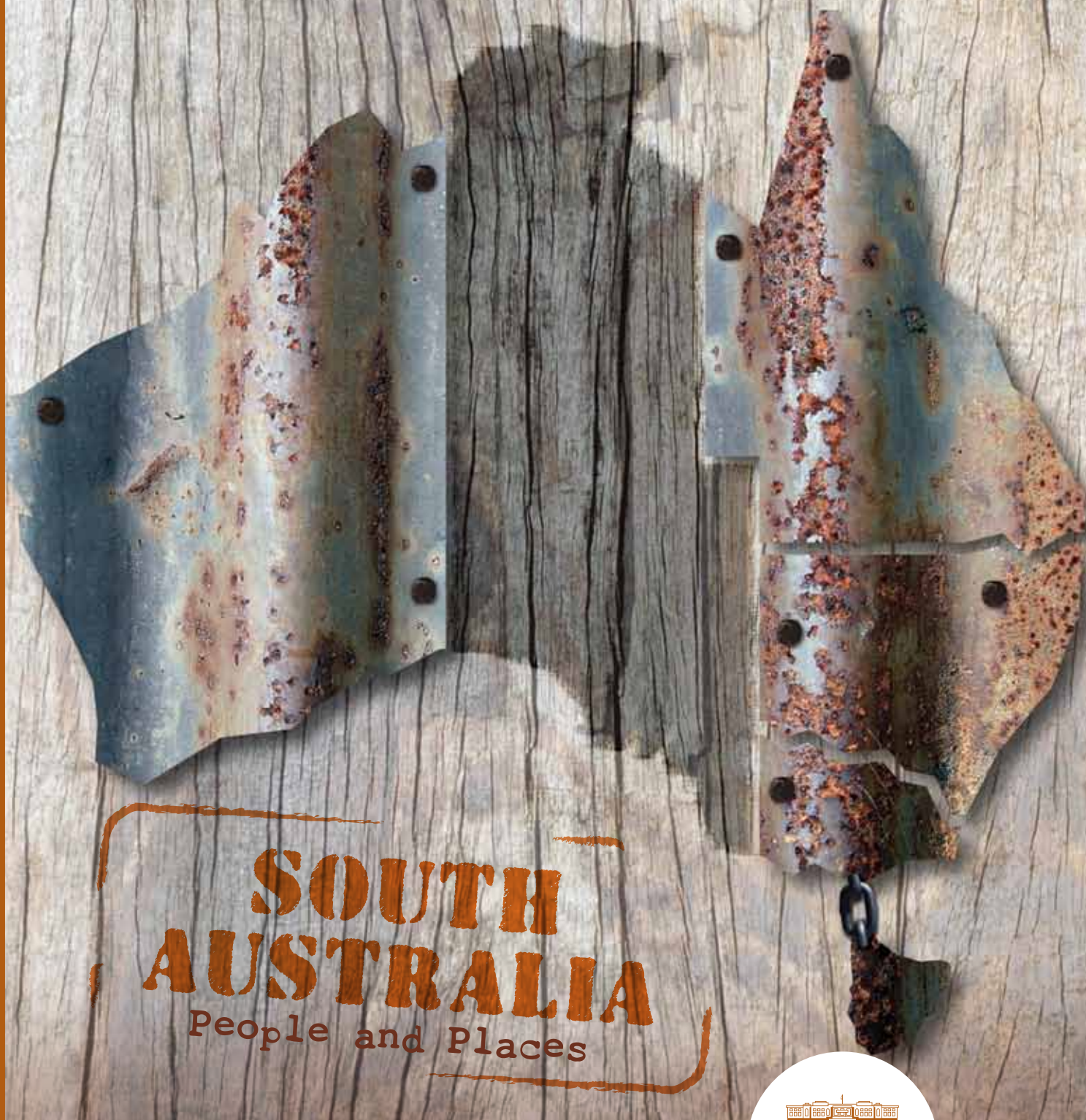


GETTING IT TOGETHER

From Colonies to Federation



**SOUTH
AUSTRALIA**
People and Places



MUSEUM
OF AUSTRALIAN
DEMOCRACY

OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE

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

MOAD
LEARNING

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People and Places

In the years before Federation, South Australia was different to the other Australian colonies in many ways. The Europeans that arrived there from 1836 onwards came as free settlers, planning to build a modern and well-managed society. Unlike other colonies, convict labour was never used to build public buildings such as schools and hospitals, or to construct the railways and telegraph lines. At the end of 1836, there were just more than 500 free settlers living in South Australia. However, the population quickly grew. By the time of the 1891 census, the population had grown to more than 324,721 people. And, by 1901, the year of Federation, it had reached 363,157.

The settlers rapidly spread out across the countryside, growing wheat and grapes, raising sheep and cattle, and mining copper. Indigenous people, however, lost more and more of their traditional lands and many died of European diseases.

In 1857, Britain granted South Australia the power to elect its own parliament, which could make laws to govern the colony. Prior to 1857, a governor appointed by the British Government ruled the colony. The women of South Australia were among the first in the world to win the right to vote. This important democratic event took place in 1894. In the years before Federation, the Northern Territory was part of South Australia. It was not until 1 January 1911 that it became a Territory under the control of the new Australian Commonwealth.

