where the Russell Defence Offices are now located.

From Griffin's point of view, that part of The Causeway across the river was required to serve two purposes, since abandoned. The first was to provide a bridge to carry his railway to the northern parts of the city; the second was to act as a solid dam to permit of the huge eastern lake being formed by raising its water level to 1,835 feet, or 10 feet above the water level fixed for the three basins and the western lake.

Whilst it may be conceded, from this somewhat technical explanation, that Griffin may have quite properly named his transpluvial avenue, 'The Causeway', the question naturally arises 'Why apply the name to a housing settlement?' Well the answer is simple. In 1924-25, we had difficulties retaining the services of good tradesmen, owing to the post-war boom in building in all capital cities, especially as we had no residences locally for them and their families. In short, we had no houses because of the shortage of tradesmen, and we failed to obtain tradesmen because of the shortage of houses. To break this vicious circle, we decided to provide a large number of standardised portable-type wooden houses that could be rapidly erected, and could be moved readily later when an adequate supply of houses of permanent character became available.

The Federal Capital Commission approved of locating a group of 120 of these wooden houses on an area having a frontage to The Causeway, as it was not anticipated that this avenue, and its permanent development, with road and railway, would occur for many years, and certainly not within the anticipated life of the settlement, estimated at little more than five years. The name 'The Causeway' became a convenient reference for the housing scheme, particularly as the avenue was never constructed, and it has retained the name ever since.

So much for estimates; the five years has extended to forty years and the houses are still in use. Although of light construction and of one type, each stands on a site of reasonable size and has always been served with water, sewerage and electric power. It is not correct, by comparison, to designate them as a 'slum', as many have done, including Senator Collings, when in opposition. When Senator Collings became Minister for the Interior, however, in 1941, he directed that the policy I had promoted of demolishing the houses, progressively, as tenancies ceased, should be abandoned, and, on the contrary, he was responsible for considerable expenditure upon additions and improvements to many of the dwellings that he had previously condemned. He became sympathetic to the wishes of the tenants who elected to stay at The Causeway, paying a few shillings a week rental, instead of moving to houses on permanent locations at rentals three or four times as high as those that they then enjoyed.

The Causeway was the scene of many concerts and social occasions in the large hall that was erected there by community effort, before the availability of the Albert Hall in 1928. The first broadcast of a concert from Canberra took place from it in 1926. The Philharmonic Society, under Aubrey Mowle, rendered a programme of operatic selections, and one of the artists was the [later well-known] radio personality, Wilfrid Thomas.

Many families at The Causeway have made, and are still making, valuable contributions to Canberra's community life in a variety of aspects, and this will be well remembered in future, long after the settlement will inevitably have passed away.⁵⁴

A LOST SUBURB

Canberra's First World War Internment Camp

One afternoon early in February 1918 in Melbourne I was conferring with the chief architect, J.S. Murdoch, when our mutual head, Colonel Owen, Director-General of Works burst hurriedly into the room, and said to Murdoch 'Sandy, what do you think of this?' He held out a copy of a cablegram from the British Government asking if we could provide an internment camp, within three months, for about 3,500 German nationals who were being expelled from China, then our ally. These included whole families, and single men and women having no loyalty to the Allies. Colonel Owen remarked 'I don't think we could look at it in time', but Murdoch, in his dry Scotch manner, replied, 'We must help Britain somehow; give me an hour or two to think this over.'

By the end of the day Murdoch's resourceful and experienced mind had evolved an ingenious scheme for constructing a camp in the Federal Capital Territory, on a site between the then city boundary and Queanbeyan, and sloping gently from a hill towards the Molonglo River. The site adjoined what is now the Fyshwick industrial area.

Murdoch's scheme was approved and we started furiously to work. The plan provided for about 30 acres of buildings, laid out in blocks projected fanwise from the hill, upon which the military post was to be located. The blocks of multiple living units were grouped in pairs, with an open space between them, containing both laundry and service units for each pair [...] Hospital buildings were obtained from a camp at Menangle, near Liverpool.

For the extensive series of standardised housing blocks, of wooden construction, the materials were mass produced, being fabricated in Sydney by four of the largest timber firms, and railed to Canberra, bolted together and placed on wooden foundations prepared meanwhile by the Works Department. Everything proceeded like a planned military operation. A simultaneous start was also made with all the engineering services, the reservoir, water mains, sewerage system, roads, electricity, and the indispensable railway siding that the New South Wales authorities asked three weeks for completion, and which we finished in three days.

Furnishing this large establishment involved the provision of thousands of articles of every description, for the family dwellings, single quarters, barracks, Officers' Mess, the school and community buildings, at a time of great scarcity. The time schedule allowed only 10 weeks, and, despite the difficulties and shortages caused by the war, the whole work, commenced on 19 February, was complete by 30 April. This surely constituted a building *tour de force*, at a time before mechanical engineering plant had come into vogue, and its success was a tribute to the inspiration of Murdoch, the organising drive of Colonel Owen and his chief engineer, Tom Hill, and the tenacity of the indefatigable Works Director, C.H.U. Todd.

How strange, however, was the sequel! The expatriates from China never came, owing to some negotiation by the German Government through a neutral medium. The Australian Government, however, had rounded up many German civilian nationals in the [Pacific] Islands and throughout the Commonwealth and about 60 of them were sent to the Molonglo Camp, which operated until 1920, when it was evacuated. Many of the occupants were of a superior type, and they made attractive gardens, set up a theatre and a good library, and established a fair standard of living. They were granted reasonable parole, and were often seen in Queanbeyan or in walking trips around the Territory.

A trust committee of which I was the executive secretary was set up to dispose of the camp and its equipment to the best advantage [...] Some of the Oregon buildings were used at the Acton offices, and elsewhere, and the tenements, badly depreciated, were progressively dismantled and sold at scrap value. Sad to relate, owing to the stupidity of a sergeant in charge of a military cleaning-up detachment in 1920, the excellent library, with some beautiful editions of standard German literature, was burnt, because it was German. [Unfortunately some of the text of this article is missing]

LESSONS IN NOMENCLATURE

The names used for streets and features of Canberra seem to provide a subject of ever-growing interest and, in regard to growth, the rapid expansion of our city into new suburbs presents definite problems in the field of nomenclature. It is important that worthy names be used, and the basis laid down for this purpose in 1928, and explained in an earlier article, has given a good lead in this matter.

One of the principles then adopted was that, with the exception of Governors-General and Governors, the names of living persons would not be used. At a crowded afternoon party in the Officers' Mess at the Royal Military College, Duntroon, a gentleman asked me, in loud tones, 'Mr Daley, who is that severe-looking military officer?' and he pointed to a large portrait over the mantelpiece. I replied 'the first Commandant of the Australian Military Forces after Federation'. This did not appear to convey anything to the group concerned, so I said 'We have a street called after him, leading down to the Drill Hall'. Even this did not seem to answer the question, so I ended by saying 'General Hutton'. My inquirer, who was a clergyman, then remarked 'Why don't you call a street after a member of the clergy – what about myself?' Much amusement ensued when I rejoined 'If you will hurry up and die, we could give consideration to your claims'.

The name 'Manuka' seems to puzzle many folk. It is, of course, the name of the attractive New Zealand tea-tree, and it was borne for years by a well-known steamship plying between that country and Australia. Walter Burley Griffin was interested in botanical names, and this was one of a number that he placed on his developed Canberra map, allotting it to a small circle at the junction of his so-called Wellington and Eastlake Avenues now both renamed Canberra Avenue. We used to pronounce Manuka with the main accent on the second syllable, but in 1921, Sir John Sulman, architect, and Chairman of the Federal Capital Planning and Development Committee, who had practised in New Zealand, insisted that the strong accent should be on the first syllable 'Man'. Bowing to his authority, we adopted this variation which soon passed into

general use. It has often been queried, however, by New Zealanders, who preferred the old style. One evening, at a function at the YWCA, I asked a Maori girl, a graduate of the University, which pronunciation was the correct one, accent on the first or the second syllable. To my great surprise, she replied 'on neither', and explained that, like French, the Maori language had few strong accents, and that 'Manuka' should be uttered with even stress on each of the three syllables, like a ripple. Our pronunciation, now definitely colloquial, is unlikely to change.

A host in a southern suburb one night asked me to 'give a lift' to two ladies on my way home. One lived in Forrest, the other at Yarralumla. To my inquiry of the latter as to her street, she replied 'It's called "Schlich Street" – I don't know who could have given it such an idiotic name'. 'Would you really like to know?' I asked, and upon her clear intimation, I said, 'Well, I did'. This was a little unkind of me, and the lady was confused and apologetic. 'Don't worry' I remarked. 'I'm quite used to this. We're all prone to be critical without knowing the facts.' I explained that Yarralumla, in the vicinity of the Australian School of Forestry, had been allotted the names of foresters and botanists, such as Novar, Mueller and Hooker; that Schlich, at Oxford, was the first Professor of Forestry in the British Commonwealth; he had produced the authoritative encyclopaedia of trees; and had influenced forestry in Australia. My admonishment was well received.

On another occasion I was requested to deliver a radio announcer to his lodging in Ainslie. 'What street?' I asked, and he replied 'Ebden', then remarking 'whoever heard of Ebden? Why don't they name streets after important people?' This nettled me, and I said 'Radio announcers evidently don't study our history'. For his better information I told him that Ebden was a very important man in his time. Born in London, in 1811, he went to Australia and became one of our leading pastoralists. He was the first man to take sheep across the Murray River into Victoria, and he bought blocks at the first Melbourne land sale. He represented Victoria in the early Legislative Council in Sydney, and he was a leader in the movement to secure the separation of the Port Phillip Bay District from New South Wales and its constitution as the Colony of Victoria, of which he became Auditor-General, a member of the Legislative Council and then Treasurer. He was also Acting Premier. Returning to England in 1860, he entered the House of Commons, and he finally died in Melbourne, whilst on a visit there in 1867. He was therefore one of Australia's important pioneers.

The young announcer thanked me, and I am sure that he learned a profitable lesson.



Mr (later Sir) Robert Menzies at the opening of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in 1929. The Reverend Hector Harrison stands on the steps behind him.

EARLY HISTORY OF SCHOOLS IN THE TERRITORY

Publicity on [a possible independent system of primary and secondary education in the Australian Capital Territory], as well as inquiries from some residents as to the present [1960s] system, served to recall the earlier history of the Territory schools, for which the Commonwealth became responsible on 1 January 1911, the date the Territory ceased to be part of New South Wales.

In the agreement between the Commonwealth and the State, as embodied in the *Seat of Government Surrender Act* of New South Wales, and the *Seat of Government Acceptance Act* of the Commonwealth in 1909, it was provided that the State laws in force immediately before January 1911 should, as far as applicable, continue in force until the Commonwealth made other provisions.

Among the manifold statutes thus covered was the *Education Act 1880*, under which about ten small public schools were operated in the Territory by the State Department of Education. An

agreement was made immediately with the State Government for its Education Department to continue the control of the schools, subject to annual reimbursement by the Commonwealth of the cost involved.

After the First World War, in 1921, the Federal Capital Advisory Committee under Sir John Sulman reviewed the requirements for schools in its development scheme to provide for the new population, and it proposed that the small schools being conducted in and around the city area should be replaced by a central modern school, where pupils would enjoy the advantages of larger and more specialised staff and equipment. The committee suggested that, where necessary, children be conveyed at the Government's expense to the central school. This was approved, and the first central school was established at Telopea Park in 1923. A site for a second school was reserved at Ainslie (now Braddon), and this one was opened in 1927 by the Prime Minister and practically the whole Cabinet, its meeting having been adjourned to enable Mr Bruce to fulfill an engagement that had been overlooked.

At this stage, the administration of the Territory was in the hands of the Federal Capital Commission, and the Chief Commissioner, Mr (later Sir John) Butters, asked me to work out a five-year programme of educational development. I made an appointment with the Director of Education, in Sydney, who at that time was S.H. Smith.

Smith had an excellent record as a teacher, an inspector and an organiser under the distinguished director, Peter Board, whom he succeeded. He had been responsible for founding and editing the *School Magazine* and for setting up continuation schools. He was chief inspector of technical and commercial schools, and he initiated the correspondence school system in New South Wales, and took a leading part in the work of many public bodies. These facts are mentioned to indicate that even men of great knowledge and ability in New South Wales, particularly in the public service, were hostile towards the Commonwealth, that new luminary which served to dim some of the lustre of 'the Mother State'.

Smith received me with studied coldness, saying at once that he had no interest in Canberra and never wished to see it again. It was my difficult duty to point out, as tactfully as I could, that under his State's agreement with the Commonwealth to conduct our schools, any shortcomings found by the public servants from Melbourne, who were leaving the excellent education system built up by Frank Tate in Victoria, might be laid at his door.

This did not seem particularly to impress him, but he passed me on to his assistant director, B.C. Harkness, whom I found to be really enthusiastic, by contrast, at the prospect of taking a share in developing an adequate school programme for the national capital. In reply to my query as to the reason for Smith's unfriendly attitude, he informed me that Smith had visited the Territory some years before, together with his minister, and considered that they had been treated with lack of courtesy by a local parents and friends' association.

Harkness often came to Canberra, and he co-operated with us for years in extending Telopea Park School, establishing Ainslie School (which he said was the best primary school in his

department's list), and the Canberra High School. Until he retired he gave his personal attention to the selection of our teachers and to all important questions affecting the Territory schools.

In regard to technical education, we had the advantage of the warm co-operation of the New South Wales Superintendent of Technical Education, James Nangle, OBE, who was also Director of the Observatory, and quite a loveable character. Technical classes were carried on for some years at Telopea Park School, but in the early thirties these were removed to Kingston, and housed in buildings moved from the Royal Military College, Duntroon, after that institution was transferred to Sydney for a term of years, during the economic depression.

