

**NATIONAL WINNER
USING ARCHIVAL RECORDS**



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**LOUISA LAWSON: MATRIARCH OF
AUSTRALIAN FEMINISM**

At the end of the nineteenth century, a social change was engulfing the Western World.¹ Australia's preparations to become a self-governing nation were put in fruition and the journey to become a new country encompassed the desire to bring with it a "new woman". Conditions were horrendously discriminatory towards women leading up to and at the beginning of the twentieth century; however this was no deterrent for strong-willed and passionate women who campaigned tirelessly; first and foremost for the right of equal citizenship in the form of holding the privilege to vote.² At the forefront of this movement, was Louisa Lawson, an inspiring and too often forgotten woman who changed Australia positively as a consequence of her tireless campaigning.

Gold Rushes of the 1850's in New South Wales saw poverty stricken convict families relocate with the prospect of fortune that gold would bring.³ Tents were assembled and quickly women were an underlying force, maintaining the domesticity. By the 1860's, however, women had established themselves as pioneers of the land. Hard working labourers who married young and bared an average of seven children for the prosperity of the nation.⁴ It was at this time when women were confined to the women's sphere, sewing for in excess of twelve hours a day, whilst maintaining a home and a family.⁵ It was this agonising and pain staking work that encouraged women to yearn for something different; to yearn for something more. Women were the second class citizens of the time, with many laws implemented to keep women in this place including not having legal guardianship of their children, nor the right to own land. Maintained with careful execution, the world of education, politics, professions and equality was a realm open only to men. However, women saw the desperate need for change. For the prevention of wife beating, child abuse and drunkenness; the right to divorce, to higher education and to politics.⁶ But first and foremost was the priority to establish enfranchisement.

¹ Oldfield, A. 1992, *Woman Suffrage in Australia: A gift or a struggle?*, University of Cambridge, Hong Kong, pages 6-19

² Lees, K, 1995, *Votes for Women*, Allen and Unwin, St. Leonards, pages 2-9.

³ State Library of Queensland, Digital number: 36212 *Young family stand proudly in front of their unfinished cottage in Gympie*, ca. 1875 pictures a proud family standing outside an unfinished cottage, and illustrates the impoverished and basic conditions in which families were forced to live. Louisa Lawson was also one of these women, pictured here <http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/14967484?q=louisa+lawson&|-australian=y&c=picture&versionId=17623365> with her son and primitive cottage.

⁴ Lees, K, 1995, *Votes for Women*, Allen and Unwin, St. Leonards, page 2.

⁵ University of Queensland: UAQ negative number 16331, Dressmaking workroom at Sinclair & Company, South Brisbane, ca. 1895. Pictures women in a crowded factory sewing.

⁶ State Library of Queensland: Record number 194020, Voters and Voteless, October 1900 privilege.

As Australia's journey to Federation progressed and failed gold rush dreams had evaporated; many circumstances found women raising large families by themselves, whilst providing for them by working. Louisa Lawson was one of these women. In all too many cases; women married young and foolishly to drunkard husbands and were subjected to child bearing decades, violent assaults⁷ and the struggles of manual labour. Due to a social change which saw products such as candles and soaps, previously made in the house, being produced by factories, for the first time, women were able to leave the confines of domesticity and take part in working life.⁸ No matter the intellect of a woman, her business dreams or aspirations, all women were confined to this situation, which combined domesticity for the first time with severely underpaid and underappreciated labour.⁹ To support her family, Lawson found herself taking in seamstress work, whilst maintaining a position at a local post office. Throughout this period, she also managed her home garden from which she grew surplus vegetables to sell at market and cared for her young family. The struggles of this country life in Eurundee, near Mudgee,¹⁰ encouraged Lawson to relocate her family to the prosperity and promise of city life, in 1883.¹¹ It was in Sydney¹² where Lawson proved her entrepreneurial genius, advertising for boarders in her house, whilst continuing to manage her seamstress tasks, so that surplus money could be invested in a sound future for the Lawson family and a challenging fulfilment for Louisa Lawson herself. After the move from bush battler to city dweller, she had no desire to be bound by the confines of domesticity again.

Lawson's monetary skills placed her in a comfortable position for the first time in her impoverished life and the untimely death of her husband, Peter Lawson, saw Lawson inherit £1103.¹³ Her passion for writing¹⁴ was then captured when she bought and managed the radical newspaper, *The Republican*, with her son Henry Lawson in July 1887 which advocated federation.¹⁵ *The Republican* provided Lawson's first platform to oppose the conventions of women's lives and conjure the potential problems that will arise

⁷ Lawson, O, 1990, *The First Voice of Australian Feminism: Excerpts from Louisa Lawson's The Dawn 1888-1895*, Simon and Schuster, Brookvale, New South Wales, page 52.

