

The 'Anxious Class'?: Storekeepers and the Working Class in Australia, 1880-1940

Erik Eklund

History Department, University of Newcastle

Outlining the shape of the Australian class structure between 1900 and 1914, Stuart Macintyre described minor professionals, storekeepers, and salary earners on incomes between 200 and 500 pounds per annum as the 'anxious class'.¹ This group were sandwiched between capital and labour, located just above the mass of wage labourers, and yet with the ever-present fear of falling back into the ranks of the wage slaves. The 'petite bourgeoisie', the 'lower middle class' or 'storekeeper class' have been the subject of considerable theorising and discussion. For example, theoretical debates raged throughout the 1970s and 1980s concerning the exact 'class position' of this 'intermediate strata'.² Their political role, particularly in view of their support for Victorian conservatism in England, and right-wing populism and fascism in continental Europe, also attracted a number of scholars.³

This paper is not about the economics of storekeeping, nor a social history of storekeepers. Instead it takes a look at non-metropolitan storekeepers and considers the political and social relationships with their predominantly working-class customers. Moving away from the large city stores which pioneered the growth of mass retailing, it looks at storekeepers in local communities where social relations were still largely played out on a face to face basis before 1940.

This paper focuses on a small fraction of the 'anxious class', the country storekeeper over the period 1880 to 1940. It considers the position of the 'country trader' within the social and political milieu of towns and communities across New South Wales. After a review of the relevant historiography, particular moments of crisis such as industrial disturbances will be looked at more closely. In these times of class tension I will consider the role of the storekeeper in various contexts. As the traditional supplier of credit to working-class customers the storekeepers were in a strategically important position in long drawn out strikes or lock outs. Their support or otherwise could be a crucial factor in determining the outcome of a dispute. Storekeeper loyalties were the subject of considerable competing claims. While many had a close affinity with their predominantly working-class customers many were also employers (albeit of small numbers), and complained about the actions of organised labour, in seeking higher wages, better conditions, regulated hours of trading and so on. At the level of rhetoric the storekeepers, through their peak body the New South Wales Country Traders' Association (CTA), appear less than supportive of labour movement causes, but in investigating the actual manifestation of relationships in various community contexts we see a much more complex scene.⁴

Contrary to the general tenor of British and European work on this group, evidence from some New South Wales towns reveals storekeepers as potentially valuable political allies for organised labour. Evidence from individual disputes suggests a pro-labour role for storekeepers. However there is an important qualification on this argument. This pro-labour role emerges most clearly in industrial or mining towns where labour was well organised and wielded some local economic and political power. The CTA was far more suspicious and less supportive of labour cause. In the country towns of New South Wales storekeepers were more likely conservative and anti-labour.

Historiographical Review

The little of what we know about the history of shopping and storekeeping in Australia we owe to pioneering scholars such as Beverly Kingston, and the more substantial body of work on the post-war period that looks at the rise of consumerism and the shopping centre.⁵ This historiography could benefit enormously from a closer engagement with labour history. Quite apart from the issue of the relationship between storekeepers and their employees, (which merits separate treatment) there is the question of the relationship between storekeepers and the working class more generally. When class is considered as a relationship and not a static category other non-working class social groups, such as the storekeepers, become part of the analysis. A brief survey of works by labour historians will demonstrate this claim. This will help politicise an historiography that is prone to bleary-eyed nostalgia as embodied in a depoliticised social history that treats storekeepers as simply providing a service, and selling/consumption as unproblematic acts of economic exchange. It will also help reveal the important role that storekeepers played in rural and regional communities, and suggest ways to incorporate non-working class groups into a more inclusive labour history.