Telopea Park School had the unusual task of providing accommodation for all manner of educational activities, from the kindergarten to the university level, until its congestion, and the city's growth, demanded the gradual provision of alternative facilities for all the various elements as well as additional schools in the expanding suburbs.

In justice to S.H. Smith, I should recall that, a few years after my first interview with him, Harkness telephoned me one day and said that Smith was visiting Cooma and Yass, and that he had persuaded him to spend the weekend at Canberra. He remarked, 'It's now up to you'.

Well, I took Smith in hand and, avoiding any reference at first to education, showed him the interesting features of Canberra's countryside. Before he left, when having tea with my wife and myself, he said suddenly, 'Mr Daley, I have a confession to make. I have been entirely wrong in my outlook towards Canberra and the capital. It is a lovely place and I now realise its potentialities. I shall try and make amends for my past attitude. I'll see that your schools get the best staff we can provide, and my personal attention to your requirements' – a remarkable retraction for which I admired him.

Smith was as good as his word and, after his retirement, Harkness and Nangle continued their good offices towards the Territory, with generally harmonious results, and the laying of sound foundations for the extensive growth that has since occurred, and in which their successors in the Department of Education have taken such an enthusiastic and successful part.

SECOND PLACE FOR THE FIRST SCHOOL

Telopea Park

The former Narrabundah Public School was the oldest of the small primary schools in the city area of the Federal Capital Territory at the time of its formation in 1911.

The Federal Capital Advisory Committee, after reviewing the conditions of the Territory in 1921, included in its initial scheme for development provision for two modern primary schools in the city area, one on the south (Telopea Park), the other on the north (Ainslie). Firmly believing that schools should have ample playing and garden areas, the committee selected Phillip Park, with about 14 acres, for the southern school and a site of similar area in Ainslie (now Braddon) for the northern school. The southern site was within a stone's throw of that of the old Narrabundah School, located at previous crossroads, about where the [Forrest] fire station now stands.

During our early visits to Canberra from Melbourne, we called sometimes at the old school and brought perhaps a welcome relief to the pupils from their ordinary routine, by telling them a little of what was to happen in the building of the new city 'just here'.

The first section of the new school [in 1965 called Telopea Park High School] was completed in 1923. As a fine brick structure, with well-lit classrooms, individual grade teachers, and modern accessory facilities, it presented, for the first time locally, a marked contrast to the ancient and dilapidated framed structures, with practically no amenities, which had been accepted cheerfully, however, under the more primitive conditions at the rural level.

The opening of this first modern school was performed by Sir Austin Chapman, Minister for Trade and Customs, and member for our adjoining electorate Eden-Monaro, on 11 September 1923. At this ceremony, the Hon. T.D. Mutch, representing the New South Wales Department of Education, made history, and thrilled the 200 pupils, and indeed the large gathering of parents, by saying, in his official address, 'You young people have a great distinction. Whilst some of us just belong to a State, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, or one of the others, you belong to the National Capital – you're true-blue Australians'.

Attendance at the Telopea Park School rapidly increased as the general population grew, and the transportation facilities were gradually extended to more of the smaller outlying schools, and new wings had to be added to the school, in 1927, to accommodate 450 pupils. The school developed a secondary 'top' and its scholars sat for the Intermediate Certificate, and later for the Leaving Certificate. In fact, it became the cradle and foster-parent of all our public educational features. Of course, it became desperately overcrowded, despite moderate extensions with funds grudgingly provided, especially when a separate secondary school was set up within its walls.

With further expanding population, and the evolution of the educational scheme, Telopea Park ultimately dropped its primary sections, and then developed into the excellent full high school status – a striking contrast to its simple district predecessor, the primary school at Narrabundah. [Now known as Telopea Park School, it caters for children from Kindergarten to Year 10.]

HOW PRE-SCHOOL CENTRES GREW

During the past week a large gathering of the old and present residents of the suburb of Reid assembled under very happy conditions to celebrate the twenty-first anniversary of the founding of Reid Pre-school Centre.

This centre, opened in November 1945, was the first of the series of pre-school units established by the Department of the Interior in practically all suburbs of the city, in a programme which represents probably the most popular and successful undertaking to which the department has put its hand.

Before 1940 action had been taken by me to provide in the development programme for the erection of two nursery schools (one on each side of the river) on the general model of the Lady Gowrie Child Centres made available in the State capitals under a scheme promoted with

Commonwealth funds by the Commonwealth Department of Health. The outbreak of war effectively halted further consideration of such a scheme for Canberra.

Interest in the proposal was maintained and stimulated, however, by the formation, out of the Mothercraft Society, of the Canberra Nursery Kindergarten Society which was strongly supported by Lady Gowrie herself and by Mrs K.H. (now Lady) Bailey, who had been actively associated with a similar movement in Melbourne.

The Canberra Mothercraft Society had been founded in 1926 and had always joined in the advocacy for some organised provision for its young charges in the gap between the nursery and the primary school. In 1942 two small and unofficial pre-school centres were operating, each conducted by a local resident and trained kindergartner, one at the Royal Military College, Duntroon, the other at the Griffith Mothercraft Centre.

With the transfer of the Community Hospital from its original site in Acton, on the university area, the opportunity came, despite war restrictions, to obtain a building very suitable for use as a nursery school. This was the former isolation block of the hospital. It consisted of several large wards, with service sections adjoining, a kitchen block attached and a sheltered verandah facing the east. It was intended to accommodate portion of a public department in the building, but representations from the societies mentioned and from Lady Gowrie induced the Minister for the Interior, Senator Collings, to direct me to have the building fitted up as Canberra's first nursery school, following generally the lines of the Lady Gowrie Child Centres in the State capitals. Moreover, the Minister managed to secure from the Treasury somehow adequate funds to renovate the structure and make a first-class job of the school and its playgrounds. It was opened in 1944 by Lady Gowrie, who regarded it with especial favour. Before she left Australia she remarked to me 'It's the nicest of them all.'

The school had accommodation for 92 children, who were conveyed each day by special omnibuses. There were, of course, hundreds of children for whom admission to the school was requested, so we adopted a quota system, allotting to each suburb a number of places relative to its comparative population and selecting the children by ballot. A Parents and Citizens Association for the school was quickly formed, the co-operation given being astonishing.

The children remained for a full day, Monday to Friday, so a luncheon or hot dinner had to be provided, in addition to the incidental fruit drinks and milk. The dining room, with its small tables and chairs, in groups of four, and the classrooms in the sleeping period in the afternoon presented a charming scene and the school became a popular feature for visitors as well as parents. Special viewing cubicles were constructed from which visitors could watch without being seen by the children.

Mothers took their turn in the kitchen and dining room and assisted in the cleaning of the building, while the fathers undertook a scheme for the formation of a kitchen garden to provide the greens and other vegetables for the meals. Many of the men, who did the digging and cultivation very well, found it somewhat irksome to stand and do the watering with a hose, so I had fixed surface water-pipes installed to spray the whole garden area.

Parents paid three shillings a week toward the cost of the children's meals and refreshments. The school was placed under the general direction of the New South Wales Department of Education for staffing and curriculum and, I believe, was the first one at the pre-school level in its system.

The Lady Gowrie Child Centres were independently conducted by the Australian Association for Pre-School Child Development. Its field officer was the capable Miss Gladys Pendred, who became our consultant later for the pre-school centres. For the nursery school, however, we had the valuable advice of Miss Wyndham, head of the independent Kindergarten Training School of Sydney. Miss Wyndham agreed to the transfer of Miss Hinsby, one of her best inspectors, to the Education Department, and thereby to the position of headmistress of the nursery school. Miss Hinsby was highly regarded for her capacity for friendly co-operation with parents, to whom she gave helpful lectures on child care at evening sessions.

The nursery school became one of the most satisfactory and popular of our community centres. It provided an ideal example of active goodwill in pleasant surroundings until the school was closed in 1952, and became an 'overflow' primary school.

As the nursery school could cater for only 92 children, it was necessary to develop alternative provisions, for which, with the growing population, there was considerable pressure from our citizens. Expert opinion took the view that the whole-day programme for a five-day week was not necessary for children aged from three to five years, and that two or three half-day periods per week would suffice to give children an introduction to community living, hygienic routines and the other benefits that the pre-school system could bestow.

This opinion, supported by our consultant, the late Miss Pendred, and by Dr Scantlebury Brown, Director of Maternal Welfare for the State of Victoria, after the review of Canberra conditions, led to the adoption of a policy to providing pre-school centres in each suburb.

Dr Scantlebury Brown had established a mobile pre-school and mothercraft unit in Victoria and she sent it to Canberra for our inspection. It proved to be most suitable for taking a pre-school programme to outlying centres and it was arranged to purchase a similar vehicle to operate in the Territory. Details of the whole pre-school centre scheme were worked out with Miss Pendred and we planned a standard building for the first centre to be constructed at Reid, in Dirrawan Gardens.

Funds were not forthcoming, however, for the structure as designed, so we decided to rely on an open-air programme, building only a wash-block, with a large verandah for shelter and playground facilities. This constituted the pioneer pre-school unit in Canberra and was opened in 1945 under the direction of Miss Rosa Combes, daughter of the Commandant of the Royal Military College. She had been trained at the Kindergarten Training College, Melbourne, and on her own initiative had conducted the small child care centre within the grounds of the Royal Military College in 1942.

As conditions improved economically, funds were provided for establishing other pre-school centres and for completing the building at the Reid Centre. The earlier centres, constructed to a

standard design, were in Turner, Griffith and Ainslie. [In 1966 there were] 33 centres, including the Occasional Care Centres at City and Manuka which provided a programme for casual pupils whose mothers were attending the adjoining Mothercraft Centre or shopping.

It is of interest to note that the list of pre-school centres includes examples at Jervis Bay and the Aboriginal station at Wreck Bay, in Commonwealth Territory.

For the staffing of these pre-school centres, the Department of the Interior granted scholarships to those selected and willing to undertake training at the Kindergarten Colleges in the various State capitals. It also employed a number of previously trained married women to meet the greatly increased demands of the last few years.

Apart from the assistance and relief to parents provided by the pre-school centres, there is little doubt that the experience of a former attendance at one of these centres is helpful to most children when they make the transition, at five or six years, to a primary course.

Some years ago a noted American educationist, speaking at a public meeting in the Institute of Anatomy, said the Canberra pre-school system was 'the best in the world'.

I rose and asked him if he really meant this high encomium.

He then called on his wife – a trained kindergartner – to support him. She did so with alacrity, declaring that our scheme for parent co-operation was a wonderful factor. It was the most effective she had noted in a wide survey of pre-school work in many countries.

It is pleasing to know that, in this field, our city has been 'in the van'.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS SPONSORED BY CHURCHES

In addition to the many public schools, private schools established by the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches have played an increasingly important part in providing education for the children of the Australian Capital Territory. This tradition goes back many years before the federal era. Most people are acquainted with the old school building at St John's Church at Reid. It was provided by the Campbell family of Duntroon, which strongly favoured denominational schools, as opposed to those on a secular basis.

St John's School, established between 1844 and 1847, is generally regarded as the first Territory school. But there was another, at Girminderra, under Methodist auspices which might have begun earlier, although this is not quite certain. In 1848 Captain Campbell of Duntroon mentioned that it had been conducted for four years.

In the year 1858 there is a record of a Roman Catholic school at Canberry, thought to have been at Springbank, probably during Sullivan's occupancy of that property, now reduced to a small island in Lake Burley Griffin. This school, conducted by one John Beston and probably organised from Queanbeyan, apparently had a short life and little is known about it.

There are many anecdotes of St John's School. Its first headmaster was the scholastic but mercurial Andrew Wotherspoon – 'a bit of a poet and somewhat cranky' – who alternated between schoolteaching and working as a shepherd. He found it difficult to come down from his

MA standard in classics and mathematics to the requirements of an elementary school and inspectors' reports upon him were not altogether favourable.

He was succeeded in 1863 by a man less qualified academically, but of fine character and devoted in service. James Abemathy had likewise been a shepherd, but had risen to be superintendent of Yarralumla station. He was parish clerk, and reputedly much beloved by the whole community. He carried on the school successfully until 1880, when, under the Education Act, it was closed as a result of the new policy for State undenominational schools. It is of interest that Abernathy moved to Young, to a government school, and that he lived to the age of 90, and was survived by 10 children, 44 grandchildren and 42 great-grandchildren.

From 1880 until 1926 there were no privately conducted schools in the Territory, so far as is known, until the establishment in that year of St Gabriel's Church of England Girls' Grammar School, which opened in the old St John's Rectory, Reid.

Sister Hilda, the Australian head of an Anglican Sisterhood and a woman of outstanding personality and ability, founded the school and later conducted the negotiations and financial operations leading to the provision of a permanent home for the school, as a boarding and day establishment, on the fine site in Deakin that it occupies today. It provided for both primary and secondary levels of education.

In 1928 the keen interest of Dean Haydon and others led to the founding of St Christopher's Roman Catholic Convent and School at Manuka, at which instruction at both primary and secondary standard was also given. This school also was noted for its excellent facilities for the teaching of music, which were made available generally, and were of great benefit for many years to the growing city.

The Anglican authorities established in 1929 at Red Hill the Canberra Grammar School, a boarding and day school for boys. This was done by moving the existing Monaro Grammar School from Cooma. It has retained an association with country families ever since and has been organised also to provide suitable courses for boys intending to engage in rural pursuits.

A second school, at primary standard, was established in Braddon later by the Roman Catholic authorities, so that there were four private denominational schools operating at a fairly early period in Canberra's history after its transition in 1925 from a construction camp to the status of a city.

