

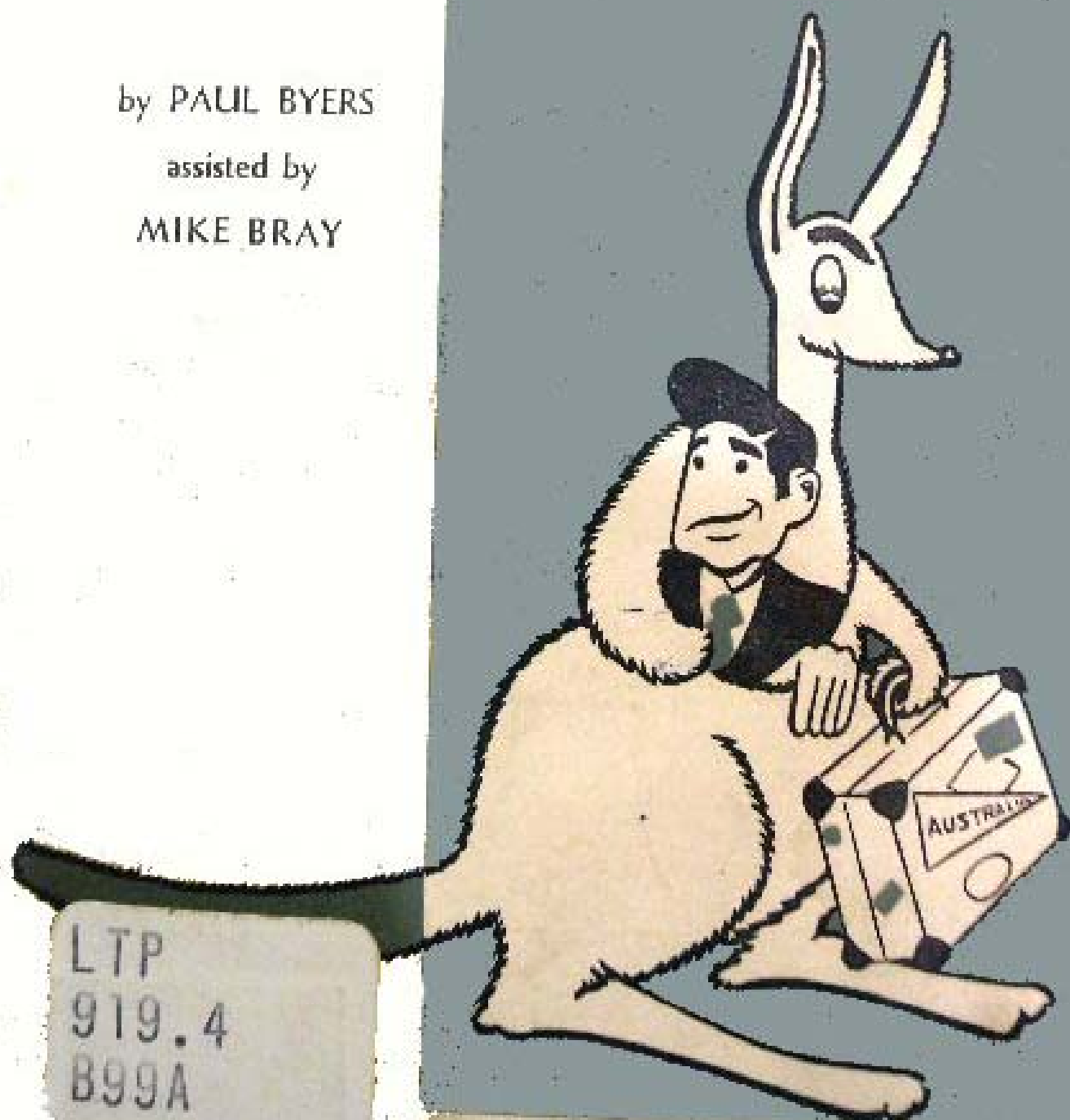
# AUSTRALIA

## a new home?

by PAUL BYERS

assisted by

MIKE BRAY



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AN EX-SERVICEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

PAUL BYERS can't decide whether to call himself a writer or a musician. A free-lance journalist pre-war, he enlisted in the Navy and spent two of his four war years behind a desk in Melbourne. In his spare time he resumed the study of piano, begun years earlier, under a noted European pianist living in Melbourne. When he had accumulated enough points for discharge from the Navy, he packed his American wife and two children off to Melbourne to continue his study of music—at the Jascha Spivakovsky Studio under the G.I. Bill.

As a secretary of the American Ex-Servicemen's Association in Melbourne, he suggested preparing "some form, probably mimeographed, of additional information for prospective migrants." The job was dumped into the laps of Byers and Bray. What started as a small effort grew into book proportions.

Byers is now "welfare officer" of the Association, is continuing his music study, teaches a few piano-pupils, writes an occasional article, and says he can't see any reason why he should return to the U.S. except for a visit.

EDWARD CHARLES (MIKE) BRAY is an ex-Marine—a tall, dark, handsome fellow who was married to one of Australia's beautiful women while resting up in Melbourne after fighting on Guadalcanal. His wife went to upper New York State to live while Mike finished the war in the Aleutians.

After the war and a spell in Rochester as a bus driver Mike brought his wife and child (now two children) back to Melbourne, where he enrolled in the University of Melbourne to study philosophy.

Mike was editor of the Association's NEWSLETTER and its publicity officer when he was elected to work on the booklet. He is also on the Association's first-string baseball team.

GEORGE SANTOS, a New Yorker, was a coxswain aboard the cruiser Birmingham during the war. After discharge, George shipped to India as a merchant seaman while waiting to finish his course in commercial art at Pratt Institute. He was carried off his home-bound ship in Arabia with a variety of tropical ailments, but managed to get back to New York and finish his course.

The prospects for another commercial artist looked pretty dismal in New York, so George bought a one-way ticket to Australia and a few months later married the fiancée he had met during his earlier visits to Melbourne.

# AUSTRALIA

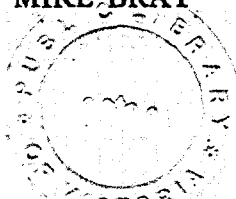
## A New Home?

BY

**PAUL BYERS**

with the Assistance of

**MIKE BRAY**



Illustrated by George Santos

*Edward C. Bray*

Written on behalf of  
**THE AMERICAN EX-SERVICEMEN'S ASSOCIATION**  
G.P.O. Box 1982 R, Melbourne  
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## FOREWORD

**W**HEN the first seventeen chapters of this book were written, copies were sent to interested Americans and Australians for correction, comment, and criticism.

Broadly speaking, there were three criticisms:

1. The Americans thought we were too hard on Australia.
2. The Australians thought we were too kind to Australia.
3. Those people, both Americans and Australians, who disagree with the political party in power, accused us of being partial to the party in power.

A few words about this third criticism are in order.

First of all, since American ex-servicemen first started coming to Australia, the same government has been in power—the Labour Party. Therefore, we have had no opportunity to experience the difference in the effect that another party would have on us.

Secondly, since all the American groups here are avowedly non-political, any attempt to evaluate opposition propaganda would not only be outside the sphere of interest of this book, but would oblige us to stick our necks out.

Thirdly, the only reasonable approach to subjects related to politics is one of taking things as we find them and attempting to explain them in the terms that they are explained to us by the government who does them.

One critic (an American) called us to task by saying "I would be inclined to enumerate rather than endorse the many social services that exist in this

country." This took us by surprise. It had not occurred to us that one did anything except endorse social services.

Another comment we have heard from a few dissenters (always Americans) has been that this book was obviously written by people who liked Australia. We have been accused of being too smug—perhaps too successful.

Neither of the authors, unfortunately, can lay any great claims to success in Australia so far. But we take grievous exception to the implication that liking Australia makes anyone unsuitable to write a book about Australia.

But, then, it is apparent that we can't win, anyway.

We take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the very many people who have helped us. They are far too numerous to mention individually.

And while we're at it, we may as well spit in the eye of those few incorrigibles who persist in disagreeing with us.

PAUL BYERS and MIKE BRAY.

#### NOTE

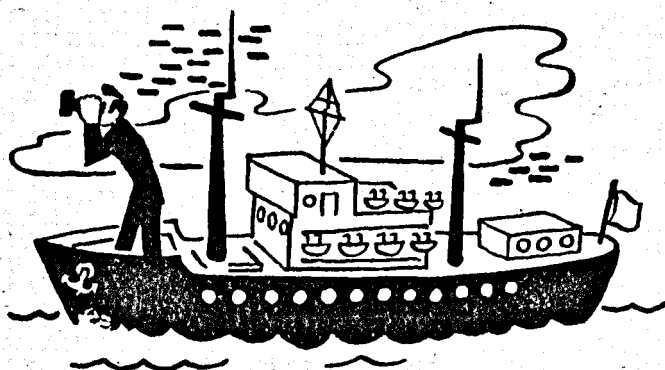
When this project was started, we sent questionnaires to American Ex-G.I.'s in Australia. On the questionnaires we asked: "Will you suggest some advice for Americans interested in coming to Australia to live?"

The answers we received gave us the "meat" for this book. Not content with this, we are also using these answers for seasoning. Even tho they range from philosophy to crackpot, we are sprinkling quoted excerpts from these comments throughout the book. Some of the comments reflect what we have said in the book. Some contradict us. There is more than one point of view. Take your choice.

The comments are quoted exactly and without comment.

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# 1. Introduction

*"I personally respect any man who has enough guts to take himself abroad. But in my opinion he ought to know fully what he is doing and not expect too much from his new country."*—(Engineer, N.S.W.)

THROUGHOUT 1948 every passenger ship coming to Australia from the United States brought ex-G.I. settlers. Even with very limited transportation the number of American settlers over here has already reached four-figure proportions.

How do these prospective "migrants" know what they are letting themselves in for?

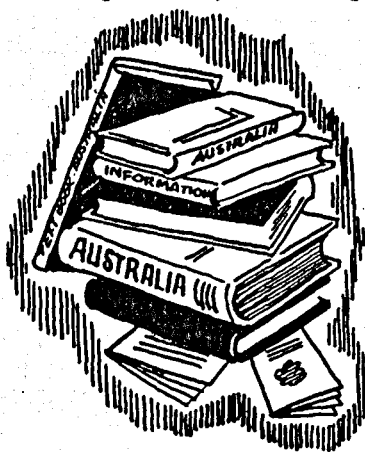
In Melbourne, Australia, our American Ex-Servicemen's Association, an ex-G.I. group that grows with each ship arrival, felt a responsibility to do something

to help Americans know more about Australia as a prospective new home.

First, we asked the Australian government to show us all the dope on Australia that an inquirer in America is given. We wanted to be sure that this information is correct, and that no exaggerated picture is being painted just to lure people to Australia.

We read their material and found that it was all pretty straight stuff. It was factual, statistical, and gave only a reasonably rosy picture. But something was missing—something that no Australian could or would write: *The American Angle*.

Our Association agreed that at least one more booklet was necessary: one written by Americans, about Americans living here, and for Americans who



might come. We wanted to help a fellow see thru American eyes just what he might expect to find here.

When we suggested writing this booklet to the Australian government, they thought it was a good idea. They looked us over pretty carefully to see that we had no axes to grind, and agreed to distribute whatever we wrote. We satisfied ourselves that they didn't want us to grind any axes for them and accepted.

Throughout the project no one put any pressure on anyone. Everyone seemed willing to help us, and we were glad to find that the Australians were—and expected us to be—honest and straightforward. No one suggested that we ignore or be unnecessarily polite about any unfavorable aspect of Australia.

On one point everyone agrees: the only settler wanted in Australia is one who can make a success of the venture. An unsuccessful, unhappy settler is worse than none at all. We are not interested in encouraging Americans to come here. We only want to increase the chances of getting people who will be well-adjusted and successful.

To get information for this booklet we mailed long questionnaires to a few hundred American ex-service-men in all parts of Australia. And we travelled thousands of miles cross-checking information, looking for useful things to pass on to you, talking with Americans, with employers, with farmers, with everybody—and generally looking the situation over.

We learned that this (or any) country is as different as the people who try to tell you about it. Something that will please one American and make him glad he came will discourage another and make him want to go home.

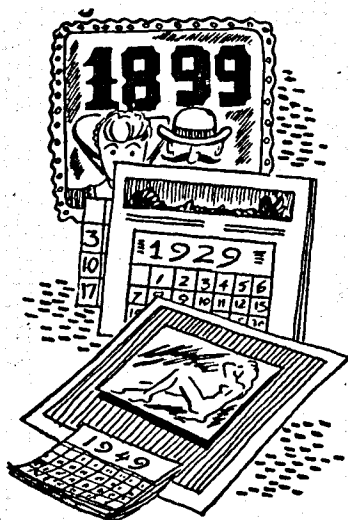
After visiting many different cities, small towns and rural areas in vastly different parts of Australia, we came to two important conclusions for a start:

1. Australia is a well-established, going concern. It is NOT (as some people seem to think) a small, backward population floundering around on a large continent looking for a way of life and optimistically



inviting people in the rest of the world to come over here to help them. Anyone who comes here with that attitude (and there have been a few) is dead certain to be a failure.

2. The most important advantage or obstacle to the success of anyone coming here to live is the fellow's



own psychological preparation for living in this "foreign country." This may sound too commonplace to mention. But after examining the reasons why one American is happy here and another is not, we found that the fellow's own attitude is usually the biggest factor. One fellow may earn a large income and be miserable. He might tell you, "This country is 50 years behind the times. I came over here with a lot of good ideas, but Australia doesn't want them. I make a lot of money but I can't

even buy a good American car." The next fellow, who perhaps barely scrapes by, may say, "Sure, this country is different in some ways. But there are plenty of opportunities. It's not as geared-up as the States, but I like it here."

Which one is off the beam?

Well, then, here we go. But remember: how good or bad Australia looks *depends on who is looking at it*.

The look we are taking is of early 1949 vintage. This country is changing rapidly and we cannot describe any but conditions prevailing now.

