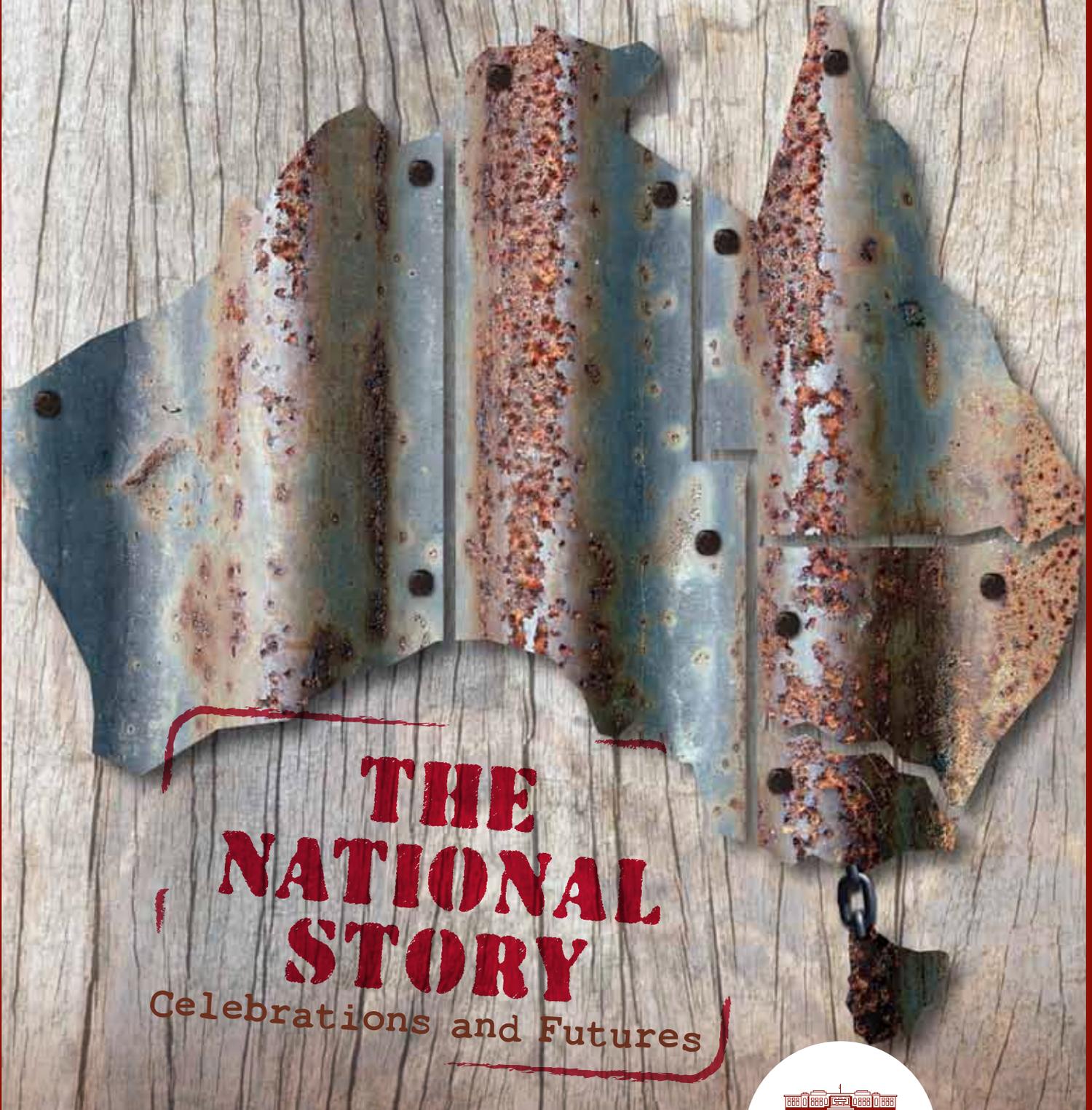


# GETTING IT TOGETHER

From Colonies to Federation



## THE NATIONAL STORY

Celebrations and Futures



INVESTIGATIONS OF AUSTRALIA'S JOURNEY TO NATIONHOOD FOR THE MIDDLE YEARS CLASSROOM

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# Celebrations and Futures



When the Australian delegates in London and the British Secretary of State for the Colonies reached a compromise on the Secretary's amendments to the draft Australian Constitution in July 1900, the delegates joined hands and danced around the room. Among them were Alfred Deakin, Edmund Barton and Charles Cameron Kingston. This small celebration foreshadowed the long line of celebrations that welcomed the new nation of Australia in January 1901, and the opening of the first Federal Parliament in Melbourne in May of that year.