⁸ <http://www.anu.edu.au/polsci/marx/interventions/suffrage.htm> 6/08/12

⁹ Lawson, O, 1990, *The First Voice of Australian Feminism: Excerpts from Louisa Lawson's The Dawn 1888-1895*, page 2

¹⁰ Matthews, B, 1998, *Louisa*, McPhee Gribble/ Penguin, Fitzroy, Victoria page 406. Map of Eurunderee , New South Wales

¹¹ Lawson, O, 1990, *The First Voice of Australian Feminism: Excerpts from Louisa Lawson's The Dawn 1888-1895*, Simon and Schuster, Brookvale, New South Wales, pages 2-17

¹² Photograph: Sydney Powerhouse Museum: Registration number 85/1285-116, 'Herald Office, Sydney', Henry King, Sydney, Australia, c. 1880-1900

¹³ <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/lawson-louisa-7121> accessed on 6.08.2012

¹⁵ Matthews, B, 1998, *Louisa*, McPhee Gribble/ Penguin, Fitzroy, Victoria page 406. Map of Eurunderee , New South Wales, page 160.

if society continues to raise their future females in such constraining and limiting manners.¹⁶ The Republican was part of the chronology of Lawson's developing, yet determined, ideals of feminism with the publication of a monthly 'Ladie's Coloum' providing revolutionary ideas about the changing role of women in society. By 1889, the campaigns for emancipation were becoming formidably stronger, and one of these founding moments was when *The Dawn* was first printed in October 1888.¹⁷ This first issue informed readers of the journal's aims and the purpose of its editorial as well as the business policies on which it was founded.¹⁸ Subtitled *A Journal for Australian Women*, this issue informed readers that it was to be the voice of women, "their journal and mouthpiece"¹⁹ and promised the rising sun of a new beginning.²⁰ It is clearly demonstrated that Lawson's objective for *The Dawn* was not the subsequent revenue it provided for her family but the complete support of the suffrage cause. This risk saw Lawson hire a team of ten female workers, grossly under experienced in comparison to their male counterparts, yet this risk paid off.²¹ The instant commercial success of *The Dawn* can be attributed to many intuitive business decisions on Lawson's part creating the widest distribution possible.²² The perfect balance of editorials and household hints made this newspaper unlike any other available. This created a practicality to the newspaper which was also filled with advertisements for women, often advertising women's services.²³ Success was seen worldwide, with issues being ordered from New Zealand, Fiji, England, Scotland and America and the average yearly subscription list was 1000 people.²⁴ A unique factor was that there was no topic that *The Dawn* was afraid to approach, with monthly editorials ranging from higher education for women, the fraud of an ideal married life and the Divorce Bill.²⁵ The pages of *The Dawn* were filled with advanced arguments for womanhood suffrage, dress and diet, reform, temperance, the appointment of women to public office and woman's right to paid work.²⁶ In the early days which paved the foundation of the path for enfranchisement, Louisa Lawson caused a

¹⁶ *The Dawn*, 1 July, 1889, *Spurious Women*, an exceptional article that parallels a woman's life to one which needs a corset to support her.

¹⁷ *The Dawn*, 1 October 1888

¹⁸ Lawson, O, 1990, *The First Voice of Australian Feminism: Excerpts from Louisa Lawson's The Dawn 1888-1895*, pages 3-4.

¹⁹ *The Dawn*, 1 October, 1888; page 1.

²⁰ *The Dawn*, 1 January, 1889; page 1

²¹ *The Dawn*, 1 October 1889;

²² Lawson, O, 1990, *The First Voice of Australian Feminism: Excerpts from Louisa Lawson's The Dawn 1888-1895*, page 17.

²³ *The Dawn*, 1 January 1895

²⁴ *Ibid*, Page 13

²⁵ *The Dawn*, 1 June, 1889, *Unhappy Love Matches*. Article written about the promise every young women expects from marriage and explores that it is the only career pathway available to half the worlds population.

²⁶ Lake, Marilyn, 1999, *Getting Equal*, Allen and Unwin, St. Leonards, page 22

social murmur. Controversial issues were now broached in a public forum and questions were now asked about the inequality that every Australian woman was experiencing.²⁷

Through this journey to Female Enfranchisement, Louisa Lawson broke down many barriers that arose during her mission for change. The New South Wales Typographical Association refused membership to females, thus threatening to shut down the emerging success of *The Dawn*.²⁸ This triumph over the encouraged boycott by unionists and advertisers further established her role in the feminist movement and encouraged her to take a further step in the battle for equality, beginning The Dawn Club in May 1889.²⁹ At the inaugural meeting of the Dawn Club, Lawson spoke gallantly about the campaign that stretched ahead of them and the significance of why it was a necessity to be fought.