Investigations

-  **1.** What was South Australia like in the late 1800s?
-  **2.** How did newspapers in South Australia represent life in the colony?
-  **3.** What impact did the construction of South Australia's Overland Telegraph Line have on the colonies?
-  **4.** Who were some of the political figures from South Australia that played a leading role in the Federation movement?
-  **5.** Who were some South Australian women that made important contributions to social and political change in the late 1800s?

INVESTIGATION 1

What was South Australia like in the late 1800s?

South Australia, as it was before the Federation of the six Australian colonies in 1901, stretched from South Bay (the southernmost part of South Australia) to Oxley Island (the northernmost point of the Northern Territory). The majority of people (57 per cent) lived in rural areas; one in 10 people (11 per cent) lived in Adelaide, while nearly a third of the population (32 per cent) lived in other urban areas.

From 1863 until 1911, the Northern Territory was the responsibility of the South Australian Government. At the time, Darwin was called Palmerston, a name it used until the Territory came under the control of the Commonwealth in 1911.

In many ways, we can only imagine what the colony was like so long ago. However, there are photographs from which we can draw information, along with reports and stories in which writers of the time vividly convey details and impressions of people and places.

Your task

Explore the similarities and differences between life in Adelaide and life in other parts of South Australia in the late 1800s.

YOU WILL NEED

Resource sheet 1

- photographs: Adelaide
 - accounts: Adelaide, Port Augusta, Strathalbyn and Palmerston
- internet access

Activities

1. As a class, read the accounts of Adelaide and look at the photographs. You may use the 'Picture Australia' website www.pictureaustralia.org to locate other photographs. Type in 'Adelaide SA' and a particular year, for example, 'Adelaide SA 1890'.

2. Form small groups. Discuss the following questions about Adelaide and record your responses.

- What evidence can you find to determine whether Adelaide was a planned or unplanned city?
- How did the population of Adelaide show links to their British and German backgrounds?
- What examples of transport, clothing and technology from the late 1800s can you identify?
- What might you see, hear, feel and smell if you were living in Adelaide in the late 1800s? You can use an X-chart to record your responses.
- How do your answers help you to build up a picture about life in Adelaide at the time?

3. In your groups, read the accounts and discuss the following questions about Port Augusta, Strathalbyn and Palmerston and record your answers. You may want to use the 'Picture Australia' website www.pictureaustralia.org to locate photographs from the late 1800s. Type in the town's name, SA and a particular year: for example, 'Palmerston SA 1895'.

- What evidence can you find to determine whether Palmerston was a planned or unplanned town?
- What examples of transport, technology and occupations from the late 1800s can you identify?
- What might you see, hear, feel and smell if you were living in Port Augusta, Strathalbyn or Palmerston in the late 1800s? You can use an X-chart to record your responses.
- What do the three towns have in common? How are they unique?
- How do your answers help you to build up a picture of life in the colony of South Australia at the time?

4. Use your responses to create a Venn diagram to identify the similarities and differences among the lives of people in Adelaide and the lives of people in other parts of South Australia in the late 1800s.

- What are the differences? What are the similarities?
- Would they have had the same kinds of hopes?
- How would their opportunities have been different?

Share your Venn diagram with the rest of the class.

INVESTIGATION 2

How did newspapers in South Australia represent life in the colony?

In the early 1880s, South Australia had 47 different newspapers and journals that were published daily, weekly or monthly. Print media was often the only way many people could stay informed of local, colonial and international events, and for businesses to advertise their goods and services. Some newspapers had elaborate mastheads at the top of the front page. The mastheads allowed the newspaper to express the values of their communities and their readers – the people to whom they were trying to appeal.

YOU WILL NEED

Resource sheet 2

- newspaper mastheads

Examine how newspapers expressed the values of their communities and their readers.

Your task

Activities

1. Examine the South Australian newspaper mastheads.

2. Form small groups. Discuss the following questions about the masthead for *Frearson's Weekly Illustrated* and record your answers.

- What does the coat of arms in the centre of the masthead represent?
- What kind of activities are taking place in the masthead?
- Does the masthead represent city or country life? What evidence suggests this to be the case?
- What kinds of technologies are apparent in the masthead?
- Who might have been the readers of this newspaper?
- Examine the twirling ribbons in the right and left corners of the masthead. What do the inscriptions say? In your own words, write what you think the inscriptions mean.

3. In your groups, discuss the following questions about the masthead for *The Illustrated Adelaide Post* and record your answers.

- Do you recognise the buildings in the masthead? Why might the designer of the masthead have chosen to include those particular buildings?
- What kind of activities are taking place in the masthead?
- Does the masthead represent city or country life? What evidence suggests this to be the case?
- How are horses being used in the masthead? How is this the same or different to the way horses were used in the masthead for *Frearson's Weekly Illustrated*?
- Who might have been the readers of this newspaper?
- Why might Britain's Union Jack be shown flying on the flagpole rather than an Australian flag?

4. Share your group's responses with the rest of the class.

5. Design your own masthead to represent Adelaide or another South Australian town in the years before Federation. When you have finished, share your masthead with the rest of the class.

INVESTIGATION 3

What impact did the construction of South Australia's Overland Telegraph Line have on the colonies?

