

AUSTRALIAN HISTORY LEAFLET

THE EVERARD LETTERS

PIONEER MEDICAL COLONIST

Supplement to Land and Wages

By E. J. Craigie

Adelaide

THE WAKEFIELD PLAN

Australian history is gaining recognition. Readers will remember that Sydney was founded by shiploads of convicts guarded by soldiers. The army officers, such as MacArthur, received large, free grants of land and convicts were assigned to work these farms. In his "Letters from Sydney," E. G. Wakefield objected to this system of convictism and proposed his theory of colonisation. Wakefield urged that the new lands should not be given by the Government, but should be sold "at a sufficient price" to pay the expense of bringing out labourers to work for the landholders.

One well-to-do Englishman attracted by the Wakefield plan was Dr. Charles C. Everard. As ship's surgeon, he received a free passage for himself and the sum of £20 to stock the medicine chest. There would be good opportunities for a medical practice in the growing colony. He set out with his family and in a magazine issued by the Electricity Trust of South Australia there appear two letters written by the worthy Dr. Everard to his sister, Mrs. Lucy, and sent back to her in Gloucestershire.

The first letter was written "on board the Africaine," off Deal, on July 2, 1836, and intimated that the ship had cleared out of the London Docks, bound for

Australia. It was stated there were "98 souls on board—our accommodation is good, our provisions excellent. I pay the passage for my family, £168, and receive a free passage for myself and £20 for the medicine chest." The family consisted for Mrs. Everard, three sons and one daughter.

Allotment of Adelaide Land

The second letter, written on May 29, 1837, after the arrival of the ship at Holdfast Bay, S.A., deals mainly with conditions in the new colony. It contains one paragraph of special interest to students of Henry George. It states.—

"I have ten acres of the town, five of which were mine by priority of choice, the remainder I bought at a public sale, and the average price was £6 per acre. I would not sell one of my first for less than £200. I do not expect we shall get our country sections for 12 months to come, we have such a paucity of good surveyors."

For the benefit of readers who may not understand the reference to the five acres which came to Dr. Everard "by priority of choice," some information on this will be acceptable. When the development of South Australia was proposed in England, land orders were offered for sale at £81 each. The purchasers of each land order were entitled to 80 acres in the country and one city acre. There were 437 of these orders sold and they were known as preliminary land orders.

On March 23, 1837, a meeting of landholders or their agents was held in Adelaide to decide the order in which the choice of city acres was to be made, hence the "priority of choice" mentioned by Dr. Everard.

After the choice had been made by the holders of the preliminary land orders, the balance of the land was then offered at public auction. It is interesting to record the fact that the 1,042 acres which constitute the City of Adelaide were sold for £3,856/8/-, the highest price received for any acre being £14/14/-, whereas the unimproved land value of the same area in the 1950 assessment for State Land Tax was £19,434,590.

Being in possession of five land-orders, Dr. Everard was entitled to five choices for his city acres. His first selection was the ninth choice on the list, according to the arrangements made at the meeting on March 23, and he selected acre No. 303 at the corner of Victoria Square and Wakefield Street, almost in the centre of the city. This acre is now used exclusively for Government offices and its present value would not be less than £180,000.

Dr. Everard's next choice was the 22nd, and he selected acre No. 17, corner of King William Street and North Terrace. This is now a very valuable site, owned by the Bank of New South Wales, the Shell Company, the Adelaide Club and the firm of D. and J. Fowler. Its unimproved land value for State Land Tax at the assessment in 1950 was £213,188.

The doctor's third selection of a city acre was the 82nd choice, when he took acre No. 71 at the corner of Hindley and Morphett Streets. This is now a very valuable business site and the unimproved value of the acre is approximately £50,000.

The selection of the fourth acre represented the 90th choice, when acre No. 343 was taken, on the south side of Wakefield Street. This is one of the central streets in the city. The fifth acre was the 144th choice, and the selected acre was No. 370, on the north side of Angas Street. These two acres are the only ones now showing in the Land Tax office books as the property of Everard Acres Ltd., and their unimproved land value is given as £49,068.