*“A woman’s opinions are useless to her, she may suffer unjustly, she may be wronged, but she has no power to weightily petition against man’s laws, no representatives to urge her views, her only method to produce release, redress or change is to ceaselessly agitate.”*³⁰

The Dawn Club was an even greater achievement and more promising frontier for the fight of feminism.³¹ Open to any female member of the public, the Dawn Club met biweekly and discussed how the evil laws of men must be changed to protect women and children and the abstract logic surrounding women not having the vote already.³² The Dawn Club was also used as a platform to practise public speaking skills and discuss campaign strategies and Lawson persuaded the Sydney Mechanics School of Arts to admit women to their association in an attempt to practice public speaking in a larger forum and by 1893,³³ Lawson was the first female on the Club’s board.³⁴ Yet another step of the ladder for change had been climbed.

As many of Lawson’s ventures were, The Dawn Club was a catalyst for unions and groups that began around Australia.³⁵ In 1891, the Women’s Christian Temperance Union met in Melbourne and was the

²⁷ Unidentified, *What We Want*, 30 September 1893.

²⁸ *The Dawn*, 1 October 1889,

²⁹ Oldfield, A. 1992, *Woman Suffrage in Australia: A gift or a struggle?*, University of Cambridge, Hong Kong, pages 77-78.

³⁰ *The Dawn*, 1 July 1889

³¹ *Ibid*

³² <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/lawson-louisa-7121> accessed on 6.08.2012

³³ <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/lawson-louisa-7121> accessed: 05.08.2012

³⁴ <http://smsa.org.au/events/event/louisa-lawson-and-the-dawn/> accessed on: 05.08.2012. The Sydney Mechanics School of Arts held an event in June commemorating their connection to Louisa Lawson

³⁵ http://www.emsah.ug.edu.au/awsr/Act_Centenary/groups.htm accessed on: 26.08.2012. Providing information about the different groups that were formed concerning suffrage.

first interstate assembly that addressed women's rights.³⁶ The primary focus of this group was the prohibition of alcohol, as it was seen to be the root for the evil and violence men continuously inflicted on their wives.³⁷ Nevertheless; this union was an underlying group involved in ensuring the vote for women across Australia. The Social Purity Club of South Australia campaigned rigorously for dignity in the form of raising of the age of consent. Once again, the Social Purity Club of South Australia agreed unanimously that the vote was necessary for any legislation to be passed by parliament.³⁸ In 1891, the Dawn Club was absorbed into a group of a larger scale; the Womanhood Suffrage League.³⁹ With the motto 'Equality is Equity'⁴⁰ the primary focus of the Womanhood Suffrage League was obtaining the vote for women. The Dawn was a pivotal part of this group, with the printing facilities used to publish the numerous leaflets and pamphlets the group used effectively to advocate their cause.⁴¹ Lawson was a prominent member of the group's council⁴² and her radical views encouraged women to participate in public speaking in an attempt to aid the message of enfranchisement.⁴³ And it was this year, 1891, when change of a greater scale was beginning to occur.

The Women's Christian Temperance Union of Victoria had created a colossal following. Gathering the support of over 31 000 women which resulted in the "The Monster Petition", signed by women from all walks of life and approximately 260 metres long, the petition was sent to the Parliament of Victoria, requesting that "*women should vote on equal terms with men.*"⁴⁴ Despite the promising support of Premier James Munro, Women of Victoria would not be granted equality at the booths for more than a decade, but this adversity was not one that women would let overcome them. In the face of this demurring obstacle, the battle for equality accelerated at far greater velocity after New Zealand women were granted the vote in 1893; a positive change was on the horizon for women of Australia.⁴⁵ After extensive deliberation in the colony of South Australia, women were finally enfranchised. Producing a petition of 11 600 names, it was now in the hands of parliament as to how this card was to be played. As a much deserved reward for the hard work of women, it was announced on December 18, 1894 that the

³⁶ Lees, K, 1995, *Votes for Women*, Allen and Unwin, St. Leonards, page 33

³⁷ National Archives of Australia: *Adelaide, Petition No 52. In favour of state right to prohibit importation of intoxicants and opium*, 1897

³⁸ Lees, K, 1995, *Votes for Women*, Allen and Unwin, St. Leonards, pages 2-9.

³⁹ Lees, K, 1995, *Votes for Women*, Allen and Unwin, St. Leonards, page 70

⁴⁰ Lake, Marilyn, 1999, *Getting Equal*, Allen and Unwin, St. Leonards, page 21.

⁴¹ <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/lawson-louisa-7121> accessed: 05.08.2012

⁴² New South Wales State Records: NRS 905 [5/6120], letter 93/2813, Newspaper Excerpts, 1893. This passionate article captures a side of Lawson that is otherwise not revealed in her writing.

⁴³ <http://smsa.org.au/events/event/louisa-lawson-and-the-dawn/> accessed on: 05.08.2012

⁴⁴ <http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/about/the-history-of-parliament/womens-suffrage-petition>

⁴⁵ South Australian Register, 31 May 1894, *Women's Suffrage Meeting at Port Adelaide*

Women of South Australia were enfranchised at last. It was the first colony of the Australian nation to take the tentative step towards the social justice the twentieth century would deliver.