Australians were justly proud of a Constitution that had won the admiration of others, especially the members of the Imperial Parliament in London. Alfred Deakin demonstrated this pride when he conveyed the impression that Federation had made in Britain to a public meeting. A journalist at that meeting recounted his story.

*In the mother country recently they [the Australian delegation] had to listen to the criticisms of some of the sagest intelligences ... who regarded with some amazement this new birth in the southern seas. When they read it they were amazed at the boldness and the confidence which was reposed in the electors of Australia ... They laid the Constitution before the men of England as being not the work of any ... party, but as an expression of the desire of a whole people to press on towards national life.*

*Maitland Daily Mercury, 18 January 1901.*

Newspapers in the capital cities of the colonies welcomed the Commonwealth on 1 January 1901 by reflecting on the journey to Federation, and what had been achieved. Poems celebrating the achievement and honouring the new nation were published, along with tributes to the work of the prominent 'federalists', many of whom would make up the first Commonwealth Government. The next day, the pages of those newspapers reported on the celebrations that had taken place around Australia, from the great procession in Sydney where the Commonwealth was inaugurated to festivities in the far-flung towns of Queensland and Western Australia.

On 9 May 1901, the celebrations were repeated in Melbourne, where the first Commonwealth Parliament would sit. Its 75 House of Representatives members and 36 senators, pledged the oath of allegiance, which was overseen by Lord Hopetoun, Australia's first Governor-General. Amid fanfare and parades, the Parliament was opened by the Duke of Cornwall and York on behalf of King Edward VII, who had ascended the throne on the death of Queen Victoria in January 1901.

## Investigations

1. What were the official celebrations on 1 January 1901 like?
2. How did Australians feel about their new Commonwealth and nation?
3. How was the opening of Parliament celebrated in Melbourne?
4. What kind of national monument should commemorate Federation?

## INVESTIGATION 1

# What were the official celebrations on 1 January 1901 like?

On 1 January 1901, despite a forecast of rain, the sun shone on the festivities in Sydney, where the new Commonwealth would be inaugurated, and the first Governor-General sworn in at Centennial Park. A procession of dignitaries, bands, soldiers and horse-drawn floats passed through the city centre and under the ceremonial arches, to the cheers of thousands of spectators who had squeezed onto footpaths and balconies along the route to Centennial Park. Buildings were elaborately decorated with banners wishing the new Commonwealth prosperity, and others repeating the slogan of the Federation movement – ‘One People One Destiny’. Two anthems were sung that day: the national anthem at the time ‘God Save the Queen’ and another, which 83 years later would become the national anthem, ‘Advance Australia Fair’.

### YOU WILL NEED

#### Resource sheet 1

- extracts: newspaper
- photographs: Commonwealth Day celebrations in Sydney
- map: the procession route
- lyrics: ‘God Save the Queen’
- lyrics: ‘Advance Australia Fair’ (version sung 1 January 1901)

Discover the ways in which the new nation was celebrated in Sydney on Commonwealth Day.

Your task

## Activities

1. In small groups, explore the news articles from *The Argus* on the celebrations in Sydney, and use the map to work out the route the procession took through the crowded city on Commonwealth Day, 1 January 1901.
2. Explore the photographs and news articles from *The West Australian*. Create a chart with the following headings: ‘Australia’; ‘Empire’; ‘Federation’; ‘International’; and ‘Other’. Identify the different parts and contributions to the celebrations and list them under the relevant headings. Use the ‘Other’ column for those people and events that do not fit the first four categories. Share your information with another group. Were you able to find items for all four categories?
3. As a class, read the lyrics of ‘God Save the Queen’ and the version of ‘Advance Australia Fair’ that was sung on Commonwealth Day. Find the meaning of any words or phrases that you do not understand. Discuss the following questions.
  - What hopes are expressed in ‘God Save the Queen’?
  - What hopes are expressed in ‘Advance Australia Fair’?
  - What words and images are used to describe Australia?
  - What vision of the new nation of Australia is expressed in ‘Advance Australia Fair’?
4. Individually, use the information in your group’s chart and song lyrics to do one of the following tasks.
  - Create a radio broadcast in which you commentate on the events in Sydney on Commonwealth Day. Be sure to explain the meaning of the different aspects of the celebrations and procession.
  - Create a design for a ceremonial arch, which includes examples from the four categories of your group’s chart. Your design should emphasise the importance of the different components of the celebrations.

