

## **NEWSPAPER REPORTS OF THE EVICTIONS**

### **THE LONG STRIKE. TERRIBLE CONSEQUENCES**

*The Star*, 29 November 1890

The great strike [Maritime Strike 1890] may indeed be all over. but that really is as nothing compared with the after effects ...

Passing through Pymont or Ultimo any evening during the past week would disclose ... an undue number of people humping furniture about on their backs. Talking to one man, it was found out that he was flying from his once prosperous home to get away from the anger and curses of his landlord. He was a seaman, and had occupied a good position at one of the intercolonial steamers, and his wife took in boarders, so that they made a really good income, and had gathered a good home ...

Take the words of a victim: "We are being both beaten and kicked, and it will never be known how far the fight has affected us, what tortures have been endured, and what torments are to come."

### **CSR'S RESUMPTION OF PROPERTIES**

*Truth*, 23 July 1911

Some time since the CSR Company purchased some land in Harris-street, right on TOP OF THE HILL. Harris-street, Pymont, is not fashionable. Still, Harris-street is not without its great men, and the greatest of these is, of course, one of the many managers of the great Sugar Company... so handy indeed, that Mr. Gunther does not carry a billy and tucker bag when he goes to work in the morning.

And yet this officer is not quite happy ... Common working people - wharf laborers even - backyards butted up against his ... What could be done to get rid of these undesirable people? They lived in cribs belonging to a widow lady, but these cribs could be purchased by the Company. The Company made the purchase, and Mrs. Carter informed her tenants that in future the Sugar Company would collect the rents.

An officer called on the following Monday for the rents, and got them too. But on Monday, July 3rd; after receiving 8s 6d from each in Nos. 38, 40, and 42 Mount-street, the following notice was served upon Mrs. Forsberg, of No. 40 (similar notices were handed to Mr. Martin, No. 38, and Mr. Terry, No.42): —

"Mrs. Forsberg, 40 Mount-st, Pymont.

"You are hereby given seven days' notice from 3rd July to quit the premises you now occupy at No. 40 Mount-street, keys of dwelling to be handed in at our Pymont office. (Signed)

L. E. Holroyde, Manager.

Some days ago the wives of the tenants ... asked for an interview with Mr. Knox. That gentleman promptly refused to see the ladies. "The matter was in Mr. Jermyn's hands," they were informed. "Could they see Mr. Jermyn?" The clerk would see. Mr. Jermyn would not receive the deputation.

Mr. Martin went to work on Wednesday night, the 19th inst., and came home on Thursday morning for breakfast. While he was seated at the table with his wife and two little ones, the

door of his residence (No. 38 Mount-street), was bumped open, and one of the sugar company's officials entered, accompanied by several of the Company's laborers, and two policemen. The representative of the Company told him that they had come to pull the house down, and that he must get out at once. Martin protested that he hadn't anywhere to go, but the myrmidon of the Company denied this, stating that he could go - out. He called the laborers, and they put Martin's effects into the yard, and the street. The three tenements are two rooms and a kitchen - places built of stone - the rooms, one above the other, with a staircase from the living room to the bedroom. The Company's laborers went upstairs and brought the bedroom "things" down. Then they broke down the staircase!

The windows were taken out, the gas and water cut off, and the place rendered uninhabitable.

Mrs. Forsberg had a similar experience. The same thing happened in No.42, and the eviction was complete.

The only pleasing feature is the kindness shown by the neighbors - poor people themselves. The men of the street were away at work in most cases, but women and children vied with each other in trying to do what they could to make things easier for the unfortunates. The goods and chattels have been stored on verandahs and in sheds and laundries, and the evicted families invited into the already overcrowded houses close by.

Meanwhile the Sugar Octopus is stretching out its tentacles, and bids fair to establish here in Australia a tyranny beside which the American Meat Trusts would appear benevolent.

### **ULTIMO EVICTIONS Is Wool Store Unhealthy?**

*Sun, 25 August 1920*

"Five hundred people have been turned out of their houses in connection with this proposal, and some of them are sleeping in backyards now," said Alderman Lambert at last night's meeting of the City Council, in opposing the granting of a concession to Messrs. Hill, Clark and Co. in connection with the Bulwarra-road wool store.

Alderman Mallett said the Council could not block the building, and the concession sought - a greater area without walls than the Act allowed - had been granted to other stores.

Alderman Lambert referred to the industry as an "unhealthy" one.

Alderman Marks: That is ridiculous — wool is absolutely healthy. Pyrmont must be the main wool centre, and it is impossible to get the stores nearer the railway.

Alderman O'Connor: This store is in Ultimo, in a purely residential quarter. We should have our residential areas defined. Our obsolete Act will not permit us to block a wool store in the heart of the city.

## **PYRMONT EVICTIONS The Last Half Dozen**

*Evening News*, 3 September 1920 and *Sydney Morning Herald* 4 September 1920

The last half-dozen houses of the 40 bought by Hill, Clark, and Company in Bulwarra-road, Pyrmont, for the erection of a factory, were evacuated by their tenants this afternoon, in compliance with an order of the Court.