In the Victorian coal mining town of Wonthaggi a four month coal miners' dispute in 1934 was supported by donations from local farmers, commercial and business men, as well as usual union sources of relief and strike pay. In the early stages of the dispute locals of all classes were fired by a sense of injustice at the Government's treatment of the town. As the dispute gained a decidedly more politicised character, and took on national significance, some Councillors, who represented local petite bourgeois and storekeeper interests, increasingly voiced their concerns, and backed away from full support. The Wonthaggi dispute, as in the case of many coal miners' disputes, was also supported by the local Co-operative Store.⁶

The Wonthaggi case is not an isolated one, and many of its features were repeated across Australia. Connell and Irving note that in such cases local business people were supporting the social fabric of the town, as much as unions themselves.⁷ In the industrial town of Port Kembla, a two-month dispute starting in late 1919 saw 'leading professional and commercial men' contribute to relief funds.⁸ On a larger scale, businesses from across the Illawarra region (that included Port Kembla and the nearby commercial centre of Wollongong), were major contributors to coal miners' dispute of 1938, and the waterfront dispute of 1938-39. Often union leaders had the organisational base and ability to speak for a whole town on issues such as Government neglect, or much needed private investment.

The local labour/local capital alliance so strong in the suburban areas of Sydney and Melbourne was also apparent in mining and regional towns. At Broken Hill the organisational strength and cultural presence of the working class reached into the town's commercial sector, initially as widespread support for strikers, and much later, in the 1920s, as fully unionised workplaces with award conditions. In this strong union town strikes secured widespread community support from small vegetable growers, to publicans to larger commercial premises.⁹

The characteristically broad church of Australian

labourism made such links still more viable. Labourist ideology was broad enough to include small storekeepers and local businessmen. Even in its more radical moments, Labor's critique of capitalism rarely extended beyond large monopolies, banks and 'parasitical' middlemen who made up the 'money power'.¹⁰ As mining and industrial towns developed from the late nineteenth century the local petite bourgeoisie became economically reliant on their working-class customers, politically linked to the working class through local Labor Leagues, and socially close through the daily round of shopping and socialising that occurred in the main street. This was an important context for their role in supporting strike action. Shed of its more radical class character by 1900 the populist labor party that sought office, both at state level and in the new commonwealth, had space aplenty for the 'middling classes'.

But opposed to this evidence of widespread storekeeper support for organised labour is a strand of historiography that is far more suspicious and circumspect about the storekeeper's pro-labour credentials. In moments of crisis the 'true colours' of storekeepers shows through. Their interest in preserving property and the status quo outweighs any economically or socially-grounded links with the working class. The clearest statement of this in the Australian context is Andrew Moore's work on the origins and character of the Old Guard in New South Wales.¹¹ The Old Guard was a conservative paramilitary organisation that experienced a rapid growth of members and influence during the political and economic crisis of the depression. Moore noted that storekeepers were keen supporters of the movement's aims in country towns throughout New South Wales. Fearful of their rights as 'property owners', or at least as leaseholders, they ultimately sided with established economic and political interests, and even flirted with more radical agenda of some right-wing groups. This argument echoes arguments about the storekeepers in Europe and their shift to right wing causes in the inter-war period.¹² Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that the alleged support of storekeepers for strike action was not freely given, but coerced through the threat of customer boycotts. Just how significant and well founded were links between storekeepers and their working-class customers?

Storekeeper/working class relationships

There were initially two dimensions to this relationship, economic and social. Working-class families were dependent on storekeepers for the supply of food and other essential products. Prior to the widespread availability of refrigeration, shopping for such items was almost a daily practice. The delivery system was well established in many towns with ice, fish, rabbits and vegetables being sold door to door. More established traders such as butchers and grocers also had a delivery service. This entailed regular contact with the consumer either in the main street or in the round of deliveries.

