

# NEWSLETTER

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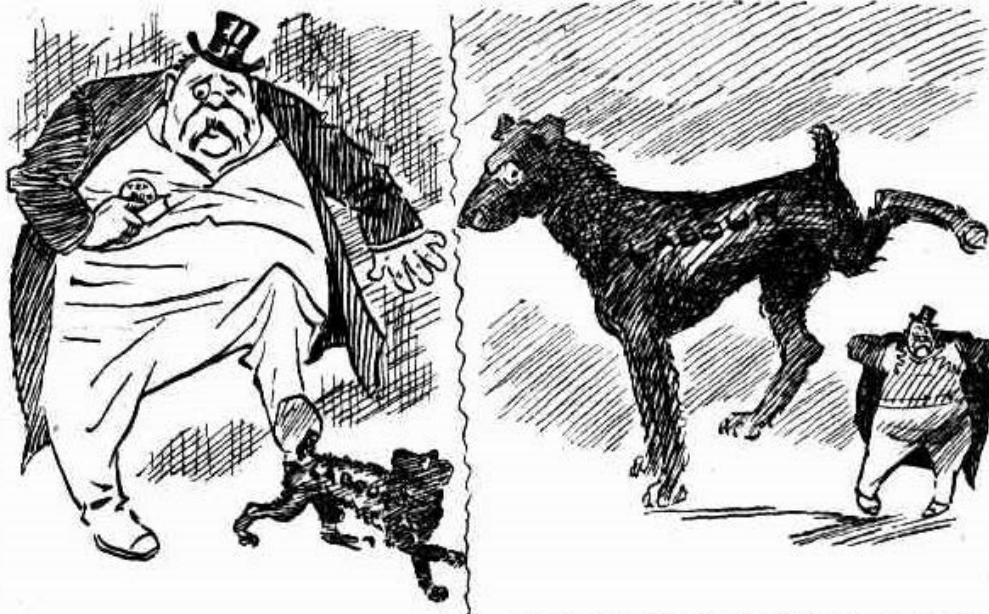
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## SIR GEORGE REID

By Cathy Jones

### REID SELLS HIS PUP AND PARTY.

[Written for "Truth."]



MR. REID'S DOG.—Lot 518 Irish terrier dog, 10s, Mr. Coll. The dog, a yellowish-colored animal, and known out Strathfield way as "Reid's dog," was sold on Tuesday by Messrs. Hardie and Gorman at the sale of furniture and appointments at Mount Royal, Strathfield, the residence of the Right Hon. G. H. Reid, Federal Premier.—"Evening News."

Amongst George Reid's household effects sold last week was an Irish terrier dog. Is this the famous "dry dog"? A man who can sell his pet pup is not likely to prove a strong friend, or a safe politician. Yes—no! Eh! What!—"Truth."

Oh, Wiggler Reid, the Ranter still,  
His reputation earns!  
He's here and there  
And everywhere;  
From every crowd he learns!  
The boss political acrobat;  
You can't make any mistake of that!  
He's wrong or right!  
He's black or white!  
No color at all he spurns,  
You never can tell how George will go!  
His "no" is "yes" and his "yes" is "no"  
He's here and there  
And everywhere,  
And everything by turns!  
He seemed to swallow the singe-tax,  
When Henry George was here!  
But soon grew lax  
And passed a law  
On bacon, butter and beer!

George ought to know which policy's best!  
He's swallowed them ALL! and THERE'S a test!  
An all-round cove  
Is George, by jove,  
In every sense; that's clear!  
But of a curious kind of clay,  
A kind of Dull Moran or Paddy M'Kay!  
An Anglo-Scotch  
Australian botch  
With a Welsh-Hibernian leer:  
Why Wiggler Reid the Ranter once  
Had Capital filled with dread!  
No man was worse!  
A dreadful curse  
Was poured on George's head!  
For George was ultra-democrat then!  
A brother-in-arms with Labor-men!  
He ran the show  
Not long ago  
Through those M'Gowen led!

But where is his love for Labor now?  
It's gone with the old-time Free-trade vow!  
A thing of the past!  
Not made to last—  
It's gone; it's done; it's dead!  
They say the Wiggler lately sold  
His poor little household dog  
For half-a-quid—  
Knocked down first bid!  
The price of a bottle of grog!  
Of one small bottle of dry champagne!  
Oh, George, that poor dog loved in vain!  
No juvenile  
On this broad isle  
But knows George Reid's Dry Dog!  
So George, the Labor Dog is sold,  
As former poodles were of old?  
But, don't forget!  
Your Labor pet  
Is growing a VERY BIG DOG!

—W.T.G

Sir George Reid is one of Strathfield's best known former residents. Reid was Premier of NSW and later served as Prime Minister. He lived at 'Mount Royal', now the Edmund Rice Centre at Australian Catholic University.