These schools had been fostered, it will be noted, by two church communities only, Anglican and Roman Catholics. Because of the economic depression of the early thirties all these schools had most difficult experiences, and it was only from the great efforts of a few devoted people that they were kept going.

We had introduced an Education Ordinance, under which a private school had to be licensed and inspected each year. As funds were short, competent staffs were not fully available and standards suffered accordingly. It was my responsibility to approve of the renewal of the licences, and much forbearance had to be exercised. But the schools eventually 'weathered the storms', and after many trials developed into the very fine institutions we have today.

During the life of the Federal Capital Commission we had tentative inquiries from representatives of other denominations but no further developments actually occurred. In 1927 the Reverend Ronald Macintyre, a past Moderator-General of the Presbyterian Church, and chairman of the business committee of its general assembly, spent some time in Canberra convalescing, and he began keen negotiations with us for a site for a Presbyterian greater public school in the national capital. A tentative allotment of a site was made by the Commission, and when this charming and deeply learned churchman came to me to take his leave I remarked that his proposals would involve the raising of much money.

He smiled and said, 'Mr Daley, when we Presbyterians set our minds to a task, we put up the cash. You wait and see.'

After 40 years I am still waiting to see any signs of this projected school.⁵⁵

CANBERRA CHURCH UNITY IS NOT NEW

About 20 sites for churches in the city area were selected in 1928 by the Federal Capital Advisory Committee which suggested that one main site be granted to each denomination in perpetuity, at a peppercorn rental subject to the provision of satisfactory buildings. Two of these sites were for cathedrals for the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches.

The proposals were ratified and the appropriate provisions contained in the Church Lands Lease Ordinance 1927. Another ordinance, the Leases (Special Purposes) Ordinance, was made to enable leases to be granted for institutions of a community character, including minor churches, on special terms. Under this legislation, leases of a number of additional church sites were taken up by denominations, at definite annual rentals, requiring the erection of buildings of approved design within a specified time.

One morning the Chief Commissioner, Sir John Butters, when discussing with me some matters in relation to church leases said, 'You know, it's going to be very hard, for some years, for all these people to raise from this community the money needed to carry out these building covenants on the church sites. And, in a way, such an attempt will be broadly an uneconomic proceeding. Why can't they use each other's churches, for a few years?'

My comment was that this, if suggested, might raise the controversial question of church unity, and the Commission might earn no thanks for its disinterested proposal. Sir John went on, 'Oh, I'm not thinking of anything doctrinal – only a matter of economy while we are a comparatively small community. Anyhow, I'll try them out.'

On behalf of the Commission, which endorsed his proposal, Sir John made the suggestion to the various church authorities then represented in Canberra. Presbyterians, Methodists and Congregationalists agreed to collaborate in regard to a certain degree of common use of each other's churches. All these denominations had been granted sites in perpetuity for their main church, and the Presbyterians, and Methodists also, had leased a minor church site each in Braddon and Reid respectively and their first churches were built on those leases.

The Congregational Church, which had comparatively few adherents in Canberra, was granted a main site in Canberra Avenue, Manuka. The site was afterwards surrendered as it had not been developed. The site is now occupied by the Roman Catholic Church, and contains the Haydon Centre. The Congregational Church, not having even one building of its own, suffered most from the arrangement for the joint use of buildings, while the Presbyterians and Methodists had at least one church each, and both went ahead with schemes for providing their principal churches on their main sites in Forrest.

The suggested co-operative arrangement therefore did not last long, and could hardly be regarded as a successful experiment. For the Congregationalists, always in the van in regard to movements for the consideration of church union, it proved disastrous, but they have now made up much of the ground they had lost, with an attractive group of buildings in Northbourne Avenue thanks to the determined efforts of Mr K. Binns, Mr L.S. Jackson and other enthusiasts [now City Uniting Church and completely re-built].

The Federal Capital Commission's suggestion was based on economic considerations, when local conditions were much less favourable than they are today, and were actually worsening with the oncoming depression.



Laying the foundation stone of the new hospital. Sister Curley is being shaded under a parasol by Mrs Ashton.

PANGS AT LOSS OF HISTORIC BUILDING

The First Hospital

It is always a matter of regret when a building with historical associations is demolished, and this feeling is intensified in the hearts of those who took some part in the provision of the building to meet an important need at the time of its erection. At the present moment, a structure of this description is in the hands of wreckers, and will shortly disappear to make way for a modern development. I refer to the first building erected as part of the original Canberra Hospital, at Acton, on the site now vested in the Australian National University. This building, whose constructional quality and condition, after more than 50 years of solid service – it was erected in 1913 – contrast more than favourably with those of the framed structures of today, contained the matron's living and administrative quarters, and some accessory accommodation.

When activities were resumed at the capital in 1921, after the First World War, the hospital was conducted by Matron G. Lawler, whose qualifications came from the famous Rotunda

Hospital of Dublin, and included those of a pharmacist. She objected to the title 'matron', and insisted on being referred to as 'Miss Lawler', as pharmacy was a profession. She possessed the typical Irish qualities of warm-hearted attachment to her friends and to those in need, and of implacable and somewhat unreasoning enmity towards those who, she considered, were working against her. It was my misfortune, after several years' enrolment in the first category, to pass rather violently to the second, in consequence of an inquiry into the working of the hospital, set up by the Federal Capital Commission in 1928 and followed by the matron's resignation.

Miss Lawler was an enthusiastic horsewoman, and she used to ride out and visit the several workmen's camps, giving advice and medicine to those indisposed. She was held in great esteem by the employees, and enjoyed a somewhat unusual position and prestige for the matron of a hospital of the period, especially in the years before we had a full-time medical superintendent, when two visiting doctors from Queanbeyan constituted the medical staff and received the matron's confident advice.

From 1921 to 1925, the hospital was one of the few institutions available for visits by MPs, who came to see what the future seat of government was like. Miss Lawler used to entertain these members, and their wives and friends, and she had thus a large circle of official acquaintances. Prominent among them were Mr W.M. and Dame Mary Hughes, Sir Littleton and Lady Groom, Sir Austin Chapman, Mr Arthur Blakeley, Sir Elliott Johnson, and senior officers of the Works Branch and other departments whose duties took them to Canberra from time to time. The matron's building was, therefore, the scene of many social occasions.

Miss Lawler was very conscious of her attractive appearance and her personality, and loved company. Next to horseriding, dancing was her favourite recreation. She was even known to dance on the kitchen tables, before a group of probationers, to their intense delight, and to the dismay of the cook, who promptly handed me her resignation. Many of us received invitations to dance on the verandah of the present doomed building, to the music of the gramophone, and afterwards to enjoy therein a sumptuous fare, for the matron was a skilled provider, and she did nothing by halves.

After the hospital moved to its permanent location, lower down on the Acton peninsula, the matron's building was used for some years as the offices of one of the overseas legations, and afterwards for various purposes of the University. At my suggestion, the Canberra and District Historical Society recently gave consideration to the question of removing this first hospital building to another site, and using it as the society's headquarters and museum. The University authorities graciously agreed to hand over the structure, as a gift, to the society, which, however, later decided that it could not accept this generous offer.

In the circumstances, this building of great importance to the early Canberra community, and the scene of many gatherings, grave and gay, has been sold for removal, and its components will suffer dispersal to the four winds of heaven. One portion is to be moved to do service on a property on the Murrumbidgee River, not far from Yass. The site of the building will probably accommodate future extensions of the newly-erected structure of the University's Geophysics Department.

THE HOSPITAL'S EARLY DAYS

The recent impressive scene at the Canberra Hospital, when, in its new and well-appointed nurses' quarters, the Minister of Health and the Hospital Board, before a large gathering, took part in a dignified graduation ceremony, is one more indication that Canberra has reached a decided maturity in its civic development. Some of the guests at the ceremony asked me many questions about the earlier days of hospital service, a matter about which there is, apparently, considerable interest.

At the time the Territory was transferred to the Commonwealth, the Queanbeyan Hospital served the needs of the local population, but, as numbers of workmen's camps were established, it became necessary to provide this service on the spot. For a short period, it was arranged for the Medical Officer at the Royal Military College to be available in cases of illness amongst departmental officers and works employees, but soon a special Medical Officer was appointed to handle all public health matters, and a temporary hospital was set up in one of the newly-erected cottages at Acton, with a nursing sister in charge.

Meanwhile, steps were taken to plan and erect the wooden hospital on the present University site. Under the then approved plan for the city, the University was to be located on City Hill, and the permanent hospital where the University now stands. The temporary hospital was duly opened, but, owing to the decline of population as a result of the First World War, it was closed and the Queanbeyan Hospital again utilised for Canberra residents.

After the war, when the works programme was resumed, the Hospital at Canberra was reopened under Matron Lawler, with Doctors Blackall and Christie from Queanbeyan as visiting medical officers. Each of them soon appointed a medical assistant to represent them continuously in Canberra, and we built consulting rooms for them at Acton. The two young doctors lived at the bachelors' quarters (now Lennox House) and their wing was known as 'Macquarie Street'. At the hospital, in 1925, when the Federal Capital Commission assumed control, it found the facilities obviously inadequate. There were only 22 beds in the general wards, of which only five were available for female patients. There was a small isolation section, partly in tents. The matron and the two sisters had rooms, but three junior nurses were quartered, one in a sitting room, one in the isolation section, the third in a tent. A cook and two maids had rooms in the kitchen building, and a male attendant slept in a tent. The Commission quickly enlarged and improved the existing provisions, still building in wood, as the location was temporary, the Griffin plan having been restored. A superintendent, at a high salary, was appointed, the post being taken by Dr J.A James, CBE, FRCS, who, from 1926 to 1929, brought the several departments of the hospital to an efficient stage in readiness to serve the main needs of an increasing population soon to come from Melbourne. Dr James resigned in 1929 to take up private practice, and we were most fortunate that he continued to give devoted and distinguished service to our city until his death.

With the expansion of the capital, after the depression of the early thirties, the need for providing the hospital on its permanent site, according to the approved plan, became more and more evident, and the Public Works Committee, in 1938, described the existing buildings as

‘noisy, scattered and inadequate’ and, moreover, as ‘a serious fire risk’. Upon its recommendations, the erection of the permanent hospital was approved.

It had hardly been finished when it was requisitioned, under war conditions, by the 5th Station Hospital of the United States Army, quartered in Canberra. So the public hospital remained for some time on the University site, and very considerable additions were made to the old buildings to serve the quickly growing local needs. These received little use, however, as the war position improved sufficiently for the American Hospital to move north, to Brisbane, and the Canberra Community Hospital, at long last, went into its proper home.

Over the subsequent years, it has gradually developed, largely under the control of its board elected by our own citizens, into the fine institution that it is [in 1965], with almost every medical and nursing requirement readily available to our community. [Sadly, Royal Canberra Hospital, its final title, was closed down in 1992.]

THE CRADLE OF ACT SOCIAL ACTIVITY

When the Federal Capital Commission assumed its wide responsibilities on 1 January 1925 it realised that the promotion of community activities and the rapid provision of the usual facilities for social welfare and citizen participation were matters of primary importance.

In addition to the then existing population of about 5,000, there was the proximate accession of several thousand new citizens by the transfer of public servants and families from Melbourne, where they were enjoying urban social amenities of high standard, and by an increase in the number of those providing the supporting services for the city. Left to themselves, it would have taken years for the citizens to provide comparable social facilities. So the Commission inaugurated a unique experiment in the stimulation of assisted co-operative effort by setting up the Canberra Social Service Association.

The scheme for this proposal, and its purpose, were outlined by the chairman of the Commission, Sir John Butters, at a meeting convened in May 1925 of representatives of the whole population. He indicated that the scheme was designed to promote the growth of social services, community and cultural activities, and sporting facilities, at an adequate standard, and at the meeting committees were elected to deal with indoor and outdoor recreation, education, libraries, and the welfare of women and children.

A magazine was established to record each month the progress of the movement, and provide the necessary publicity for this co-operative venture amongst the whole population. For some activities, the Commission undertook to provide plant and equivalent value in materials, if the people organised the labour.

After a trial of nine months, at another public meeting, ‘The Canberra Services Association’ was formally inaugurated, its objects being: To promote generally the welfare of the inhabitants of Canberra; and to collect and distribute information regarding the activities of the Association through the Social Service Journal, to be issued monthly in conjunction with the Federal Capital Commission. Every resident over the age of 16 years was eligible to join the association, the fee for which was one shilling a year. There was provision by which other bodies could affiliate.

One of the first important activities of the association was the erection of a large hall at The Causeway – one of our first public halls. It was built by voluntary labour, the Commission finding the materials, and it was erected in three weeks, at weekends, in spare time. A strange thing about it was that the electricians' union declared the job 'black'. We had arranged for a film presentation on the opening night, and the absence of electricity caused an embarrassing situation. To overcome this Sir John Butters sent the electrical section of our engineering department down to complete the wiring of the building, so faith was kept with the film-projectors.

The Social Service Association became the cradle of the many social, cultural and sporting bodies that provide such a wide interest for Canberra citizens today. In the course of time, and circumstance, such bodies became separately organised, but their rapid growth and effectiveness were due in large measure to the fostering care of their main elements by this early Association inaugurated by the Commission.

The Social Services Branch, under the Commission's organisation, was a portion of my own department, and I have most happy memories of co-operation with many fine men and women who contributed most worthily in emphasising that the establishment of a new city – especially a capital city – involved much more than the basic provision of buildings and engineering services.

It is typical of the hostile and cynical attitude of the Melbourne press, that it characterised this fine movement as an attempt, on the part of the Commission, to 'regulate the private lives of the public servants'. Its co-operative character and positive values were not, of course, mentioned.

