

ONE PEOPLE ONE DESTINY

CELEBRATING
THE CENTENARY
OF FEDERATION



THE IDEA FORMS, 1840-1860



'They knew no better'

Bulletin, 31 January 1891

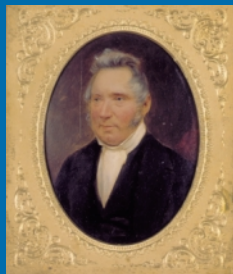
(MDQ079/39)

Statue of Dr. Lang: "Excuse me, gentlemen, but it makes me laugh to think that the first official act of a new vice-royalty [Governor Jersey] should be to do honour to a Republican whose whole life was spent trying to abolish Royalty!"



Portrait of Henry Parkes

charcoal drawing by Charles Rodius, 1854
(ZP2/13)



Rev. Dr. John Dunmore Lang
Miniature oil portrait
(DLPa3)

'I feel much diffidence in offering an opinion so soon after my arrival in this part of the world; but it appears to me that, considering its distance from Home, and the time that must elapse before the decision of Her Majesty's Government upon measures passed by the Legislatures of these colonies can be obtained, it would be very advantageous to their interests if some superior Functionary were to be appointed, to whom all measures adopted by the local Legislatures, affecting the general interests of the mother country, the Australian colonies, or their intercolonial trade, should be submitted ...'

Governor FitzRoy (NSW) to Earl Grey (Colonial Secretary, London)
29 September 1846



Custom house on the flooded lower Murray River at the junction of NSW, Victoria and South Australia
albumen photograph by Charles Bayliss, 1886
(PXE674 vol.1 no.38)

'You must not yet argue defiance to the power of Britain yet. Australia is not combined enough ... America with Three Million of people fought out its Independence — Australia with half a Million cannot.'

James T. Thomson
to Revd Dr John D. Lang (NSW)
6 February 1855

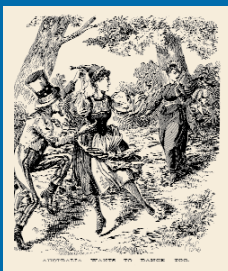
'The time ... is not far distant, when the Colonies will adopt some federal arrangement ...'

Edward Deas Thomson (NSW)
29 October 1856

'... the want of a federal authority has been already felt in regard to the establishment of light-houses in Bass's Straits, to the collection of custom duties on the River Murray, which intersects the three Colonies of South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales, and to the construction of an electric telegraph between Adelaide and Melbourne.'

Memorial of the General Association for the Australian Colonies, London
(William C. Wentworth, Chair)
31 March 1857

THE IDEA STARTS TO TAKE HOLD, 1860 –1890



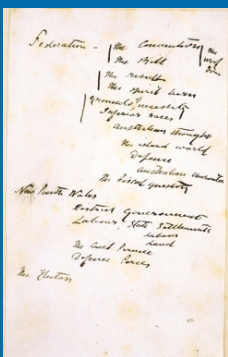
'Australia wants to dance too'
Boomerang, 6 July 1889
(MDQ079/50)
[The republics of France & the USA
invite Australia to join in the dance
while Britain dozes]

'In the present condition of Europe it is surely our duty to be in a condition to unite our resources for Defence, or at least to take counsel together.'

Charles G. Duffy (VIC)
to Revd Dr John D. Lang (NSW)
12 June 1860

'... let me beg of you to distinguish yourself above all other Statesmen by endeavouring to bring about a General Federation of Australasia.'

James Tyson (QLD)
to Henry Parkes (NSW)
5 January 1875



Federation planning manuscript
by Sir Henry Parkes, c. 1889
(A956 item 3)



Delegates to the Australasian Federation Conference, 1890
(DG MPG/1)

'... how rapidly a pure Australian sentiment is growing and strengthening among us.'

Henry Parkes (NSW) to
James A. Froude (England)
16 August 1889

'... a convention of leading men from all the colonies ... to devise the constitution [for] ... a federal government with a Federal Parliament for the conduct of national business.'