## INVESTIGATION 2

# How did Australians feel about their new Commonwealth and nation?

The idea of a united Australia had been promoted by the Federation movement in the 1890s. But, many people in the colonies had imagined and longed for it before this, not least among them poets and writers of the time. The Australian national anthem, 'Advance Australia Fair', was written by Peter Dodds McCormick in 1878. He was born in Scotland, but had settled in Sydney 23 years before. Caroline Carleton, a South Australian, wrote 'Song of Australia' in 1860, which was sung at the celebrations in South Australia to mark Commonwealth Day and at the opening of the Commonwealth Parliament in May 1901.

With the coming of Federation, poets were encouraged to compose a poem to commemorate Federation and a prize of 50 guineas was offered. Newspapers published the inspirational verses of the poets, in which the new nation was acclaimed. *Ode to Commonwealth Day*, a poem by George Essex Evans, won the best Federation poem prize. Of Welsh descent, Evans had migrated to Queensland from Britain in the 1880s, and was a Toowoomba public servant and poet. His 'A Federal Song' had won praise from Alfred Deakin, and was thought to have been influential in swaying Queenslanders to the cause of Federation.

### Your task

Examine a Federation poem to discover how people felt about the new nation.

## Activities

1. As a class, read the extracts from the poem *Ode to Commonwealth Day*, which was written to celebrate Federation. Discuss and use a dictionary to find the meanings of any words you do not know.
2. *Ode to Commonwealth Day* is an allegory, which means it uses symbols or metaphors to convey its messages. Re-read the first verse. As a class, use your own words to describe what it is saying about the formation of the new Australian nation.
3. The parts of the second and third verses that are in bold type are describing each of the six Australian States: New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, Tasmania and Queensland.

Individually, read the words carefully and try to identify the description of each State. Think of what you know about the natural landscapes, locations and agriculture.

Compare your ideas with a partner. Then work as a whole class to match the descriptions and the States.

4. What image would you use to describe Australia today? Nominate your image and write a caption explaining why you think it represents what Australia means to you.

### YOU WILL NEED

Resource sheet 2

poem: *Ode to Commonwealth Day*  
by George Essex Evans

### INVESTIGATION 3

## How was the opening of Parliament celebrated in Melbourne?

The Commonwealth Parliament met in Melbourne for its opening session on 9 May 1901. It was opened by Prince Albert, the Duke of Cornwall and York. He was representing His Majesty King Edward VII, who had succeeded Queen Victoria on her death in January 1901.

The royal visitors arrived in St Kilda by royal yacht. They then made their way through the city of Melbourne to the Royal Exhibition Building. Their carriage was escorted by the troops on horseback from regiments of the six Australian States. As on Commonwealth Day in Sydney, Australians turned out in their thousands, lining the decorated streets to welcome their esteemed visitors through the ceremonial arches.

The packed hall in the Royal Exhibition Building contained members of both houses of the Commonwealth Parliament, Governors of the six Australian States and many other dignitaries and guests. In a demonstration of the technology of the day, cables were sent simultaneously between the gathering and King Edward, conveying his best wishes for Australia's future. Australia's first Governor-General, Lord Hopetoun, administered the oath of allegiance to the members of Parliament and instructed them, in accordance with the Australian Constitution, to elect a Speaker for the House of Representatives and a President of the Senate.

### Your task

Investigate the opening of the first Commonwealth Parliament to reach an understanding of Australia as a constitutional monarchy.

### YOU WILL NEED

Resource sheet 3

- extracts: newspaper
- photograph: citizen's arch
- painting: Opening of Parliament
- invitation: to the celebratory reception
- extract: the Australian Constitution

### Activities

1. In groups, have each member take responsibility for reading or examining and interpreting one or some of the items: newspaper extracts, photograph, invitation, painting. Record and explain the following about your selected item:
  - the kind of item it is;
  - what it tells you about Australia as part of the British Empire; and
  - what it tells you about the opening; and of the Commonwealth Parliament.
2. As a class, discuss what the items convey about Australia's connection to Britain at Federation. What did Australians at the time feel about this connection? Find the evidence in at least three items to justify your response.
3. Focusing on the newspaper extracts, discuss the roles the Duke of Cornwall and York and the Governor-General performed. As a class, discuss the duties and importance of their respective roles.
4. Examine the quote from the Australian Constitution about the role of the Governor-General, Australia's head of State. Explain how the Governor-General fulfilled this role at the opening of the first Commonwealth Parliament.
5. Working in small groups, create a flow chart that demonstrates the relationships among the monarch, the Governor-General, the Parliament and the people. Present your flow chart to the class, and arrive at a class version of the relationship among these four elements.