The Social Services Branch was placed under the charge of Mr J.H. Honeysett, a man well suited for the task. He had been a welfare officer of the Electrolytic Zinc Company, in Hobart, and brought a wealth of experience to his work here. A keen cricketer, good vocalist, able committee chairman, a capable editor of the Community News, and altogether an engaging personality, he very soon became generally popular in all circles. He did much to help those who had come from Melbourne and were feeling somewhat lonely in the severance of their old ties. They were soon given congenial tasks and introduced to kindred spirits. They soon felt that they had a stake in the new city; indeed, the move to Canberra often proved a sudden and unexpected stimulus to those who had lived a very routine existence for years in Melbourne, and they took an interest in wider social activities and discovered talents and satisfactions that had before been dormant.

The greatest encouragement was given to personal participation in outdoor sport, the Commission providing ample grounds and facilities that would otherwise have taken a long time to evolve in the ordinary way. Children's playgrounds were another feature developed by co-operative effort, and the Canberra Mothercraft Society, and similar welfare institutions had their beginnings under the aegis of the Social Service Association.

The association had its headquarters in a building erected in Acton, on the site later occupied by the residence of the Superintendent of the Hospital, and it was always a busy place, where

any citizen could drop in to obtain sporting news, or, indeed, learn how things were going in almost every communal activity. This building, given a distinctive character by its large porch carried out in classical architectural style, now reposes in Flinders Way, Griffith, opposite Manuka Shopping Centre, and it is used as a pavilion for the adjoining Hockey Ground, not a bad tradition.

The need for the Social Service Association, in its original form, no longer exists, but the excellent spirit of community effort which it promoted still pervades our society as a whole, and is very evident in the numerous public bodies to which so many of our citizens continue to give devoted service.

TRANSFERS ENLIVENED SOCIAL LIFE

With the commencement of the transfer of public servants from Melbourne, the year 1927 witnessed an ever-growing interest amongst the organisations already established in Canberra, as well as the founding of new ones. The Mothercraft Society opened its first clinic in a residence at Kingston, opposite J.B. Young's store. Sister Whiting was appointed as the first Sister-in-Charge. She held consultations with mothers during afternoons and on Saturday mornings, and spent week-day mornings in visiting mothers in their own homes.

The sturdy Canberra Highland Society and Burns Club commenced its long series of activities in generous support of community projects by organising a concert and dance at the Causeway Hall to raise funds for a wireless installation at the Community Hospital. At that stage, the Hospital was located on the present University site, and it was being enlarged and re-equipped to meet the new demands.

Dr Clyde Finlay, the first physician to set up independent practice in Canberra, made an unusual contribution, of much value to residents and tourists, by preparing and publishing a Guide to Canberra with a map. This Guide sold for a shilling and the proceeds of sales were devoted to the fund for restoration of the historic St John's Church, the repair of which was important in view of its wider commitments to the growing population.

The first shops in the capital had been opened in the preceding year, at Eastlake (now Kingston), and this imposed some hardships on those who lived on the north side, although the early grocery, meat, bread and milk vendors called everywhere to deliver and to take orders. The northerners in Ainslie (then including also Braddon and Reid) were happy when some shops opened at City in 1927, thus saving many long journeys, even on an improved omnibus service, to Eastlake.

Another welcome change in this year was an improvement in the railway service between Canberra and Sydney, with connections at Goulburn for access to other capital cities. It was arranged for a late train to leave Sydney towards midnight, so that Canberra residents visiting that city for the day might return home after attending a concert or the theatre.

Some concern was felt by parents and relatives for the welfare of the young women, many of whom were employed in the Government Printing Office. Although satisfactory accommodation conditions were provided for single women at Hotel Ainslie (now called Gorman House, after

Commissioner Clarence Gorman, who died early in 1927) and Beauchamp House, in Acton, the Commission arranged to establish, in two residences in Blandfordia (now Forrest), a residential and social institution for women, known as The Lady Hopetoun Club. This club was concerned with the question of women's employment and the development for them of all types of healthy recreation. The Matron of the club was Miss Hawkins, an experienced ex-officer of one of the British women's war services, who came to Canberra with the family of Dr W.G. Duffield, the first Director of the Stromlo Observatory.

After the YWCA responded so readily, in 1929, to the Commission's invitation to establish programmes for the welfare of young women, The Lady Hopetoun Club was closed, its residents being transferred to other boarding establishments, and its social work undertaken by the YWCA whose activities, pending the erection of its own building in Alinga Street, were conducted in rented premises, upstairs in one of the units of Sydney Buildings, on East Row. Its first general secretary was Miss Tapley Short, a well-trained and experienced woman, who did splendid work amongst the girls coming to Canberra, providing a warm welcome and congenial activities to wear off their initial loneliness.

The Commission had made ample provision for outdoor sport, as has been previously related, but one category was organised quite independently. This important year of 1927 saw the formation of the Canberra Racing Club, which used the course at Acton – now submerged. The club's success was immediately demonstrated. At the end of six months' activity, the *Canberra Community News* could declare 'the Canberra Club is indelibly printed on the racing map'. There is still no sign of its erasure.

Quite unconnected, of course, with the arrival of public servants from Melbourne, another important event in 1927 was the definite setting up of the Canberra Police Force. The prior arrangement, since 1 January 1911, provided for police from the New South Wales Force to be lent to the Commonwealth. Under the Commission, for three years, these officers worked as a section of my own department, Sergeant (3rd class) Cook, a very wise and capable guardian of the law, being the leader.

In September 1927 it was decided to place these officers under the control of Colonel H.E. Jones, as Chief Officer, Federal Territory Police, and thus transfer such responsibilities to the Attorney-General's Department – an arrangement of dubious propriety, and one which has since, happily, been changed to place the police force under the Territory administration, and thus revert to a traditionally sound British practice.⁵⁶

One of the city's shortcomings in 1927, especially in the suburbs, was the absence of street lights, and comments in our first newspaper, the *Canberra Community News*, are of interest.

'This absence,' it said, 'severely handicaps the movements of married residents after dark. It is becoming quite a common occurrence to fall over bridges and walk into shrubs and other objects. We are pleased to state, however, that it has the effect of bringing young people together.'

HOTEL CANBERRA WAS A CENTRE OF SOCIAL LIFE

When the city first operated under its formal charter, on 1 January 1925, the Hotel Canberra, then recently opened, was the only available centre locally for social functions, public or private. And it assumed, therefore, a special character that still surrounds its name. The hotel was under the control of the newly-appointed Federal Capital Commission, and as a residence for senior officials and distinguished visitors, it supplanted Yarralumla, which had to be altered and renovated for its projected vice-regal role.

At this stage, Canberra was still under 'no-licence' conditions, so there was no public or private bar at the hotel. But residents could obtain liquor, legally, from outside the Territory, and used to entertain their friends privately with supplies obtained mostly from Le Hunt, of Goulburn, who claimed to hold the oldest wine and spirit licence in New South Wales and took a lively interest in Canberra activities.

For several months, the Commission had its offices in pavilion 'H', on the east side of the hotel, which became a hive of industry, by day and night, in the settling-in period. In these circumstances, it was certainly convenient to have one's bedroom adjacent to the office.

The Chief Commissioner, Mr (afterwards Sir John) Butters, settled in The Residency at Acton, built in 1913 for the first Administrator, Colonel David Miller. Later it became the headquarters of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee, the home of the British High Commissioner, the Commonwealth Club, and now one of the buildings of the Australian National University.

The second Commissioner, Sir John Harrison, and Mr Clarence Gorman, the third Commissioner, did much to promote pleasant social conditions in the hotel, which housed between 20 and 30 senior officials. Among them was the Director of the Stromlo Observatory, Dr Duffield, with his family of four. I had met him in Melbourne, in December 1923, when he arrived for a short visit to conclude his arrangements. He handed us a sketch plan for his Stromlo residence, and when he was leaving, Colonel Owen, Director-General of Works, said 'When you come back at the end of next year, from England, Duffield, at least we'll have your house ready'. Dr Duffield arrived in Canberra, with family and furniture on 10 December 1924, and, to his dismay, found that the building of his home had not even begun. The Minister, Sir George Pearce, who had to find us the money, considered the plan extravagant, and refused to approve. Eventually, a modified design was adopted and Duffield himself contributed a substantial sum towards the costs.

As the technical structures for the observatory, involving much excavation in rock, took some time to complete, a pavilion of the Hotel Canberra was allotted for its use, and we were often entertained by watching the working of the many machines that it contained.

In order to provide a convenient centre for public and private dances and for meetings of the newly-formed cultural societies, we allotted one of the pavilions on the west side of the hotel for this purpose, temporarily omitting the partitions of the future rooms, laying a tallow-wood floor, and installing a player-piano and a gramophone.

This pavilion was superseded in such use, of course, by the Albert Hall, in 1928, but meanwhile it had been of great service and benefit to the growing Canberra community.

We were much concerned with maintaining a high standard in the hotel, in every respect, even encouraging residents to dress for dinner in the evening.

As the leasing of land had begun, many visitors arrived in Canberra, and lessees, architects and builders either lived in or frequented the hotel. The auctioneer, Mr W.G. Woodger, and his family became residents, and Mr John Deans, a builder, took up several hundred leases for the erection of houses, thus assisting the Commission's task in providing residential accommodation at moderate cost, in Kingston and Braddon. Another interesting personality was Mrs Helen Barton, who was allowed to make the hotel a base for her hire car and transport service to Queanbeyan.

The Hotel Canberra, therefore, was an interesting place in which to live, as there was great activity and enthusiasm for the city-building tasks ahead.

For those of us more intimately associated with administration, there was the disability of having little leisure, as we were at the mercy of the public for almost 24 hours a day. It was no unusual experience for me to be knocked up before breakfast, or after retirement at night, to oblige someone in a hurry for information. We were rather glad when, late in 1926, the Commission, in accordance with our agreements for joining its service, completed residences for us at Acton.

THE DRY CAPITAL

In his insatiable appetite for publicity, King O'Malley, with shrewd instinct, constantly sought to ally himself with subjects of broad human interest. One of these was the liquor question. Of course, he appeared as a convert to the temperance cause, explaining that it was his first young wife who convinced him of the folly of taking strong drink, a habit he had formed in commercial circles.

It was one thing to become a strenuous temperance advocate, but to impose such a principle, by law, upon the area selected as the seat of the national capital was certainly a remarkable achievement. Yet, in the first ordinance for the provisional government of the Territory, O'Malley secured the consent of his cabinet colleagues to a provision that no licences to sell intoxicating liquor should be granted. This did not, however, mean prohibition. It was still legal to have private possession of liquor, but illegal to sell it, so O'Malley's wish 'that the Territory shall be dry' was not achieved.

The King's 'stagger-juice' circular, conveying his views to his Home Affairs Department officers, is a unique document in the archives. It reads:

Stagger-juice and efficient public business are absolutely incompatible. My order to the heads of all sections of the Home Affairs Department is to suspend from duty, without pay, any employee found to be under the influence of drink whilst at work, or showing any evidence whatever of

having used it whilst on duty drawing the King's pay. Delay is the seed of disaster and death. There can be no efficiency without speed, and speed is impossible with muddled whisky brains.

It may be remembered that one of the names proposed, sardonically, for the capital was Thirstyville, probably put forward by the same exasperated Scot who broke into the following verses:

Canberra's a truly awfu' place,
A 'canna-get-a-spot' land;
It wud na' lang hae this disgrace
Wer it a bit o' Scotland.
If Scots had but a moment's power
O'er this fine flat and highland,
It shouldna' be anither hour
A droughty an' a dry land.

The 'no-licence' condition of the Territory with its large number of workmen living in camps naturally reacted to the advantage of Queanbeyan hotels, and some small fortunes were made. Our resulting difficulties included weekend disturbances at the camps. The police, who for some time were under my control, did not make many arrests, the Sergeant quietly confiding to me 'it suits us better to "lay them out" because, if I put them in the lock-up, my wife has to cook their meals and she hates it'.

After the transfer of the Parliament, there was a decided reaction against the fate that provided a comfortable bar for Parliamentarians and their staffs, but required the average toiler to trek several miles to Queanbeyan to buy a drink, so the Bruce-Page Government approved of the Federal Capital Commission's suggestion to hold a poll, in 1928, with the options of prohibition, no licence; government control; or open licence.

The decision, influenced materially by a large naval vote at the time at the Jervis Bay naval college, was in favour of 'open licence'.

The laying of foundation stones, and the ceremonial naming of the new city, Canberra, by Lady Denman – a spectacular occasion for King O'Malley himself – was followed by a splendid luncheon, which must have given concern to the 'King', for due concession was made to precedent, and the 500 guests honoured the toasts in the usual beverages which were in ample supply.

My last meeting with O'Malley was in the Commonwealth Bank, Melbourne, his 'little bank', and, after traversing all manner of subjects and reminiscences, he finally said 'Brother, your name is Daley, so you're Irish. Beware of drink. The Irish are conceived, born, baptised, confirmed, married and buried with drink. It's their national curse.'

THE ALBERT HALL'S PIONEER SERVICE

While joining the congratulations over the provision, at long last, of a community centre more in keeping with the status and present-day needs of the national capital [the opening of the Canberra Theatre complex], it may not be inappropriate to refer to some of the early steps that were taken in Canberra in the cultural field. The first of these, after the Territory passed to the Commonwealth were found at Duntroon Royal Military College, the first centre of official activity and settlement. Professor J.F.M. Haydon did much to foster interest in music, at which he had much talent and training, and later, Dr L.H. Allen did the same in dramatic productions. At Acton, these activities were organised by the Medical Officer of Health, Dr Thompson, and took place in the school building, afterwards moved up to the Acton Road to become the Acton Recreational Hall, and finally the Trades Hall, later removed to make way for hospital expansion.