Banquet speech by
Henry Parkes, Tenterfield
24 October 1889

'We know it is a wise dispensation that these large colonies sprang into existence ... but the time has now arrived when we are no longer isolated. The crimson thread of kinship runs through us all.'

Speech by Henry Parkes
at Intercolonial Conference
Queen's Hall, Melbourne, 1890

'The chief objection to federation seems to be that this colony would be robbed of part of its individuality.'

Edmund Barton (NSW)
8 October 1890



Flag of the colony of NSW
NSW Colonial Architect, January 1874
(V*/FLA AUS/1)

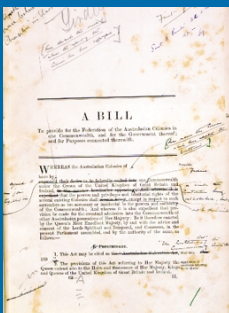
THE IDEA IS DEBATED AND SHAPED, 1891–1898



'Federation. The Parkesian Model'
Bulletin, 7 March 1891
(MDQ079/39)



'What's in a name?'
Bulletin, 4 April 1891
(MDQ079/39)
[referring to the 'Commonwealth' established under Oliver Cromwell after the trial and beheading of Charles I in 1649]



First proof of the draft Constitution Bill prepared for the Drafting (sub-) Committee 24 March 1891
(MSQ198)



Banquet menu cover for the Sydney Federation Convention, September 1897

'... No people can constitute a nation unless they are free; no people are free whose sovereignty is a prerogative of an exterior power; and ... a nation that cannot work out its destiny without reference to Imperial interests is not a nation at all. It is merely a colony of dependants and not of freemen.'

The Bulletin, Sydney, 14 March 1891

'At yesterday's sitting of the Federation Convention ... [it] appointed three committees ... The Constitutional Committee consists of two delegates from each colony, and the other committees of one from each. The Finance and Judiciary Committees will report to the Constitutional Committee, which will prepare and submit to the Convention a Bill for the establishment of a Federal Constitution.'

The Times, London, 20 March 1891



Some members of the National Australasian (Federation) Convention, Sydney, March/April 1891
(MPG/46)

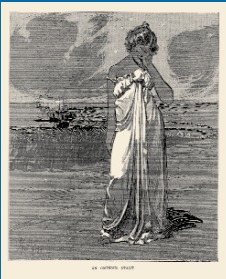
'A federation is the outcome of a particular sentiment, the effect of which is that the people of the proposed federated states wish not to become one nation, but to preserve their individuality as separate states to a considerable degree, but yet to a certain extent to form, as far as the outside world is concerned, an undivided front ...'

Address to the electors of East Torrens by Mr. Baker, Norwood Town Hall, Adelaide, 15 April 1891

'That in the opinion of this meeting the Constitution Bill prepared by the convention is a just and liberal measure, and well fitted to be the Constitution of the people of Australia'

Resolution by Sir Edmund Barton, Great Federal Meeting, Sydney Town Hall 19 April 1898

THE IDEA IS DEBATED AND APPROVED, 1898 – 1899



'In ... the question of Federation, THE TOCSIN stood alone among victorian newspapers in the battle against the nefarious, plutocratic, liberty-chloroforming Federal Constitution Bill !'

The Tocsin, Melbourne,
29 September 1898

'We women have come here tonight to speak to you upon the Federation Bill, and its so called 'Amendments' — unlike the women of S Australia we have no vote ... we are utterly powerless to voice our views in the National Referendum ...'

Speech by Rose Scott, Sydney, 1899

'An ominous start'
Bulletin, 18 November 1899
(MDQ079/39)
Federated Australia: "And so my first national act is to back up a wanton deed of blood and rapine!"
[referring to the Boer War]



Commemorative certificate - showing that the question of an Australian Federal Constitution was submitted to the Electors of Victoria, 27 July 1899

**FEDERATION DAY,
3RD JUNE 3RD**

WORKING MEN OF HOBART.