*"The less one knows—or thinks he knows—about Australia, the more interesting will be his orientation."*—(Clerk, Queensland)

## 2. Why Australia wants You to come

*"One must realize that 7,000,000 people cannot be expected to produce, and afford the facilities of 150,000,000."—(Pilot, N.S.W.)*

**I**N 1947 the Australian Department of Immigration put schemes into operation to bring migrants to Australia on a large scale. In 1948 the goal was 70,000 migrants. Slightly more than half of these were from the British Isles. The rest were "selected personnel" from America and Europe. Many were displaced persons from D.P. camps in Europe.

Why is Australia so anxious to increase her population?

The great natural wealth of this country cannot be developed efficiently by the number of people already living here. There are simply not enough people to do everything that should be done.

Another reason for wanting a greater population arises from Australia's peculiar geographic position in the world. North of Australia is the Orient (no Australian ever considers that Australia is part of the Orient). The Orient is characterized by countries overflowing with yellow and dark-skinned people. A large, unrestricted immigration from India, China, or Japan would have a strong, immediate and unwanted effect on Australia's economy and her standard of living.

From a military standpoint, particularly since the recent war, Australia recognizes that if the "teeming millions" in the uncomfortably near North ever get together and decide again to try to take over Australia, this country would be hopelessly outnumbered with its present population.

Australia does not want to be caught again with her population down.

Like one who decides to share his home with another family, Australia had to decide whom she would invite to live here. Since the very great majority of her settlers in the past have been British, Australia regards British people as kinfolk. Thus the first encouragement to settlers is given to the British.

Before and during the war, thousands of European refugees were admitted to Australia. Prior to that, settlements of Italians, Greeks, Germans, Chinese, etc., had migrated here. All of these groups have made a noticeable and distinct contribution to Australia both productively and culturally. But Australia is predominantly of British origin and consequently people with foreign accents or "off-color" skins are easily noticed. Prejudice against "foreigners" does exist in Australia, as it does in any English-speaking country. It is perhaps more straightforward and less insidious than it is in the U.S. But it is on a proportionately smaller scale, and it would be fair to say that Australia has no important "race problem."

The problem of absorbing different nationalities into the Australian way of life will diminish as increased foreign immigration makes the "Australian way of life" more and more international. Australians are already so distinctive as a people that even a newly arrived Englishman is noticeably different.

In spite of all this, one magic word will place the speaker above all suspicion. This word is any word spoken with an American accent. Any brand of American accent will work the charm equally well.

A couple of million Americans passed through Australia during the war. We came along just at the right time to get a good reception. Some Australians will tell us gratefully that America "saved" Australia. (And we remind them that we came here in the nick of time mostly to save our own necks in the long run.)

Apart from our fortunate association with Australia's fate during the war, they seemed to like us personally. Americans came here in a friendly

invasion. We took over their buildings, many of their homes, their telephones, their cars, their food, and to some extent their peace of mind. And to top it all off, while Australian men were off fighting the war in the Middle East (where they had been since 1940), American troops entertained the Australian girls—as you would expect. But still they liked us.

To many Australians America is a country with enormous efficiency, organization, and speed—an enterprising land overflowing with new ideas. While most Australians prefer a somewhat less supercharged country, they believe that a few bottles of “American tonic” (in the form of American settlers) will have a healthy effect on Australia. But remember: tonics are usually prescribed in small doses.

If the British are regarded as kinfolk, Americans are close friends. Some Australians believe that the pioneer spirit of their country makes Australia even more akin to America than England in many ways.

So, when Australia started planning for large-scale immigration, she sent out invitations to her kinfolk in the United Kingdom, and then turned to America. In fact, while American troops were still here during the war, the Australian Government started wooing them gently with the attractions of this country.

Some stayed. And the rest? Well, they’re still coming back.

*“There is plenty of room here for development and that means there is room for more people. So if a man has the ambition to try and the grit to stay with it, he might go far in this country.”—(Clerk, Victoria)*

*“If the prospective Americans are willing to pioneer and work like their grandparents worked in America, then I am sure they will make a success of their life in Queensland. However if they expect a soft touch, they would be a liability to Australia and themselves by coming out here.”—(Student, Queensland)*

### 3. Why have Americans come?

*"I came here to get married and to make some money."—  
(Builder, Victoria)*

**D**ESPITE the attractions of Australia as a country, it is Australian women who have been responsible for the biggest share of American migration to Australia.

During the war thousands of Americans married or became engaged to Australian girls. After the war many men returned here to join their wives or marry fiancées. In a great many cases the war-brides went to the U.S. About a third of the American ex-service-men families now living here are those who went to the U.S. first and then, for one reason or another, decided to come back.

During 1948 only about 2% of the Americans coming here were married to American wives. And to

complete the statistical picture: 9% of the Americans here are unmarried—some having decided (or it was decided for them) not to marry the girl after all. A few just came back to look around. 61% of the fellows were married during the war, 28% after the war, 2% before the war.



When Australia started encouraging American migration to Australia there were two serious difficulties. First,

there was very limited transportation. Secondly, there was a severe housing shortage in Australia. Therefore, only those people came via the "assisted passage"

scheme who had assured housing (usually with their wife's relatives here).

When Australia first started beating the drum to attract Americans to Australia, they found that they had more customers for their proposition than shipping space. They soon realized that it wasn't good business to try to sell something they couldn't deliver, so they started soft-peddalling the "Come to Australia" campaign. Late in 1948, passenger shipping between Australia and the U.S. had dwindled almost to nothing. The dollar shortage prevented many Australians from going to America. Therefore, ships might come to Australia full, but they would have to go back with too few passengers to make the round trip profitable. Consequently, American migration to Australia dwindled to a small dribble.

In June, 1948, despite the soft-peddalling and the lack of shipping, there were about 1,700 approved applications of people ready to come here filed with the Australian offices in the U.S. And inquiries were still coming in at the rate of nearly 200 a week.

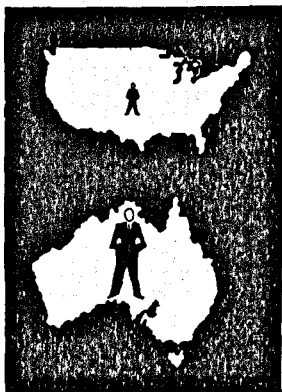
All this indicates that no one really knows the extent of potential migration from the U.S. to Australia. But when enough shipping becomes available and when the housing situation improves here, the Australian ex-G.I. community will probably grow quickly.

According to the questionnaires it looks as though this American migration business is fairly successful. Less than one fellow in five decided that coming here was not a good idea. And remember, a great many fellows came here not because *they* wanted to, but because their wives (or fiancées) wanted them to come.

Apart from this wifely influence, another factor has influenced Americans to come to Australia. As someone put it, some of us are refugees from the high cost of living. And in a later chapter we will discuss

education in Australia under the G.I. Bill, still another reason why some Americans have come.

There is one peculiar attraction here which isn't often mentioned but which is undoubtedly important.



The individual here is more important. Or at least he seems to be, which is almost as good. There are only seven and a half million souls holding down this continent, as against twenty times that number in the U.S. Among 150 million people one individual isn't very important.

Because of the size and population of Australia, one can enjoy the illusion of being a somewhat bigger fish.

*"I strongly suggest that you sell any surplus goods and come."*—(Medical Student, Victoria)

*"Think it over and don't come."*—(Painter, Queensland)

*"If you are thinking of leaving the States because you are dissatisfied, because you are a failure in your job, because you can't find the job that suits you, because you want to get rich quickly, I'd advise that you stay home. The trouble is probably within yourself, and you won't be any happier here."*—(Student, Victoria)

*"Forget the days of wartime glamor. Things are different now."*—(Travelling salesman, N.S.W.)

## 4. How different is Australia ?

*"Come prepared to like Australia and don't expect Utopia and you'll do O.K."—(Ice cream Mfr., Victoria)*

On the questionnaire we asked the question: "Do you think that the differences between Americans and Australians and their respective ways of life are important or necessary to know and understand before one comes to live in Australia?" More than seven out of every ten answered "yes." On the following question half of the Americans believed "that those differences are an important obstacle to happiness for an American in Australia."

We think that these differences are "obstacles" largely because one doesn't understand them. Therefore, we have written the following three chapters to help you understand some of these differences and to see why and how they operate. If, when you have read these chapters, you think these differences wouldn't be obstacles to *you*, this is a hopeful sign. But, believe it or not, some of these molehill-sized differences make a mountain of unhappiness for those people who believe that there is only one good way of life—the *American Way* (whatever they think that is).

Someone has remarked that the difficulty an American has in understanding Australia does not lie in the differences but in the misleading similarities. To one person this is like eating a toadstool which he mistakes for a mushroom. But to another it is simply a matter of biting into an apricot that he mistakes for a peach: no harm done.

*"I think that the Australian way of life is so near similar to America's that it is easy to adjust oneself very quickly."—(Fuel merchant, Victoria)*

*"I think that the average American cannot accustom himself to the Australian way of life."—(Public relations, S.A.)*



## 5. The Country

*"Australia is a wonderful place to live in."*—(Student, Victoria)

### Two myths about Australia:

Some Americans are confused about the relationship between Australia and Britain. Some have the attitude that Australia is being exploited by Britain, that her economy is controlled by London, that she pays taxes to England. This is hogwash.

Australia maintains a close working relationship with Britain, and doubtless seeks her advice on many matters. But politically Australia's ties to Britain are only voluntary ones. Australia grew up in the "British Empire" and has an advantageous buying and selling arrangement in it. But not a compulsory one. It is safe to say that Australia gets at least as much as she gives in her relations with Britain to-day.

The second myth concerns socialism. Because Australia has an extensive program of social benefits, because each State owns the railways in the State, owns some of the public utilities and is developing some natural resources on a governmental basis, some people cry "socialism." Whatever the intention of the government, the fact remains that at the present time these things do not make Australia a socialist country any more than the TVA implies socialism in the U.S.

There is, perhaps, a *trend toward* socialism here. But anyone coming here hoping to find a socialist country will not find it. The differences between the American and Australian governments result much more from the different problems confronting the two countries than from differences in basic political ideology.

Some people have asked us to "explain the government" to you. Rather than fall into the trap of trying

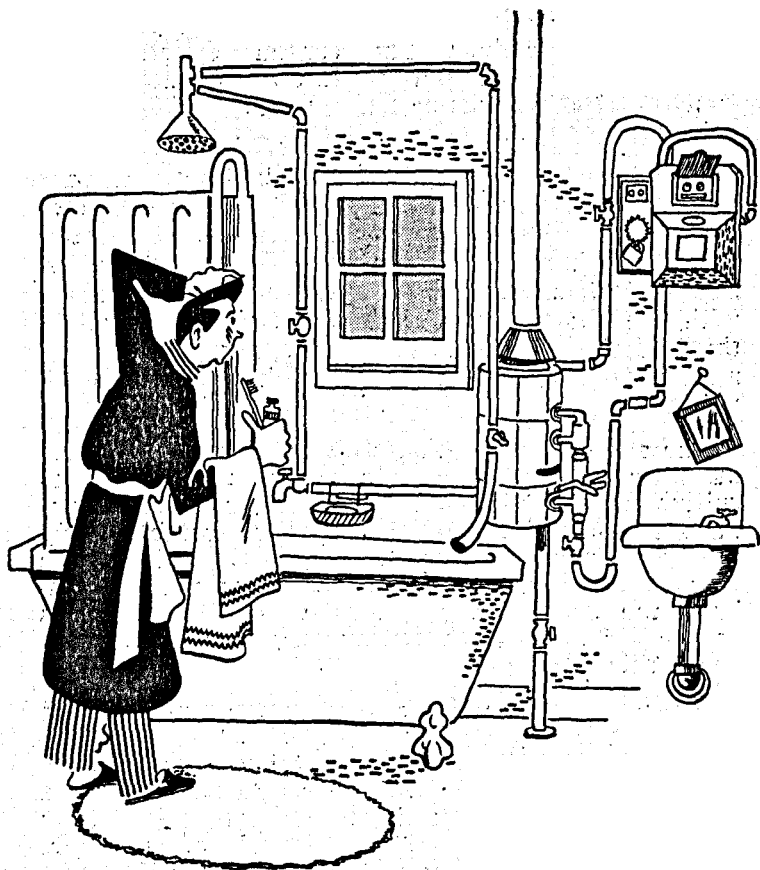
to "explain a government," we have tried to show you some of the conditions you will face living here. This, after all, is more important to you.

Describing differences that an American finds here is tricky because in most instances the overall picture is really one of similarity more than difference. And, too, Australia differs in sections just as the U.S. differs from north to south or east to west.

The chief difference between an American household and an Australian one lies in the different emphasis on gadgetry and convenience. Americans in the past generation have come to accept a large degree of gadgetry as essential to living. The Australian is not yet convinced of the necessity of much of this. Perhaps in another generation he will be.

Where heat is desirable in an Australian home (it appears never to be essential), it is done mostly by fireplaces. There is virtually no built-in central heating. Australians will point out that even in Melbourne it almost never freezes in winter. But most Americans are convinced that even an Eskimo would be uncomfortable in a Melbourne winter.

There are practically no clothes-closets here, wardrobes are used instead. Houses very rarely have basements. The toilet is almost never in the bathroom. Though it is a flush one, it is either outside the back door somewhere or separate from the bathroom in a room of its own. There are fewer hot-water systems here. The usual devices are a sink-heater (which really heats the water, not the sink) in the kitchen, and a bath-heater in the bathroom. The bath-heater has been described as a Rube Goldberg Device—a complicated gadget in which cold water is piped over a gas flame and thence into the tub—never into a wash basin. Kitchens here are rarely the gleaming laboratories we cherish in the U.S. Instead, the presence of marble slabs or bare wood for drain-boards, tall movable cabinets, ice-boxes, and often wood stoves make them look a bit antique. But they



are only slightly less efficient. Washing-machines are rare. Most homes have a "laundry" with two or three built-in concrete tubs and a "copper"—a large round vat set in bricks over a wood-burning firebox (modern ones use gas). Clothes are boiled.