The Federal Capital Commission realised, in preparation for the needs of the incoming population, that something better than the Acton Hall, which was built of galvanised iron, was required, so it offered for lease a theatre site at Manuka, on a location that had been set apart for that purpose by the earlier Sulman Advisory Committee. There was disappointment that this project was not taken up by one of the larger theatrical organisations, but, at that time, they, like so many other commercial interests, had no particular wish to have a share in the task of building up facilities in the national capital. The block offered was leased by picture-theatre interests. This building, the Capitol Theatre, has, however, been the scene of a number of orchestral and other concerts and gatherings, but its stage is now unsuitable for many of these purposes.⁵⁷

The Commission decided to build a public hall on Commonwealth Avenue, and a scheme was developed accordingly. When it was ready, I took the details to Melbourne to see the Minister for Home and Territories (Senator Pearce), as there was then a statutory provision that required all works estimated to cost over £25,000 to be referred for investigation by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, and considerably more than that sum was involved. I had drafted the usual motion and a short speech for the Minister to use, but, to my surprise, he refused to take the matter to Parliament, saying that the Commission must reduce the cost of the work below £25,000, to make the reference unnecessary. Like so many other politicians, because of the opposition and indifference in the electorate, he wanted to do his duty to the capital by stealth. As a result, we had to revise the scale of the project and omit desirable accessory features and accommodation. The Hall was duly built, and the opening ceremony, on 10 March 1928, was performed by the Prime Minister, the Hon. S.M. (later Lord) Bruce, who also named the building, associating it with Albert, Duke of York, who had recently opened Parliament House, and with the important centre of musical culture in London, called after the Prince Consort of Queen Victoria. Mr Bruce said that he did not think he could have done better in so designing 'the official headquarters of music in the Commonwealth.' He remarked that 'although like Parliament House it is not meant to be permanent, nevertheless it is too fine, perhaps, for a temporary structure, and should prove a suitable habitat for the promulgation of cultural activities'. He expressed the hope that 'the Albert Hall will come to be the centre of Australian musical life'.

Although these high aspirations were not realised, the Albert Hall has been the scene of many fine concerts, dramatic displays, conventions and public gatherings of almost every description for 37 years, and it has thus been an invaluable asset, especially in cultural matters. The opening ceremony, itself, was followed by an excellent concert, arranged by a very good friend in music to Canberra, the pianist Frank Hutchens, who brought a talented group from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, and charged no expenses whatever, giving our newly-formed Musical Society a good financial start in taking the proceeds.

The first international artists to appear in the Hall were the Cherniavsky Instrumental Trio, who said that it was one of the best in which they had ever played. Lotte Lehmann, the eminent vocalist, told me that it was ‘a beautiful hall to sing in’, and the members of the Budapest Quartet said that it was fine for chamber music, and that they wished that they could stay here.

The Albert Hall is too small for large orchestras of about 80 players, a circumstance that displeased Eugene Ormandy, but for smaller groups of 45 that used to play here under the batons of Percy Code and others, it is satisfactory. From time to time, various schemes for its improvement or enlargement have been drawn up, but funds for these could not be obtained. I feel sure that the Albert Hall will continue to give good service to this community in many ways, even for musical and dramatic features for which the large new theatre at City may not be required. [Indeed the Albert Hall has continued to play an important role in Canberra’s cultural life.]

A BLOW FROM AN ANGRY TROMBONE

At an early meeting of the Social Service Association’s Outdoor Recreation Committee, in 1925, one of its members said that it was unthinkable that, in a city like Canberra – the capital to be, with a population exceeding 5,000 – there should not already be a first-class city band.

For some years, there had been a band at Duntroon organised by Professor Haydon, and formed mostly from members of the ground staff; but it had never reached a high degree of development. It had mainly an internal recreation objective, and was not used for cadet parade work; for that, on important occasions, it was customary to bring a band from the Eastern Command, Sydney.

The prayer of the committee member soon received an answer from an unexpected quarter. One Monday morning, a Melbourne businessman was discussing an engineering project with the Chief Commissioner, when the latter was called by the Industrial Officer, reporting some weekend disturbances at one of the workmen’s camps. Sir John Butters gave his directions and then apologised to his visitor for the interruption, remarking ‘It’s difficult to give these chaps something to occupy their spare time without going off to drink in Queanbeyan and then becoming a nuisance back here’.

The businessman inquired, ‘Have you got a band to play to them?’

‘No,’ replied Butters, adding, with a grin, ‘how about you donating a set of instruments to use?’

He was surprised when the visitor said, 'Alright, I'll do that, and have the privilege of founding Canberra's Band'.

When Sir John told me of this, later in the day, I remarked, 'that was a most generous gesture', as I had a fair idea of the cost involved. Several months afterwards, the Chief Commissioner informed me that he was going to Tasmania, and, while in Melbourne, he was to receive, from the Lord Mayor, a set of band instruments, at the Melbourne Town Hall.

He asked, 'Will you arrange for one of your fellows to take them over, and have them safely transported to Canberra?' I was astonished to hear that the Lord Mayor came into this, in view of the prevailing hostility in Melbourne's attitude to Canberra.

Some years later, as Civic Administrator, I had a meeting with the same businessman and he asked me how the band was getting on. I replied that, like most voluntary bands, it had its ups and downs; I did not tell him that, in the interval, we had purchased for the band an entirely new set of instruments, but I said, 'Of course, you were kind enough to donate a set of instruments'.

He asked, 'Did you ever hear the real story?'

'Well, when I returned that time to Melbourne, I asked my old friend Charlie Allan, of Allan and Co. Music Warehouse, to get me a good set of instruments for Canberra, and put me on his best possible terms, as a friend, and let me know what the figure would be. He did so about a week later, and I almost fainted. In my cheerful ignorance, I had imagined that a set of band instruments would cost somewhere about £100, whereas Allan's quote (a reduced one for me) was over £1,000. This amount I could not afford, so had to cut down as best I could, as well as enlist help to raise the money.

'I went first to the Lord Mayor and said "some of us are thinking of giving a band to Canberra, would you like to join in?" He did so, and I then approached many of my friends, but things were not easy; there was no great enthusiasm for the new capital. We made the amount up to £450, and Allans fixed up a reasonable set of new and secondhand instruments at that price; it was a real lesson to me.'

When the instruments had arrived, in October 1925, I had noted that they were French, of poor quality, some already used, and that there were no cases. However, they were handed over to the Social Service Officer, Joe Honeysett, who had arranged for band personnel to be organised, with Maginess as bandmaster and Bert Howe as the organising secretary. They commenced practising two evenings a week, somewhere in a secluded spot in Acton, mindful of the Rev. Charles Spurgeon's dictum that it might be possible for a brass instrument player to be a Christian, but not the man living next door.

Transport to practice was a difficulty in those days, but it was managed somehow, and the band, which included some experienced players, came along quite well, the bandmaster conducting from the trombone position.

Its first public appearance was made on 28 November 1925, on the occasion of the commencement of the building of the Causeway Hall. The band provided interest and

stimulation for the voluntary workers, and a writer in the *Community News* said of its programme 'every item was 18 carat gold'. High praise, but perhaps a subtle suggestion to strive for the optimum 22 carat standard. When the hall was opened officially, on 6 February 1926, the band once more supplied incidental music, and it soon became a welcome feature on public occasions.

A talented draughtsman and musical conductor, Aubrey Mowle, grandson of one of Canberra's earliest settlers last century, joined our Survey Office staff in 1926 and he formed a Philharmonic Society and an orchestra with members of the first joining the latter as required.

The first public Anzac Day Service in Canberra was held in 1926, on Camp Hill, behind Parliament House, and the band rendered the appropriate music and accompanied the singing of several hymns.

Les Edwards, an accomplished trumpeter, played the Last Post, and Reveille. In 'Abide with Me', the band's tempo began to drag badly, and Mowle, present as a spectator, becoming desperate at this, went behind the bandmaster and, grabbing his arm, endeavoured to accelerate his beat, as indicated by the movement of the trombone. This infuriated the bandmaster, who had begun too early to celebrate the anniversary, and he attempted to strike Mowle with his trombone, whilst the concourse concluded the hymn in a ragged fashion – a situation without precedent for an Anzac Memorial Service.

The band formed the opinion that it should have its own committee of management, and this was conceded in July 1926, when a constitution was adopted and a new committee elected, with the Governor-General as patron, Sir John Butters as president, Commissioners Harrison and Gorman as vice-presidents, genial Bert Howe still the secretary, with Stevenson as new bandmaster. It was decided that the band should be named the Canberra Vice-Regal Band – a title rather of aspiration than accuracy.

Under its new constitution, with more public support, and Bandmaster Stevenson's enthusiasm, the band made good progress, the newly instituted bus service solving transport troubles. Early in 1927, Bert Howe, after his most valuable service, handed over the secretary's post to T.W. White, who entered upon a long and devoted career in the band. Rowland succeeded Stevenson as bandmaster.

The band played at church functions, races, highland gatherings, football matches, and well fulfilled its civic role. In the year 1926-27 it made 26 public appearances, and, according to the *Community News* of March 1927, 'the stage has now been reached when no function is complete without the presence of the Vice-Regal Band to liven up the proceedings'.

The band was smartly turned out, the Commission assisting its finances with a subsidy on a 50-50 basis in regard to public support. It had many successes and failures, up to the Second World War, under several bandmasters, of whom the last and most notable was Les Pogson, a very capable and experienced musician.

DISCORDANT NOTE BY BAND BRINGS DISSENSION

An important circumstance that led to the dissolution of the Canberra Vice-Regal Band was the failure of the public management committee, in the late thirties, to maintain adequate interest in its allotted task, and exercise proper supervision over the band's activities and morale. Dissensions developed and the pioneering spirit of the earlier years departed. Strong efforts were made by the band secretary, Mr T.W. White, to counteract these tendencies but he finally resigned, after more than 10 years of office and a longer term as a player. He was well known, for 20 years or more, as the efficient trumpeter of the Last Post and the Reveille at Anzac Day services, and also at the funerals of ex-servicemen. He took part, too, in the work of the orchestra, and as a member of the Canberra Musical Society.

As a result of slackness in the band's control, proper care was not always taken of its valuable instruments. One day I observed a kettle-drum in an Acton shrubbery, where it had remained, apparently, all night in light rain. Another reliable report indicated that a large double bass instrument had been found on the Hume Highway. I had some unpleasant conversations with the band committee, over these and other matters, and threatened to call in the instruments. The climax came when the band refused to appear at Parliament House for an official function, unless the Government guaranteed full-time employment for the bandsmen.

The Prime Minister, angered at this peremptory demand, gave instructions for the instruments and equipment to be withdrawn, and all assistance to the band to cease. This occurred shortly before the Second World War, and, for several years, there was no city band in Canberra.

During the war, the band instruments were loaned to the commanding officer of the RAAF station at Canberra, Wing Commander Blake Pelly, who was keenly interested in music, and had organised a choral group on his station that was accepted for broadcasting. He told me that, owing to commitments elsewhere, he did not know when, if ever, he would receive a set of band instruments from the Air Board, so I agreed, subject to suitable safeguards, to hand over our valuable set of instruments to him. Despite his good intentions, Blake Pelly did not have much success in training a band, on account of the constant change of personnel, so at last the instruments were handed back to us.

One morning, on returning to my room, I found a Salvation Army Captain sitting there. He rose and said, 'I understand you have a set of band instruments that are not now in use. Could I borrow them to train up some young men to form a band?' He informed me that he could play most of the brass instruments, as he had served for years in a leading Salvation Army band in Sydney.

We discussed his proposal, but he could not give acceptable assurances for the safety or replacement of the instruments, then worth over £2,000. I could not agree to let him have them. As he was leaving, I said, 'Captain, what is your name?' He replied, 'Captain Bugler.'

The revival of the band, as the Canberra City Band, arose out of a desire to promote an interest in the actual playing of musical instruments amongst schoolchildren. The Inspector of Music of the Education Department of New South Wales, Mr Victor McMahon, himself an

eminent flautist, was fully in accord with this idea, and promised me that he would try to replace the full-time music teacher at the High School with one who played either a stringed or wind instrument. To my disappointment he met with no success in finding a suitable appointee.

At this stage, I discovered that the Prime Minister, Mr Chifley, who was also Treasurer, although not versed in musical matters, enjoyed listening to band music. This gave me an idea: appoint a suitably qualified musician to my staff, to revive the city band, and promote the playing of instruments in the schools.

I knew that I would have little chance, owing to funds shortage, of securing an appointment solely for the latter purpose, but, in view of Mr Chifley's keen interest in band music, I thought that he might, as Treasurer, make funds available to have band music from local players, instead of bringing bands at considerable expense from other centres for official functions.

I put up the proposal and, to my delight, it was approved. Mr Chifley directed, however, that the applications for the position be referred for his consideration. This condition rather worried me, when I found that the bandmaster from Mr Chifley's home town was one of the many applicants, and that, although successful with his band in competitions, he did not have the broader type of training and qualifications desirable for dealing with the young people in the schools.

This posed another problem, so I enlisted the aid of my friends in the Australian Broadcasting Commission, who agreed to their conductor Percy Code, a leading bandmaster, and other experienced musicians, acting as a committee to interview the applicants whom I had placed on a 'short list', and which included the Prime Minister's town bandmaster.

As a result of the interviews and consultations, we were unanimous in recommending the appointment of Mr W.L. Hoffmann, of Adelaide. He was a younger man, who had been trained at the Adelaide and Melbourne Conservatoriums of Music, and he had been an army bandmaster during the war. He played many instruments and possessed experience in promoting musical activities in the community. Our report went to the Prime Minister, and to my satisfaction, it was returned marked with his approval.