The English-born astronomer, Charles Todd came up with the idea to build a transcontinental telegraph system between Port Augusta and Palmerston (Darwin) in order to connect Australia with the rest of the world. The telegraph system, known as the Overland Telegraph Line, took almost two years to build. When it was finished on 22 August 1872, the line stretched across 3,000 kilometres and crossed land that had barely been explored by non-Indigenous people. The telegraph line was generally regarded as a 'national' achievement. People could communicate faster and easier than ever before, reading about events in London less than a day after they happened. Before the telegraph, messages came from Britain by sea and took several months. Todd later supervised the building of the telegraph line to Perth with equally good results. He also used the telegraph stations that were built along the line to begin a system of meteorological stations to collect scientific information about weather.

YOU WILL NEED

Resource sheet 3

- map: South Australia and its Northern Territory

Your task

Consider the impact the construction of South Australia's Overland Telegraph Line had on the lives of people in the late 1800s.

Activities

1. Examine the map of South Australia and its Northern Territory.
2. Form small groups. Discuss the following questions and record your answers.
 - What kinds of difficulties might Todd and his team of workers have experienced when constructing the Overland Telegraph Line?
 - How might the line have improved communication for colonial governments, businesses and families?
 - Why might the line have been generally regarded as a 'national' achievement?
 - Why might improved communication have encouraged people to think of themselves as Australians rather than as part of a colony?
 - Why might the ability to communicate with Britain have been considered important? Does this ability have the same level of importance today? Why?
3. The telegraph was used for messages that were very short and important. Individually or with a partner, write an urgent telegram message to a relative living in another colony or overseas. Think of a very complicated situation that you must explain using as few words as possible. For example, 'Mother fell off a ladder and is in a coma. We aren't sure how seriously injured she may be. You should make arrangements to come here as soon as possible and you may have to stay here for several weeks before we know her situation', might be reduced to 'Mother had a bad accident. Come quickly'.

INVESTIGATION 4

Who were some of the political figures from South Australia that played a leading role in the Federation movement?

Many South Australians of the late 1800s were working to improve the lives of others. They were committed to making a difference.

Between June 1885 and May 1901, the most powerful position in South Australia, that of Premier, was occupied by six different men. Three of them – Playford, Downer and Holder – held the position twice. The shortest serving Premier during the period was Vaiben Solomon. He was leader for only seven days. The longest serving Premier was Charles Cameron Kingston. He was leader for 2,359 days. Despite the ‘musical chairs’ of South Australian politics, the colony’s leaders were supporters of Federation and played key roles in uniting the six Australian colonies.

YOU WILL NEED

Resource sheet 4

- biography: Charles Cameron Kingston
- biography: Thomas Playford
- biography: Sir John William Downer
- biography: Frederick William Holder

By exploring the lives of some of the colony’s prominent figures, we can learn about the difference they made and what motivated them to take such active roles in their colony’s social and political life.

Do you think that their values, leadership qualities and motivations as active citizens would have been similar to those that are important today?

Discover the values, leadership qualities and motivations of four South Australian Premiers of the late 1800s.

Your task

Activities

1. As a class, brainstorm a list of values. The nine *Values for Australian Schooling* may be used as a starting point. Go to www.valueseducation.edu.au. Then, click on ‘National’, followed by ‘National Framework: Nine Values for Australian Schooling’. Brainstorm a second list of leadership qualities. It might be useful to have some leaders in mind when creating this list. Discuss how people demonstrate values and leadership through their actions.
2. Form groups of four. Each group member will be responsible for reading one of the biographies. Your task is to highlight examples of your prominent person’s values and leadership qualities.

The biography of your person may include all or only some of the values or leadership qualities

identified on the class list. As you read the biography, consider why you believe specific facts or events are examples of a value or leadership quality.

3. Read your selected biography to your group. Explain the values and leadership qualities that you have identified. Be prepared to justify your observations, if required.
4. As a class, make a list of the possible motivations Charles Cameron Kingston, Thomas Playford, John Downer and Frederick Holder might have had for wanting to make a difference in South Australia, and in supporting Federation. There are no right or wrong answers, but you need to be able to justify your suggestions based on the biographies that you have explored.

INVESTIGATION 5

Who were some South Australian women that made important contributions to social and political change in the late 1800s?

The women of South Australia and Western Australia were able to have a say in referendums on Federation, but women in other colonies were not. Women in South Australia won the right to vote in 1894. Some women became lobbyists and played a significant role in bringing social and political change to the colony. The Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) was an organisation that campaigned for women's rights and family values. They believed that the consumption of alcohol was disruptive to family life and sought to restrict its sale. The WCTU supported women having the right to vote, and to enter government so that they could participate in decisions on education, health and other matters that affected family wellbeing. Many men, however, considered women's participation in politics as a 'modern fad' or 'crank' – ludicrous, ridiculous, fanciful and at odds with community beliefs.

Some of the South Australian women who brought about social and political change are still well-known today. This is testament to their commitment to democratic values, and their work to improve people's lives and build a better future for their respective colonies.

Your task

Explore the lives and work of prominent women of the late 1880s and investigate how they worked to bring about change.