## INVESTIGATION 4

# What kind of national monument should commemorate Federation?

The Australian Capital Territory was established in New South Wales to be the place for the national parliament. In 1927, the Commonwealth Parliament began sitting in Canberra, in the building that today is known as Old Parliament House. Originally planned as a temporary home, it served as the location for the Parliament for more than 60 years. In 1988, the Parliament moved to the present site on Capital Hill.

The city of Canberra has many landmarks that pay tribute to aspects of the Australian nation and to significant national figures. Federation was an important milestone in Australia's history, and its significance has been commemorated in various ways over the years. But, it has no national monument.

Use your knowledge and imagination to think of a monument to commemorate Federation and the values it represents – now and into the future. You might consider how Australia has changed and developed over more than a century, and what kind of monument could reflect new and different elements of Australia's national identity.

**Design a monument to Federation that reflects the values Federation represents today.**

**Your task**

## Activities

1. In small groups, use a concept map to brainstorm monuments. Think about the purposes of monuments and how they communicate or reflect events, people and ideals.
2. Use the internet and library to research monuments in Canberra and discover their design and purposes. The Australian War Memorial [www.awm.gov.au/visit/visit-special-entrance.asp](http://www.awm.gov.au/visit/visit-special-entrance.asp) and Reconciliation Place [www.nationalcapital.gov.au/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=82&Itemid=300](http://www.nationalcapital.gov.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=82&Itemid=300) are two examples. Choose a monument and write a brief description of it, taking care to describe how it fulfils its purpose.
3. In your groups, brainstorm what you know about Federation, using an affinity diagram to classify your ideas. Use headings such as 'Values', 'People', 'Places', 'Events', 'Artefacts', etc.
4. Using your affinity diagram, come to an agreement about what you want to emphasise or highlight about Federation. Brainstorm ideas for the design of a Federation monument. Discuss the following questions.
  - What will your monument represent about Federation?
  - What will it represent about Australia today?
  - What material will be used to make it?
  - What shape will it be?
  - What colours, symbols and/or words will it use?
  - Where will it be located?
  - What do you want people to think and feel when they see it?
5. Present your ideas for a monument to the class with plans, diagrams, sketches or models.
6. As a class, vote on the best proposal. Discuss how you might let the government know about your ideas.



## What are you thinking now?

Now that you have completed the investigations in Celebrations and Futures, use your knowledge to explore connections to your life today. Do one or more of the following activities.

- 1.** Research the role of Australia's Governor-General today. Visit the Governor-General's website [www.gg.gov.au](http://www.gg.gov.au) to start your research.
- 2.** In 1998, a Constitutional Convention considered whether or not Australia should become a republic and replace the office of Governor-General with a President. The President would be appointed by Parliament or elected by the people. Host a parliamentary forum in your class in which you debate whether Australia should become a republic.
- 3.** Does your school have an event or occasion it should celebrate? Plan a celebration for that event with your class. Think about the kinds of events and ideas used at Federation to inform your thinking. Submit your ideas to your principal, along with your reason as to why it ought to be recognised.

# RESOURCE SHEET 1

## Inauguration of the Commonwealth in Sydney

### An historic demonstration

The sanguine people who lined all the five miles and a half of the procession with stands were not disappointed. From start to finish the procession passed through an unbroken avenue of serried ranks of people. They filled all the paths, they swarmed from every parapet, they crammed every window with their happy faces, and then they blackened all the slopes of the wide-spreading Centennial Park. Emphatically, it was a people's day.

It was also an Imperial day. The motherland sent her troops, splendidly arrayed, to do honour to her Australian kinsmen in their hour of destiny, and she also contributed her dusky warriors from India as an object lesson displaying her sympathy and her power of rule.

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### The procession

Instead of the moist, rich smell of the Himalayas, which ... the teller of Indian tales puts it, the [India Troops] had the pungent scent of the young gum leaves in their nostrils. Further away ... the Household Cavalry, the Foot Guards, and Fusiliers were breathing the same new scent instead of the fragrance of the English thorn. The Maori Guards of the Premier of New Zealand cantered past the gorgeous Indian troops, showing the easy colonial seat in the saddle and the simple khaki uniform.

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### By the Commonwealth Arch

The next arch was the Commonwealth arch, of gleaming white adorned with the names of all who have served the cause of united Australia written upon the shining walls in letters of gold. Some of those whose names are written there are dead, others are no longer in the fighting lists of politics but all have deserved well of their country, and it was fitting that their names be recorded on the walls of this arch, which was erected to mark the triumph of their long drawn labours, so that the soldiers of the empire might read them as they passed through.