It will be noted from Dr. Everard's letter that, although he paid only £1 each for these five acres, he stated: "I would not sell one for less than £200." The land was then in the same state as when the doctor purchased it, so, apparently, he had all the qualifications of the modern land speculator, and was prepared to exploit any legitimate user who desired to buy any of it by charging £200 for an acre which had cost him only £1.

Auction of Adelaide Land

An investigation of the original plan of Adelaide and research in the books at the State Land Tax Office reveal the following facts relating to the sale by auction.

The five acres mentioned by Dr. Everard as being purchased "at an average price of £6 per acre" are as follows:—

Acre No. 533, north side of Halifax Street, purchased for £6, valued at 1950 assessment at £3,448.

Acre No. 534, also north side of Halifax Street, purchased for £6, 1950 valuation £3,318.

Acre No. 555, north side Sturt Street, price paid £5/10/-, land valuation £3,782.

Acre No. 556, also north side Sturt Street, price paid £5/15/-, land valuation £2,926. This lower valuation is due to the fact that only a portion of the acre is taxable, being owned by W. H. Burford and Co., the balance of the land being held by the Commonwealth Government and the Catholic Church Endowment Society, therefore being exempt from taxation.

The above four acres are in the residential section of the city of Adelaide.

The fifth town acre was No. 955, situated at Barton Terrace, North Adelaide. The price paid for it was £3/3/-, and the 1950 land tax valuation was £3,500.

It will thus be seen that these five acres sold to Dr. Everard for £26/8/- are now valued at £16,974 for State Land Tax. To this must be added at least another £1,000, being the value of the land owned by the Commonwealth Government and the Catholic Church Endowment Society on Acre No. 556, for which no official valuation is made.

Australian Way of Life

Before summarising the facts relating to the land orders, reference to another paragraph in Dr. Everard's letter will be of interest. In that he says:—

“I am now, with William's assistance, only felling and grubbing up the trees upon one acre preparatory to building our town house. I have lost my labourer. He would not work for me longer, although I had agreed to give him 12/- per week, but he could earn more, he said, and if I did not choose to advance him, he would leave, and accordingly did. In England he did not earn on an average, more than 6/- per week, and did not taste meat from one week's end to another. Here he got meat every day and less than a bottle of rum a day was not enough for him. . . . Therefore, William and I are obliged to work hard, but we enjoy it, as we know it is all for our comfort and prosperity.”

It is pathetic to read that Dr. Everard and his son William were “obliged to work hard,” even though they “enjoyed it.” Most pioneers who are true to name expect to work hard. Development work cannot proceed without hard work.

The fact that the labourer would not remain with the doctor, even though he generously offered to double the 6/- per week wages he was paying him, plus the daily meat and bottle of rum; makes it abundantly clear the statements Georgists have made for many years, “that where land is easy to obtain and workers have a chance of alternative employment, exploitation of labour is impossible.” We have stressed this important economic truth for a long period, but Labour leaders apparently are still unaware of it. If they read the letters by Dr. Everard it should prove to them that the freeing of natural resources by the collection of land values for public purposes is a more logical method of providing a just return to all who toil, than the illogical scheme now made manifest by the so-called “marginal increase” which is making for inflation of prices.

So much for so little

To summarise the position, this is what we find. Dr. Everard, as the purchaser of five land orders in 1836 for £405, was granted the choice of five acres in the city of Adelaide and 400 acres in the country. The five city acres, obtained at a cost of £5 had in 1950 an unimproved value of £492,256. We cannot give the value of the 400 acres of country land, as only a long search in the Land Titles Office could reveal where that land was situated. The greater portion of it would be near the city, therefore, very valuable.