YOU WILL NEED

Resource sheet 5

- biography: Mary Lee
- cartoon: 'The Whisper of a "Shriek"'

internet access

library access

Activities

1. As a class, read the biography of Mary Lee. List some of the issues that she was concerned about. Then, list the actions that she took to make a difference to society and the values and leadership qualities that she displayed by her decisions and actions.

2. Research either Catherine Helen Spence, Elizabeth Webb Nicholls or Louise (Lucy) Morice. These women made a difference to society in South Australia in the late 1880s, and eventually the nation as a whole.

Consider the following questions in relation to the woman you have chosen.

- Were her concerns the same as Mary Lee's? If not, how were they different?
- What actions did she take to make a difference to society?
- What values and leadership qualities did she display through her decisions and actions?

3. Join with a partner who has researched the same woman as you. Imagine that you are journalists working in South Australia in the late 1880s. Work individually to prepare a series of questions that you would like to ask the woman you have chosen. Combine your questions so that you have a final list of 10.


4. Decide which of you will play the woman and which will play the journalist. Conduct an interview as a role-play for the rest of the class. Try to imagine how the woman would look, sound, and how she would speak. Think of what would make her happy, sad, proud or angry. Ensure that the interview includes opportunities for her to express her hopes for the future of the nation and her opinion of Federation.

5. Working in pairs, examine the 'The Whisper of a "Shriek"' cartoon. It shows WCTU members speaking into the ear of Premier Charles Cameron Kingston. As you examine the cartoon, caption and quote from Hon. JH Howe, consider the following questions.

- What impression does the cartoonist create of the WCTU members? Does the title of the cartoon help to create a positive or negative impression of them?
- The cartoonist shows the WCTU as having the 'ear of government'. What does this phrase mean? Why is it important? What might 'Mrs WCTU' be whispering about?
- The cartoonist refers to 'Mrs WCTU' as having 'crank fads'. What might the cartoonist be referring to? Were the WCTU's desires 'crank fads'?
- Did Hon. JH Howe support or reject the views of the WCTU?

6. Work together to write speech bubbles for 'Mrs WCTU' and the two women waiting in line behind her, to express what they would want to communicate to the Premier.

Share your speech bubbles with the rest of the class.



What are you thinking now?

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

- 1.** You have been commissioned to establish a newspaper to report about the place where you live. You want to convey to readers in other parts of the country what your community or city looks, sounds, feels and smells like. Design your newspaper's masthead. Create an outline to show the different sections that you will include in your newspaper, such as fashion, reviews, sports news or any other topics that are of interest to you. Write an editorial for your first edition, introducing readers to the aims of your newspaper.
- 2.** Create a 'learning centre' about a woman working in politics today. Research her life and recent activities by watching the news, reading newspapers and magazines, and searching the internet. Present the results of your research on a series of cards with a question on one side of the card and its answer on the other. Place the cards in a question box that you make and include it in a learning centre that you prepare. Find objects and props that represent your prominent woman's life and political activities and display those in your centre. Invite your classmates to visit your centre.
- 3.** Construction of a railway line, known as the Ghan, began in 1878 at Port Augusta. The railway line was designed to connect South Australia and its Northern Territory. Research the history of the Ghan and how it operates today. Search for interesting and quirky facts to share with your classmates.

RESOURCE SHEET 1

Account of Adelaide

Adelaide

The Capital of South Australia is a happy choice of its site, and the manner in which it was laid out by the original surveyors. It lies on an elevated plain between Mount Lofty ranges and the sea, and the River Torrens, once a fine river, then an insignificant stream, now a handsome lake, divides it into two parts, known respectively as North and South Adelaide ... The city is laid out in regular streets, with equally regular streets intersecting, and all these particularly clean. Rundle Street ... runs at right angles from the great thoroughfare of King William Street and through the eastern Park Lands, having along its length many important buildings, including the Jewish Synagogue, and the East End markets.

ED Hoben, *Glimpses of Australia. An Album of Photographic Gems. Volume II*, Gordon and Gotch, Melbourne, 1897.

Rundle Street, Adelaide, c 1890



State Library of South Australia, SLSA: B 16276.

RESOURCE SHEET 1 continued

Account of Adelaide

The Webbs' Australian Diary, 1898

Adelaide ... resembles more than any English town we know a German "Residenzadt"—the capital of a little principality, with parks and gardens, its little court society, its absence of conspicuous industrialism, and its general air of laying itself quietly to enjoy a comfortable life ... It is hoped that it will gradually add some of the charms of the German city—music, for instance, by a municipal band, if not by a municipal opera house, might easily come; the little University might develop some scholarship ... Adelaide has, in fact, more chance than any other Australian city of becoming the Weimar or, more precisely, the Stuttgart of the Southern Hemisphere.

Cited in AG Austin (ed), *The Webbs' Australian Diary*, 1898, Pitman, Melbourne, 1965.

German Club, Pirie Street, Adelaide, c 1895



State Library of South Australia, SLSA: B 62218.

Accounts of Port Augusta, Strathalbyn and Palmerston

Port Augusta

Port Augusta is a very fine natural harbour, about 250 miles north-west of Adelaide, and is the northern port of South Australia. There is here a population in the municipality of 1500, and amongst the public buildings is a Town Hall, lit by electricity, which is the finest outside of Adelaide. ... From the port there is a considerable export of wool, wheat, copper, hides and tallow ... There are indications of mineral wealth all round. Some of the business houses are very fine, and generally the place is a go-ahead commercial centre.