In Queensland (which is north and is semi-tropical to tropical), houses are built on stilts (called stumps) and are from two to ten feet off the ground. The

reason for this, in our experience, has not been definitely determined but coastal Queenslanders believe that it has something to do with the climate, which varies in summer from hot and wet to very hot and very wet.

Any American coming here must be impressed with the abundance of parks and gardens. Australians all seem to love puttering around in gardens. The result, not only on home properties but throughout the cities, is a restful, uncrowded natural beauty. This, along with the climate, was singled out by more than a third of our fellows as one of the things they liked most here. Even Queensland's tropical climate is not unhealthy.

The rural aspect of Australia is probably the most un-American of all. Anyone accustomed to the endless cultivated fields of the middlewestern or eastern farming sections in the U.S. will feel uncomfortably lonely in the Australian countryside. Although there are areas under rich cultivation, particularly in Queensland, the bulk of the Australian countryside runs from sheer desert to uninviting pastureland. But more about this later.

It is not unusual to hear an American comment that "Australia is 50 years behind America." It is obvious that the twentieth century hasn't brought the same degree of furious "civilization" to Australia that it has to America. One does not find the same frantic speed here that characterizes much of America. Australians are not over-enthusiastic about the prospect of a push-button existence. This country operates with less glitter, streamlining, high-pressure competition, speed, and efficiency. But perhaps the real key to this business of being "behind the times" lies in the American versus Australian ideas of service. In America living is comparatively expensive because considerable service is sold you whether you want it or not. In Australia things are generally cheaper because they come without service—and you can't get much

even if you want to pay for it. One example will show how this operates.

In America, if you go to a good hotel in a city, you get service. You have your own private bath, perhaps a radio, telephone, carpets an inch thick on the floor. By picking up the phone you can get a suit pressed, a pitcher of cracked ice, a manicure, a cup of coffee or a roast duck. You are treated royally. But per day all this will cost, for the minimum of respectability, the equivalent of perhaps one or two days' pay. In Australia (with few exceptions), you will get a reasonably comfortable room with all *essentials*. You can't ring for Pierre to come up and shave you, and no roast ducks are available. You won't have to fish around in a thick carpet to find your shoes in the morning. But you will be staying in an equally "respectable" hotel, and it will cost you half a day's pay or less with breakfast thrown in. An Australian finds it a little hard to understand why an American says that all this is "behind the times."

But even in Australia it is becoming more and more possible to buy the same article, chromium plated, and with a bow and a scrape thrown in for twice the price.

*"Be prepared to do without the little things we always take for granted e.g. central heating, hot water, inside toilets, late movies, all-night public transport, entertainment on Sunday . ."*  
—(Student, Victoria)

*"Anyone intending to achieve success here should remember that it takes an honest effort whether applied in the U.S. or anywhere and not expect to step into prosperity just because they have shown incentive in making the important decision of coming to a new frontier."*—(Weaver, Victoria)

## 6. The People

*"The people fortunately are of a very fine type. They are very friendly, and always glad to give you a helping hand."*  
—(Public relations, S.A.)

There is greater difference between a New Yorker and a Georgian or Texan than there is between the average American and the average Australian.

On the questionnaires we asked "What things do you like most about Australia?" Seven out of every ten fellows said "the people." They are friendly, hospitable, easy-going, and prone to liking most Americans. They put the enjoyment of a fairly simple but pleasant life somewhat above everything else.

If you took away an Australian's opportunity to go to the movies he'd grumble. He snarls if he can't get enough firewood in the winter. He is unhappy because he can't get enough gasoline for a ride in the country on Sunday. If he can't put a small bet on the horses, he is heartbroken. But if you took away the several cups of tea with which he breaks up the day or the glasses of beer he drinks after work, there would be a revolution.

There are no social habits in the U.S. which are so necessary to the minimum contentment of the American as tea-drinking and beer-after-work are to the Australian. An American might exist comfortably in Australia without drinking beer, but his social success would certainly be limited if he couldn't at least pretend to enjoy a cup of tea.

To an Australian it seems as tho Americans often have a fondness for making themselves conspicuous in their speech, clothes or behavior. To an American it seems that Australians try to be as inconspicuous as possible. While the Australian is friendly, hospitable, and a most agreeable person generally, his personality is rarely as colorfully aggressive as many Americans.



This reluctance of an Australian to put his best foot in your face is often mistaken for an "inferiority complex." Such is not the case, and many Americans have discovered with some embarrassment that this quiet reluctance is not a sign of ignorance.

For all this the ordinary Australian is decidedly not stuffy. Even without being introduced, he will buy you a beer, and give you a tip on the races on the slightest provocation.

*"If you don't think a break for a cup of tea twice a day is a good idea, stay away, for the custom is symbolical of Australia."—(Travelling salesman, N.S.W.)*

The Australian's education is somewhat different from the American's. The Australian takes fewer subjects in high school, and consequently knows proportionately more about them. He is more likely to be a specialist without wide outside interests. The American, on the other hand, is the traditional jack-of-all-trades, who knows a little about everything, but often finds it hard to match the Australian's skill in his particular field.

Along with his tea and his beer, the Australian must have his sport. Whatever his particular field of learning, he is probably also an expert on racehorses, football, or cricket. Even the motherly old lady behind the store-counter will gladly give you a tip on the races, and you can probably lay your bet with the iceman or the man who delivers the groceries (that's illegal, though).

Sydney is the only place in Australia where Australia has anything approximating "night life." Entertainment on the whole here is not geared to a very high pitch of excitement. Even the major crimes in this country are committed with such finesse or monotony that they don't add much glamour to the country.

An important advantage to understanding Australians is an appreciation of their intense pride in their country, and at the same time their insularity. An American takes his country for granted and isn't particularly concerned with what an outsider thinks about it. But in Australia no news item is lapped up with more unwholesome eagerness than any outside comment about Australia, however absurd.

This insularity is not difficult to understand because Australia is, after all, insulated from the western world by large oceans. The result reminds one of a high-school girl at her first formal dance, wearing a dress she has made herself. Instead of forgetting about herself, she wonders if she is properly sophisticated. Even though her dress is attractive she wonders if it looks "home made." She would not like it to look "home made," yet she is anxious for the credit for having made it herself. Everyone else, of course, accepts her as one of the crowd and doesn't think much about her one way or the other.

In the arts Australia is torn between the love for her home-grown product and the strong suspicion that it may be somewhat mediocre. Australia is making notable strides in all the arts—(music, drama, dance, etc.), but only in the face of great difficulties. Firstly, the very good artists find a greater market for their talents overseas. This seriously depletes the stock of good teachers and limits the opportunity for the best experience. Secondly, the public is so anxious for homegrown artistry that it encourages far too much mediocrity without realizing it. But in any field of art-expression, there is no lack of



talent here—only an absence of first-class training facilities. Painting is an exception. This field of art-expression is well developed and stands on its own feet.

However close the people of America and Australia may be, there is sometimes a thin invisible barrier, like a sheet of cellophane, between them. Americans and Australians make friends quickly. But by nature or tradition the Australian is not a highly demonstrative person. He seems to filter the emotions he expresses. The result is sometimes less emotional and more sentimental than Americans expect.

An American will share his deepest emotions and his sorriest troubles with his best friend. An Australian may be even more prone than an American to share his joys and his worldly possessions with his friends. But it seems in almost effeminate-bad taste here to share troubles and emotions.

Apart from anything else, however, the Australian is usually a pretty swell guy.

And the girls—well, on the whole, they are probably a little less "career minded" than American girls, and they are probably used to somewhat harder work. But they are healthy, good-looking, outdoor girls, and they usually like Americans. They say we have a "technique."

*"Don't underestimate the average intelligence of the Australians by trying to 'put something over' on them. Be plain. They love that."*—(Student, Victoria)

## 7. Restrictions and Controls.

*"Don't come with the intention of making a fortune."*—  
(Student, Queensland)

Even though a person believes that there may be a way of life that is different from his own, he still may not understand that different national problems can result in a government deceptively both alike and different from his own. This has been the reason for the most frequent type of answer to a question on the questionnaire about "complaints."

Australia is not America. It is newer and less endowed with easy riches from natural resources. It is isolated by large oceans from the countries with which it has most in common. Yet it is an English-speaking nation that demands a high standard of living for everyone.

To get a high standard of living and make it available to everyone,

To keep wages in a reasonable relation to living costs,

To keep prices down and assure producers a reasonably profitable market,

To cope with a severe dollar shortage which prevents Australia from importing many of the necessities and nearly all the American luxuries it wants,

To help Britain and Europe by sending them great quantities of food,

To iron out the post-war kinks in the economy,

To develop industries and make a larger part of the manufactured requirements,

To develop and distribute resources and manpower in a way that is most effective and equitable,

All these things add up to a pretty tough job for a government and considerable red-tape for the individual.

They necessarily add up to a lot of nuisances: restrictions, controls, rationing, scarcities. Under the circumstances, these things cannot be avoided. But the fact that so many Americans are disturbed by the unpleasant red-tape rigmarole makes it necessary to tell you without beating around the bush what to expect.

First of all, since the war, a temporary shortage of something or other has plagued Australia. One time it's sugar, another time it's salt. Next it will be electricity and then gas. It may be white cotton thread or it may be matches. It is soap one week and your favorite cookies next week. Fortunately, these shortages don't all come at the same time, nor do they last long.

These are the small annoyances, and they are gradually disappearing.

Then there are the things that have been scarce as long as we American ex-servicemen can remember: housing accommodation, gasoline, newsprint for newspapers, telephone installations, bathtubs, roofs for houses, cement, cars (except expensive ones), tobacco, timber, building materials, etc. These are the tough ones. These shortages exist because of the dollar shortage, because there simply isn't enough labor or materials to produce enough goods, because shipping is too scarce, because there is an abnormal demand for them, or perhaps because of a prolonged strike. Therefore, to distribute these scarce materials where they will be most useful in the long run, the government must control the distribution on a priority basis. Despite some black marketeering, or a few injustices that arise from "knowing the right person," these controls are enforced successfully and fairly. And they make it absolutely necessary for anyone (particularly a prospective migrant planning a Big Time Operation) to check his business plans with the existing possibilities here. If this isn't done, the man arrives here prepared to set up his pet project. He walks off the

ship into an infuriating mass of red tape beyond which is a brick wall. The "government" permits required for his Big Time Operation may not be granted and he spends his last few dollars catching the next ship back to San Francisco. There, in all probability, he meets a newspaper reporter and gives him a story about what a helluva country Australia is.

This can be avoided.

This kind of criticism of Australia overlooks the great majority of American settlers here who (according to our questionnaires) think that coming here was a good idea, those who think there is at least as good a chance for an ordinary fellow to get along well here, who find less competition here for their own jobs, and who think their own prospects for advancement in Australia are better than average. These fellows have been around here awhile. They understand the situation, they have considerable faith in Australia's future, and they are not discouraged by the present set-up.

If Americans here are annoyed by restrictions, controls, etc., we find many evidences of sound development in this country.

By exercising rigid controls Australia has kept post-war prices down more successfully than nearly any other country. This country has managed to develop a reasonable standard of living that is virtually free from the large patches of poverty and social degradation that exist at any time in the U.S. In Australia it may not be easy to become a big shot, but it is easier to become a medium sized one. Admittedly, there is a pretty tight squeeze on the top brackets. But a program of social services—more extensive than that in the U.S.—protects the little man from the ravages of a highly competitive and free economy where everyone has the same opportunity to lose his shirt.



This country gives unemployment and sickness benefits, old age, widows, and invalid pensions. The government has introduced a free-medicine scheme and pays part of hospital bills. Medical treatment is already free to anyone who cannot afford to pay, and the government plans to introduce national health and dental schemes soon.

Every mother is paid a weekly allowance for each child after the first. (This allowance is enough to buy about: 4 lamb chops, a dozen eggs, a pound of butter, a quart of milk, and two good seats at the local movie per week.) She is also given a liberal "maternity allowance" for each baby—enough to cover medical and hospital bills. These social benefits and other less important ones make at least a minimum standard of living available to everyone. But they cost money. Thus taxes are high in Australia. To an American they seem very high indeed.

Another interesting aspect of Australian government is the concept of the "basic wage" and "awards." The "basic wage" is a minimum wage which is fixed from time to time by the Commonwealth Arbitration Court. "Awards" are larger salaries actually paid for industrial jobs depending on the skill required. The whole scale of "basic" and "award" rates are set by the court *at the highest level that industry can afford to pay*. Both labor and management, therefore, must apply to industrial courts for a determination on wage increases or reductions, and any decision by the court is legally binding.

Although there are still numerous strikes, this system provides a method of arbitration for both labor and management and minimizes exploitation and unfairness on either side.

There are always complaints that prices are still too high, that wages are too low, that this or that part of the whole system is out of balance. It would, of course, be a miracle if this were not true. Probably the whole set-up is geared for a slightly lower living standard than the U.S. enjoys (judged, anyway, from the materialistic point of view of many Americans). But it would be hard to say that any part of this whole scheme of running a country is dangerously out of balance considering the difficult circumstances.

Australia may not skyrocket to the glorious heights of boom success. But neither is she likely to suffer a sudden steep economic nose dive. And in terms of the people themselves: they are neither oppressed nor discouraged. Instead, they are optimistic, reasonably comfortable, and enjoy a large measure of security.

*"Those desiring to enter business should realize the red-tape and multitude of permits necessary to start and that there is a scarcity of materials in Australia. All in all I should judge that there are more opportunities for small businessmen in Australia once they get over the obstacles than in America."*  
—(Clerk, Queensland)

*"If you're looking to the future, this is the place to come to. All the obstacles are only temporary or minor inconveniences and do not affect the fact that, in the long run, you can have security and moderate success easier and quicker than in the States."*—(Student, Victoria)

## 8. How different are Americans ?

*"Those who have come here to make their home and to take things as they are, and make friends with whom they meet, live as the Australians do, they are the ones that are getting along good, are happy and contented in their new country."*—(Student, Victoria)

When you are in the U.S. you are entitled to think that Australia is "different." But when you come here, Australia is entitled to think that *you* are different.