The additional five acres in the city purchased by public auction cost Dr. Everard £26/8/, and the latest available valuation of this land shows it to be worth £17,974. In other words, the 10 city acres and 400 country acres were purchased for £431/8/-, and the value of the city acres alone is £510,230.

The official records of city land in the Land Tax office show that Everard Acres Ltd. are still in possession of city acres Nos. 343 and 370. These are assessed at £49,068 unimproved value. Most people would agree that these two blocks give a reasonable profit on the original investment of £431/8/-, without taking into account the profit made on the other 408 acres, details of which could only be discovered by lengthy research in the records of the Land Titles office.

The Lesson they Teach

The lesson to be drawn from the Everard letter is that Dr. Everard and the other landholders were in no way responsible for the increment in land value since the foundation of the State. The increased land values arise because of the presence of the community and the provision of necessary public utilities such as roads, railways, water supply, harbours and other social services required by a growing community. Seeing no individual is responsible for an increment in land values, no one has a moral right to take any part of land values for private gain. Justice decrees that land values be taken into the communal treasury to defray the cost of the services provided for the community. When this is done there will be no need to impose direct and indirect taxes upon wealth producers as is done today.

Those citizens who wish to follow this fascinating topic may secure for one shilling from our office the booklet, "Land and Wages" — study of the colonisation schemes associated with the Swan River settlement in Western Australia and the foundation of South Australia.

WAKEFIELD PLAN OF COLONISATION

Wakefield's basic plan included the vital clause; Article II "That all land throughout the colony be declared liable to a tax of X per cent. upon the actual rent."

The South Australian Association did not adopt that clause and so some pioneers who, it is asserted, "opened up the country for settlement" were able to hold valuable lands, under-developed, as a close monopoly. This was one cause of the later "depressions" with hard times for workers.

But if Wakefield's plan of ground rent for revenue had not been suppressed then, its operation would have given a stimulus to develop both town and country lands, an incentive to make improvements giving the laborers full employment and continuous prosperity to the State.

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ADELAIDE

NORTH TERRACE

14- TRUSTEES SOUTH AFRICAN COMPANY	14- S.A. COMPANY	14- GEORGE BARNES	14- GEORGE BARNES	14- JOHN RIGGIE JAMES	14- S.A. COMPANY	14- R.N. BURTON
9- CHARLES CRIPPEN	14- REVEREND C.B. HOWARD	14- GEORGE ORMSBY	14- ROBERT THOMAS	14- THOMAS PLAYFORD	14- SAMUEL SMITH	14- SAMUEL STEPHENS
14- CHARLES CRIPPEN	14- REVEREND C.B. HOWARD	14- GEORGE ORMSBY	14- ROBERT THOMAS	14- THOMAS PLAYFORD	14- SAMUEL SMITH	14- SAMUEL STEPHENS

NORTH TERRACE

14- C.G. EVERARD	14- S.A. COMPANY	14- S.A. COMPANY	14- JOHN COVEY	14- T. GATES DARTON	14- OSWALD SMITH	14- ROBERT THOMAS
14- J.P. NODIN	14- S.A. COMPANY	14- S.A. COMPANY	14- JOHN BARTLEY THORNGATE	14- JOHN BARTLEY THORNGATE	14- ROBERT THOMAS	14- JAMES COLTMAN
14- J.P. NODIN	14- S.A. COMPANY	14- S.A. COMPANY	14- JOHN BARTLEY THORNGATE	14- JOHN BARTLEY THORNGATE	14- ROBERT THOMAS	14- JAMES COLTMAN

STREET

14- C.G. EVERARD	14- JOHN BROWN	14- ROBERT COCK	14- ISAAC SLADEN	14- CAPTAIN BERKLEY	14- WILLIAM LEIGH	14- CAPTAIN LIPSON R.N.
14- WILLIAM WHITHAM	14- OSMOND GILLES	14- OSMOND GILLES	14- JOHN BARTLEY THORNGATE	14- WILLIAM LEIGH	14- CAPTAIN LIPSON R.N.	14- B. FINNIS
14- WILLIAM WHITHAM	14- OSMOND GILLES	14- OSMOND GILLES	14- JOHN BARTLEY THORNGATE	14- WILLIAM LEIGH	14- CAPTAIN LIPSON R.N.	14- B. FINNIS