ED Hoben, *Glimpses of Australia. An Album of Photographic Gems. Volume II*, Gordon and Gotch, Melbourne, 1897.

Strathalbyn

A stroll round the town is not without interest to those who remember it in the palmy days of coaching, but this light of other days does anything but shine now that the railway line is in existence ... The Bank, Post Office, and the local newspaper and printing offices are situated not far from the mill ... The local gasworks are situated on the other side of the river. [Their] charge of 15s. per 1000ft. of gas supplied is the cause of much grumbling on the part of the township residents. Spanning the river leading to the railway station is the second bridge erected for traffic purposes ... The old coaching stables ... are now transformed into the local cheese and butter factory.

EH Hallack, *Our Townships, Farms and Homesteads – Southern District of South Australia*, Adelaide, 1892.

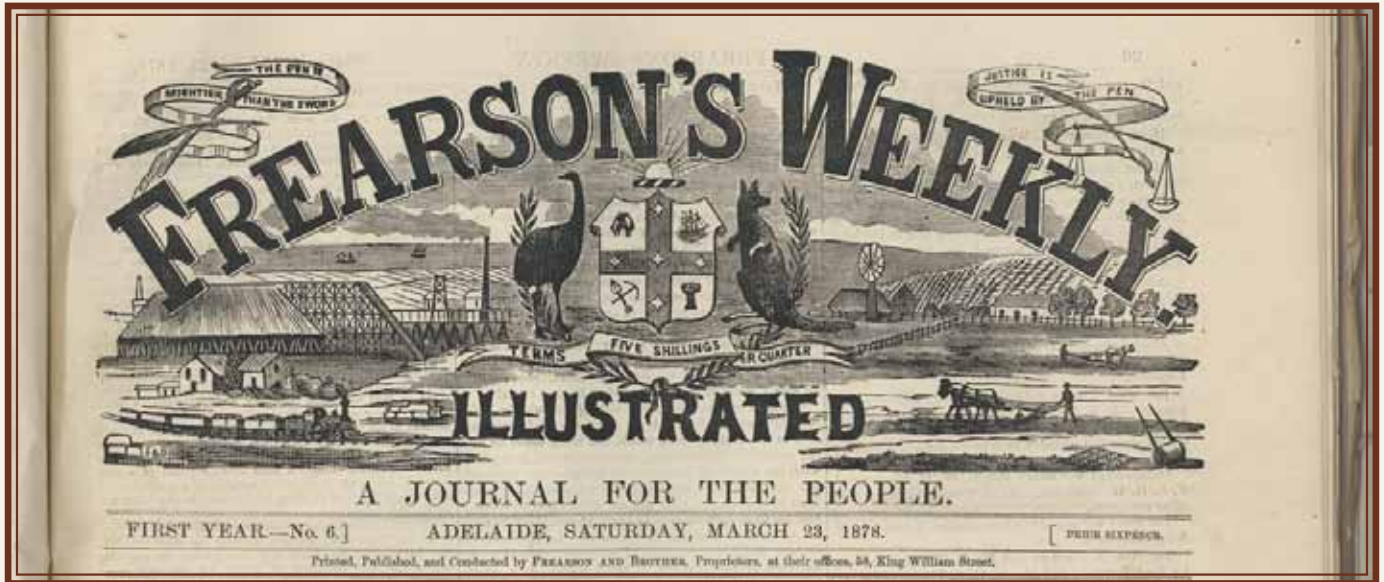
Palmerston (Darwin)

Winding up a short, but steep incline from the beach, about 200 yards, the town of Palmerston comes into view, situated on a peninsula bluff stretching into the harbour, the extreme cape being ornamented by the Governor's residence – not a very imposing building certainly; but quite elegant enough for a new country ... Palmerston has lately made rapid strides in the way of progress. Three of the streets are assuming a uniform appearance and tents dotted around the bush in every direction. Just now it is all a stir and bustle and publicans, storekeepers and mechanics are doing a thriving trade. The public houses are two, the general stores eleven, bakers two, and blacksmiths two. There is one chemist and some talk of a butcher's shop being opened. The only stone and lime buildings are the Telegraph and Post Offices...