Despite these "differences" an American is almost never made to feel out of place here. An American can sometimes get into hot water and sometimes he can irritate an Australian by being so *very* American. But Americans have no national habits which are seriously offensive to Australians.

Here are three good rules for Americans to remember:

Until an American has been in Australia for some time and understands the Australian attitude, he should make it a strict rule not to discuss the British Royal Family. An American simply cannot understand the relationship between the Australian and his King and Queen until he has been here some time, perhaps a year or two. Any American who leaps into a conversation about the Royal Family is sticking his neck out. That is rule number one.

Rule number two is: don't keep telling the Australians "How We Do It in America." They have already heard that one—from two million Yanks during the war. They know "how we do things" by now and if you stick around Australia long enough, you'll find out why they don't do it the same way.

An American often thinks in terms of speed, efficiency, comfort, making money and a good time. An Australian wouldn't deny that he likes these things,

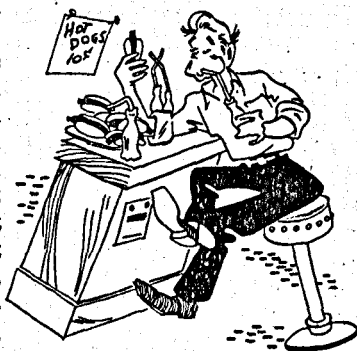
too. But in somewhat different proportions. Since you won't change this country overnight, don't beat your brains out trying. Wait until you have been here long enough to understand Australia.

Rule number three is: don't be a Big Shot. The Australians are a quiet, easy-going people, and sometimes an American gets the idea that they are a bunch of dopes who need some good advice and a push in the right direction. Well, this usually ends up rather sadly. If you try to push an American around and show him the "right way," he will argue with you and fight back. But the Australian's tactics are often quite different. One type just sits back quietly and lets the Big Shot make a damned fool of himself.

Another type will shout you down. The third sort will simply give you a punch in the nose. Anyway, don't be a Big Shot and try to push Australians around.

These rules and ideas, by the way, are ones we were asked to stress by people answering our questionnaires. They are being passed on to you by fellows who have gone through these things themselves.

Despite these small points, an American is generally considered to be a very likeable person. An observant Australian can spot a newly arrived American a block away. The American wears his hat at a slightly different angle. His clothes are cut a little differently. His gestures are more expressive. He is generally a little flashier, a little faster, and a little louder than the Australian. And his manners are a bit more spectacular. He pulls out





a chair and holds it for a woman. He holds her coat. He carries her packages. He is attentive. And he says "you're welcome," an expression that is not used here. He wears rings on his fingers and a loud tie around his neck. An American is almost always less worried about being conspicuous than an Australian.

The average Australian thinks that an American is far more different than he really is. For an Australian often has a bizarre picture of life in the United States. Unless he has been there (and even then he may know only a few large cities), he must rely chiefly on the movies and newspapers for his picture of America. Hollywood movies are often either glamorous or lurid, and the newspapers look for the spectacular news, for crime, and for anything that is screwball. So an American coming here must be prepared to encounter some very startling misconceptions about his homeland.

There are some peculiar myths here about Americans. For some strange reason the movies rarely picture anyone drinking beer. It is almost always whisky. Therefore, it follows that Americans are whisky-drinkers. And since Americans are known also to be coffee drinkers, the Australian assumes (and this time quite correctly) that we don't like the way he makes coffee.

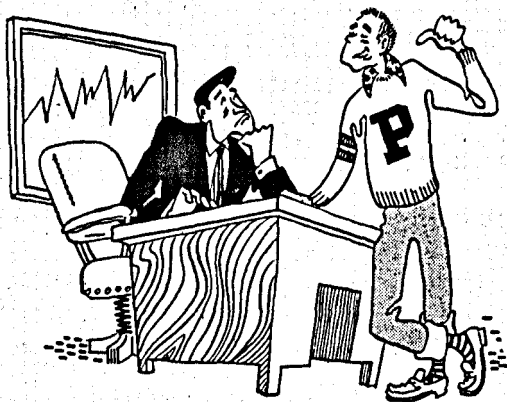
The American, it is usually assumed, is not fond of lamb. An Australian eats a lot of lamb. The American, of course, has table manners quite different from those of an Australian. The Australian marvels at the wonders that an American can perform with a fork alone. There is a story one occasionally hears about someone who actually saw an American, using only one hand and a fork, polish off a half roast-chicken, leaving only bare clean bones.

There is a suspicion here that about half the American diet consists of hot-dogs and cokes. And that the other half consists largely of salads (which

are not favorite dishes here). There is also a suspicion that Americans find Australian cooking dull. We usually do.

The Australian is certain that any American coming here finds it dull. This isn't a glamorous country, on the whole. There seems to be a fair amount of glamor, mild excitement, and sin kicking around Sydney. But in the other cities many of our fellows have complained mildly about the absence of excitement and entertainment, particularly on Sundays, when there are no dances, movies, sporting events, and, in some places, no newspapers.

But what some Australians fail to understand is that, after the excitement and high-pitched competition in some American cities, this peaceful, easy-going country is not at all hard to take.



*"Do not act superior, a superiority which Australians will not recognize in any event."*—(Student, Queensland)

*"Americans should not expect the Australians to be as gullible as they appeared during the war when the U.S. servicemen had the money."*—(Presser, Victoria)

## 9. Standards-of-Living in Australia

*"This country is young and undeveloped and so many of the things that are accepted in the U.S. way of life are luxuries over here."*—(Soils technician, Victoria)

We must admit that we don't exactly know what "standard-of-living" means. If we take it to mean having cars, washing-machines, telephones, electric refrigerators, television sets, and such gadgetry, then we are dealing largely with convenience and comfort and not necessarily with the ultimate effect on the happiness of people. On the other hand, if we talk just in terms of happiness, we get into a worse muddle trying to decide what happiness is and how to get it.

But we can make some observations.

First of all, the Australian idea of happiness or standard-of-living is not so closely tied to money as it is in America. In the U.S., particularly in the large cities, it costs money to escape the high-tension or the humdrum of life: to go to plays, movies, concerts, night clubs, dances, beaches, motoring, etc. A lot of money is made in the U.S. selling something to help you over life's little nuisances: a faster can-opener, a frozen vegetable, an automatic laundry, a self-winding watch. There is not such an emphasis here.

The Australian does not buy free time. He just takes it. Every morning and afternoon at work a cup of tea and a cooky are placed before him. He takes time out to enjoy it. After work he meets his friends in the "pub" and has a convivial good time talking and drinking beer. In the evening he may invite his friends in to talk, eat, and drink tea. On Saturday afternoon he may work in his vegetable and flower garden or go to a football game, and perhaps on Sunday he strolls with his family through one of the many parks or he goes to a beach and lies on the sand.

This easy-going way-of-life is his "standard-of-living." All the gadgetry in the world will not dispel stomach ulcers, sleepless nights or the jitters. The Australian thinks that America is a very great country, and a very clever one to think up all these gadgets. But the American doesn't appear to be any happier or healthier than the Australian.

This is one side of the question. It explains in part why the Australian doesn't lose any sleep over the absence of such gadgetry. And why the American, who expects to clean up by bringing "The Gadget" to Australia, so often goes broke.

But now the other side of the question. It is important to an American coming here to live to understand just how much of his usual existence he must do without. Each person is entitled to have his own "standard-of-living" ideas. One fellow must have a car. The next one isn't interested in a car, and so on.

Most Americans coming here agree that Australia has a "lower standard-of-living." By that they mean that the average Australian has fewer amenities for comfort and convenience than the average American seems to "need."

An American in the U.S. may buy a car costing him half a year's income. The equivalent Australian fellow would have to pay more than a whole year's income for a similar car. So cars are usually found only in higher income groups. This same comparison is more or less true throughout the whole range of expensive luxury goods. The standard-of-living in terms of luxuries is certainly lower here.

But then there is a wide difference between an *American* luxury and an *Australian* luxury. A modern, up-to-date bathroom with perpetual hot-water on tap is considered nearly a necessity in America. A home that is heated throughout to perhaps 80 degrees in the winter is standard, middle-class necessity. But an Australian has no serious objection to stepping just

outside the back door to get to his toilet. Lighting the gas bath-heater isn't very troublesome. And the Australian might suffer heat-prostration if you heated his home to 80 degrees throughout the winter. One or two rooms is enough—and just enough fire to take the chill off.

If you think that cars, refrigerators, central-heating, washing machines, hot water at every other faucet, and such things are *necessities* to you, you will find that living here is on a lower "standard." As you get used to doing without these things, they become of less importance as necessities and become, as they are to the Australian, dispensable luxuries.

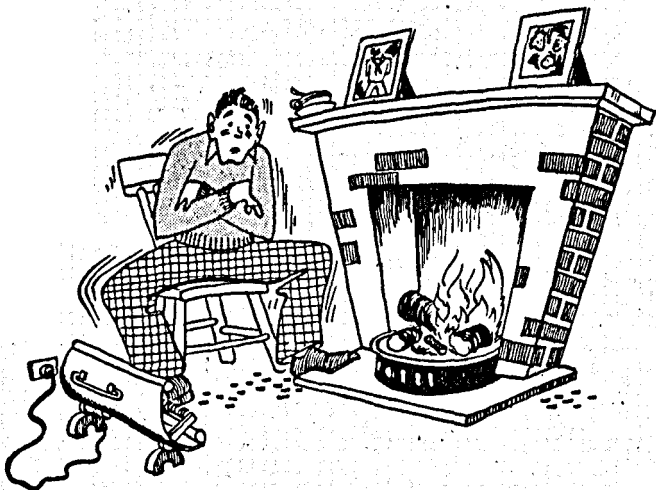
This is not to say, of course, that such things do not exist here. You can find homes in Australia just as luxurious and modern as anything in the U.S. (Unless, of course, you get into the gold door-knob and silver toilet-seat class, in which case America can always go one better.) Homes being built to-day in Australia are very modern, and if they lack conveniences, it is because the owner hasn't been convinced that he needs them.

We asked our fellows if they had some of these things, and here are the figures of those who said they did:

Car .. .. .	18%
Refrigerator (electric or gas) .. . . .	21%
Inside toilet .. . . .	46%
Hot water system .. . . .	41%
Washing machine .. . . .	12%
Radio .. . . .	87%

This probably represents a higher proportion than a cross-section of Australians would show. And in each case the percentage of Americans having these things is larger in the larger cities and smaller in the small cities and towns.

It might be necessary to add that in the case of apartment buildings there is a toilet *inside* each apart-



ment. But with the exception of Sydney, where there are a large number of "cliff dwellers," Australians prefer to live in houses.

At the lower end of the scale it is interesting to find that the "standard-of-living" by any definition does not sink as low in nearly any respect in Australia as it does in parts of the U.S. This, again, results from the squeeze of both ends toward the middle of the scale.

In the next chapter we will relate this standard-of-living to the cost-of-living, particularly as it affects Americans.

*"The Australian's understandable love of leisure makes for poor service in certain industries, e.g., no bread on Saturday, 3-weeks laundry holiday at Xmas."* (Law student, Victoria)

*"Australia is a young country and though slow at learning and slower at taking advantage of what has been learned, seems willing to want to advance. It is up to us to bear with Australia and help her to advance to the stage where she will be on an equal footing to the U.S.A."*—(Asst. Mgr., Victoria)

## 10. Cost-of-Living

*"Expect to pay high prices for manufactured goods i.e. automobiles, refrigerators, radios, etc., and less for food and housing."*—(Pilot, N.S.W.)

In Australia the cost of a pack of twenty cigarettes is about the same as the cost of an ordinary lunch in a restaurant. And the cost to build a new, two-bedroom house is about the same as the cost of two new Chevrolets (bought here).

These two typical examples illustrate the difficulties of explaining the cost-of-living in Australia to an American.

From these examples it appears that either luxuries are very expensive or necessities are quite cheap. Both are true from an American point of view. Thus it is impossible to say just what the *cost-of-living* is here without knowing what *standard-of-living* you want.

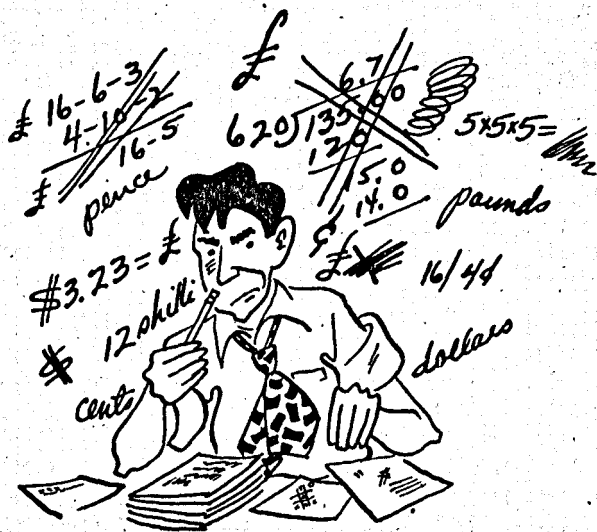
These examples also illustrate the fact that an American cannot trust figures to give him an accurate picture of living costs here. No matter how accurate or true the individual figures may be, they can be added up to a cost-of-living only by someone who knows Australia. For this reason we will not give figures of Australian costs. And we warn you not to expect to get a clear picture of the Australian cost-of-living from any set of figures.

Starting at the bottom of the income-scale the cost-of-living here is low. The lowest income groups in Australia probably buy more necessities for their wages than the lowest income groups in the U.S. Food is comparatively cheap and plentiful. This low-cost item extends to everyone. Housing on the "lower middle-class" level—minimum standard, adequate, but not in the best suburbs—is also very cheap.

Similarly, the clothing available at this level is fairly durable, plentiful, ill-cut, but comparatively cheap.