A couple of police from Pyrmont Station were on the spot, but little trouble was experienced. The tenants, though they had waited until the last possible moment, mostly went out without any trouble and were inclined to make a joke of the matter.

One woman, however, became hysterical at the last moment and refused to leave. The police, exercising great tact, quietly removed her furniture out the back, where kindly neighbours took charge of it and comforted the weeping woman. The curious crowd outside in the street composed mostly of women and children knew nothing of the incident.

### **In defence of the Pyrmont Eviction**

*Construction and Local Government Journal*, 6 September 1920

It is time some of the daily papers got sense and decency in their desire to fill their pages. The Sydney evening papers during the week have been giving much space to what they call the Pyrmont evictions, illustrating the affair with large-sized illustrations showing groups of ragged youngsters evidently purposely looking miserable to give a doleful effect to the photograph. We have seen one photograph taken of the scene for which one of the youngsters who happened to have had boots on was told to get out of the way, so that only barefooted children would show in the picture.

This pandering to the morbid and sensational element in the community is bringing our daily journalism down to the lowest level.

Let us look at the facts: Hill, Clark and Co., a large wool firm, desires stores built to cope with the progress of the State. To get as near as possible to the best point of discharge, they purchase land at Pyrmont. There happened to be a number of cottages upon it, so they gave a very long notice to the occupants to leave, but a number found difficulty in finding other places, so on the termination of their very lengthened period, the sensational evening journals pander to the morbid.

### **AGAINST HIGHER RENTS**

*Workers Weekly*, 28 February 1936  
(from the N.S.W. Council of the Unemployed and Relief Workers)

Since the Pair Rents Act went out of operation last December there has been no legal limit placed on the extent to which landlords, agents and rackrenters of every description could batten on the tenants. A drive to increased rentals, led by big firms ... is the order of the day.

Growing numbers of workers are served with notices and evicted from their homes. The protest against increased rentals is daily growing. Successes have been met with in Pyrmont-Ultimo

and elsewhere, where tenants have banded themselves together and collectively demonstrated their refusal to meet a demand for increases in their weekly rental.

In many cases where organised resistance has been shown, the landlords and agents have backed down and the tenants have won the day. Part of the struggle against increased rentals is taking the form of support for the demand for a Fair Rents Act.

## **WILL BUILD HOUSE**

### **Eviction Stopped**

SYDNEY—On Thursday, July 7, Mrs. R. Bates, of 23 Paternoster Row, Pymont, answered a summons by the Scottish Australian Co., Ltd., at the Central Police Court. She had previously received notice to quit. This woman's husband is unemployed. There are three young children, and she is expecting another. She had already applied to the government through the Unemployed Homes Trust for land at Malabar and building materials. This has been granted, and will be supplied as soon as the £3/8/- deposit is paid. Two pounds has already been paid. A working bee from Pymont branch of the Communist Party will build the house for her when this occurs. C. Shaunessy of the Pymont Unemployed, who represented Mrs. Bates, asked for another three months so that she would not be evicted until her new house was ready. At first the agent would agree to only six weeks but later agreed to three months.

Workers Weekly, 22 July 1938

### **Eviction Order Delayed**

*Workers Weekly*, 30 September 1938

In answer to an eviction order, Mrs. M. Bates of Pymont has been allowed a further month's grace to vacate the premises. Mrs. Bates ... was defended by a representative of the Pymont Housing Committee. The family has been granted a building site and material at Malabar by the Homes for Unemployed Trust, but though all payments have been made by Mrs. Bates, the material is not yet available.

## **100 To Be Evicted TO MAKE WAY FOR FACTORY**

*Workers Weekly*, 16 June 1939

16 families in Bulwara Road and Allen Street, Pymont, and Burlinson Street, Ultimo, are facing eviction. Their homes are to be demolished in preparation for the erection of factories.

About 40 adults and a large number of children, more than 100 all told, are in danger of losing their homes.

The eviction notice, served last week, caused quite a stir ... because of the short notice and the difficulty of getting other houses...

The secretary of the local branch of the Communist Party informed the people concerned that no rent can be claimed by the agent after notice to quit has been issued, also that the tenants, being unable to find premises, should await the usual summons to court.

**FAMILIES GIVEN TIME  
Hurried Evictions Sought**

*Workers' Weekly*, 30 June 1939

Six families threatened with eviction in Ultimo have been granted in Central Police Court up to six weeks' time in which to find new homes.

The cases were defended in court by Charlie Shaunessy, well known Communist and *Workers' Weekly* seller ...

The agents stated in court that the owners wanted immediate possession of the premises ... to make room for the erection of a new wool store ...

To one agent the magistrate said: "We must remember that these people must have time to find new homes."

After the case the tenants expressed keen appreciation of Shaunessy's defence of their interests.