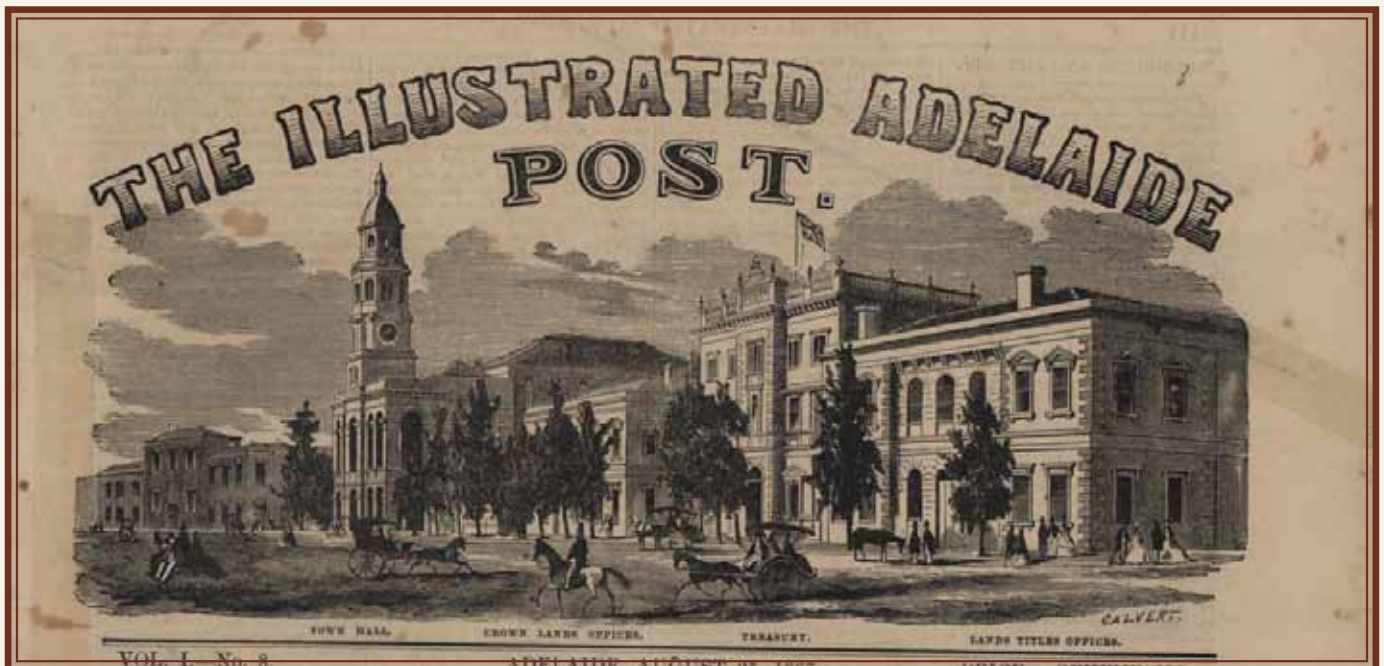
South Australian Advertiser, 5 December 1873.

RESOURCE SHEET 2

South Australian newspaper mastheads



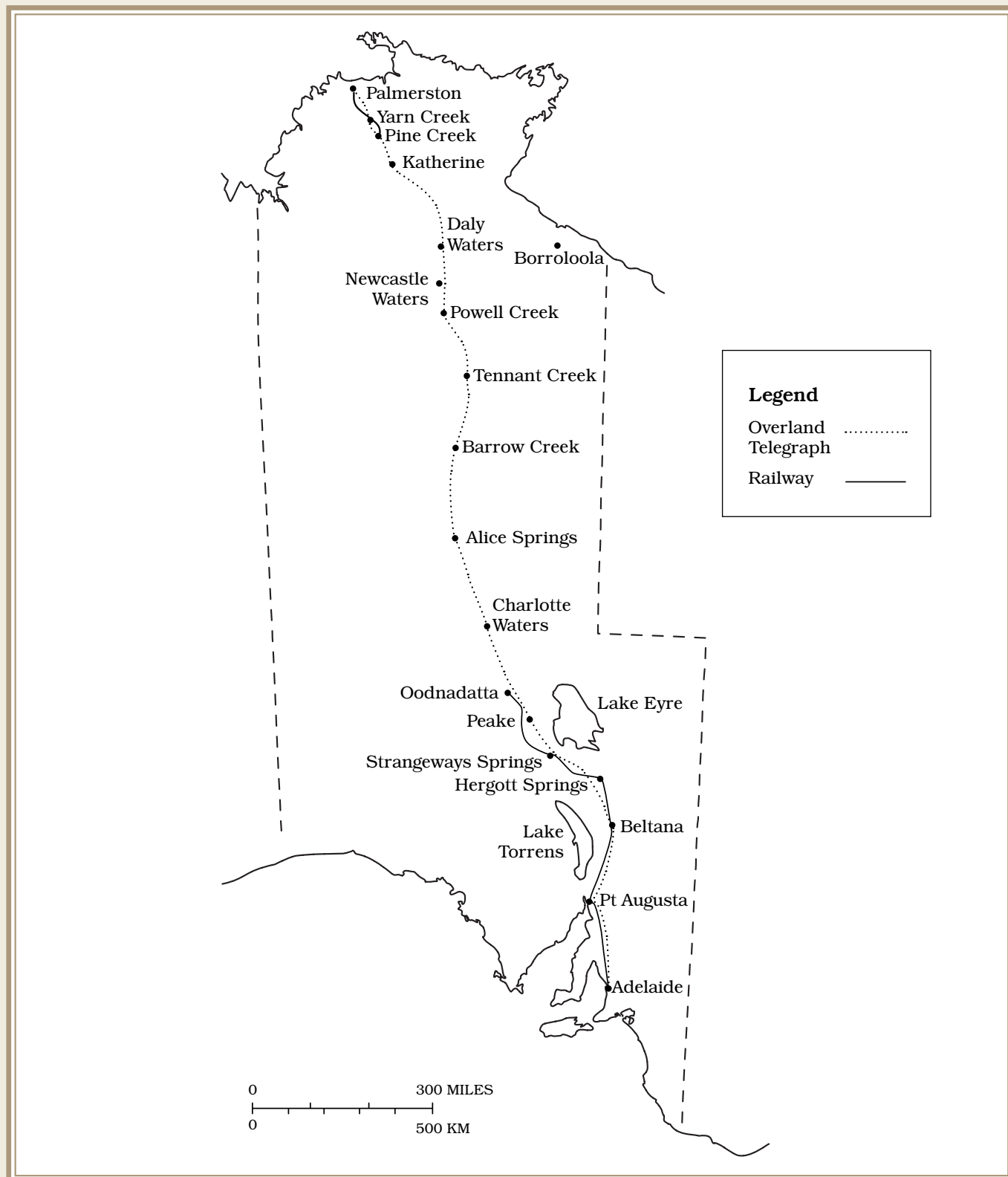
Frearson's Weekly Illustrated, 23 March 1878, State Library of South Australia, SA Memory.