This represents a minimum standard-of-living, one with wholesome necessities but without a great deal of material luxuries. If an American will gear himself to this standard-of-living, he will find living costs appreciably lower here than he will find in the U.S.

As we move upward from this minimum standard-of-living toward one with more conveniences and luxuries—an inside toilet, a better suburb, more space, a refrigerator, an extra room—the cost-of-living rises sharply. As we climb the ladder of material standard-of-living, we find that the cost-of-living beats us to the top. This upward climb toward a high material standard-of-living is steeper here. But steeper particularly for the American who continues to regard perpetual hot water and an electric refrigerator as necessities.





There is, of course, no particular point on the scale where the cost-of-living goes from low to high. One person will have no hot water at all in his home, yet he will buy a car.

An American coming here is almost certain to suffer a drop in his material standard-of-living at first. If, when his income goes up, he tries to get back his American standard-of-living, he rarely saves money. Incomes here, particularly in the skilled tradesman range, are geared below the range of great material luxury. Therefore, there is a disproportionately big jump for an American to make to get a middle-class standard-of-living *American-style*.

So far we have painted this cost-of-living picture only in terms of money and the material comfort it buys. But there is another and perhaps more important side. Those Americans who have not found Australia to their personal liking will usually point out that they find the cost-of-living here high. But those who do like Australia will readily agree that the *cost-of-the-enjoyment-of-living* is low. And this takes us back to the most important point in this book: your success and happiness in Australia depends more on your attitude than on Australia's opportunities. If you like Australia, you will find the cost-of-living reasonably low. But if you do not like Australia, your cost-of-living will be high because you will try to buy yourself an American life in Australia. And this is expensive.

Since the war, prices in Australia have been held down more effectively than they have in the U.S. But not, of course, for those things which are imported from the U.S. American goods have jumped in price here the same as they have in the U.S., which is one reason for the high cost of imported luxuries.

Taxation in Australia is high compared with taxation in the U.S. As we explained in chapter 6, this is reflected to some extent in the great variety of

government services and social benefits which everyone receives. Under the latest reduced tax rate a man and wife earning \$105 a month here (which is the amount they would receive under the G.I. Bill if he were studying full time) would have to pay more than \$40 a year in taxes to the Australian Government.

We have not yet weighed the cost-of-living or standard-of-living against the opportunities for an American to *earn* money here. We will discuss money-earning in more detail later. But at this point it is worth noticing that Americans in general have an advantage over Australians (though we know many glaring exceptions). Americans on the whole work harder and faster than Australians. They have a reputation for being very much on the ball, for being ambitious, for having ideas. And to the same degree that this is true, the American works himself proportionately higher up the scale here.

On the whole, while our fellows here may be living a little less luxuriously than they did in the U.S. as far as material comforts and conveniences are concerned, only about one person in ten complained about this on the questionnaires. Most of our fellows appear either to have reached the standard-of-living they want or to have become adjusted to the Australian way of life. Or both.

*"The average American person is used to a high wage, having a car and a home. Those things are obtainable in Australia also if a person works for them."*—(Electrician, Queensland)

## 11. Housing

*"The housing shortage should be emphasized."*— (Law student, Victoria)

The difficulty of finding a suitable place to live is usually the biggest problem confronting a person arriving in Australia.

Australia entered the war in 1939, and from that time until the end of the war, scarcely a house was built. This, plus the movement of people to the cities during the war, created an acute housing shortage. At the present time applicants for "assisted passage" to Australia should have assured accommodation before coming. It would be foolish to bring a wife and family here without having some housing accommodation lined up—at least a friend or relative who can put you up until you find something for yourself.

But just how difficult is it?

For a single person it isn't so bad. One can always find something, usually a furnished room in a boarding house. It is more difficult for a married couple, particularly if they want cooking facilities. And finding housing that is adequate for a family with children is very difficult. Generally speaking, housing is most difficult in the largest city (Sydney), and gets slightly easier in the smaller cities. But this does not mean that it is very much easier even in the small towns.

Although the solution to the housing problem is difficult, it is not impossible. You start out by finding *something—anything*. Then you start improving on the situation. The solution usually involves having to live in some place that you don't like longer than you thought you'd have to.

But how do you tackle the problem? Unless you live with relatives or friends, you either rent, buy, or build a place.

Building a house is not an immediate solution. Nor is it a feasible approach to the problem for a newcomer who does not know values, builders, etc. These days it may take a year or longer to have a house built, anyway.

Buying a house is a possibility, but, again, someone who is not familiar with values, suburbs, etc., can easily be taken for a sucker. Real estate agents here are no different from those in the U.S. It would take \$1,500 to \$2,000 to make the down payment on a house here with the usual methods of financing the balance. The first difficulty in buying a house lies in finding a house to buy. Agents have long lists of people who want to buy houses but few houses to sell. Another difficulty is getting into the house after you buy it. The laws here make it difficult to evict tenants, particularly ex-servicemen, unless your hardship is greater than theirs.

In the beginning, then, you will probably rent a place to live.

The least difficult possibility for a start is a guest house. A guest house here is similar to a U.S. boarding house or a rooming house. Some guest houses serve only breakfast, some serve all meals. Although guest houses are cheaper than hotels, they are still expensive as a permanent residence for couples or families. A married couple living in a guest house will pay as much for one or two rooms and breakfast as they would pay for a small furnished apartment (if they could find it). Some guest houses charge more for a married couple than the rental of a whole furnished house would cost them. And many guest houses will not take children. But first you are glad to get something, so you move into a guest house.

When the first comfortable flush of having a roof over your head wears off, when you have formed a firm dislike for your landlady and a violent distaste for the food she serves, you start looking for another place—a flat or a house. (An American "apartment" is called a "flat" here.)

In our experience people usually don't really get on the ball and start looking for better housing until the current accommodation gets intolerable. Then, in desperation, they go into a frenzy of house-hunting. And since it takes some time to find something, this interval is the "frantic period," characterized by short tempers and a miserable, frustrated countenance. But once you have reached the stage of willingness to beat your brains out and lick the problem, there are several ways to go about it. The best idea, of course, is to try them all.

First you advertise and answer advertisements in classified sections of newspapers. While the chances of doing any good here are slight, you can't afford not to try it. Sometimes something turns up unexpectedly. Often there are vacant flats and houses advertised, but usually there is a catch somewhere.

Next you visit the numerous real estate agents. Some of them are polite and try to appear helpful. Others are downright rude. They have so many applications and so few vacancies that they can't do much. Sometimes you can "persuade" an agent to become particularly interested in helping you. Then something may turn up quicker.

Probably the most fruitful approach to combine with the other ways is through personal contacts. If you work up a sizeable grapevine of informers and keep your own ears and eyes open, you have a better chance. This takes a lot of patience and a lot of carfares. If you make the rounds of agents and friends once, and then sit and wait, you will wait for a long time. But if you chase down all the possibilities promptly, answer lots of advertisements, keep pestering your friends and the agents, and keep them on the alert for you, you will eventually find something. And *something* is important. With something, you can start trading. This is discouraging, but the problem can be licked.



Here are several other assorted ideas that may be useful.

If you can afford an expensive place, your chances will be greater. Some people have solved the problem by taking an expensive place and, through a series of downward exchanges, have finally arrived at something they want to keep. This, of course, is an expensive way to solve the problem. Perhaps you can find an expensive place where you can rent out a room or two to bring the rent down.

If two couples or families are willing to share a house, they can afford to take an expensive house and divide the rent. (If, however, you are invited by an advertisement to share the house of a stranger, he usually gets most of *his* rent from you.)

A fairly easy source of housing accommodation lies in "domestic service" jobs. There are many large homes in the cities in which the owner will offer a couple of rooms free for a certain amount of gardening, housework, chauffeuring, etc. Despite the housing shortage, Australians are usually unwilling to be considered "domestics," even for a place to live. So we have had little difficulty in finding accommodation on this basis for suitable couples who will take on this deal.

It is worth mentioning that any settler coming to Australia who goes to Brisbane is permitted to stay at the State Migration Centre there until he makes other arrangements. This place (called "Yungaba") is a large old building which has been remodelled to accommodate several hundred people on a temporary basis. No discrimination is made between British migrants, Americans, Europeans, etc. The atmosphere is unusually friendly, the quarters are exceptionally clean and comfortable, the food is excellent, and the cost is ridiculously low.

The organizations of American ex-servicemen in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, and Perth all make some effort to assist Americans to find living accommodation. But no organization can guarantee anything. The amount of assistance you can expect depends on each organization's facilities and on the circumstances of the newcomer.

Now something about costs.

Houses are cheaper to buy or build in the north, in Queensland. This is because the warm climate permits cheaper construction. A five-room wood house (they rarely use brick for houses in the north) costs about \$4,500 to \$5,500 to build. The same size house in the south will cost perhaps a third more. In Queensland it is not possible for an alien (which includes Americans) to own real estate, though it is possible for such property to be in the name of an Australian wife. This is an ancient law and the Queensland Government will probably straighten out this peculiar discrimination in the very near future.

In terms of a dollar income, rents are low in Australia. In terms of an Australian income, they are budgeted about the same as in the U.S.—about 20% of one's income. In practice, however, this does not always work because of the shortage. If one has the choice of paying 25%-30% of his income for rent or of having no suitable place to live, he chooses the high rent.

## 12. The American Woman in Australia

Australia has seen many American men, but the American woman is still a novelty. And being a novelty has its advantages and disadvantages.

The female American usually goes around with her nationality showing.

When she opens her mouth to speak, the American exhibits two exotic characteristics: her American accent and her good teeth. The female accent is generally considered far more American than the male. And in Australian mouths good teeth are fewer and far between.

The American's dress is probably a different length—longer or shorter depending either on the prevailing "look" or on how long ago she bought it. In either case this can easily be mistaken for the latest overseas fashion.

Apart from her appearance, her habits are delightfully peculiar. She divides her time between beauty parlors, other women's husbands, and a spate of slaving away daintily in her modernistic kitchen. Here she performs her daily ritual of unfreezing dinner, computing the family's daily vitamin consumption, enjoying the "psychological" color scheme, and generally wearing herself to a frazzle pushing buttons.

Being an Americaness covers a multitude of sins—and encourages a few others. If the American behaves peculiarly, it is doubtless because she is clinging to her "American way." So the opportunity to shed a few inhibitions and enjoy a modicum of bizarre behavior is the normal inheritance of the migrant American woman.

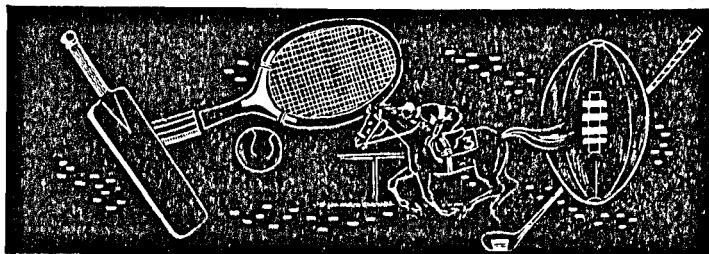
The American woman will find Australia somewhat exotic, too. It is the housewife who comes face to face most intimately with the little differences in



custom that make countries interesting. She will learn a new system of currency, dozens of new names for everyday articles, and how to entertain an afternoon or evening guest in the Australian manner. These are not very important matters, perhaps, but they will certainly be little sources of embarrassment at first.

The American housewife must first of all forget the American pampering she used to get. There is no army of inventors here thinking up time and labor-saving devices for her. There are no slick women's magazines to sell her allure and glamor. She will find the women here a little less mixed up in the man's world of business. And she will find the Australian men a little less mixed up in the domestic affairs at home.

When she goes shopping she will not find supermarkets. In the ordinary suburban shopping center, she will be obliged to go to different shops for bread, meat, milk, vegetables, soap, and clothes-pins. They are seldom under one roof. Her bread, whether she buys it from the travelling baker's cart or over the counter, will be unwrapped. The meat will come in unfamiliar cuts. She will be unable to buy cream (at present all cream is made into butter for export to England and Europe). She won't find Crisco, Spry, or other vegetable shortenings (except margarine).



No strained, canned baby-foods, no canned mushrooms, tuna, rice, or maple syrup. When she uses Australian flour she will probably have to throw out her first cake and learn to adjust her recipes. She may never find a way to make a good American pie-crust with the flour available here.

A new social rule-book will have to be learned. The details of common ritual hocus-pocus are different in many ways. The institution of tea-drinking will have to be learned. And the American woman can safely assume in the beginning that she makes poor tea. As an example of how different a favorite drink can be, the American will remember her first taste of Australian coffee, and should realize that her tea by comparable standards is probably equally peculiar.

She must learn the hour at which afternoon and late (10 p.m-ish) evening tea (called supper) should be served to guests and how to serve it. The tea should be accompanied by cookies, cake, or some dainty sandwiches. The sandwiches should always be offered before the cake. Milk (if used) should always precede the tea into the cup. And so on.

If this sounds funny, you may be certain that any newcomer to the U.S. finds customs there equally funny. And in any country a newcomer learns these things by trial and error—mostly error.

The American woman won't find the same female pursuit of "chic" here. Fewer women try to be glamorous. Cosmetics are available here but often curiously applied.

The vocabulary will be a nuisance at first: toilets are called "lavatories," the evening meal is usually called "tea," the food and liquid tea served late in the evening is called "supper," cookies are called "biscuits," and our biscuits are called "scones." A few of our innocent words are naughty here, and vice versa. But it will be more fun to learn those for yourself.

All in all, these differences that a woman will find here are little ones. Some of these differences may be nuisances at first, but you will get used to them. And when your children come back from school or from playing with the neighborhood gang and talk a language you don't understand, don't worry. They're just becoming Australians.