Lawson responded to the triumph of her New Zealand and South Australian colleagues with exuberance for the prosperity and opportunities this victory insinuated. Lawson printed

*“A mother can now teach her son by example, percept the responsibility of a faithful citizen... and strengthen, not weaken the marriage tie.”*⁴⁶

To demonstrate her persistence and the inconsistency of the electoral act, Lawson took out a Miner’s Right in 1895 and again in 1897. Although Lawson had since resigned her position on the board in the Womanhood Suffrage League, she remained both a financial and publication supporter, printing the petition sent to the Federation Convention in *The Dawn*.⁴⁷ Ultimately it was rejected, however, Lawson continued to advise and improve the lives of women. Monthly household tips in her journal spanned from home remedies for the common cold to where it is best to store eggs, Lawson continuously tried to give women tips that would minimise their time spent on domestic necessities.⁴⁸ In 1897 Lawson applied for a patent for a self adjusting curtain holder, again trying to help women in the home.⁴⁹

In 1900, tragedy struck as Lawson stepped off a tram at Circular Quay. With extensive spinal injuries, Lawson was bed ridden for many months and attempted to continue the prosperity of *The Dawn* from her sick bed. She found much of her time was spent on writing verses and stories for children⁵⁰ but despite her injuries, her passion remained campaigning for the enfranchisement of women. Joining the Women’s Progressive Association in 1901, formed by Nellie Martel, Lawson was again active politically and maintained the campaign for equality. And in 1902, Lawson’s tireless work, persistent attitude and diligent campaigning were substantiated with the Commonwealth Franchise Act passed in parliament.⁵¹ Due to her sickly health, Lawson was unable to join the other women in the gallery for the decision,

⁴⁶ *The Dawn*, 1 January 1895, Written in response to South Australian Women’s success.

⁴⁷ National Archives of Australia: AA1971/506, AA1971/506 4/1, Adelaide, Petition No 2. In favour of equal voting rights for both sexes in elections for Federal Parliaments, 1897 and printed in *The Dawn*, 1 April 1897

⁴⁸ *The Dawn*, 1888-1905. It was one of Lawson’s great passions to minimise the work of women. She realised that it would be impossible to eradicate it from society, however, these tips that appeared monthly still provide advice that is relevant to housekeeping in 2012.

⁴⁹ New South Wales State Records, NRS 8109 [7/4690], CP75/240, Conditional Purchase Register, 1875 National Archives of Australia: A4618, *Correspondence with Louisa Lawson concerning an invention entitled- A self-adjusting curtain holder*, 1897

⁵⁰ Lawson, L, “Dert” and “Do”, ? Collates the poems and short stories that Lawson wrote for children.

⁵¹ National Archives of Australia: NAA: A1559/1, 1902/8, *An Act to provide for a Uniform Federal Franchise (No. 8 of 1902)*, 1902

however, attended an event held by the Womanhood Suffrage League a few weeks later. Although she was no longer an official member of the group, and not listed on the agenda of the proceedings, Lawson was called to the lectern at the close of the evening. It was at this point the realisation of her life's dream was fulfilled and years of pioneering work were validated. Now Lawson stood in front of a room of women, many of whom she encouraged to defeat their fear of public speaking, overcome the political obstacles that stood in their way and to join her in forcing votes for women onto the public agenda of New South Wales. Rose Scott declared her "*The Mother of Suffrage*" and this euphoric moment stayed with her for her remaining years. Her advancing age saw the closure of *The Dawn* in 1905 after 17 years of successful business, but her objective was now complete and legacy left for generations to come.⁵²

The year of her death, 1920,⁵³ saw a new era of change begin. Australia, refreshed and rejuvenated from the conclusion of war, saw a greater liberalisation of women.⁵⁴ Shortening dresses and sporting perms, women had greater opportunities than they ever conceived possible, only 40 short years prior, when Louisa Lawson raised this significant problem to political attention. Everything Lawson achieved to accomplish triumphed. Women, of every race across every state and territory of Australia have the right to vote, they also hold equivalent legal rights in divorce and guardianship and the power to stand for election. Higher education has seen an even more dramatic result, with 60% of 2011 graduates being females.⁵⁵ The legacy of Louisa Lawson should never be forgotten. She is the person every Australian female owes her equality to. Her persistent campaigning has been successful and she has created a truly remarkable consequence to her toil, initiating the suffrage movement in Australia.

WORD COUNT: 2423

⁵² http://www.dictionarofsydney.org/entry/lawson_louisa Accessed on 26.08.2012. Arguably the greatest achievement of her journey.

⁵³ New South Wales State Records: NRS 13660, *Death in Gladesville Hospital*, 1920

⁵⁴ State Library of New South Wales: Call number 50074, *Three Women 1920's*, 1921-1931 This picture illustrates everything the above described 1920's woman was.

⁵⁵ *The Age*, 17 July 2012, A New Take on the Gender Gap. A very recent article about how women create more than half of the higher education population.