The Illustrated Adelaide Post, 23 August 1867, State Library of South Australia, SA Memory.

RESOURCE SHEET 3

South Australia and its Northern Territory



Adapted from *South Australian Advertiser*, 5 December 1873.

RESOURCE SHEET 4

Biography: Charles Cameron Kingston (1850-1908)



Portrait of Charles Kingston, Swiss Studios, National Library of Australia, nla.pic-an23379300.

Charles Cameron Kingston was a lawyer. In politics, he was a radical, and impatient with those opposed to democratic reforms. He challenged one of his opponents to a duel with pistols and was arrested by the police. In court, the magistrate ordered him to keep the peace for 12 months. But, this did not stop him becoming Premier.

He was a great supporter of Federation. Apart from insisting that the small States must have the same number of senators as the large States, he wanted a democratic Constitution for the Commonwealth. He believed that all people, including men and women, should have the vote. He argued strongly that the upper house (Legislative Council) should not block the people's wishes represented in the lower house, as it did in South Australia.

Kingston was Minister for Trade and Customs in the first Commonwealth ministry under Prime Minister Edmund Barton. This was an important post, since he had to steer through Parliament the new tariff laws, which were to replace those of the colonies. He also drew up the bill for the Arbitration Court that was to settle workplace disputes, something he had pioneered in South Australia.

Biography: Federation people: Charles Kingston, The Learning Federation, L9435.

In a letter to the people of South Australia, Kingston encouraged people to vote in favour of Federation, and warned them against further delay as the consequences of such action would only lead to increased intercolonial differences.

What patriotic Australian can desire to see a further postponement of the accomplishment of Federation ... I have penned this letter that at least it may not be my fault should they fail to realise the great possibilities of the position and the dangers which may result from their neglect. But neglect would be a crime against Australia, and I cannot seriously contemplate its probability.

The Register, 26 May 1898.

Biography: Thomas Playford (1837-1915)



Portrait of Thomas Playford, Hammer & Co, National Library of Australia, nla.pic-an23355903.

Thomas Playford and his family arrived in Adelaide from England in 1844. His father was a minister of religion, who refused to let his eldest son study law, which he thought was the devil's business. Instead, Playford established a successful fruit orchard in the Adelaide Hills. Unlike the clever city lawyers, he made slow progress in politics, beginning in local government before moving to parliament. But, he was a very able man, plain-spoken and honest, who became a government minister and was twice Premier in 1887–89 and 1890–92.

He attended the 1890 Federal Conference called by Henry Parkes. Playford, like many others, wondered why Parkes was suddenly interested in Federation and criticised him openly. Playford said politicians could not create a movement for Federation, whereas Parkes said all great movements had a great man as their leader. At the 1891 Federal Convention, Playford supported a limitation on the Senate's powers over the budget, which the big colonies insisted on.

He did not attend the 1897–98 Australasian Federal Conventions because he was the colony's representative in London. He was elected to the Commonwealth Senate in 1901, and served as a minister under Alfred Deakin.

Biography: Federation people: Thomas Playford, The Learning Federation, L9591.

At the 1890 Federal Conference, Playford contested Henry Parkes' belief that Federation was a people's movement that was beginning to have widespread grassroots support. The question of whether the colonies of Australia were ready to federate was debated at great length at the conference.

... if the people of Australia had taken up this question in the first instance, we should have had it brought to a conclusion long ago ... It has not sprung from the people ... so far as South Australia is concerned, with the people not so educated on the question as to enable us to state that they ... are distinctly and unmistakably prepared for federation, and to what extent they are willing to go.

Parliament of Australia, 1890 Australasian Federation Conference Proceedings No 3, 10 February.

Biography: Sir John William Downer (1843-1915)



Portrait of Sir John William Downer, Swiss Studios, National Library of Australia, nla.pic-an23605224.

John Downer was very clever, winning a scholarship to St Peters school in Adelaide. He became the leading lawyer in Adelaide. In politics, he was conservative, but on some issues, such as women's rights, he was a reformer. In 1883, he passed a law allowing married women the right to own property, rather than it belonging to their husbands. He also supported votes for women.