*"The homes over here are not on a whole equipped with any labor saving device although the Australian wife is to be admired for doing without these. An American would feel guilty on settling here and finding he would not be able to give these to his family, being used to them himself."*—(Assurance agent, Queensland)

### 13. The G.I. Bill of Rights

*"University graduates here are better educated than average U.S. equivalent."*—(Journalist, Victoria)

The G.I. Bill offers probably the best opportunity for an American to prepare himself for his working life in Australia. An American enrolling here not only gets the specific training required in Australian jobs, but he can look things over carefully before he has to jump in and start earning money. There are nearly fifty different institutions approved for G.I. study here, and a few hundred American students are already enrolled in them.

The most gratifying aspect of G.I. study here is the fact that you can actually live on the subsistence allowance. The dollar income goes very much farther in Australia than it does in the U.S. In fact, an American's subsistence payments, in many cases, are more than he will expect to get in his first job when he finishes his training.

An American's training, particularly in the skilled trades, often does not meet the requirements here. The American tradesman may be highly skilled in some small, specialized part of his trade, but not be highly qualified in the trade as a whole. He may be a wizard at repairing carburetors without knowing how to adjust the brakes of a car, for instance.

The closed shop operates almost universally here, and the unions will recognize as a full tradesman only men fully qualified in their trade. Because of this, the opportunity to study in Australian technical schools under the G.I. Bill has been a godsend to many Americans here.

On-the-job training under the G.I. Bill is not possible in Australia.

It would be a mistake to think that education in an Australian trade-school or university is any easier

than it is in the U.S. In most cases it is more difficult. The standards are high here, and a large proportion of students fall by the wayside.

A university education in Australia is regarded somewhat differently from the mass production of degree-holders that characterizes the U.S. Degrees are not so common here. This is partly because university education is less available to everyone and partly because of the academic difficulties of getting thru. Unlike American university students, it is not so common for Australian students to "work their way thru college." Vacation jobs are nearly as plentiful here, but part-time jobs are not common.

The organization and methods of Australian universities are different, too. The universities here are similar in many respects to those in England where the procedure is built around lectures and tutorials. To an American familiar with the difficulties of understanding an American university catalogue, an Australian one will probably make little or no sense at all. The university curriculum here is not divided into a great number of small "courses." Instead, one takes fewer subjects. They continue throughout the year and are broader in scope. It is common for the grade to be determined entirely by the final exam.

Probably the most troublesome and important difference in method is the extent to which the Australian student is put on his own initiative. American students here have often commented that, compared to Australian students, the student in the U.S. is spoon-fed.

Because of the differences in method, organization, and curriculum, it is necessary to ascertain beforehand the extent to which previous university work will be recognized here. Because of the higher standard here, some degrees from the U.S. are not fully accepted. Also there is not the same stepladder progression from bachelors to masters to doctorate here.

If you plan to enter an Australian university with only an American high-school diploma, it will be necessary to find out in advance if you will be accepted. The usual entrance requirements of universities here are higher in some respects than those of U.S. universities.

The procedure for getting started under the G.I. Bill here is simple. Most institutions have already had some experience in handling American students under the G.I. Bill, and do it efficiently. The first necessity is your "Certificate of Eligibility and Entitlement." This should be obtained before you come from your regional Veterans' Administration Office in the U.S. A "supplemental certificate" is necessary if you are enrolling for a second time under the G.I. Bill. When you enroll, and your course is approved, the subsistence checks will start coming within a few months. They will catch up and then arrive only about a week after they are due each month. The local American Consulates are the local "agents" for the Veterans' Administration.

All inquiries concerning G.I. education here should be made either to the Veterans' Administration in Washington (who can give you lists of approved schools here) or to the schools themselves.

*"The educational system of Australia is much different and adjustment is a bit difficult. Of nine university students at the University of Queensland, most of whom had university training at home, only three passed and these with much difficulty, even though they were all repeating the same work they had done at home . . . ."*

*The educational standard is much lower.*

*Though the Australian is not illiterate, he is uneducated, moronic, and not too intelligent."*—(Student, Queensland)

## 14. Earning Money in the Cities

*"Too many Americans have come to Australia thinking someone is going to give them something. If they are willing to work hard, there are excellent opportunities here."*—(Welding engineer, Queensland)

The American coming to Australia to-day will have little difficulty in getting a job. But he may have some difficulty in getting what he considers a good job.

There are several reasons why he may have difficulties. First, his experience is different. He may be over-specialized in one section of his trade or he may be the Jack-of-all-trades. He may have the misfortune to have good qualifications for one of the few types of work which is either overcrowded or which doesn't exist here. Or he may be the typical American "bright boy" who knows his way around but who has no definite qualification, no specific ability to sell in Australia.

On the other hand Americans have a few native advantages: his accent sometimes, his ability to put a "smooth line" over the public in jobs where he deals with people, his knowledge of a machine that may be new to Australia. Some American companies here are partial to Americans, and even some Australian employers believe that Americans have more ambition and work harder.

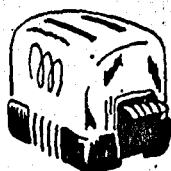
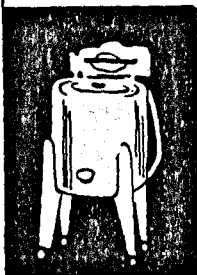
In any event the American coming here should *know how to do something well*: how to operate a machine, how to write a good radio play, how to sell women's shoes, how to plaster a wall or repair a watch—*something*. Australia needs skill. The best sources of employment here are the skilled trades (with some exceptions that we will discuss later).

In semi-skilled white-collar work, the opportunities are not glittering. Office work of a semi-skilled sort—typing, filing, clerical, etc.—is usually too poorly paid for a married man to consider. Semi-executive jobs

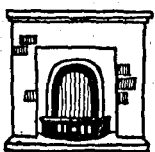
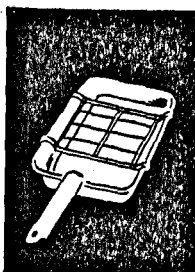
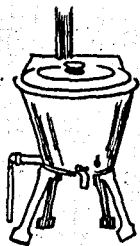
are always good, but you don't step into them, you work into them. If you have time and can afford to start near the bottom and work your way up in a good company, you can possibly make the grade quicker here since much industry is getting started now and considerable expansion is ahead.

In the semi-creative jobs—radio work, acting, journalism, commercial art, advertising, etc.—the position is much the same here as it is anywhere: if you are good enough, produce your evidence and someone will take you on. But don't be misled into thinking that standards in these fields are lower here, and that you can get by with less on the ball. In some cases, of course, this is true. But in only a few.

How to go about getting a job? First, remember that you, as a newcomer, are not in the best position to find jobs. The government here maintains the Commonwealth Employment Service to achieve the fullest possible employment. By "full employment," they mean employing each person in the job in which he can contribute most (and get the most money). Since almost everyone has a job, this means finding better jobs for people. This is not just a government "service." It is a national effort to make better and more efficient use of the labor in the country. So these C.E.S. people have the employment situation pretty well taped, and in the







case of the newly-arrived American they assist the Department of Immigration. The first place to go when looking for a job is the Commonwealth Employment Service. There are C.E.S. offices in all cities, agents in smaller towns.

We have talked to dozens of employment officers in the C.E.S. Almost without exception they are courteous, helpful people who know their job. However unusual this may be in government service, it is nonetheless true in the C.E.S. Their job even extends to realizing that Americans are special problem cases in many instances, and that frequently Americans have a "let's-see-what-you-can-do-for-me" chip on their shoulders. In at least three capital cities: Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane, there are special officers who are particularly experienced in handling Americans. In each case these men can be found in the C.E.S. at the "Central Ex-Serviceman's Office." They keep track of pro-American employers, and know most of the answers to the peculiar problems that arise from unusual American job experience.

These C.E.S. officers, in addition to helping you get jobs, are usually prepared to tell a man where to go to get every benefit he is entitled to as an ex-serviceman in Australia. There are a lot of small concessions to ex-servicemen which are equally available to the ex-G.I.'s here. Act-

ing on behalf of the Department of Immigration, the C.E.S. man is the best bet to solve a big share of your first problems here. Don't be discouraged by the man behind the front counter, tho. He has to deal with a string of nit-wits every day, and may not be as patient as the man you want to see further along.

When you start job-hunting here, don't be too particular at first. Like housing, you can get into something and then start looking for something better. The C.E.S. will help you to keep looking.

One very important factor in getting jobs in the trades are the unions. There is often considerable controversy here about unions. They are strong and militant. The closed shop is almost universal. Therefore, in most trade jobs you will have to get a union ticket first. And unlike many unions in the U.S., you can't always get a union ticket by paying a fee and getting a card. You will be obliged to prove that your qualifications are sufficient for the rating you want. And you will probably not be able to pull the wool over their eyes. They may give you a trade test.

In some occupations you may be virtually unable to get recognition as a full tradesman—particularly in *some occupations* in the electrical, metal and engineering trades. During the war a great many people who were not fully qualified, were allowed to earn tradesmen's wages on specialized jobs in these trades. After the war it was necessary to protect the actual tradesmen in these trades from this "dilution." Therefore, entrance into these "diluted" trades was virtually closed to newcomers pending the time when the problems of dilution, and subsequent overcrowding, became less acute. Also the definition of a "full tradesman" in these occupations has been tightened—excluding British, American, or other newly arrived tradesmen unless they can prove that they were recognized tradesmen before the war. This has proved to be an unfortunate stumbling block to a number of Americans coming here. Therefore it is necessary for people planning to enter these trades to find out

beforehand whether or not their qualifications are sufficient to get them union recognition as a full tradesman in these fields. Since these restrictions vary in different trades and States, get your dope from the best authority: the C.E.S. or the unions themselves.

In any field of work it is highly essential for anyone coming here to bring with them the fullest evidence of the training, experience, and union status that they had in the U.S. Skilled work in any unionized field is broken down into small job components. Each is a recognized job with its own legally fixed wage rate.

The rates of pay that one can expect to get for various jobs here would mean little in figures. By and large, the greater the skill required, the greater the pay. The common skilled jobs pay enough for an Australian to have a reasonable standard-of-living. And to make some evaluation of what this means, we can only suggest that you weigh this against the chapters on standard-of-living and cost-of-living.

The principle of the 40-hour week has been recognized by the industrial courts and is the generally accepted working week. Most jobs include a period of 14 days' annual leave with full pay, a requirement by law.

On the questionnaires we found the following additional information which we pass along without comment: 92 % of the Americans found Australians easy to get along with at work; 73% thought that Australians do not work as hard as Americans; 69% thought that the competition for their jobs is less here than it would be in the U.S. When asked about what they thought of their own prospects for advancement in Australia, 47% said "good," 43% said "average" and only 9% said "poor." This tells the story better than we can.

One-fifth of the Americans here are in business. Some started a business of their own, and some entered the business of a father-in-law. This, of course, is the common American ambition: to have

your own business. Starting a business here is difficult. Running one after you get it is not so difficult. These are good business times, and the number of businesses started is limited only by the space available. This means that space for a shop or factory is hard to find, and that buying someone else's business is expensive. But it can be done.

One of the chief difficulties to starting a business here is the newly-arrived American's lack of understanding of his customers. Not any business will succeed here. Some of America's "good ideas" would flop in Australia. It is difficult to judge in advance which businesses will succeed and which will fail. In general, tho, it is safe to say that Australians are rather slow to bite at something new and unusual. Your business idea might be a hot one from *your* point of view, but there is in all of us a tendency to prefer our usual way of doing things.

During the war a great many Americans saw horrible gaps in Australia's make-up. No super-markets, no drug stores, no cocktail lounges. They regarded these things as symbols of progress. They



*"Be settled in yourself! Don't try to run away from yourself by coming to Australia. Adventure is great for the single man with no responsibilities. BUT! if you can't solve your problems at home, don't expect to be able to solve them in some other part of the world."*—(Textile worker, Victoria)

are really only peculiarities of American life. If you can distinguish between the two, it will be much safer to start a business which will make a contribution to Australia than one which merely inflicts the "American Way" on Australia.

At any rate, before coming here to start a business or promote your "Good Idea," do a lot of writing first and find out as much as you can about obtaining premises, space, equipment, materials, etc. This may save you a lot of headaches.

In fact, writing for more information will always save you headaches.

*"If you aren't a skilled laborer you won't hold a job just because you had a couple of years training in the Navy in one particular field."*—(Confectionery Mfr., W.A.)

*"Many of us have returned to Australia with the idea that we are Americans and would therefore be welcomed into industry with opened arms and great salaries. This is not so and unless a man is thoroughly qualified he cannot expect to start at the top of the ladder."*—(Asst. Mgr., Victoria)

*"You can't bluff your way thru here like you can in the big shops back home. I personally think this a country of great opportunities if one is willing to put up with a struggle, which I believe is easier than in the States and the more cash one has the easier it is."*—(Engineer, Queensland)

*"Always ask to see the top man, as it is not as hard to get into the office and the boss here as it is in the States. You will usually find the people very polite."*—(Mechanic, Victoria)

## 15. Earning Money out of the Cities

*"I think there is a great opportunity for people who would like to go on the land here."*—(Soils technician, Victoria)

Rural Australia offers enormous opportunities. But at the moment this is offset by almost equally enormous difficulties.

In one part or another of Australia anything will grow. And there is much good land lying idle. Much of it is comparatively cheap. When this was true in the U.S. years ago, the opportunities were gilt-edged and comparatively easy to cash in on. But in Australia it is not so easy.

First of all, this is a country of great distances and limited transportation, of small-scale markets, of uncertain rainfall. You may buy land which will grow beautiful tomatoes—which you can't get to market. You may grow wonderful cauliflowers and succeed in getting them to market—and find that a temporary glut on the market puts you into bankruptcy. You may buy land to graze cattle and, after a few years, build up a valuable herd—only to be completely wiped out by one rainless season. Opportunity in rural Australia is fraught with great hardship and bitter disappointment.

You can buy land, good land, in Australia to-day. But if this land is already in production, accessible to markets, etc., it will cost too much. The demand is great and prices are high. If you buy good cheap land, it will probably be inaccessible to markets, there will be no house and very little chance of getting one built soon, no roads, electricity or railway. You can take your choice, but scarcely anyone here would advise you to buy land now.