---

### Passing the Queen's statue

The Bells of St. Mary's Cathedral were ringing gaily as the head of the immense column, nearly three miles in length, moved out of the main entrance gates of the Domain, and swung round to the right, so as to pass through the Queen's square.

*The Argus*, 2 January 1901.

# RESOURCE SHEET 1 continued



**The Commonwealth Arch, Park Street, Sydney 1901**

Government Printing Office, State Library of New South Wales.

**The Wool Arch, Bridge Street, Commonwealth Day Procession, Sydney, 1901**



National Library of Australia, nla.pic-an13143006-6.

## **More arches**

“Black diamonds” from Newcastle compose the first arch, which is typical of the great coal industry of New South Wales. A large block of coal has been utilised as a foundation, and the upper portions of the columns and archway are constructed with wire netting lumps of coal.

A wool arch commands mention, because it represents the great National Industry Commonwealth. At the base are bales of wool and columns. The arch consists of scoured fleeces loosely thrown into a wire netted frame. Across the semi circle are painted in gold the words, “Welcome to the land of the golden fleece.”

## **Street decorations**

That part of Pitt-street between Bridge and Bond streets has been transformed into a French avenue. The French arch bears on its supporting pillars the coats of arms of Paris, Lyons, Marseilles, and Bordeaux. In its centre is displayed the coat of arms of the Republic, surrounded by the Australian and French Flags.

The American arch and a mazy arcade of stars and stripes take up the running from the junction of Hunter and Pitt streets. “America hails the new-born nation” on one side, and on the other the “United States of America greet United Australia”.

## **The swearing-in of the Governor-General**

Lord Hopetoun, wearing the Order of the Thistle, a gorgeous uniform, and several distinguished stars, walked with a large stick. Archbishop Smith, the Primate, in the robes of his high office, officiated.

The crowd stood with bared heads. With deep intonation Archbishop Smith then read the prayers for the Commonwealth. Then followed the prayer for the Governor-General, and the Lord’s Prayer.

Lord Hopetoun’s communication from Her Majesty was read with a firm, unhesitating voice. Lord Hopetoun declared, among ringing cheers:

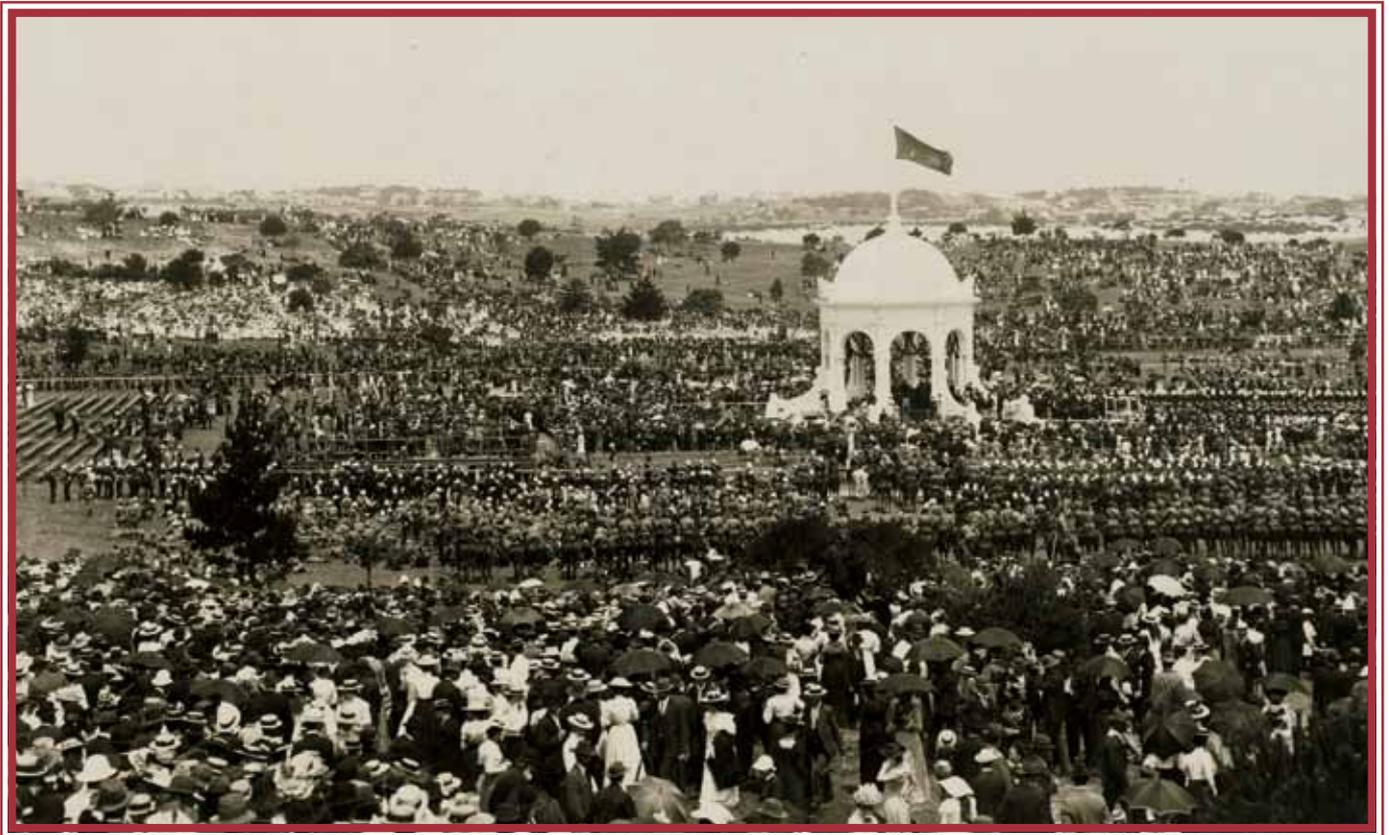
“I, John Adrian Lewis, Earl of Hopetoun, solemnly swear that I will truly and faithfully serve the Queen, so help me God.”