Downer was a member of the Federal Conventions of 1891 and 1897–98. He was also a supporter of a strong Senate to protect the smaller States. As with many Australian-born lawyers, who were proud of their ability, Downer did not want English judges to be the final court of appeal for Australian law. However, the 1897–98 Australasian Federal Conventions did not want to exclude them completely. When the Convention met in Adelaide, Downer worked closely with Edmund Barton on drafting the Australian Constitution. Barton stayed at his house, so much of the work was done there.

In 1901, Downer was elected to the first Senate and supported Barton's Government. He was disappointed not to be appointed to the first High Court.

Biography: Federation people: John Downer, The Learning Federation, L9559.

Downer was a member of the committee that drafted the Constitution at the 1897 Australasian Federal Convention in Adelaide. The draft Constitution detailed the necessary powers that the new nation needed to manage its own affairs. One by one, clauses for the Constitution were watered down. Downer wondered whether the colonies would forever remain Britain's infant. Victorian politician, Simon Fraser argued that the Convention delegates were not there to cut ties with Britain. Downer responded passionately to Fraser's comment.

We do not propose in any way to separate from the British Crown, in fact we look to it with reverence. We consider ourselves the same people, but the very essence of the difference is that we think that we can make laws which will suffice us; in other words, to put it colloquially, we think we can manage our own affairs.

Peter Bartlett, Downer, Sir John William (1843–1915), *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 8, Melbourne University Press, 1981.

Biography: Sir Frederick William Holder (1850-1909)



Portrait of Sir Frederick Holder,
National Library of Australia,
nla.pic-an23386143.

Frederick Holder was a school teacher, who became headmaster of the State school at Burra in northern South Australia. He gave this up to be editor of the local newspaper. He was elected Mayor, and then local member of parliament.

He was twice Premier, but only briefly. His best work was done as Treasurer in Charles Kingston's long-lasting reformist government. He was a good manager of the colony's money and he gained wide respect. At the Australasian Federal Conventions of 1897–98 he worked hard on the financial arrangements of the new Commonwealth.

Holder was disappointed not to be a minister in Prime Minister Edmund Barton's Government. Barton organised that he would instead become the first Speaker. He was good at controlling the debates and was very fair in his rulings. Like the Speaker in the British Parliament, he stopped being a member of a party so that he would not be biased. In 1909, when the battle between the parties was very bitter, he collapsed in the Speaker's chair, saying 'Dreadful! Dreadful!' He died later that day.

Biography: Federation people: Frederick Holder, The Learning Federation, L9568.

South Australian Treasurer, Frederick Holder, together with Premier Charles Kingston, made a final appeal to the electors of South Australia to vote in favour of Federation. Their appeal was printed as a letter to *The Register*.

We favour Federation in the interests of Australian National Life; for the sake of unity and fraternity, and for the strength and safety which they beget; and for the sake also of the progress and prosperity, peace and concord, which history tells us Federation alone can secure ...

The Register, 3 June 1898.

RESOURCE SHEET 5



Portrait of Mary Lee, 1880, Hammer & Co, State Library of South Australia, SLSA: B 70647.

Biography: Mary Lee (1821-1909)

Mary Lee was born in Ireland on 14 February 1821. She was a widow when she arrived in Adelaide in 1879, with her daughter Evelyn, to care for her son Ben, who was seriously ill. Ben died the following year, and Mary and Evelyn continued to live in Adelaide.

During the late 1880s, South Australia was suffering hard times. There was a great drought, wheat and wool prices were down worldwide and there were strikes and lockouts. The unemployment rate soared. With no dole or relief, and the collapse of some of the banks, there was great hardship and misery. Mary and her colleagues worked hard to improve the lives of women and children. Mary was older than 60 by this time, but she was always busy. She joined the Social Purity Society and helped found the Working Women's Trades Union. These groups worked to change the laws relating to young women, and to improve the conditions and wages they were often forced to accept.

Mary Lee believed that equal education for girls was critical if they were to improve their lives and become politically aware. They would also need to be able to vote, to support members of parliament who would make fairer laws. Mary and others formed the Women's Suffrage League to fight for the vote for women. To spread these ideas, she wrote articles and letters to newspapers, spoke at meetings in drawing rooms, public halls and clubs, and lobbied politicians. Thanks to her efforts and those of others, South Australia became the first Australian colony to grant women suffrage in 1894. It was also the first place in the world where women had the right to sit in Parliament.

Mary Lee kept on fighting for the rights of women until her death on 18 September 1909. She was 89 years old.

Elizabeth Mansutti, Mary Lee, 1821–1909, State Library of South Australia, www.slsa.sa.gov.au/marylee.

In a series of articles entitled 'Letters for Women', Mary wrote:

As women assist in maintaining Government they have a right to a say how and by whom they shall be governed. Nineteenth century civilisation has accorded to women the same political status as to the idiot and the criminal. Such is the basis of our reverence for the person of women and of our estimate of her work.

Elizabeth Mansutti, Mary Lee, 1821–1909, State Library of South Australia, www.slsa.sa.gov.au/marylee.

The Whisper of a “Shriek”

‘The Government were a Government of promises, and all that was needed, was for a few old women to get up a deputation and they could obtain a promise from the Government—*Hon. J. H. Howe in the S.A. Council.*’



The Critic, 22 October 1898, National Library of Australia.