If you did buy land, you'd find that the agricultural experience you gained in the U.S. would not be worth as much here as you thought it would. The soil, the climate, the markets are different. If you plan to live

on the land here, it will be advisable to work for someone else for a few years to gain experience under local conditions. For example, no matter how successful your tobacco crops in the U.S. may have been, you would probably fail here at first. Tobacco will grow well here, and it is a very profitable crop. But very few people have mastered the trick of growing it successfully.

If you have some money to invest in land here, and if you put it in the bank for a few years while you gain experience working for someone else, you should be prepared for hardship. If you are single you can go into the "outback" and work on a cattle or sheep station (ranch). You can get a job easily. The farther "back" you go the cheaper the land and the greater the hardship. Hardship takes on a new meaning in this country. The station on which you work may cover a thousand square miles. You may have to drive your cattle overland a few hundred miles to sell them. Apart from the people on your station, you may see white men no oftener than once a year. You can guess the rest. It is no bed of roses, and probably few Americans are prepared to accept "opportunity" on this basis.

But coming back toward civilization, you will still find opportunities. There is a considerable labor shortage in rural Australia these days, and many farms will offer you a job. But the catch is the housing shortage. A single man will find it easy to get a job. He can get a job in almost any field of Australian agriculture. And he can probably save money. A married couple will find it more difficult because of the housing. However, if the wife will accept employment in the house, they will have less difficulty. The couple with children, who require a house of their own, will not be so easily satisfied. The housing difficulty in remote parts will be complicated by the lack of facilities, mainly education, for children.

Many farmers, however, may sell you a share of their farm if you stick around long enough.

There is considerable "share farming" carried on here—you live on and work someone else's land. This is done on a fair basis, controlled by law, and does not reach the status of "tenant farming" in the southern U.S.

There is no *free* land here available for settlement by Americans. A "soldier settlement" scheme to put Australian ex-servicemen on the land exists but there is not even enough land available for the soldier-settlers because the Government will only allow "settlement" on land that can provide a reasonable living under existing conditions. In the State of New South Wales alone there are some 12,000 unfilled applications of people who are registered as "suitable" for land-settlement. A real land hunger.

There is almost every kind of agriculture here: sheep, cattle, pigs, wheat, all fruits, vegetables, peanuts, sugar-cane, pineapples, tobacco, dairy products, etc. But how much of any product is grown is limited by several factors. (To avoid over-production and the resultant price-drop, the government controls production or marketing of some products.)

The first factor is the availability of markets. Australia may be able to grow three times as many tomatoes, for instance, as she needs. But until she develops canning facilities and overseas markets there is no point in increasing the production of tomatoes. This obstacle may eventually be overcome to some extent. Another problem is distance and the lack of rail or road facilities in the more remote areas. When more people live and eat in Australia it will, of course, become necessary to build more railways, electric lines, roads, etc. The climate is an important factor, too. In some areas there may be three consecutive good years with profitable crops, followed by a fourth year of drought and complete crop failure. It takes money and experience to take this risk.



One prospect for development here lies in irrigation. While there is a limit to the amount of irrigation that can be profitably developed here, this limit is still beyond the horizon. The current state of irrigation development can be illustrated by one example. In Australia's largest irrigation development scheme (the Murray River valley), water is run on to pasture lands in some places to grow grass for sheep and cattle to eat. As overseas markets and increased population make greater demands on food production here, irrigation can be developed more extensively and more efficiently.

When the need arises for Australia to produce more food for the world (particularly in the eastern half?), there is no reason why Australian rural development cannot keep pace.

The fact that this is possible means, of course, that there is a future in agriculture for migrants to Australia. It is not easy to point out now just how an individual can find a part for himself in Australia's rural development. But if you will hang around, look the situation over carefully, and keep your eyes and ears open *for several years*, there is no reason why you cannot work yourself profitably into rural development here.

Because of the large problems that face the individual who wants to "open up" some of the undeveloped agricultural land here, it is possible that co-operative schemes may form a basis for opportunity and development that the individual cannot manage alone.

One particular project in Queensland is worth citing:

In Cairns (North Queensland), the Land Settlement and Development Institute of North Queensland, a private co-operative enterprise, is purchasing large tracts of land. They plan to divide this land into individual properties, each sufficient to provide a good living and income for one family. They plan to lay out the entire area on a community basis, making

provision for shopping centers, schools, etc. They plan to build a house on each property (dodging the shortages of materials by using temporary plywood or tar-paper roofs and installing showers instead of bathtubs). As houses are built, settlers will move on to the land and become members of the co-operative.

The Institute intends to create a farming-equipment pool and machinery will be made available to settlers on a roster system at a nominal rental. Training and advice will be available to people with insufficient experience under local conditions.

Marketing of produce will be carried out for members by the Institute, and the establishment of a canning factory is intended to assure permanent, stable, and remunerative markets. Provision will be made for each settler to buy his home and land from the Institute on a long-term contract basis.

This, it is generally agreed in North Queensland, is an excellent blue-print scheme. But despite the honesty of purpose and the sincere desire of the promoters to do something worthwhile, despite the great need for such a scheme, its chances of success are thought to be pretty slim.

However useful such a scheme would be in the development of valuable land, regardless of the enthusiasm and support it will receive from people whom it can help, there are, as usual, in a free-enterprise country, influences which would prefer not to have this sort of scheme. It is interesting, in this regard, to find that despite several attempts, no one has succeeded in starting a much-needed canning factory in North Queensland.

The food-growing possibilities here are great. But when dog prefers to eat dog, they will take longer to develop.

The Land Settlement and Development Institute intends to include American settlers in their scheme.

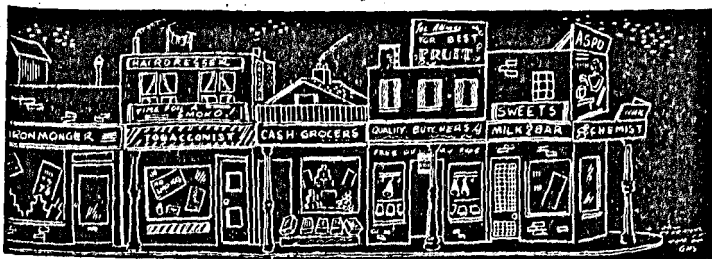
Queensland, incidentally, bears a strong resemblance to Texas—a large State, proud, and with great

potential wealth. It has the same extremes of lush fertility and barrenness.

Along with the development of agriculture in Australia will come the growth of small towns. Already there is a considerable effort being made to decentralize industry in Australia, to divert industry to country areas. This means more and more opportunity to find a greater variety of jobs outside the cities.

At the present time anyone intending to move to an Australian small town to set up a small business—shoe-repairing, grocery store, barber-shop, etc.—will have a tough time. The housing shortage is at least equally matched by the shortage of office space and space for shops and stores. We visited many small towns and looked in each for any vacant premises where one might set up a business. None was available. And few are being built since houses come first. This cannot last forever, however. More people are coming to Australia and these towns, at least some of them, must grow.

If you insist on coming to rural Australia, come ahead. We won't discourage you (any more than we already have). There is obviously much to be done, much land yet to be cultivated. There is every reason to expect great development here, and you may get in on the ground floor. But not right away. There isn't enough material to spare for the ground floor yet.



## 16. Miscellaneous Advice

### What Shall I Bring?

Since this is a modern, civilized country with a great diversity of department stores, shops, etc., don't feel obliged to pack up *all* your worldly possessions. Some things (which are heavy or bulky) will cost more to bring than to buy here.

But some things here are either very expensive or very hard to get. The first "priority" items to bring are electrical goods: radios, washing-machines, sewing machines, vacuum cleaners, electric razors, etc. All these can be obtained here but at much greater cost than in the U.S. All these things will require transformers since the electric current here is 200-240 volts (A.C.). But transformers are available and not too expensive. The one difficulty that may arise is the difference in "cycles." Most American household electricity is 60-cycle. Australian current is generally 50-cycle. On most things this won't matter. But on a few—electric clocks or record-player turntables, for instance—the cycle difference may slow down the motor to five-sixths of its proper speed. Ask your nearest electrician for advice.

Bring clothes, too. Apart from what you will want to wear when you get off the ship, you will need a sufficient supply of outer apparel to last at least until you get accustomed to Australian styles. A Hollywood zoot-suit will not be a good investment. Fine woollen goods are plentiful and cheap here—children's and women's winter woolies, pajamas, sweaters, etc.

Bring your *special* tools, precision equipment, typewriter, etc. Ordinary tools are available here.

Bring any indispensable books: texts, manuals, etc. American books are hard to get here.

Bring every possible documentary evidence of your skill, training, experience, and status in your trade. This is extremely important to anyone wishing to enter the trades here.

It will not be a good idea to bring a *new* car. The duty will be too high. But if you can *prove* that you have owned your car for three years or longer, and if you will agree not to sell it for at least three years after you arrive here, you can bring it in duty-free. (If you sell it within the three years you must automatically pay not only the duty but the sales tax.) But before bringing your left-hand-drive car, inquire first whether the State you plan to live in will register it. Some will, some won't. On the other hand, you may be able to have your car changed to a right-hand-drive before you leave.

### **How Much Money Will I Need?**

We asked for advice on this question on the questionnaires and received two kinds of answers. Those people who intend to start or buy businesses here were generally advised to bring \$3,000-6,000, depending on the type of business. Those who wish to get a job or start studying were advised to bring \$800-1,500 to cushion them against housing troubles, etc. The figures are only approximate and averages of the suggested amounts. A fifth of the Americans, for instance, suggested that *less* than \$800 would be necessary.

### **Should I Leave Any Money in the U.S.?**

This is always a good idea if you can afford it. If you don't like it here, you'll want a nest egg ready when you go back.

Because of the dollar shortage here, Australia will not usually allow dollars to be sent to the U.S. at the present time. (And you can't send Australian currency.) But numerous exceptions are possible since Americans often have special money problems. An American can, for instance, arrange to pay his insurance premiums, to contribute to the support of a needy relative (if he can prove his case), make his alimony payments, subscribe to his favorite magazines (except a few unsavory ones which are banned here). But you can't send your brother a hundred dollars for a Christmas present. In other words: in

genuine and reasonable cases you can usually send money home. But the government here will not allow Americans to act as cover-ups for the illegal export of dollars. If there is any particular reason why you may need to send money home, you should inquire from the Exchange Control Department of the Commonwealth Bank, Sydney, N.S.W. (see chapter 16) about your particular case.

If you should want to return to the U.S., you will want to take your money out with you. There is no fixed rule about this but normally you will have no difficulty. If, however, you want to take an unusually large amount back after a relatively short stay, you will probably have trouble and will be obliged, among other things, to prove how you got the money.

Many people are looking for devious ways to get dollars out of Australia. You will have to prove that you are not making a loophole of yourself.

If there is likely to be anything unusual about your business dealings here, inquire first.

### **Customs Procedure:**

Few things are more confusing to a civilian overseas traveller than the forbidding Customs declaration form that he is handed before disembarking. Anyone new to this common form of red tape is almost certain to be in the dark about what to put on the form. And the more people you ask, the more confused you get. This confusion sometimes results in serious trouble and sometimes a person wakes up afterward to the fact that he has unwittingly slipped through Customs more easily than he should have.

First of all you should understand that the complicated Customs declaration form is designed to cope with any complexity that may arise when people try to bring strange things into the country under varying circumstances. Most of this probably won't apply to you.

Secondly, you should understand that the Customs officers are not out to bleed you for anything. But, at

the same time, they are always on the alert for the wise guys on every ship who always try to put something over on them. If you are honest and straightforward with them, they will almost always give you an even break. They really don't care if you have one pack of cigarettes too many. But don't try to play innocent if they find a dozen new fountain pens in your suitcase.

The chief function of Customs officers is to protect *trade*. To this end they will charge you for any little business you are doing on the side—bringing in watches, pens, stockings, etc., which you can *sell* here. You, a visitor, migrant, or tourist, cannot engage in the importing business without paying duty, the same as an importer. And remember, too, the Customs officers cannot distinguish between a dozen wrist-watches which you *intend* as gifts for your friends and another dozen watches that you might sell. Don't try to convince them, either. That's an old story. A small inexpensive assortment of personal gifts won't matter. They may charge you a small duty, but that is quite fair.

You can get all the information concerning Customs regulations from the Australian Customs Representative in the U.S. (see Chapter 16). In case this confuses you, we will try to explain it. First of all the regulation concerning what you can bring in free reads:

"Passengers' personal effects; passengers' furniture and household goods which have been in actual use by such passengers for at least one year, not exceeding £125 Australian currency in value for each adult passenger (two children are counted as one adult)."

This means:

1. You can bring in free your personal effects—as much as you like and regardless of how long you have had them. Personal effects include jewellery, toilet articles, bicycles, cameras (non-commercial), sporting goods, typewriters, etc. It will also include hand tools

of trade and hand instruments. This "hand" business is important. This distinction makes the difference between a duty-free personal effect and a dutiable machine. If your "tools" are hammers, saws, wrenches, and things you use by hand, O.K. But if your "tools" roll on wheels, are fixed to a bench, or are otherwise not carried and used *by hand*, they are classed as machines and are dutiable. Even the poor two-by-four saw horse would be called a machine in this instance.

2. "Personal effects" *does not* include radios, home movie projectors, perfumes, alcoholic beverages, tobacco, cigars, cigarettes, confectionery, partly-made wearing apparel, piecegoods, furnishings, or anything for use, decoration, or ornament in a house. *These are the things you must particularly list on your Customs declaration.*

3. "Household goods" means furniture, household decorations, radios, pianos, linens, dishes, etc. All these things come in free if they have been in your actual use and possession for at least a year. Each adult can have about \$400 worth of this stuff. The Customs authorities take a very liberal attitude in assessing the value of household goods, so, if you can convince them that you've had it at least a year, they won't split hairs over the value.

4. But remember: a new radio, a carton of cigarettes, a bottle of Scotch, or a few yards of material that your wife plans to make into a dress—these things are neither household nor personal effects. They will be dutiable. And in some circumstances you may be required to get an import licence before you can bring these things in at all.