If You are in favour of Federation
VOTE THUS:-

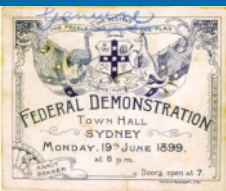
YES

NO

FEDERATION will give unity to our hearts and homes.
FEDERATION will give industrial intercourse and trade with our neighbours and bring peace and harmony between the people of the several Colonies.
FEDERATION will lessen the cost of living by large quantities of Colonial duties.
FEDERATION will create new manufactures in Hobart, and send our workers with their families established.

THEREFORE VOTE YES - JUNE 3
YOU CAN VOTE AT EVERY POLLING BOOTH.

Federation day [voting] poster
Hobart, 3 June 1899
(DL drawer item 354)



Federal Demonstration entry card
Monday 19 June 1899
(Q354.9/A)

'Australia spent five solid years in building up its Commonwealth... It held more Conventions than anybody cares to remember now. It had an election of Federal delegates in four provinces. It held nine separate Referendums – two each in N.S.W., Victoria, S.A. and Tasmania, and one in Queensland. Eight houses of Parliament wrestled with the Enabling Bill twice, and also went over the Draft Constitution once to suggest amendments. Four Houses of Parliament wrestled with the Bill once. Hundreds of thousands of pounds and thousands of tons of literature were spent over the struggle. Federal and anti-Federal orators by hundreds stumped about a thousand million acres of country...telling the people things that were true about the Bill and things that were not true... And in the end a scheme was agreed upon, and carried in three provinces by a large majority and in two by a comparatively small one.'

The Bulletin, Sydney
7 April 1900

BRITISH AND ROYAL ASSENT, MARCH – SEPTEMBER 1900



'Arrival of the New Baby'
Bulletin, 14 July 1900
(MDO079/39)
Nurse Barton: "He ain't much to look at
now. But wait till he grows!"

'Our Federal self-government is embodied in the Commonwealth Bill. The only question is, how much will the Imperial Parliament filch from us?'

The Bulletin, Sydney,
2 June 1900

'Joseph Chamberlain, in the House of Commons, described the Commonwealth Bill as "a monument of legislative competency"'

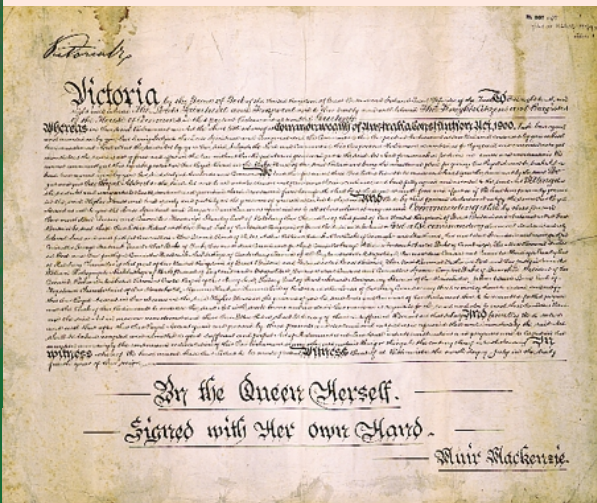
The Bulletin, Sydney,
7 July 1900



Copy of the Proclamation of Queen
Victoria announcing the Federal
Commonwealth of Australia, 1900
(D356-9 item 7)



Banquet invitation to celebrate the
appointment of Governor-General,
Edinburgh, 27 September 1900



Facsimile of Royal Assent to the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act, 1900
(MLMS5 1379X item 1)

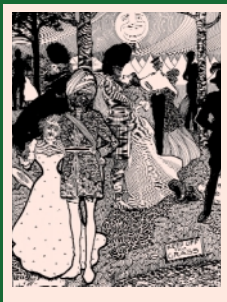
'... Old England gives your hand the grip,
And binds you with a coronet,
In which the gold o' the wattle glows,
With Shamrock, Thistle, and the Rose.'

Poem by Gerald Massey

'... We do hereby declare that on and after the First day of January One thousand nine hundred and one the people of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, Tasmania and Western Australia shall be united in a Federal Commonwealth under the name of the Commonwealth of Australia.'