The supreme moment had arrived – that moment for which Federalists for half a century prayed and fought, guns boomed forth a salute proclaiming to the world, as Lord Hopetoun signed his name, that he had assumed his official duties and was invested with all the powers conferred upon the Queen’s representative by the constitution.

*The West Australian*, 2 January 1901.

# RESOURCE SHEET 1 continued

## Centennial Park, Sydney, Commonwealth Day 1 January 1901



Swearing in ceremony, Centennial Park, Sydney, Commonwealth Celebrations, 1901, National Library of Australia, nla.pic-an13117410-1.

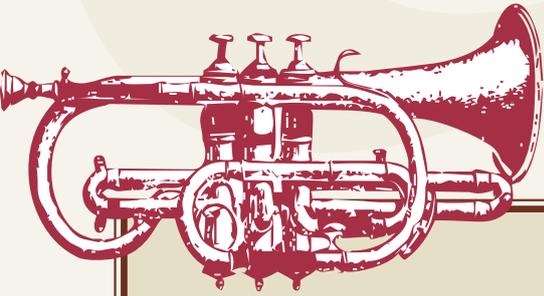
## The grand procession route through Sydney



*The Argus*, 2 January 1901.

# RESOURCE SHEET 1

continued



## God Save the Queen

(former Australian national anthem)

*God save our gracious Queen!  
Long live our noble Queen!  
God save the Queen!  
Send her victorious,  
Happy and glorious,  
Long to reign over us,  
God save the Queen.*

*Thy choicest gifts in store  
On her be pleased to pour,  
Long may she reign.  
May she defend our laws,  
And ever give us cause,  
To sing with heart and voice,  
God save the Queen.*

## Advance Australia Fair

by Peter Dodds McCormick

Version sung 1 January 1901 at the inauguration of the Commonwealth by a choir of 10,000 people in Sydney.

*Australia's sons let us rejoice,  
For we are young and free;  
We've golden soil and wealth for toil,  
Our home is girt by sea;  
Our land abounds in Nature's gifts  
Of beauty rich and rare;  
In hist'ry's page, let ev'ry stage  
Advance Australia fair.  
In joyful strains then let us sing,  
Advance Australia fair.*

*When gallant Cook from Albion sailed,  
To trace wide oceans o'er,  
True British courage bore him on,  
Til he landed on our shore.  
Then here he raised Old England's flag,  
The standard of the brave;  
"With all her faults we love her still"  
"Britannia rules the wave."  
In joyful strains then let us sing  
Advance Australia fair.*

*Beneath our radiant Southern Cross,  
We'll toil with hearts and hands;  
To make our youthful Commonwealth  
Renowned of all the lands;  
For loyal sons beyond the seas  
We've boundless plains to share;  
With courage let us all combine  
To advance Australia fair.  
In joyful strains then let us sing  
Advance Australia fair!*