STREET

14- WILLIAM STUCKEY	14- ROBERT COCK	14- JOHN MORPHEIT	14- ROBERT THOMAS	14- ROBERT COCK	14- WILLIAM LEIGH	14- THOMAS MOKRIS
14- D.B. MAJOR	14- ROBERT GUGGER	14- ROBERT GUGGER	14- WILLIAM PULLEN	14- RICHARD SLADEN	14- JOHN REAY	14- JOHN REAY
14- D.B. MAJOR	14- ROBERT GUGGER	14- ROBERT GUGGER	14- WILLIAM PULLEN	14- RICHARD SLADEN	14- JOHN REAY	14- JOHN REAY

STREET

MORPHEIT

14- LIGHT SQUARE	14- JOHN COCK	14- HIGGELING CAPTAIN HINDMARSH R.N.	14- W.G. GOVER	14- JOHN BARTLEY THORNGATE	14- WILLIAM WYATT	14- W.G. GOVER
14- CHARLES CORTES	14- OSMOND GILLES	14- OSMOND GILLES	14- OSMOND GILLES	14- JOHN BARTLEY THORNGATE	14- WILLIAM WYATT	14- W.G. GOVER
14- CHARLES CORTES	14- OSMOND GILLES	14- OSMOND GILLES	14- OSMOND GILLES	14- JOHN BARTLEY THORNGATE	14- WILLIAM WYATT	14- W.G. GOVER

CURRIE STREET

WILLIAM

14- JOHN A SMITH	14- ROBERT COCK	14- JOHN HILLET	14- I SLADEN	14- I SLADEN	14- WILLIAM WYATT	14- P.S. LEGER GREENFELL
14- JOHN A SMITH	14- ROBERT COCK	14- JOHN HILLET	14- I SLADEN	14- I SLADEN	14- WILLIAM WYATT	14- P.S. LEGER GREENFELL
14- JOHN A SMITH	14- ROBERT COCK	14- JOHN HILLET	14- I SLADEN	14- I SLADEN	14- WILLIAM WYATT	14- P.S. LEGER GREENFELL

PULTENEY

WAYMOUTH STREET

14- THOMAS HARDY	14- W.H. NEALE	14- EDWARD WRIGHT	14- EDWARD WRIGHT	14- JAMES CHAMBERS	14- ROBERT COCK	14- D.B. MAJOR
14- EDWARD WRIGHT	14- EDWARD WRIGHT	14- JAMES CHAMBERS	14- ROBERT COCK	14- D.B. MAJOR	14- D.B. MAJOR	14- D.B. MAJOR
14- EDWARD WRIGHT	14- EDWARD WRIGHT	14- JAMES CHAMBERS	14- ROBERT COCK	14- D.B. MAJOR	14- D.B. MAJOR	14- D.B. MAJOR

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14- TOWN HALL	14- JOHN BROWN	14- JOHN BROWN	14- G. UGER	14- HIGGELING CAPTAIN HINDMARSH R.N.	14- WILLIAM WYATT	14- MARGARET
14- TOWN HALL	14- JOHN BROWN	14- JOHN BROWN	14- G. UGER	14- HIGGELING CAPTAIN HINDMARSH R.N.	14- WILLIAM WYATT	14- MARGARET
14- TOWN HALL	14- JOHN BROWN	14- JOHN BROWN	14- G. UGER	14- HIGGELING CAPTAIN HINDMARSH R.N.	14- WILLIAM WYATT	14- MARGARET

PIRIE STREET

FLINDERS STREET

TOP LINE FIGURES, PRICE PAID FOR ACRE IN 1837.

• FRANKLIN STREET

• FLINDERS STREET