5. If you are in doubt about any particular item, write to the Customs representative in New York (chapter 16) and inquire.



## 17. Where to write for further Information

So far in this book we haven't tried to give you all the answers. But you should know as much as possible about your own situation before you come. So below is a list of addresses to write to. If you come to Australia without checking your plans first, you may very easily find yourself in the soup. But if you write many letters telling people exactly what you want to do, and make searching inquiries about the likelihood of success, you will be pretty safe.

One important point: we have seen many letters that have come to some of these offices. We asked to see what sort of letters they received, how they got the information for the answers, and we have read many answers they have written. The biggest difficulty in answering letters is the difficulty of understanding just what the inquirer wants to know. Believe it or not, we saw one letter which asked "When my wife and I arrive in Australia what will be the situation?"

Many Americans have learned to make themselves appear to be as big as possible. That's all right sometimes. But when you want information for your own use, you must be honest. You can't say, for instance, "I have had a lot of experience working with aircraft—where can I get a job?" This doesn't mean anything. You can't say, "I am a pretty good farmer. I can grow anything." So, for gosh sakes, when you write a letter asking for information, BE EXACT. Remember, too, that many jobs have titles in the U.S. which are meaningless here. So describe what you mean.

### **JOBS:**

No. 1—Department of Labour & National Service  
Box 2715

G.P.O., Sydney, N.S.W.

We have examined this letter-answering set-up carefully. They will answer questions concerning employment in Australia and questions concerning the availability of labor for starting businesses. They will probably send your letter to several district officers and ask for a report from each. If your letter concerns professional work they will get reports from several persons in the field. In other words they will find the answer. They will reply by air-mail. But this service is so thorough that if you ask several broad questions, it may take them months to prepare a good answer for you. Their answers will tend to be accurate but conservative.

**No. 2—Trades Hall**

(Melbourne, Victoria).

(Sydney, N.S.W.).

(Brisbane, Queensland).

(Adelaide, S.A.).

(Perth, W.A.).

(Hobart, Tasmania).

This is the central union office in each state. They can give you answers on union requirements. Each of the capital cities listed has a Trades Hall. Since each state's union requirements differ somewhat, you can get an overall picture from address No. 1.

**STARTING BUSINESSES:**

**No. 3—Ministry of Post-War Reconstruction**

**Division of Industrial Development**

**Melbourne, Victoria.**

A government department which will give you information on starting productive businesses, the availability of materials, etc.

No. 4—Australian Government Trade Commissioner

636 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York.

From the Trade Commissioner, you can get a preliminary idea of Australia's needs in business, industry, trade, etc.

No. 5—Commonwealth Treasury  
Canberra, A.C.T.

The Treasury will give you information concerning "capital issues"—i.e. issuing stocks and bonds to start a business.

If you are interested in a small business—shoe repairing, cabinetmaking, etc.—perhaps in a small town, address No. 1 can help you.

## AGRICULTURAL:

No. 6—Bureau of Agricultural Economics  
Canberra, A.C.T.

Here you can find how much of what is grown where, what is done with it, market possibilities, etc.

No. 7—Under-Secretary of Agriculture  
(Melbourne, Victoria)  
(Sydney, N.S.W.)  
(Brisbane, Queensland)  
(Adelaide, S.A.)  
(Perth, W.A.)  
(Hobart, Tasmania).

These men are probably the best sources of information about agriculture in their own states. They will probably send your letter to the department head concerned with the particular field of agriculture about which you inquire.

Address No. 1 is probably the best source of information concerning jobs in rural industry. In this case they will probably refer your letter to the Chief of the Rural Section in the appropriate state.

## **EDUCATION UNDER THE G.I. BILL:**

**No. 8—Vocational Rehabilitation & Education  
Veterans' Administration  
Washington, D.C.**

This office can give you a list of institutions which are approved for G.I. education in Australia. Either this office or your regional V.A. office can give you information on the mechanics of studying abroad under the G.I. Bill. They will tell you what papers you need, how to get them, etc.

Since the Veterans' Administration will give you a list of schools, you should write to each of those which interest you to find out about entrance requirements, transfer credits, etc. You may even try to get in touch with an American studying at such a school if you want an American explanation of how the school works.

## **GETTING TO AUSTRALIA:**

**No. 9—Migration Officer  
Australian Consulate General  
630 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York.**

**Migration Officer  
Australian Consulate General  
206 Sansome Street  
San Francisco, California.**

These officers handle the mechanics of getting people to Australia. He can provide information on the "assisted passage" scheme, on transportation, etc. For information on what you can bring and how to get your stuff into Australia he will refer your inquiry to the Customs Representative. For trade information he will pass you along to the Trade Commissioner. For assorted information there is the News and Information Bureau in New York and the Press Attache to the Consul General in San Francisco.

No. 10—Commonwealth Exchange Control  
Commonwealth Bank of Australia  
Sydney, N.S.W.

No one will worry much about the money you bring into Australia. But if you think you may want to take money out of Australia, or to send any back, this office can tell you what will be allowed and what won't.

**ASSORTED INFORMATION:**

No. 11—Australian News and Information Bureau  
636 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York

The U.S. Bureau of the Australian Department of Information is equipped to give all sorts of general and educational material on Australia. It maintains an Australian reference library.

When you don't know where to write to get the answers to some of your particular questions—when you can't find a good source of information among the addresses above, you can always write to

No. 12—American Ex-Servicemen's Association  
Box 1982R  
G.P.O., Melbourne, Victoria.

— or —

No. 13—American Australasian Ex-Servicemen's  
Memorial Club  
151 Elizabeth Street  
Sydney, N.S.W.

These two clubs will take an interest in your case. They may not know the answers to your questions, but they can probably find the man who knows the answer. They are also prepared to tell you whatever they can from an *American* point of view. These clubs have built up a pretty good source of contacts in Australia, and they will be pleased to use these contacts to help you if they can.

## 18. When You get here

Now to tell you what assistance to expect, from whom, when you arrive. One of the greatest problems of a newcomer is finding where to go for what in a new country.

First of all, if you come via the "assisted passage" scheme, several helpful groups in Australia will have your name and prospective address before you arrive.

The most effective and useful reception provided by the Department of Immigration is through the Commonwealth Employment Service. When American "migrants" arrive by ship in Sydney, a crew of government men, including officers of the Commonwealth Employment Service, go aboard before the ship docks and start dispensing assistance.

There will be a representative of the railways who will make train reservations on the spot for Americans travelling away from Sydney. For convenience the American group will probably be put in the same railway car. Unless you have good reason to do otherwise, better get in there, too. If you take off like a lone wolf, the people who are prepared to help you later won't be able to find you.

Anyway, if you get aboard the train for Melbourne or Brisbane or points beyond (and if there are enough of you to make it worthwhile), an employment officer from these cities will board the train several hours out of Melbourne or Brisbane and go to work on the Americans aboard. There is, of course, nothing compulsory about all this. You can spit in his eye if you want to. But if you don't take every advantage of the assistance that he can offer you, you're a sucker. Even if you have a job already lined up, get acquainted with the C.E.S. officer and find out what he can do. You may need his help some day.

He will probably offer you a voucher for a cigarette or tobacco ration. Take it. Sooner or later, if you smoke, you will get accustomed to Australian cigarettes. But unless you have a ration you will have difficulty in buying Australian cigarettes. You can usually always get cigarettes imported from England, but they are more expensive. When you finish the American cigarettes you bring in with you, you won't see any more for a long time.

Next, the C.E.S. man will want to get some personal history from you for his card file. Don't be afraid of card files. Even if you don't believe that he can help you, give him a break and let him try. You will find, sooner or later, that he is quite genuine in his desire to help you. If you are in Australia for the first time, you may jump to the conclusion that the C.E.S. man (and perhaps other Australians you meet) aren't as much on the ball as you think they should be. But don't be misled by a quiet personality. We have met most of these men ourselves, and they are considerably smarter than you may think.

Remember, too, that this man isn't interested only in getting you a job. He wants to get you the best job you can hold. And he is also interested in helping you get settled successfully in other ways. He knows and understands the difficulties involved. You don't. So give him a chance.

Even if you don't need any help at the moment, get yourself in his files. He will remember you, and you may be seeing him again. He may even follow you up and give you a call some day to see how you are doing. Or if you are travelling away from the city, he will probably send your card to the nearest district officer with the request that he contact you and help wherever he can.

If you get sidetracked and don't get aboard the right train, or if you fly, you can always find the C.E.S. man at the Central Ex-Servicemen's Office. There is such an office in each capital city.

In some cities here there are clubs or associations of American ex-servicemen (for addresses of two see chapter 16). In Sydney the American Australasian Ex-Servicemen's Memorial Club sends representatives aboard each incoming, migrant-bearing ship to welcome those Americans bound for Sydney. This club maintains an office and full-time secretary. It offers a variety of useful services for American ex-servicemen in Sydney, including some assistance in securing accommodation. Frequent social and business meetings are held, and the club publishes a periodic magazine carrying information of interest to Americans.

In Melbourne the American Ex-Servicemen's Association (the group behind this booklet) sends a letter of welcome, distributed aboard ship to individuals arriving under the "assisted passage" scheme. It then sends representatives to meet the Americans arriving in Melbourne on the following train. This association has as yet no permanent quarters and maintains no full-time secretary, but it is well-organized. Meetings, usually of a social nature, are held at least monthly. A monthly newsletter is sent to members, and a welfare fund is maintained to give financial assistance to members. This group offers a wide scope of services to members, including help in finding accommodation, and free hospitalization and medical treatment for members with service-connected disabilities.

In five of the six Australian capital cities there is an American consulate. The consulate will want you to register with them. This is not compulsory and has nothing to do with keeping your citizenship, but it helps them keep track of you, and it doesn't cost anything. We recommend that you register.

The consulate will answer questions about citizenship, pensions, passports, etc. They will forward your papers to the Veterans' Administration if you plan to study under the G.I. Bill. But the consulate has no authority to make a decision for the V.A.



The consular people generally maintain an attitude of friendliness toward Americans. However, no employee of the U.S. government in Australia is obliged to be helpful to you except in matters relating to governmental business. This means, of course, that some consular officers are friendly and helpful "beyond the call of duty." Others are just friendly. Do not mistake consulates for welfare institutions.

In each of the large capital cities you will find a club of Americans of the cocktail-party, country-club variety. These are the more or less wealthy Americans, usually employed by American firms, usually about a generation older than the ex-servicemen, and often in a tight social clique. The activities of these clubs are primarily social—in the white-tie-and-tails class. But despite a general difference in interests, many members of this group have been exceedingly helpful and generous in helping American "migrants."

During the war an Australian organization was formed which is known as "The Australian-American Association." Its membership is drawn largely from the top brackets of Australian business life, and it aims to promote understanding between the two countries. It is anxious to associate itself with the welfare of American "migrants," and to this end it will offer a good source of contacts in high places. It also plans to be of some assistance in housing problems for newcomers. The right type of American is encouraged to join.

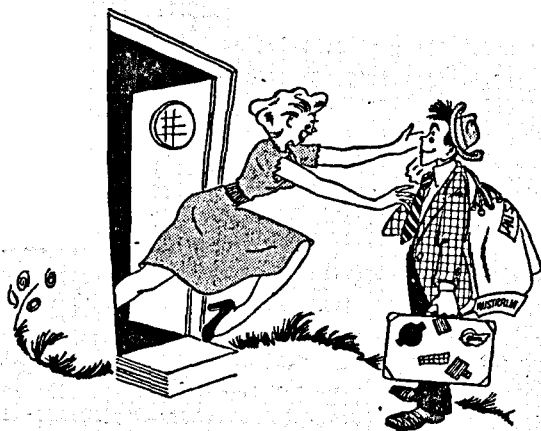
Two other Australian groups which are anxious to extend the hand of comradeship to American ex-servicemen here are the "Returned Soldiers, Sailors, and Airmen's Imperial League of Australia" and the "Australian Legion of Ex-Servicemen and Women." The former is limited to men who served overseas. The latter includes all Australian ex-servicemen. In some instances, Americans are eligible to join this group. They are large, powerful groups and bear a strong similarity to the American Legion in the U.S.

These, then, are the groups who can and will help you. The two most important groups to see are the local Commonwealth Employment Service officer and the nearest American ex-servicemen's club. The American Consulate, where you will probably go first, will tell you where to find either.

In the case of the American ex-servicemen groups, write beforehand and let them know you are coming. If you tell them how much you can pay, what your family consists of, and when you will arrive, they may be able to help you in the way of housing-assistance.

One thing you never need worry about here: being lonely. This country is full of friendly people.

*"Australia is a young country with a good future. If you can put up with a few hardships, work a bit harder than the average Australian, be patient until the whole world gets back to normal (if ever?) then you have the adventuresome spirit of our former pioneers and you should find a measure of success and happiness in this country."*—(Salesman, Victoria)





THE AMERICAN EX-SERVICEMEN'S ASSOCIATION began in June, 1946, when the ex-G.I.s in Melbourne wanted some way to keep in touch with each other.

After more than two and a half years, the Association has grown to a position of respect and responsibility in Melbourne. In addition to being socially useful to its American members, a Welfare Fund is established from which members receive loans and from which all medical and hospital bills for "service connected" illnesses are paid. (Americans do not receive free treatment or hospitalization for service connected disabilities in Australia.)

When Americans began to arrive in Melbourne in great numbers, the Association set up a program of reception to meet and help new arrivals.

A monthly NEWSLETTER is sent to all members, keeping them up-to-date on U.S. baseball scores, veterans' news, and club activities.

To help solve the housing shortage, the Association is working on plans for a trailer community—a stopgap measure particularly for those people who are waiting to build houses.

An annual Thanksgiving Ball is held for the purpose of raising money for the welfare activities and to publicize the activities of the club.

The biggest headache to the club is the lack of a clubroom. When the Association finds permanent quarters, it will install a permanent secretary to co-ordinate its increasing activities.