*Should foreign foe e'er sight our coast,  
Or dare a foot to land,  
We'll rouse to arms like sires of yore,  
To guard our native strand;  
Britannia then shall surely know,  
Though oceans roll between,  
Her sons in fair Australia's land  
Still keep their courage green.  
In joyful strains then let us sing  
Advance Australia fair.*

# RESOURCE SHEET 2

## Ode to Commonwealth Day

by George Essex Evans (extracts)

*Free-born of Nations, Virgin white,  
Not won by blood, nor ringed with steel,  
Thy throne is on a loftier height,  
Deep-rooted in the Commonwealth!*  
*O Thou, for whom the strong have wrought,  
And poets sung with souls aflame,  
Born of long hope and patient thought,  
A mighty name—  
We pledged thee faith that shall not swerve,  
Our Land, Our Lady, breathing high.  
The thought that makes it love to serve,  
And life to die!*

*Now are the maidens linked in love  
Who erst have striven for pride of place;  
Lifted all meaner thoughts above  
They greet thee, one in heart and race;  
**She, in whose sunlit coves of peace  
The navies of the World may rest,  
And bear her wealth of snowy fleece,  
Northward and West**  
**And she, whose corn and rock-hewn gold  
Built that Queen City of the South,  
Where the lone billow swept of old  
Her harbour-mouth.***

*Come, too, thou Sun-maid, in whose veins  
For ever burns the tropic fire—  
Whose cattle roam a thousand plains—  
Come, with thy gold and pearls for tire;  
And that sweet Harvester who twines  
The tender vine and binds the sheaf—  
And she, the Western Queen, who mines  
The desert reef—  
And thou against whose flowery throne  
And orchards green the wave is hurled—  
Australia claims you; Ye are one  
Before the World!*

Mackay Chronicle, 14 January 1901.

# RESOURCE SHEET 3

## Opening of the Commonwealth Parliament in Melbourne

### Procession through the city

Ten minutes later came another cheer, and a second fusillade from the guns, and then, amid enthusiastic cheering, the head of the Royal procession came under the Commonwealth arch and thundered over Princes bridge. The Duke of Roxburghe, conspicuous in the striking uniform of the Royal Horse Guards, rode well ahead of, followed by the suite and escort proper of Victorian Mounted Rifles, New South Wales Lancers, New Zealanders, Queenslanders, South and Western Australians and Tasmanians, under Major Vernon, New South Wales. The now familiar scarlet-coated, tall hatted Royal outriders followed, and then came the Royal carriage, with an aide-trotting on either side. H.R.H. the Duke of Cornwall and York wore the uniform of a rear admiral in the navy. As the Duke and Duchess drove through the city, the troops, section after section, came to the "present," while at all the important corners and turning places, the chief arches and best point of view, the enormous concourses of people rose and cheered and waved hats, sticks, handkerchiefs and umbrellas with the greatest and warmest enthusiasm. As the Royal progress proceeded the evident affection and loyalty of the Heir apparent.

### His Royal Highness's opening speech

Gentlemen of the Senate and Gentleman of the House of Representatives ...

His Majesty has watched with the deepest interest the social and material progress made by his people in Australia, and has seen with thankfulness and heartfelt satisfaction the completion of that political union of which this Parliament is the embodiment.

It is his Majesty's earnest prayer that this union so happily achieved may under God's blessing prove an instrument, for still further promoting the welfare and advancement of his subjects in Australia, and for the strengthening and consolidation of his Empire.

Gentlemen of the Senate and Gentlemen of the House of Representatives, it affords me much pleasure to convey to you this message from his Majesty. I now, in his name and on his behalf, declare the Parliament open.

### Message to England

As the sound ... reverberated through the building, her Royal Highness pressed an electric button which started a message to England announcing that the first Federal Parliament had been opened.

*The Age*, 10 May 1901.

## Message from the King

“My thoughts are with you on to-day’s important ceremony. Most fervently do I wish Australia prosperity and happiness.” EDWARD R.I.

## The reply

The cheering was renewed as his Royal Highness finished reading the message. The following cable message in reply was despatched by his Royal Highness to his Majesty the King immediately after the ceremony:

“I have just delivered your message, and in your name declared open the first Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia. I also read your kind telegram of good wishes, which is deeply appreciated by your loving Australian subjects, and was received with great enthusiasm. Splendid and impressive ceremony, over 12,000 people in Exhibition Building.”