His name lives on the federal electorate of Reid, which currently includes the suburbs of Strathfield and Homebush. In an issue of the "Truth" Newspaper, it was reported that George Reid sold his dog as well as the furniture when he moved out of 'Mount Royal'. The Truth Newspaper reported that:

*"MR REID'S DOG - Lot 518. Irish terrier dog, 10s, Mr Coll. The dog, a yellowish-coloured animal and known out Strathfield way as 'Reid's dog' was sold on Tuesday by Messrs Hardie and Gorman at the sale of furniture and appointments at Mount Royal, Strathfield, the residence of the Right. Hon. G. H. Reid, Federal Premier - 'Evening News'*

This event inspired the cartoon where the dog represented the Labour Party (note the spelling) and comments about 'Reid's loyalty. As reported in the Truth:

*Amongst George Reid's household effects sold last week was an Irish terrier dog. Is this the famous 'dry dog'? A man who can sell his pet pup is not likely to prove a strong friend, or a safe politician. Yes-No! Eh? What? - Truth?*

*Oh, 'Wriggler Reid the Ranter still, His reputation earns! He's here and there And everywhere; From every crowd he learns! The boss political acrobat; You can't make any mistake of that.*

*He's wrong or right! He's black or white! No color at all he spurns, You never can tell how George will go! His 'no' is 'yes' and his 'yes' is 'no'! He's here and there and everywhere, And everything by turns.*

*He seemed to swallow the single-tax, When Henry George was here! But soon grew lax And passed a 1% On bacon, butter and beer!*

*George ought to know which policy's best! He's swallowed them ALL! and THREE's a test! An all-round cove Is George, by jove, In every sense; that's clear!*

*Built of a curious kind of clay, A kind of Dill Moran or Paddy McKay! An Anglo-Scotch Australian botch With a Welsh-Hibernian leer!*

*Why Wriggler Reid the Ranter once Had Capital filled with dread! No man was worse! A dreadful curse Was poured on George's head!*

*For George was ultra-democrat then! A brother-in-arms with Labor-men! He ran the show Not long ago Through those McGowen led! But where is his love for Labor now! It's gone with the old-time Free Trade vow!*

*A thing of the past! Not made to last – It's gone; it's done; it's dead! They say the Wriggler lately sold His poor little household dog. For half-a-quid – Knocked down first bid! The price of a bottle or grog! Of one small bottle of dry champagne! Oh, George, that poor dog loved in vain!*

*No juvenile. On this broad isle But knows George Reid's Dry Dog! So George, the Labor Dog is sold, As former poodles were of old? But, don't forget! Your Labor pet IS GROWING A VERY BIG DOG! – W.T.G.*



Sir George Reid was Australia's fourth Prime Minister, serving for 10 months between August 1904 and July 1905. The early 1900's was a particularly turbulent period in Australian politics, with regular changes of Government and leadership caused by fast shifting alliances between individuals, parties and groupings.

The short period of Reid's leadership does not reflect his significant achievements and influence. A career spanning the 19th and 20th centuries, Reid holds a unique position among Australian political leaders, having been a representative in colonial, Commonwealth and British legislatures.

Reid was first elected to the New South Wales Parliament in 1880 at 35 years of age and served for almost 20 years in the NSW Parliament. His roles included Minister for Public Instruction (1883-1884), Treasurer and Premier (1894-1899), and a short time as Attorney-General in 1899.

Reid had an influential role in achieving Federation in 1901. He became known as 'Yes-No' Reid for sometimes outlining different sides of an argument. He noted in his 1917 autobiography, *My Reminiscences* the importance of compromise in the Australian federation project: 'in every project of federal union a bargain, which means a compromise, or a compromise which means a bargain, must be struck between national powers and provincial interests'.

Reid was elected to the first Commonwealth Parliament for the Division of East Sydney in March 1901. He was Prime Minister and Minister for External Affairs between August 1904 and July 1905, and also had two periods as Opposition Leader (May 1901-August 1904 and July 1905-November 1908).

As noted by Church (2018), "Reid's service was not without sacrifice, especially financially. As Commonwealth parliamentarians were initially only paid an annual allowance of £400 (rising to £600 in 1907 and £1,000 in 1920), Sydney-based Reid often struggled with the circumstance of parliament sitting in Melbourne in addition to the heavy workload of being Leader of the Free Trade Party. Even as Leader of the Opposition no additional allowance was provided, and so he was frequently absent from parliament in order to attend to his legal practice".

Reid left the Commonwealth Parliament in December 1909 and served as Australia's first High Commissioner to the United Kingdom from 1910 to 1916, when he was followed by the former Australian Labor Prime Minister Andrew Fisher.

In January 1916, he was elected unopposed to the House of Commons, representing the central London constituency of St George's, Hanover Square.

Reid was known for his keen sense of humor and, following his death on 12 September 1918, this was widely noted in obituaries. One obituary stated that Reid 'was a rare thing in public life; he could laugh when the joke was against him. The species has not survived in politics'.

## References

Church, N, 2018, Sir George Houston Reid (1845-1918): Premier, Prime Minister, High Commissioner, and Member of the UK House of Commons viewed at [https://www.aph.gov.au/About\\_Parliament/Parliamentary\\_Departments/Parliamentary\\_Library/FlagPost/2018/September/George\\_Reid](https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/FlagPost/2018/September/George_Reid)

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'Mount Royal' Strathfield