Annotated Bibliography

Primary Sources

Unpublished, Unofficial

Recount of War

As enfranchisement occurred over 100 years ago, it would be impossible for me to talk to someone about what this liberation and freedom felt like. Instead, however, this detailed account of the tumultuous battle of World War Two and the opportunity for women to serve in the armed forces for the first time shares with it many parallels as the journey for enfranchisement. This reflection details what it felt like to be equal to men, another frontier that was crossed, and the legacy that would be left for women in future generations to come. The emotions captured in this piece are very relevant to what women felt in 1902 and provided an insight into emotions that are not felt today as many women take for granted their vote, opinion in parliament and entitlement to further education. Currently in the possession of Sarsha Crawley.

Published, Official

INTERVIEW

The Bulletin, October 24 1896, *The Bulletin Interviews Louisa Lawson, 1896*

This is an incredibly insightful and different view of Louisa Lawson. Speaking candidly about her ventures, failures, mistakes and triumphs, Lawson reveals more about her personal life than ever before. With the main intention for this interview to discover more about Lawson's personal life, she quite accurately states that "what [she] has done since 18 (the age she was when she married) could fill a book." Another defining factor of this interview is the nurturing and protective attitude she presents when talking about her children and their endeavours.

ARCHIVAL RECORDS

National Archives of Australia: AA1971/506, AA1971/506 4/1, Adelaide, Petition No 2. In favour of equal voting rights for both sexes in elections for Federal Parliaments, 1897

Petition presented to the president and members of the Federal Convention, this petition both outlines and justifies the numerous reasons that women should be enfranchised. An invaluable primary source from the Womanhood Suffrage League of New South Wales, this document provides incredible insight into what the Womanhood Suffrage League of New South Wales was campaigning for and one of the numerous techniques they used to get this message conveyed to those of power. They asked that 'the right to vote for representatives to the Federal Parliament shall be possessed by women and men without any distinction or disqualification on the ground of sex'.

National Archives of Australia: AA1971/506, AA1971/506 4/1, Adelaide, Petition No 1. In favour of equal voting rights for both sexes in election for Federal Parliaments, 1897

Created by the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Australia and presented to parliament, this petition reflects a different opinion of why females should be enfranchised, but nevertheless, campaigns for the same result.

National Archives of Australia: AA1971/506, AA1971/506 SERIES 4/1, Adelaide, Petition No 55. Against adult or female suffrage, 1896

Although this petition is the opposite of what this essay argues, it presents a historic opposition to the enfranchisement of women. Signed by 96 Tasmanian residents and presented to the Convention of Australia, this document requests that the opinions and voices of women be left to their husbands to formally request for in parliament. It also demonstrates the passionate opposition that Louisa Lawson was pitted against during her fight for equality.

Public Record Office of Victoria: VPRS 3253/P0, Unit 851, Women's Suffrage Petition (Monster Petition), 1891

Women's Christian Temperance Union of Australia collected more than 30 000 signatures from solely female petitioners. This petition provided much encouragement to Louisa Lawson and women from other colonies across Australia, despite the tragic rejection. An important Archival Record that demonstrates even public opinion of this strength and force was rejected by parliamentarians in the 1890's.

National Archives of Australia: NAA: A1559/1, 1902/8, An Act to provide for a Uniform Federal Franchise (No. 8 of 1902), 1902

What women strived for and eventually succeeded in obtaining, The Federal Franchise Act gives women the liberation that they desire. This document also provides an insight into the voting age, 21 years and section 3 of this act allows women of states even without enfranchisement, to vote in federal elections. This act also states that aborigines and natives of pacific islands cannot vote.

State Records of South Australia: SRSA: GRG 2/55/369, *A Bill for an Act to amend the Constitution (Female Suffrage) [No. 613 of 1894] Reserved for Royal Assent, granted 2 February 1895, 1895*

These documents include a bill that was passed by the South Australian government on 21 December 1895 advising enfranchisement for women. It was enacted on 2 February 1895 when Queen Victoria signed her consent. Consequentially, South Australian women were the first women in the world to stand for election and the second in the world to gain the right to vote. These documents also include a letter from the attorney general. Despite all these milestones these records encompassed, they provide much hope for Australian women in their quest for equality.

National Archives of Australia: *Adelaide, Petition No 52. In favour of state right to prohibit importation of intoxicants and opium, 1897*

A petition from the Women's Christian Endeavour Union concerning one of their main objectives which was the attempt to stop wife beating. They believed that this could be achieved if there was a complete ban on alcohol and opium. This document significant because it demonstrates how serious this union was about improving the lives of women and that they choose to substantiate this, again, with a petition.

New South Wales State Records: NRS 905 [5/6120], letter 93/2813, Newspaper Excerpts, 1893

This newspaper clipping, dated 15 October, 1892, from the Daily Telegraph, details a report on the meetings of the Womanhood Suffrage League and provides an excellent primary source as to how passionately Lawson campaigned for enfranchisement.