## Members sworn in

As soon as the applause which followed the reading of the King’s message subsided Lord Hopetoun, the Governor-General, stepped forward and said:-

“Gentlemen of the Senate, Gentlemen of the House of Representatives, -I am desired by his Royal Highness to acquaint you that so soon as the members of your houses shall be sworn, and a president of the Senate and a Speaker of the House of Representatives shall be chosen, I will declare to you causes of this Parliament being called. The members of the Senate and the members of the House of Representatives will therefore now make and subscribe before me, the Governor-General, the oath or affirmation of allegiance, as by the Constitution Act provided, which will be administered by me.”

*The Age*, 10 May 1901.

# RESOURCE SHEET 3 continued

## Citizens arch welcoming the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York to Melbourne, May 1901



State Library of Victoria.

### **The citizens' arch**

Decorated in warm fresh tints relieved with gold, the Citizen's Arch gives strength, finish and added beauty to the ornamentation of Bourke street. It is erected just east of the Russell street intersection ... On the towers are medals, one representing the six States, together with embossed portraits of the Duke and Duchess. In the centre of the arch figures the portrait of his Majesty the King ...

*The Age*, 10 May 1901.

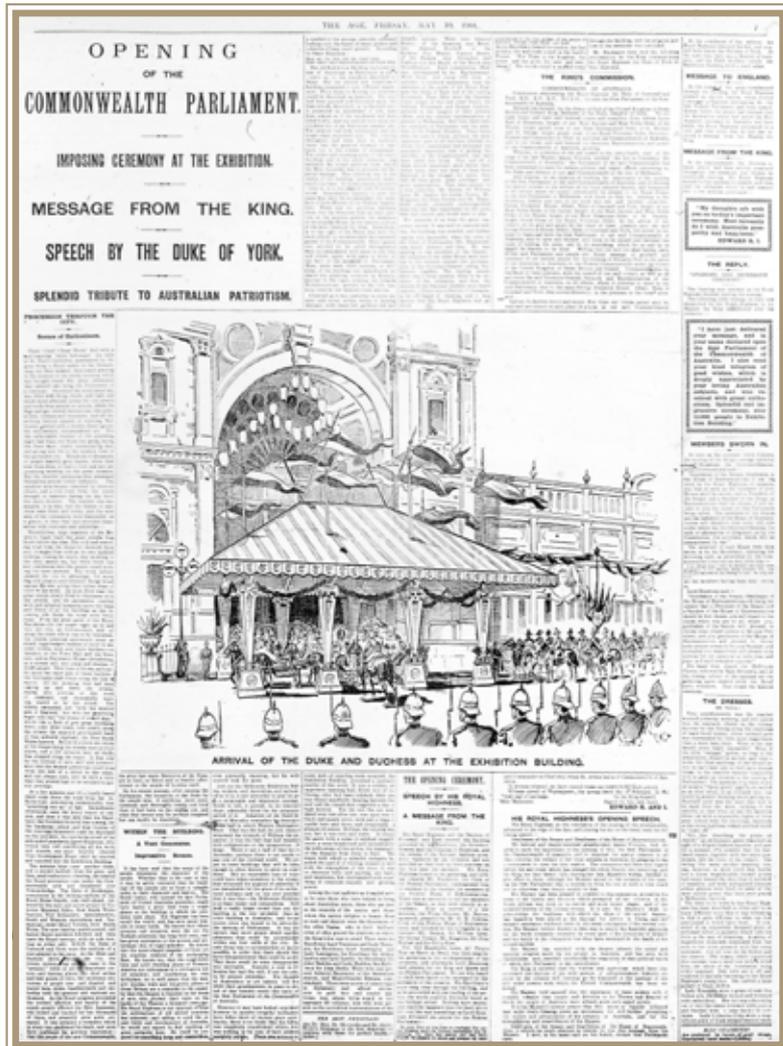
# RESOURCE SHEET 3 continued

## The Duke of Cornwall and York opening the First Commonwealth Parliament, Melbourne, 9 May 1901



Charles Nuttall, National Library of Australia, nla.pic-an8334367-1.

## Opening of Commonwealth Parliament



The Age, 10 May 1901.

# RESOURCE SHEET 3 continued

## Invitation to the celebration of the opening of the first Commonwealth Parliament of Australia, 1901



Julian & Howard Ashton, National Library of Australia, nla.pic-an8334487.

### Extract from the Australian Constitution, Section 2

A Governor-General appointed by the Queen shall be Her Majesty's representative in the Commonwealth.

Draft of a bill to constitute the Commonwealth of Australia, Robt S Brain, Government Printer, Melbourne, 1897.

