

Arthur Dowe 1902-1997

by Lionel Boorman

On Sunday August 17th, Mr. W. A. Dowe died in his ninety-fifth year. Mr. Dowe was a leading Georgist teacher and theorist in Australia for many decades. Arthur Dowe was a Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Law and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of New South Wales until his retirement, and thereafter a life member of the Law Society of New South Wales, and gentleman.

As an Articled Clerk, one day I attended at his office in Pitt St., Sydney in connection with a legal matter and on its completion he led me along a wonderful path to the World of Henry George. The law was his livelihood, but his great loves were his late wife Bess, and the philosophy of Henry George.

Arthur was the most erudite social historian I ever met. He had a passion for the poor and the underdog tempered by a great sense of humour and of the ridiculous. I remember standing with him opposite the Sydney Town Hall prior to a reception of some kind, watching a bevy of Judges, preceded by tipstaff, climbing the steps in their robes and full bottom wigs. Arthur's comment was, "Don't they look wise!"

Arthur was the Director of the Australian School of Social Science; in fact he was the School — and by his keenness and clarity of thought he gathered about him many students. Most remained as dedicated Georgists. He was generous in spirit, held no grudges, was generous with money and no one knows how much he gave to the Georgist Movement in the days when it was poor.

Arthur was for quite some time superintendent of a Sunday School nearby and having left the city, practiced in Lakemba. He saw Jesus as a social reformer. His interpretation of the much misquoted statement "the poor ye have always with you" was that wherever Jesus's disciples preached, it would be the poor who would follow them.

Arthur was an admirer of Gilbert and Sullivan, particularly of Gilbert's social witticisms. He had a ready explanation for much; on political leanings, for instance, he was fond of saying "Every baby born alive is either a Liberal or a Conservative. Henry George in his conclusion to *Progress and Poverty* said "To how few of those who sow the seed is it given to see it grow". Our friend and teacher has sown many seeds. *Vale Arthur Dowe!*