**New South Wales State Records, NRS 8109 [7/4690], CP75/240, Conditional Purchase Register, 1875
National Archives of Australia: A4618, *Correspondence with Louisa Lawson concerning an invention entitled- A self-adjusting curtain holder, 1897***

This record proves that Lawson was continually attempting to make the daily life of women easier. Lawson was a tireless worker and her numerous intuitive inventions, including a mail bag fastener and a bottle opener have also been recorded.

New South Wales State Records: NRS 13660, *Death in Gladesville Hospital, 1920*

Lawson died in the Gladesville Hospital for the Mentally Insane and named her son Peter as the executor of her will.

MAPS

New South Wales State Records: NRS 3829 [5/15856.1], *Eurunderee School, 1876*

This map is very significant in the history of Louisa Lawson because this is where her love and passion for writing began. Although she left school at year five, the years spent at this school gave her a deep appreciation for both written works and writing itself.

World Map of Suffrage

Accessed at:

[http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=rbcml&fileName=scrp4005301/rbcmilscrp4005301.db&recNum=0&itemLink=r?amem/rbcmillerbib:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(rbcmiller001165\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=rbcml&fileName=scrp4005301/rbcmilscrp4005301.db&recNum=0&itemLink=r?amem/rbcmillerbib:@field(DOCID+@lit(rbcmiller001165)))

A visual representation of Australia's forward thinking in comparison to the remainder of the world and a document which puts Australia's journey to democracy into greater perspective as the constitution was effectively changed immediately. This map was created during the American Suffrage movement, and clearly illustrates the rights that women were granted in Australia.

PHOTOGRAPHS

State Library of New South Wales: Call number MPG 149, *Demonstration of Gratitude from the WSL, 1902*

Accessed at:

<http://acms.sl.nsw.gov.au/item/itemDetailPaged.aspx?itemID=447913>

This photograph shows the congregation of the Womanhood Suffrage League and as the title suggests, their gratitude towards being enfranchised. An invaluable source.

National Archives of Australia: NAA D4477, 352, *The Federal Convention in session, Parliament House, Adelaide, 1897*

Accessed at:

<http://constitution.naa.gov.au/stories/quick-steps/pods/constitutional-convention-1897/index.html>

The enfranchisement of women was on the agenda for this meeting. Provides information about who attended this meeting and the formal occasion that it was.

State Library of New South Wales: Call number 18410, *Louisa Lawson and her son Charles William in front of their bark hut, Gulgong area, unspecified date*

Accessed at:

<http://acms.sl.nsw.gov.au/item/itemLarge.aspx?itemID=62303>

This picture exemplifies the challenges that Lawson would have faced living and raising a family in this rural area.

State Library of New South Wales: Call number 18374, *Louisa Lawson, her son Charles and sister Phoebe Albury, unspecified date*

Accessed at:

<http://acms.sl.nsw.gov.au/item/itemDetailPaged.aspx?itemID=62265>

Taken when Lawson lived in rural New South Wales, this picture highlights the conditions that she lived in, being a very basic wood-constructed hut.

University of Queensland: UAQ negative number 16331, *Dressmaking workroom at Sinclair & Company, South Brisbane, ca. 1895*

Accessed at:

http://bishop.slq.qld.gov.au/view/action/singleViewer.do?dvs=1345960410045~575&locale=en_US&metadata_object_ratio=7&show_metadata=true&VIEWER_URL=/view/action/singleViewer.do?&DELIVER_Y_RULE_ID=10&frameId=1&usePid1=true&usePid2=true

Pictured in a factory setting, women would often spend all the daylight hours in factories sewing then return home, with more sewing work to continue with or their own business service which they had to

complete. This tedious work bored Louisa Lawson, although it also gave her the finances required to begin *The Dawn*, so much of her campaign rested on her strong dislike of housework.

Sydney Powerhouse Museum: Registration number 85/1285-116, 'Herald Office, Sydney', Henry King, Sydney, Australia, c. 1880-1900

Accessed at:

<http://www.powerhousemuseum.com/collection/database/?irn=30639#ixzz24dCDCq7i>

This picture looks down the busy Sydney city streets and the promise and hope that it symbolised for the Lawson family.

State Library of New South Wales: Call number 50074, *Three Women 1920's*, 1921-1931

Accessed at:

<http://acms.sl.nsw.gov.au/item/itemDetailPaged.aspx?itemID=140079>

This picture illustrates everything the Australian flapper of the 1920's was. With shortened hair and skirt, sporting makeup a perm and a confidence not seen before, these women had the right to vote in parliament; as a result of the work of Louisa Lawson.

State Library of New South Wales: Digital number a593059, *Suffrage group*, 1892-1902

Accessed at:

<http://acms.sl.nsw.gov.au/album/ItemViewer.aspx?itemid=823561&suppress=N&imgindex=2>

This is a photograph of the Womanhood Suffrage League group. All of the members here were attending a meeting that night.