Proclamation by the Queen, Victoria R
17 September 1900

THE PROCESSION, 1 JANUARY 1901

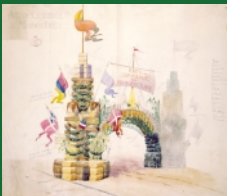


'Our soldiers in the park'
Bulletin, 5 January 1901
(MDQ079/39)

'We may naturally expect the next generation of Australians to be true sons of that cosmopolitan empire on which the sun never sets'



Troops in the procession pass under the Golden Fleece Arch on Bridge Street moving towards Pitt Street
photoprint, Government Printer
1 January 1901
(PXD760/10)



Planned Commerce & Manufacture Arch (unbuilt) by Carl Weber
pencil & watercolour sketch
Department of Public Works
Government Architects Office
(PXD383/40)

'... I will now proceed to tell you something about our trip to Sydney ... We stayed at Petersham all Sunday and on Monday we went into town and stopped the night at the 'Australia' in order to be ready for Tuesday morning, when the great celebrations were to take place. On Tuesday morning we went into Macquarie St and got into a grandstand erected in Parliament House grounds and waited there ...'

William Cain of Melbourne
to his brother Robert,
8 January 1901



Aerial view of the Inauguration Day procession moving down Macquarie Street toward Bridge Street with Parliament House and spectators (including Robert Cain) at right
photoprint, Government Printer, 1 January 1901
(PXD760/4)

'A city of arches. First the arch in Bridge-street, white with wool, bearing, in gold letters, 'The Land of the Golden Fleece' ... It is half-past 10 as the procession comes into view ... Shearers in yellow hats, stone-beakers in blue ... The trades are passing ... Then the fire-engines roll by ... Two gorgeous cars come along. The first is for Italia ... The second is a Canadian car ... Then politicians, judges and soldiers pass in quick succession. Only four or five women are in the show ... At last, the Governor-General ...'

The Bulletin, Sydney, 5 January 1901

THE SWEARING – IN, 1 JANUARY 1901



'May'
Bulletin, 4 May 1901
(MDQ079/39)
"For I'm to be Queen o' the May,
mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May!"



Governor-General approaching pavilion
prior to Swearing-in Ceremony
photoprint, Government Printer
1 January 1901
(PXD760/21)



Administering the oath to the
Governor-General
photoprint, 1 January 1901
(PXD789/23)

'Directly the end of the Procession disappeared we immediatly (sic) started off for Centennial Park to view the Swearing in of Lord Hopetoun ... We arrived there before the Procession and got a good seat. When the Govenor (sic) came we saw Mr Blackmore read the Proclamation (sic) and saw Lord Hopetoun sign the document and take the oath, whereupon a salute of 21 guns was fired and thus we saw the greatest event in Australian History, that is ever likely to take place ...'

William Cain of Melbourne
to his brother Robert,
8 January 1901



Panoramic view of Centennial Park and the pavilion, photoprint, Government Printer
1 January 1901
(PXD760/25)

'In the centre of the scene was a white pavilion with a gaudy royal standard floating over it. Opposite was a grandstand illuminated with the red and blue ensigns, and around it were rows and rows of yellow seats ... the waiting populace, glistening whitely in the tremulous heat, looked scanty and patchy ... Away to the west were little yellow dots, which later on turned out to be the artillery. The white pavilion was lit up with the red robes of the visiting Chief-Justices ... It was all military ... Suddenly guns boomed, grey smoke rolled in clouds across the park, there was a meagre cheer, and Australia was born.'

The Bulletin, Sydney, 5 January 1901

THE CELEBRATIONS, 1–8 JANUARY 1901



'Australia faces the dawn: 2nd January, 1901'
Bulletin, 5 January 1901
(MDQ079/39)



Rickard's Tivoli Theatre program
3 January 1901
(ML ephemera collection)



Certificate to commemorate the inauguration of the Commonwealth issued by Paddington Borough Council (ML1161)

'No madder idea was ever originated than the letting-off of fireworks from the Town Hall on Thursday night ... The display suddenly began with a tremendous rocket, which started all the horses within earshot plunging amongst the crowds in George-st. The second rocket struck the parapet a few yards off ... Another missed the tower on the [Queen Victoria] markets by a few feet ... A better-directed one landed right on the market building ... but beyond singeing a flag or two and scorching a few boys sitting almost on the fireworks, everything escaped.'