As is well known, Mr Hoffmann, with all the disabilities attendant upon the maintenance of a band on a voluntary basis, has built the Canberra City Band into a most successful group of players⁵⁸

I was able to obtain funds to purchase some very fine instruments for the band, including later a full woodwind set, so the band became a 'military band' and thus widened its scope and appeal.

Although we have an excellent professional full-time band at the Royal Military College, Duntroon, good relations exist between the two bodies.

Before he put forward his scheme for a permanent band at Duntroon, the commandant, at the time, General Hopkins, came and saw me and, after asking if I had any serious objections from the City point of view to the suggestion, he promised that the College band, if formed,

would not seek to replace or in any way embarrass the Canberra City Band in its civic role – an undertaking that has been fairly kept.

A BOOST FOR EARLY ART

The earliest recorded activities in the literary and dramatic field in the Australian Capital Territory grew up, after 1910, within the Royal Military College Duntroon. The cadets published a college journal, well sponsored by the civil staff members, such as Professor J.F.M. Haydon and Dr Allen. The latter organised a competent dramatic society that staged many excellent productions.

In 1925, with the building up of the Commission's administrative and technical staffs, and the increase in the supporting commercial and professional population, there were many who were anxious to enjoy the cultural avenues of recreation that they had left behind in the State capitals.

A group known as the Canberra Community Players staged one of the first dramatic productions in the newly-built Causeway Hall – a comedy by Douglas Murray called *The Man from Toronto*. A critique of the performance slated the male actors and declared that any success was due to the talent of the ladies in the cast. The critic appropriately signed himself 'Retired Murderer'.

These Community Players then changed their name, adopting the mysterious title of The Scythians, and meeting at the bachelors' quarters (Lennox House). They announced their devotion to the 'four arts' and they met behind closed doors. It was noted that their literary deliberations also resulted in a stack of empty bottles. But they had an idea that led to the establishment of a public body devoted to the cause of the arts.

One of the members, an architect, went to America, in 1926 and, writing from the University of California, described a project for a centre devoted to vocal and instrumental music, drama, arts and literature, with a small theatre, a comfortable lounge, meeting rooms and a cafe, the whole to be set in a park, with a Greek open-air theatre setting for plays and music in fine weather. He suggested that such a feature would be ideal for Canberra. We thought so too, but such a thing was not readily realisable.

The following year, 1927, saw the opening of Parliament House, and several people on its staff, including those of the National Library, joined with other residents in a movement to promote interest in the arts. On 28 June 1927, Mr D.E. Limburg, one of the Commission's architects, convened a meeting at the Hotel Canberra for the purpose of inaugurating a society for the encouragement of literature and the fine arts. Another architect, H.M. Rolland, presided, and the 50 people who attended resolved to set up a provisional committee to draft a constitution for submission to a general meeting on 5 July 1927. With commendable expedition, the provisional committee produced an excellent draft constitution which the 5 July meeting, after very minor amendment, duly adopted. It provided that the Society should be known as the Canberra Society of Arts and Literature, with its object to encourage and foster the arts and literature by arranging exhibitions, concerts, play-readings, dramatic productions, literary presentations and discussions, and lectures, debates and addresses on any aspect of the arts or

literature. Forty-nine people who took part were declared foundation members under the constitution.

The society was fortunate enough to secure as its first President, Sir Robert Garran, a man distinguished, not only in the law, but in his devotion to literature and the arts. Other members of the first committee were R.A. Broinowski and Colonel Owen (vice-presidents), H.L. White (secretary), C.C. Fitzpatrick (treasurer), the convenors, D.E. Limburg (fine arts), C.S. Daley (music), R.J. Raikes (drama), and Mrs L. Rudd (literature).

After settling the vexed question of a meeting place, the society proceeded actively with its general programme for fortnightly meetings, at which papers were given on the widest range of literary subjects, one-act plays were often read, music was played, or discussion promoted on some aspect of one of the arts. The dramatic section presented stage plays, and also organised play-readings in the various hostels and hotels, to interest and occupy transferees from Melbourne. From time to time, the society arranged for playing companies to visit Canberra. In 1928, after the Albert Hall had been opened, the Allan Wilkie Shakespearean Company presented *Henry VIII*, *Coriolanus* and *Twelfth Night*.

In the field of music, the society arranged joint meetings with the newly formed Canberra Musical Society, and it also had close liaison with the Artists' Society in exhibitions and lectures. The dramatic work expanded considerably, and the late Dr L.W. Nott, who took the keenest interest in this activity, was appointed producer. He put on many plays, but he had rather ambitious ideas and balancing the budget was often a difficulty, which eventually led to his resignation, and later to the suspension of presentation of stage plays by the society.

In 1929, Sir Robert Garran handed over the presidency to Sir Walter Kingsmill, who was also President of the Senate. It became customary for the president's term to be two years, and this office was held successively by R.A. Broinowski, Dr L.H. Allen and myself, followed by Mr Broinowski for a second term.

Some of our members were gramophone enthusiasts and special evenings for listening to classical music were arranged, often in private homes, at the Albert Hall, or, at times, on fine summer evenings, in the sunken gardens of the Hotel Canberra. One evening, we had invited the Governor-General, Sir Isaac Isaacs and Lady Isaacs, to a meeting at the Albert Hall devoted to Greig, and the music of the north. A modern gramophone had been lent by a local firm for the presentation of the records. After a welcome to Their Excellencies, and an introductory talk, Mr Broinowski proceeded to illustrate his remarks with the first record, but, alas, the machine would not produce a sound. After willing hands had tried, ineffectually, to coax the machine into action, one of our members went off, and in a few minutes returned, assisting a friend to carry a very large gramophone set which they duly plugged in, with excellent results, redeeming what might have proved an absolute fiasco for a vice-regal occasion.

With the strong growth of the independent musical and artists' societies, and the formation, in 1933, of a separate Repertory Society, support for the parent arts and literature society began to fail. Although it maintained its literary work and its play-reading activities, it experienced

financial and other difficulties, and, after a few of its foundation members had to join together in the liquidation of its liabilities, it was wound up in 1938-39, shortly before the outbreak of war.

SURVEYOR'S ART MADE VALUED RECORD

The Canberra scene, with its pleasant winding streams, its dark wooded hills, and its vistas to the blue or snow-clad mountains in the west, has always had a very strong attraction for landscape painters. This interest was stimulated by the action of the Government in 1910, when it gave a commission to two prominent landscape artists, W. Lister Lister and Penleigh Boyd, each to paint a picture showing a broad view of the site for the future city, for reproduction in the conditions and information for the guidance of those entering for the international competition for a design of the capital, issued on 30 April 1911.

The pictures were painted from two different points on the lower slopes of Mt Ainslie, and they afforded perspective views of the undulating features of the site, with the lonely spire of the Church of St John the Baptist marking a striking contrast to the surrounding open country. These excellent studies were used again, by Griffin, for a similar purpose of illustration in the conditions of the Parliament House architectural competition issued in July 1914, but withdrawn in September 1914, after the outbreak of war.

The large-size originals of the two landscape paintings are now in Parliament House.⁵⁹ They form but a small part of the valuable art collections of the Parliamentary and National Libraries, which include the ever-increasing portrait gallery of the King's Hall, and the impressive paintings of the opening ceremonies.

The National Library holds many historical pictures showing urban and rural scenes at various stages of Australia's development, as well as collections of special value, such as the lovely Hardy Wilson drawings of early colonial architecture and of Grecian and Chinese buildings, and Mrs Ellis Rowan's paintings of Australian flowers and birds of New Guinea. Many of these pictures have been lent to public departments, and also, from time to time, as opportunity offered, in the absence of a national art gallery, they have been placed on display to the public. The presence in Canberra of these interesting collections has tended to foster a keen local sense of appreciation of pictorial art and encouraged many citizens to engage in sketching and painting.

Several of the public servants who came to Canberra in 1910 or thereabouts on technical assignments have left valuable records on canvas of scenes that have since vanished or changed entirely as the result of modern development. Prominent among these pioneers was H.M. Rolland, the first resident architect, who worked principally in watercolour, and a few years ago presented a collection of his paintings to the National Library. Another was Les Edwards, who became Chief Survey Draftsman, and, over the years, recorded scenes of interest in Canberra and in the surrounding districts. After retirement from the service he increased his activity in producing interesting landscape, and regularly participated in the exhibitions of the Canberra Artists' Society, a body founded in 1927.

Arthur Percival, whose Canberra service also began in 1910, gave strong support, too, in the society's work while he was Surveyor-General and after his retirement from that position in 1944. He was its president for more than 12 years, and ably assisted its firm establishment and progress, so that, after 40 years, it still plays an active and important part in our cultural life. [Thirty years later, it still does!] Arthur Percival was very competent at rapid sketching. When attending conferences or committees, or even a personal interview, he would make intriguing landscape-type drawings, mostly of the seascape variety, with small boats in evidence, and do all this with his left hand. This unusual form of 'doodling', he told me, he developed in his earlier surveying days, when working out data from his notebooks in the evenings. He would do calculations with his right hand and tabulate the results with his left, and, at an interview, he practised making sketches with his left hand while awaiting further figures from his right hand operations.

At Advisory Committee meetings during Percival's membership these desultory left-hand sketches, more carefully executed during a period of boredom, were often quietly appropriated as souvenirs by others present. Arthur Percival encouraged the draftsmen of his staff, as well as members of the society, to paint the Canberra landscape, and we have many good pictures as a result of this policy.

The Artists' Society occasionally arranged for prominent painters to visit Canberra to give lectures, and its members assisted in providing tuition when we began art classes at the Canberra Technical College.

Many artists came of their own accord to paint the Canberra scenes, and it was not an uncommon sight around Acton to see an easel set up in the middle of the road, to the peril of both the motorists and the painter anxious to obtain just the right angle on a landscape. One of the earliest artists was J.H. Joseland, a well-known Sydney architect, who combined sketching happily with trout-fishing, and another enthusiast was Sir Elliott Johnson, twice Speaker of the House of Representatives, some of whose paintings of the few early buildings, and especially of St John's Church and the old rectory, are cherished possessions of older Canberra residents.

Among the notable artists who were attracted by the beauty of the Australian Capital Territory was Elioth Gruner. He was very amused when I showed him a press announcement that 'the well known artists, Messrs Elliott and Gruner, are in Canberra and painting at the Cotter'.

One of the most valuable and extensive pictorial records of Canberra scenery, buildings and engineering activity, transport, notable events and personalities is that resulting from the unusual skill of W.J. Mildenhall as an artistic photographer. He came to Canberra when activities resumed after the First World War as an officer of the accounts branch, Department of Works and Railways, and lived at Acton in the cottage next to Lennox House. He and his wife were musical, and they possessed the only privately owned piano in Acton in the early twenties. On my visits from Melbourne, it was a pleasure to take part in musical evenings at their home, at which many friends were always in attendance and prepared to sing or play.

As paying-officer, Mr Mildenhall visited all centres of activity in the Territory, and he had excellent opportunities to obtain his fine photographic records. He had been a paying-officer, previously, on the construction of the East-West Railway, and he was the only person who took a full photographic record of that vast undertaking. His camera work was so good that I arranged, when the Federal Capital Commission took over control in 1925, for him to be transferred to duties in the Secretariat Department, which included the post of official photographer. His pictures were used in the Commission's annual reports, in the *Canberra Community News*, the *Federal Capital Pioneer*, and numerous other publications. Although an amateur, I have known him to train professionals in their art. Photographs of scenes and events in the capital, recorded by him, were sent to all parts of the world. Apart from his devoted service to Canberra in many official positions, he made an invaluable pioneering contribution in the wide range and quality of the pictures which he produced and of which the negatives are now in the possession of the Commonwealth Archives Office.

RADIO COMES TO CANBERRA

The effective use of radio to broadcast from Canberra throughout the Commonwealth the public addresses and concert from Parliament House, on 9 May 1927, aroused interest in the extent to which wireless transmission was utilised at the national capital.

The earliest instance of such transmission of which I have any record occurred on 3 December 1924, when Theo Cooper, an electrical dealer in Queanbeyan, gave a demonstration at a horticultural exhibition by sending news items by wireless over a comparatively short distance, using a somewhat primitive appliance, but giving a decided indication of its possibilities to an interested audience.

Development in this new medium was rapid and, in 1926, items from the second concert presented by the newly-formed Canberra Philharmonic Society, after relay to Sydney by landline, were broadcast by arrangement with Farmer and Company's station, 2FC. In the same year, on 12 and 13 October, the Empire Parliamentary Association sent a delegation to Canberra, led by the Marquis of Salisbury and Mr Arthur Henderson. Forty-four delegates from nine parliaments assembled in the House of Representatives, and their proceedings were relayed to Sydney and broadcast from station 2FC. This constituted the first broadcast emanating from Parliament House, a portent, perhaps, for the decision many years later to permit the routine transmission of parliamentary sessions over the national radio stations.

A few weeks after the official opening of Parliament by the Duke of York, there occurred a broadcast of historic importance which, however, received no publicity. One evening Mrs Duffield, the wife of the first Director of the Stromlo Observatory, and also leader of the Stromberra Sextet, telephoned me and asked me if I would play accompaniments for her violin solos, as she had been requested to take part in a first attempt to broadcast a music programme from Australia to London and New York by short-wave wireless. Mrs Duffield and I had been playing together frequently as members of the sextet, so I readily assented to her request.

Rising to an icy-cold and frosty morning I finally persuaded my car to start and arrived at Parliament House worried, but in time. The main heating system there was not operating so it was perishingly cold, and the atmosphere little conducive to the best artistic effort. I noticed that, besides Mrs Duffield my old friend and fellow Bendigoian, Frank McKenna, Deputy Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department was present, talking to the announcer.