State Library of Queensland, Digital number: 36212 *Young family stand proudly in front of their unfinished cottage in Gympie*, ca. 1875

Accessed at:

http://bishop.slq.qld.gov.au/webclient/MetadataManager?pid=77671&descriptive_only=true

This picture depicts the conditions of the Gold Rush and the standards which families were forced to reside in.

State Library of Queensland: Image number 39356, *Crowd outside the Courier building on election night*, 1907

Accessed at:

http://bishop.slq.qld.gov.au/webclient/MetadataManager?pid=76542&descriptive_only=true

The euphoric scenes outside the electoral building in Queensland as this is the first time many women have voted. There are many women visible in the crowd.

POLITICAL CARTOONS

Comic of who has the vote and rhetorically asking why women don't

http://bishop.slq.qld.gov.au/view/action/singleViewer.do?dvs=1345956386176~996&locale=en_US&metadata_object_ratio=7&show_metadata=true&VIEWER_URL=/view/action/singleViewer.do?&DELIVERY_RULE_ID=10&frameId=1&usePid1=true&usePid2=true

State Library of Victoria, Accession number: A/S10/03/86/41, *Election Sketches*, 1886

Accessed at:

<http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/miscpics/gid/slv-pic-aab22136/1/mp009771>

A political cartoon depicting the unorderly elections and questions women's suffrage.

Unidentified, *What We Want*, 30 September 1893

Accessed at:

http://bishop.slq.qld.gov.au/webclient/MetadataManager?pid=193679&descriptive_only=true

Depicting a woman holding a banner of equal opportunities in front of a sun entitled prosperity, it was now common place to see cartoons like these appear in newspapers across the country. This simple cartoon is a very valuable source because it shows a more brazen image published for the public on this matter.

State Library of Queensland: Record number 194020, *Voters and Voteless*, October 1900

Accessed at:

[http://onsearch.slq.qld.gov.au/primo_library/libweb/action/search.do?vl\(D45500790UI0\)=creator&vl\(D45500791UI1\)=title&vl\(1UI0\)=contains&ct=search&indx=1&vl\(1UI1\)=contains+&mode=Advanced&vid=SLQ&reset_config=true&vl\(freeText0\)=unidentified&fn=search&vl\(freeText1\)=voters+voteless+%5Bsuffrage+movement+in+queensland%5D](http://onsearch.slq.qld.gov.au/primo_library/libweb/action/search.do?vl(D45500790UI0)=creator&vl(D45500791UI1)=title&vl(1UI0)=contains&ct=search&indx=1&vl(1UI1)=contains+&mode=Advanced&vid=SLQ&reset_config=true&vl(freeText0)=unidentified&fn=search&vl(freeText1)=voters+voteless+%5Bsuffrage+movement+in+queensland%5D)

This political cartoon portrays all the negative stereotypes of society, race and difference, with the vote and the woman pictured in the middle 'voteless'. It demonstrates the social confines which have been enforced on women.

CAMPAIGN MATERIAL

The first leaflet issued by the Victorian Women's Suffrage Society, Date unknown

Accessed at:

<http://www.abc.net.au/ola/citizen/women/women-home-vote.htm>

Very important campaign leaflet, detailing all the reasons that women should have the vote and all the reasons that the law is unjust towards women.

ARTWORKS

National Library of Australia: an6222116, *Enfranchised!* 1902

Accessed at:

<http://nla.gov.au/nla.pic-an6222116>

This ink drawing was illustrated immediately after women were enfranchised and depicts men at a dinner party raising their glasses for a woman at the head of the table who is holding a piece of paper with the declaration on it. This picture demonstrates that at this time, there were men who supported this movement.

Australian Archives: *The Australian Women's Suffrage Banner*, Meeson, D, date unspecified

Accessed at:

http://www1.curriculum.edu.au/ddunits/guide/g1e_aust_democ.htm

Due to the difficulty of Australian women getting the vote, this banner depicts Australia urging its mother country, England, to also give their women the vote.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Lawson's newspaper, *The Dawn* was published for 17 years, between 1888-1905. A tragic fire at one of *The Dawn's* offices has resulted in more than a year of issues being lost forever. I have read articles from the remaining issues extensively, however, these are the issues of which I drew information from directly to write this essay.

***The Dawn*, 1 October, 1888**

This first issue of *The Dawn* was a foundation for the articles, information and beliefs that were to come. It established itself as a magazine that all women needed and also encouraged them to spread the word about the suffrage concern.

The Dawn, 1 June, 1889, Unhappy Love Matches.

Article written about the promise every young woman expects from marriage and explores that it is the only career pathway available to half the world's population. It was articles like these that began the public discussions about marriage, enfranchisement and women's rights.

The Dawn, 1 July, 1889

The leading article in this issue about corsets draws many parallels to the confinement women lived in society during this time. This provided an excellent comparison that was believed during this time.

South Australian Register, 31 May 1894, Women's Suffrage Meeting at Port Adelaide

As with most major publications around Australia, New Zealand's triumph was widely documented. As is implied in the title, the sudden success prompted a meeting of the Women's Suffrage League as it was believed that this triumph would be a catalyst of greater things to come in Australia.