The Bulletin, Sydney, 12 January 1901



Town Hall illuminated at night with fireworks, photoprint, Government Printer, 1 January 1901 (PXD760/62)

'[Wednesday] we were going to the [military] review but father met Mr Tavener at the Hotel and he asked us to go round the harbour in the Government Launch, which we did and enjoyed ourselves very much. On Friday we had lunch on board the German steamer 'Grosser Kurfürst' one of the largest steamers afloat ... made into a kind of Hotel where the NSW Government put up some of the visiting officials. That evening we had invitations to go down the harbour to witness the fireworks on the harbour ... The firework display was a grand sight, all the boats were illuminated, the men-of-war were burning bright lights and firing guns and then on top of all this there were the fireworks, which gave Sydney harbour a most beautiful aspect. I don't suppose a sight like it could be seen at any other place in the world.'

William Cain of Melbourne
to his brother Robert,
8 January 1901

OPENING OF THE FIRST PARLIAMENT, 9 MAY 1901



Royal procession passing the Melbourne Town Hall, pen & ink sketch by Julian Ashton, 1901 (SV7COM.C/7)



First Commonwealth Ministry, silver gelatin photoprint, January 1901 (DLPe282)

From left to right: John Forrest, George Turner, Richard O'Connor, Neil Lewis, Edmund Barton, James Dickson, Lord Hopetoun, Alfred Deakin, William Lyne, Frederick Holder, Charles Kingston



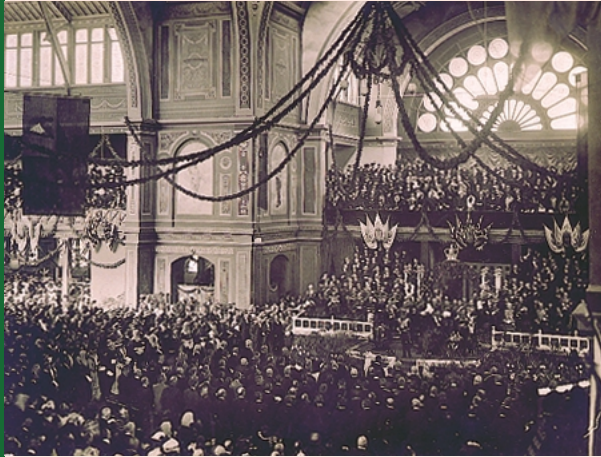
Invitation to evening reception in celebration of the opening of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, Julian and Howard Ashton

'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'

Speech by H.R.H. the Duke of Cornwall and York
Exhibition Building, Melbourne
9 May 1901

'The Jook (sic) was very nervous at first. Likewise the Duchess. Barton and the other Commonwealth ministers played the part of flunkey hosts to the Yorks and Hopetouns, and played it very uneasily ...'

The Bulletin, Sydney
18 May 1901



Opening of the First Federal Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, silver gelatin photoprint, May 1901 (DLPx159/6)

'As a spectacle, the Opening of Parliament would have kept one interested for a week. The vast floor held an ocean of straining faces which had overflowed the balconies like white foam flung up on cliffs. In the midst of the sea an island of Royal-red, and on this ruddy speck four human figures facing the concentrated glitter of 24,000 eyes. Opposite this group, which had for background a body-guard of staff officers arrayed in gorgeous millinery, stood Australia's Ministers of State and Senators, flanked by State politicians, officials, consuls, soldiers, sailors, while beyond this representative mass ordinary citizens, rich and poor, strained eyes and ears in the endeavor to catch sound or glimpse of the historic ceremony.'

The Bulletin, Sydney, 18 May 1901