The programme was opened by Mrs Duffield, who played *The Swan* by Saint-Saëns, and Svendsen's *Romance*, and then the announcer said, 'Mr Frank McKenna will sing two Irish songs'. After duly supporting Frank in 'The Rose of Tralee' and 'The Mountains of Mourne', the announcer whispered to me 'play a couple of short piano pieces'. By this time I had become an automaton so I played the A flat Waltz of Brahms and a Hungarian dance, by De Chaneet.

The following day it was reported that the reception in London had been an utter failure, but next day a New York announcement declared that the trial had been fairly successful there; that the music had come through clearly, and amazing to us – 'that the broadcasters had evidently used gramophone records'.

At this early period Canberra possessed a keen radio enthusiast in the person of A.J. Ryan, formerly an electrician in the postal department. He began an electrical business in the Kingston shopping centre shortly after its erection. An experimenter in radio transmission, he built up his knowledge and in 1931 secured a licence as a broadcaster, and established the first broadcasting station in the Federal Capital Territory.

The new station encountered many difficulties and a tribute must be paid to Mr Ryan for his courage and determination to succeed. He did much to promote local interest in music and drama, and to present all significant features of the growing capital to listeners. He conducted station 2CA until 1938, when it was taken over by the Macquarie Network.

With the formation of the Australian Broadcasting Commission in 1932 it was expected that a national broadcasting station would be established at Canberra, but a decision to do so was not made until 1935. When this matter came to a head the chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Commission, Mr Cleary, arrived in Canberra to discuss the project with the Prime Minister, Mr J.A. Lyons. The decision, of course, came in favour of Canberra, and stations 2CY and 2CN eventuated. It is difficult to realise that we might have been dependent on Goulburn for our radio service.

GOULBURN V CANBERRA

How might we have been dependent upon Goulburn for our radio service? The reference, of course, relates to the national radio network. When the Commission, after its establishment in 1932, was formulating its plans for district broadcasting stations, a strong bid was made by the city of Goulburn to have the station for the southern area located there. It was contended that Goulburn was more suitable on several technical grounds than was Canberra, and that from this location a wider coverage for the broadcasts would be assured.

Prominent among the advocates was a Goulburn dentist, who displayed unusual ability and persistence in his advocacy, and this led to the serious consideration that was given to the

proposal. At this time, moreover, Goulburn possessed some active musical and dramatic organisations. An active and capable leader in this field had been the distinguished soldier, Brigadier-General Sir Walter Ramsay McNicoll.

It was suggested that the strong local interest in musical and other cultural activities provided a promising background for locally developed programmes. Those of us in Canberra, deeply interested in having this national station built in the national capital, were clearly aware that in Goulburn we had a strong contender, as General McNicoll used to bring musical groups to perform in Canberra, and quite frequently we engaged Goulburn artists as solo performers at our local concerts. We were conscious, too, that there was some merit in the arguments put forward in favour of Goulburn on technical grounds. But we felt it was inconceivable that provision should not be made for national broadcasting from the nation's capital city. These views were duly and strongly conveyed to the Government, and especially to the Prime Minister, Mr J.A. Lyons.

When the chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Commission, Mr Cleary, came in 1935 to discuss this matter with the Prime Minister and his Cabinet, he first invited me to give him a full account of the then-existing cultural facilities of Canberra and its potential for local broadcast programmes of acceptable standard. This I did and told him that Canberra could certainly match anything that Goulburn might produce, and that with our inevitable development as the capital of the Commonwealth, in this aspect there must be progressively greater value and interest. I mentioned the necessity to provide conveniently for broadcasts by the Governor-General, the Prime Minister and other Ministers on national and other occasions, and not realising how correct was the prognostication, said 'you might, one day, be broadcasting parliamentary proceedings.' To which Mr Cleary replied, 'We would never take that on – but, as we know, *autres temps, autres moeurs.*'

The successful representations for locating a national broadcasting station at Canberra did not connote any dissatisfaction with the previously established commercial station, 2CA, which despite its earlier slender resources, well served the capital, making its interests and welfare of primary concern. With its incorporation into the Macquarie Network in 1938, station 2CA continued the same policy, identifying itself even more with the growing community movements, and providing on generous terms valuable facilities for local bodies.

The official transfer of station 2CA to the Macquarie system was the occasion of a splendid banquet at the Hotel Canberra, to which about 250 leading personalities were invited. Prominent at this function were the two inimitable 'Jacks' – figures well known almost as personal friends by broadcast listeners – Jack Davey and Jack Lumsdaine. The former was the principal announcer for the function, and the latter entertained the guests as they dined, with incidental music at the piano, which included a very humorous song on Canberra, which he had composed himself for the occasion.

After the banquet the guests proceeded to the newly-erected building for 2CA in Northbourne Avenue, to witness its formal opening, hear a concert programme and finally enjoy an excellent supper.

Jack Davey was in his characteristic exuberant element as compere for the concert and he convulsed the guests by his sallies, some of them fairly free and tough. This applied, especially, in the case of one of the vocalists, Dave Coates, who was prominent as a tenor singer of the Canberra Musical Society and also of the Canberra Male Choir. Dave was a 'tenor robusta' and had zealously modelled himself on Caruso and Gigli, whose records he constantly played. He was justly proud of his voice and singing capabilities, and he was a popular figure on and off the platform, despite the fact that he was an assistant Commissioner of Taxation.

When it came to Coates' turn on the programme, Jack Davey impishly announced 'Mr Pants will now sing for us. Oh, I apologise, the wrong garment. It is Mr Coates.'

Dave came to the stage almost bursting with indignation at this unpardonable levity towards a serious artist and it took him a few minutes, after glaring at Davey, to compose himself to sing an operatic aria, which he rendered very well, and for which he received tumultuous applause.

He was finally persuaded to sing an encore. When announcing this the irrepressible Davey said 'Mr Coates (with strong emphasis) will now sing "All Through the Night" – no, no, ladies and gentlemen, I assure you that he will sing only for a few minutes.'

Dave Coates was so angry with the announcer at this second gibe that he would not have performed had not the audience clamoured for him to do so.

In taking a somewhat cynical view of the matter it may be that the final applause was for both the singer and the compere.

Later on, when my wife and I were enjoying the buffet supper, I noticed Dave Coates had 'bailed up' Mr Horner, who had just transferred from the Australian Broadcasting Commission to a high executive post in the Macquarie service. Dave was obviously protesting forcefully against Jack Davey's liberties and doubtless received a polite official apology.

It has often been a matter of favourable comment that the Canberra national station and the local commercial station have developed amicably, side by side, actually for a long time in adjoining buildings, each providing in its own way excellent radio fare for the capital, and stimulating discreetly sound community movements progressively emerging in our rapidly growing city.

SPORT BEFORE THE PLAYING FIELDS WERE MADE

Before the development of the many planned recreation areas, there were ample spaces in the Canberra plan for outdoor sports, and there was always keen activity and competition between early teams in cricket, football and other games throughout the whole district.

The establishment of the Royal Military College in 1911 at Duntroon, with its definite emphasis upon prowess in sport, gave an impetus and a standard to local sport, although the college for some years was rather self-contained in its sporting exercises, which were regarded as part of the regular curriculum.

On account of its high standard, also, it favoured contests with other defence establishments or with the greater public schools. At the same time, it provided an excellent pattern and atmosphere. Later, of course, its teams took their place in the local competitions which developed with the growth of the city of Canberra, and which are now a noteworthy feature of our community life.

One of the interesting sports developed at Duntroon in the early days was polo, and the Duntroon Polo Club was formed by some military officers and a few residents of the Territory who could afford to keep the requisite ponies.

A riding school was part of the equipment that we built at the college in 1911. All cadets were required to learn to ride, and mounts were thus available readily for use in polo. Some of the senior cadets were encouraged to take part in this sport. The matches and practices were held on the flat ground opposite the college main gates on the road leading to the Canberra Aerodrome. The famous Ashton brothers polo team came sometimes to have a game with the local exponents, and these occasions were noted for parties and celebrations.

The club was expanded in the middle twenties by taking in non-playing members, at an annual subscription. This entitled us to park our cars in the front row at the matches, and, of course, to attend the brilliant and hilarious Polo Club at the Hotel Canberra.

Among the enthusiastic polo-players were Arthur Campbell, of Woden, and Leslie Fussell, an early manager of the Commonwealth Bank, and afterwards secretary of the Canberra Building and Investment Company, that began with great promise but declined as a result of the depression. The depression also affected the Polo Club and its expensive activities.

The flat areas in Turner and O'Connor, now covered with suburban development, were conveniently used for practising polo technique, and for golf strokes. These occupations became more regularised by the formation of the Acton racecourse (now in the lake) and the provision of a nine-hole golf course, with sand greens, in the same area.

Golfers often chafed under the necessity to curtail their own activities for the benefit of the patrons of the turf, but, on the whole, the dual scheme worked well. At times you had a bad lie in a hoof-mark deeper than usual. One of the hazards was a short hole with its green on top of the hill now occupied by the University [Research] School of Physical Sciences. There was a conical summit to the hill, and, if you overshot, you went off a great distance down the other side, with an equally difficult approach to make for the second, or perhaps the third, time.

Golf soon became very popular in Canberra, and two devotees of the game in the twenties were Colonel Owen, Director-General of Works, who came to live in the city in 1923, and H.M. Rolland, architect, an excellent player and first captain of the Canberra Golf Club, formed later. These gentlemen naturally fostered the proposal for the establishment of a proper course, so the services of Ross Gore, secretary of the Royal Sydney Golf Club, and E.J. Bayly Macarthur, a barrister and an amateur golf champion, were sought to give their valuable advice and experience in the laying-out of first-class rinks.

Interpolating a story about Macarthur, I remember that, during one of his later visits, there was a young man at the Hotel Canberra indulging in some unforgivable boasting about his golf prowess. This at length riled Macarthur who went up to him and offered to play him a round for a stake of £5, Macarthur to use a putter only, the youth to use anything he liked. The challenge was accepted and a most interesting contest resulted, in which Macarthur, whose standing the youth had not realised, easily came home the winner, giving a salutary lesson to the aspiring golfer.

Although the plan prepared as a result of the visit of the two experts provided for a course of 18 holes, at first only 11 were constructed. The first had its tee near the present Albert Hall, and one proceeded northwards, parallel to Commonwealth Avenue, and almost up to the Molonglo River under the old wooden bridge, then roughly following the course of the river on the way back towards the old clubhouse.

The great flood of May 1925 completely obliterated the northern portion of the course, several of the greens never again appearing above the silt that covered them, so this section was abandoned entirely. A new first fairway was finally formed, leading westward, and a course of nine holes laid down on the south side of the river. In 1928, nine additional holes were added, on the north-western side of the Molonglo, thus completing the full 18.

A suspension bridge was thrown across the river, and there was a threatening hole where you had to hit across the water. This was a great spot for boys who came to salvage golf balls and sell them back to you. They also used the bridge as a diving board, often causing dismay to an unsuspecting golfer starting to cross and finding the whole structure of the bridge swaying under the feet from the thrust of the take-off of the diver.

The links were well maintained by an arrangement between the club, which became the Royal Canberra Golf Club, and the Federal Capital Commission, and the whole course was beautified by tree-planting. Eventually it provided one of the most attractive courses in Australia – alas, no more, since the filling of Lake Burley Griffin, but having given service and great pleasure to two generations of Canberra residents, as well as to many visitors to the capital.⁶⁰



C.S. Daley tees off at the opening of the Federal Golf Links, Acton, 5 August 1933.

MAKING AND KEEPING A WICKET

The report that the area known as the Turner Sports Ground is being handed over to the Australian National University recalls two special planting occasions that took place on that area, on the assumption that it would contain Canberra's main central oval, to serve a purpose similar to that of the Sydney or Melbourne Cricket Ground. This was a project cherished by my development surveyor in 1931, Mr P.L. Sheaffe, as well as myself, as we regarded Manuka Oval merely as a district ground, with inadequate space for a national oval with parking facilities and sufficient detachment.

When, in the 1936-37 season, Allen visited Canberra with his English team, opportunity was taken to have a coppice planted by the Englishmen on the western side of the Turner ground, as a memento of the historic occasion of the first visit of English cricketers to our capital. No one imagined, at that time, that the trees, which, I believe, were cedars or cypresses, would disappear to admit of the site being occupied by a Geology School of the University.

The other Turner planting, some years later, was arranged by the Australian Rules Football League, and took place, in the rain, on the northern part of the ground, along Nicholson Crescent. The trees selected were varieties of eucalypt, and were planted by the Prime Minister (Sir Robert Menzies), football officials and myself. These trees appear to be flourishing, and they

will, doubtless, be a reminder to the University not to fail in some allegiance to the Australian game.

Manuka Oval, much admired for years because of its beautiful trees and its resemblance to an English country ground, had an unusual origin. Manuka Circle that surrounds the ground was a comparatively small feature in the Griffin Plan, less than 200 feet in diameter, providing a focus at the junction of his so-called Wellington and Eastlake Avenues. When secretary of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee, I was examining this area in 1922, with the object of suggesting a site for a district playing field. For this purpose, Manuka Circle, as planned, was far too small, and it appeared to be of little practical value, apart from its function as a planned feature.

Forming an idea, I took our Chairman, Sir John Sulman, and a surveyor down to see if it would be practicable to make a slight eastward deviation of the watercourse, carrying surface drainage from Red Hill slopes to the river, and thus admit of increasing the diameter of the circle sufficiently to provide a moderate-sized recreation oval. This suggestion proved practicable and the Advisory Committee, after checking the levels and junction with the drainage reserve now known as Telopea Park, approved of the change. The City Plan was duly adjusted, permitting the development, over the years, of an excellent oval that is giving service for many purposes.