The Dawn, 1 January 1895

This issue contained over 2/3 advertising which is an example of how popular this journal was and lucrative business Lawson had created. More importantly, the ads were for women and by women which meant that they were a very important part of women's lives and many women's income.

The Dawn, 1 January 1895

This issue was published after the New Zealand and South Australian victories. It addressed the triumphs and also provided information about events and campaigns that were subsequently started.

The Dawn, 1 October 1889

The leading articles of this issue discuss the decision of employing a team consisting solely of female employees and the support that this would inevitably create towards the suffrage movement. Despite women not being as experienced as their male counterparts in this field, Lawson's decision proved her seriousness towards this cause.

The Age, 17 July 2012, A New Take on the Gender Gap.

A very recent article about how women create more than half of the higher education population and a positive comparative to a time when women had few choices and opportunities.

SECONDARY SOURCES

JOURNAL ARTICLES

Cameron, H, "Inspiring *Womanhood: A Reinterpretation of The Dawn*," 2011

This thesis provided very valuable information about The Dawn and Lawson's endeavours with it. Placing it in a more modern context, this journal discussed how The Dawn promoted the life of every Australian woman and examines how women were advised to address these fundamental issues.

Pearce, S, "The Shameless Scribbler: Louisa Lawson," Working Papers in Australian Studies, QUT 1992

This journal follows the life of Lawson, with particular focus on the establishment of The Dawn. It provided information about all aspects of her life, from political, to business, to family affairs.

BOOKS

Handley, R, 2011, *That Mad Louisa*, Jojo publishing, Docklands, Victoria

This biography was again very insightful of the life of Louisa Lawson and drew on primary accounts of her life to weave this fascinating story.

Lake, Marilyn, 1999, *Getting Equal*, Allen and Unwin, St. Leonards

An extremely insightful and in-depth book about the struggles and the journey to enfranchisement. This book puts all of these battles into context and comparison to what a modern person would feel if they had to live the disadvantaged lives that women of the 19th century did.

Lawson, O, 1990, *The First Voice of Australian Feminism: Excerpts from Louisa Lawson's The Dawn 1888-1895*, Simon and Schuster, Brookvale, New South Wales

This was an exceptional book, providing excerpts from The Dawn and an introduction which included a brief summary about the life of The Dawn. Lawson's writing is truly inspirational and the articles in this book were of varied subjects and very much ahead of her time. This book also details how The Dawn was not only a source to spread the concepts of enfranchisement, rather also provide information about how ordinary women can advertise their services in this newspaper.

Lees, K, 1995, *Votes for Women*, Allen and Unwin, St. Leonards

This book documents the journey to the vote across the states and has very detailed information about why it was desired and what different groups had as their priorities if and when enfranchisement was declared.

Matthews, B, 1998, *Louisa, McPhee Gribble*/ Penguin, Fitzroy, Victoria

This book provided an invaluable insight into the life of Louisa Lawson and members of her family. It details her dreams and motivations and is a rich source of primary sources.

Oldfield, A. 1992, *Woman Suffrage in Australia: A gift or a struggle?*, University of Cambridge, Hong Kong

This was a very detailed book about all the adversities women faced around achieving equality. It had very detailed information related to Louisa Lawson and other suffragettes from the New South Wales area who were involved in the Womanhood Suffrage League.

AUDIO

Fuller, K, 12.10.2010, *Suffrage in NSW, and the role of Louisa Lawson*,

Accessed at:

<http://www.abc.net.au/local/stories/2010/08/27/2994894.htm>

Very informative source presented by a historian about the role that Louisa Lawson had in the suffrage movement as a whole in Australia.

MULTIMEDIA

***For Love or Money*, Flashback Films, 1983, Nash, M and McMurchy, M**

Including some original footage, this documentary highlighted the tedious work that women had to engage in on a daily basis to make ends meet.

Websites

Magarey, S, 2010, *Lawson, Louisa*, http://www.dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/lawson_louisa accessed on 26.08.2012.

This website details the life of Louisa Lawson, her achievements and her legacy.

O'linclon, T, no date provided, *Sex, Class and the road to women's suffrage*,

<http://www.anu.edu.au/polsci/marx/interventions/suffrage.htm> accessed on 06.08.2012

Provides information about what allowed this massive social change to occur, namely factory production expanding and the first opportunities for women to do paid work.

Radi, H, First published in hardcopy format 1986, *Lawson, Louisa (1848-1920)*,

<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/lawson-louisa-7121> accessed on: 06.08.2012

Extremely detailed biography about Lawson, her family and what happened to her in the years after the closure of The Dawn.

**Date and author not provided, <http://smsa.org.au/events/event/louisa-lawson-and-the-dawn/>
accessed on: 05.08.2012**

This webpage is advertising a talk that was held in June of this year, which was about Louisa Lawson. Over 100 years since she was part of their board, she remains a valued member of their community.