Turf wickets were duly established on the Oval, and when it was arranged that Allen should bring the English team to play a match against a Canberra and District combination, on 10-11 February 1937, the Territory Cricket Association asked that a special new wicket be formed for the occasion. I agreed to this, and through the courtesy of Mr Harold Heydon, secretary of the Sydney Cricket Ground, his curator collaborated with our Superintendent of Parks and Gardens, Mr. A.E. Bruce, so that the new wicket might be prepared under the best possible advice. Special soil was obtained and the work proceeded according to a definite schedule. No child was ever watched over with more care than that bestowed upon this wicket by the president and committee of the Cricket Association.

Some weeks before the date of the match, my Minister, the Hon. Thomas Paterson, rang me up and instructed that one of the old wickets be put into condition for use, instead of the new one, as the latter would not be ready in time, and would be a failure anyway. 'Who told you that?' I asked, for Bruce had informed me that the wicket was making satisfactory progress.

The Minister replied, 'The president and some members of the Association; they ought to know'; to which I rejoined 'They play on wickets, but I am sure that none of them has ever made a wicket.' The Minister was a nice fellow, but he lacked knowledge and experience in many directions, like all of us. He said, 'Will you please see that my directions are carried out'.

At this, Bruce and I were most disconcerted and we conferred by telephone with the Sydney curator, who said that he would come down and inspect the wicket himself. This he did, and said to me 'It's doing splendidly; I only hope my wicket for the Sydney Test will be as good'. I asked him if he would say this to the Minister and he said 'Certainly, I would'. After a little difficulty, I arranged for an interview. The curator was in good form and speedily convinced the Minister that there was no ground for alarm. The local cricketers, however, were most unhappy. At the

match, the wicket turned out to be excellent, as the vice-captain confided to me, and the English team were so pleased that they gave a handsome present to the Manuka groundsman. Truly, making and keeping a wicket are different vocations.



The Eastlake Cricket Club team, 1922.

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CHRONOLOGY

[Based on C.S. Daley's articles and therefore not a complete guide to the events of 1887-1966.]

1887

July 4 Birth of C.S. Daley

1901

Jan. 1 The Commonwealth of Australia comes into being

Mar. 29-30 First elections for the Federal Parliament held

Apr. 30 First Commonwealth Parliament opened in Melbourne

Nov. 20 Colonel David Miller appointed as Secretary of the Department of Home Affairs

1902

May 5 Federal Act establishes Commonwealth Public Service

1903

Aug. 15 Senate chooses Bombala as site for the federal capital

Oct. 8 House of Representatives chooses Tumut as site for federal capital

1904

Colonel Owen appointed Director-General of Commonwealth Works

1905

C.S. Daley joins Department of Home Affairs in Melbourne

1908

Oct. 8 House of Representatives chooses Yass-Canberra as site for national capital

Nov. 6 Senate agrees to Yass-Canberra site

Dec. 14 *Seat of Government Act 1908* receives assent

1910

Apr. 24 Andrew Fisher becomes Prime Minister

King O'Malley becomes Minister for Home Affairs

Nov. 7 Duntroon leased from the Campbell family

Dec. 5 Governor-General proclaims the vesting of the Territory for the Seat of Government in the Commonwealth

1911

First permanent building at Mt Stromlo Observatory erected

Jan. 1 The Territory becomes official with the transfer of an area of 2,360 sq.km of New South Wales to the Commonwealth Government

June 27 Royal Military College officially opened

1912

May 14 Walter Burley Griffin's design wins national capital competition

Aug. 8 Colonel Miller appointed as Administrator of the Territory

Nov. 1 Post office opened in Acton

1913

Original Canberra Hospital erected at Acton

Mar. 12 Foundation stone of the commencement memorial laid

May 31 Joseph Cook becomes Prime Minister

W.H. Kelly becomes Minister for Home Affairs

Oct. 15 Walter Burley Griffin invited to come to Canberra

1914

June 30 International competition for Parliament House advertised

Sept. 17 Andrew Fisher becomes Prime Minister

W.O. Archibald becomes Minister for Home Affairs

1915

Thomas Weston establishes nursery at Yarralumla

Oct. 27 William Morris Hughes becomes Prime Minister

King O'Malley returns as Minister for Home Affairs

1916

Cotter Dam completed

May 18 William Webster attacks Public Works officers in Parliament

Nov. 24 Competition for design of Parliament House indefinitely postponed

1917

Feb. W.A. Watt becomes Minister for Works and Railways

Apr. 17 Royal Commission on the competence of officers of the Public Works Branch hands down final report; the officers were later exonerated

Aug. 31 Colonel Miller retires from the Public Service

1921

- Jan. 22 Federal Capital Advisory Committee created under chairmanship of John Sulman and with C.S. Daley as secretary
- Aug. 17 Report of Sulman Committee presented to Parliament
- Dec. 15 Government agrees to advice of the Sulman Committee

1922

- July 27 Molonglo River floods

1923

- Colonel P.T. Owen transferred to Canberra
- May Canberra connected by rail to Sydney and Melbourne, via Goulburn and Queanbeyan
- Aug. 28 Construction of Parliament House commenced
- Sept. 1 Telopea Park school established

1924

- Jan. 30 First federal cabinet meeting held in Canberra
- Dec. 10 Hotel Canberra opens
- Dec. 12 First commercial auction in Canberra

1925

- Jan. 1 Federal Capital Commission takes over administration of the Territory from the Federal Capital Advisory Committee
- May 27 Molonglo River floods

1926

- First concert broadcast from Canberra
- Canberra Mothercraft Society founded
- Apr. 25 First Anzac Day Service held in Canberra
- Sept. 3 *Canberra Times* begins publication

1927

- Thomas Weston retires
- Death of Commissioner Clarence Gorman
- Canberra Racing Club formed
- Feb. 1 First Motor Traffic Ordinance becomes law in the Territory
- Mar. 21 Canberra Post Office established in East Block Offices, Parkes

May 9 Parliament House officially opened by the Duke of York
June 28 Canberra Society of Arts and Literature formed
Sept. Canberra Police Force formed
Dec. 31 Transfer of departments of the Prime Minister, Home Affairs,
Treasury, the Attorney-General and the Official Secretary of the
Governor-General

1928

Rotary Club of Canberra formed
Canberra Musical Society formed
Canberra National Memorials Committee established
Federal Government provides for an elected member of the Federal
Capital Commission
St Christopher's Roman Catholic Convent and School founded at Manuka
Mar. 10 Albert Hall opened
Sept. Canberra place and street names gazetted

1929

Colonel P.T. Owen retires
Canberra Grammar School established at Red Hill
July 15 Death of John Gale
Oct. 12 Prime Minister Scullin elected

1930

First Court of Petty Sessions established
Apr. 30 Administration of Territory reverts to Parliamentary control
Aug. C.S. Daley appointed Civic Administrator

1932

Australian Broadcasting Commission established

1934

Aug. 18 Death of Sir John Sulman

1938

Dec. National Capital Planning and Development Committee
established

1943

- Nov. 10 Death of Henrietta (Jessie) Daley
- 1945*
- Nov. First pre-school centre opened in Canberra at Reid
- 1948*
- The Territory elects a member of the House of Representatives
- 1953*
- Dec. 10 Canberra & District Historical Society formed
- 1964*
- July 4 ‘As I Recall’ – first article published in *Canberra Times*
- 1966*
- Sept. 30 Death of C.S. Daley
- 1994*
- Canberra and District Historical Society publishes ‘As I Recall’ by Charles Daley



Charles Studdy Daley and The Rotary Club of Canberra

Charles Studdy Daley was a charter member of the Rotary Club of Canberra which was admitted to Rotary International on 16 June 1928.

He was a member of its inaugural Board of Directors, Vice President in 1934/35 and President of the Club in 1941/42.

For many years he gave enthusiastic service as Chairman of the Entertainment Committee, pianist and Club Historian. He wrote many songs for Rotary special occasions and was pianist at many Rotary functions.

He was appointed an Honorary Member in 1951.

- ¹ Article on Daley in *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (hereafter *ADB*), vol.8, Melbourne, 1981, pp. 192-3, and his obituary in *Canberra Times*, 3 October 1966.
- ² P. Harrison, 'Walter Burley Griffin: landscape architect', M.Arch. thesis, University of New South Wales, 1970, chap.7, p.10.
- ³ See, for example, L. Noye, *O'Malley MHR*, Geelong, 1985.
- ⁴ H.J. Gibbney, *Canberra 1913-1953*, Canberra, 1988, p.63.
- ⁵ *ibid.*, p.150.
- ⁶ E. Sparke, *Canberra 1954-1980*, Canberra, 1988, pp.40, 46.
- ⁷ *Real Estate Times* (Canberra), 19 February 1988.
- ⁸ *Canberra Times*, 18 September 1967.
- ⁹ Gibbney, pp.247-8.
- ¹⁰ *Canberra Times*, 3 October 1966.
- ¹¹ Gibbney, p.163.
- ¹² *ibid.*, p.193.
- ¹³ *ADB* article.
- ¹⁴ Sparke, p.10,
- ¹⁵ See Gibbney, p.169, and L. Wigmore, *Canberra: history of Australia's national capital*, Canberra., 1972, p.112.
- ¹⁶ Personal information from Mrs N. Boyd of Ringwood, Vic.
- ¹⁷ *ibid.*
- ¹⁸ R.F. Rowe & A.I. Aitken, *The Building and Furnishing of the Presbyterian Church of St. Andrew, Canberra, ACT*, Canberra, 1992, p.33.
- ¹⁹ *Courier* (Canberra), 20 May 1965.
- ²⁰ H.L. White (ed.), *Canberra: a nation 's capital*, Sydney, 1954, pp.33-65.
- ²¹ *ADB* article.
- ²² C.S. Daley papers in National Library of Australia, MS 1946, folder 138.

²³ *Courier*, 20 May 1965.

²⁴ Two of his papers were reproduced in P.A. Selth (ed.), *Canberra Collection*, Kilmore, Vic., 1976, pp.1-17, 213-22.

²⁵ See *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates* (Hansard), vol.HofR 16, p. 1300.

²⁶ L.L. Gillespie, *Canberra 1820-1913*, Canberra, 1991, p.341.

²⁷ *Canberra Times*, 11 November 1943.

²⁸ See the articles on Jessie Daley in ADB, vol. 13, Melbourne, 1993, pp.562-3.

²⁹ *Canberra Times*, 3 October 1966.

³⁰ Personal information from Mrs M. Campbell of Aspley, Qld.

³¹ *Canberra Times*, 6 October 1966.

³² *ibid.*, 7 October 1966.

³³ *Courier*, 13 June 1968.

³⁴ *Canberra Times*, 17 October 1963.

³⁵ The last time the Committee sat formally to consider nomenclature was in 1975. It consisted of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, the Leaders of the Government and the Opposition in the Senate, the Minister and the Secretary of the Department responsible for administering the National Memorials Ordinance, one other member of that department, and a former National Librarian. (*Canberra's Suburb and Street Names*, 1992.)

³⁶ gamp umbrella, esp, large untidy one (from Mrs Gamp in *Martin Chuzzlewit* by Charles Dickens) (Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary definition).

³⁷ For information on Kelly and Archibald see '[Ministers in Contrast](#)'.

³⁸ For information on Kelly and Archibald see '[Ministers in Contrast](#)'.

³⁹ In 1964 it was. It is now known as Old Canberra House and is part of the Australian National University.

⁴⁰ The protracted arguments about the siting of the permanent Parliament House were finally settled, of course, with the selection of Capital Hill as the preferred option, in 1974.

⁴¹ The Royal Canberra Hospital at Acton was closed in 1991, but at the time of publication most buildings, and the fountain, were intact.

⁴² The Googong Dam on the Queanbeyan River was inaugurated in 1979.

⁴³ Now incorporated into the Canberra Centre.

⁴⁴ At the time this article was written, the present railway station building was nearing completion.

⁴⁵ Modern garden cities in Great Britain.

⁴⁶ Since that time the problem has been overcome, resulting in the spectacular displays of Floriade.

⁴⁷ There is no sign of them in 1994.

⁴⁸ The Telecom Tower replaced the masts on Black Mountain in 1974 after considerable protest.

⁴⁹ Now incorporated in Parliament House.

⁵⁰ The National Library building in Parkes was opened in 1968.

⁵¹ The Canberra Carillon, a gift from the British Government to commemorate Canberra's 50th anniversary, was opened by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, on 26 April 1970.

⁵² This was the late Mr Larry Anthony, father of a future Minister for the Interior, Mr Doug Anthony.

⁵³ Full voting rights for the Member(s) representing the ACT were granted in 1966. The Territory's first Senators were elected in 1975. Mr Fraser died in office in 1970.

⁵⁴ With the houses now completely rebuilt, The Causeway nevertheless retains its semi-rural character, even though officially part of Kingston.

⁵⁵ The greater part of the Presbyterian Church joined the Uniting Church in 1977. Small Christian schools have been established in Canberra, but no officially Uniting Church schools. Before the establishment of federal territory there were a number of provisional denominational schools, e.g. at Tuggeranong and Ginninderra, but their lives were short.

⁵⁶ The Canberra police are now part of the Federal Police Force – but it is possible, under self-government, that this arrangement could change once more.

⁵⁷ The Capitol Theatre was later demolished, and a new cinema complex erected on the site.

⁵⁸ Mr Hoffmann later became music critic for the Canberra Times, a position he retains in 1994.

⁵⁹ Both paintings are held by the National Library. The Lister is hanging in Parliament House [1994].

⁶⁰ The present Royal Canberra Golf Club at Westbourne Woods is equally renowned for its beautiful landscape.