Credit was an essential part of this economic relationship. The provision of credit developed as a reaction to the intermittent nature of working-class incomes. Intermittent or irregular employment was a characteristic feature of many of the labour markets dominated by wage earners.¹³ In rural areas employment followed the seasonal rhythms of production. In mining towns and on the waterfront employment followed the receipt of orders, seasonal and other cycles of domestic and international demand for Australian products and produce. In urban areas industrial and manufacturing production was closely linked to the fortunes of the export-oriented rural economy, together with fluctuations in domestic demand. These lean periods were to some extent counterbalanced by periods of regular employment, often worked as overtime, as labour-dependent, undercapitalised industries geared up to try and meet new demand. Smoothing this cycle of boom and bust for wage

earners was the local storekeeper

There was an obvious economic necessity in the provision of credit. Storekeepers had to take into account the money supply of their predominantly working-class customers. But economic necessity was often overlaid with the social contact that came with regular consumption. The contact between customer and storekeeper through the daily round of shopping, or through the common deliveries of ice, vegetables, milk, and so on, helped cement good relationships between storekeepers and workers. Avis Bright who grew up in the industrial town of Port Kembla in the 1910 and 1920s remembered that 'relations with the tradespeople in town were very friendly', and during their delivery rounds 'they'd come in and have a cup of tea if they had time.'¹⁴ Consumption was an act with social and political implications. Far from a simple process of economic exchange, shopping brought the trader and the consumer into a relationship. The isolated nature of many towns, and the importance of local services and infrastructure, entailed a close interdependence between trader and consumer. The regular nature of local shopping also gave impetus to a social dimension to the storekeeper/customer relationship. This interdependent and multi-faceted relationship had important political and industrial implications in times of industrial disputes.¹⁵ Furthermore this sort of argument has important implications for the links between class and gender in local communities. Women were by far the largest customers for foodstuffs in local stores, and women were primarily responsible for managing budgets in working-class households. Working-class women then, through their regular round of consumption, helped cement the working class/storekeeper alliance.

Storekeepers and industrial action

One way to assess the role of storekeepers in local communities and their empathy or otherwise with organised labour is to consider their actions in a range of industrial disputes across the period in question. While outlining the various kinds of support from the storekeepers in should be made clear at the outset that the vast majority of financial and moral support for workers involved in industrial disputes came from other working class organisations.

In November 1909 coal miners in New South Wales went on strike citing a long list of claims and growing dissatisfaction with the system of arbitration. The *Newcastle Morning Herald* reported that several large local storekeepers had established a relief association, the Newcastle Merchants' Relief Fund, 'for the purpose of supplying the families of miners and others.' This was not only a simple act of charity but also a highly-politicised intervention into the course of the dispute. The employers were fully aware of the implications of such support and reacted vehemently to the formation of the Association. As the *Herald* reported: 'The coal proprietors are abusing merchants to-day. One coal proprietor violently abused the head of one of the principal Northern Wholesale houses for assisting the miners with food supplies.' The significance of the intervention is further underlined by the report that concludes the help of the merchants may actually force the proprietors to 'make an early offer to meet the miners in conference'.¹⁶

Apart from these general responses from local merchants there were also individual acts of support. One bookseller and auctioneer from the mining community of Adamstown, a few kilometres southwest of Newcastle city wrote to the coal miners' union offering to donate fifty loaves of bread per week to the people of Adamstown.¹⁷ On one occasion two miners were observed canvassing the town of Maitland, inland from Newcastle on the Hunter River and coming away with 'a quantity of provisions under their arms', which was bound for a particularly needy case that had been brought

to the attention of the local miners' lodge.¹⁸ This kind of assistance was vital for the relief effort for miners and their families, but concerted action by the conservative state government, (including the gaoling of the miners leader Peter Bowling), together with the intransigence of the coal proprietors, finally defeated the miners in March 1910, after an eighteen-week stoppage.¹⁹

In terms of credit there is also evidence that indicates that this was forthcoming from some storekeepers during this and other disputes in the Hunter Valley. During industrial trouble in the mining town of Cessnock in 1923, *The Storekeeper*, a less sympathetic source than the *Newcastle Morning Herald*, noted with an air of resignation that '[t]he storekeeper, as usual, must give credit until the big trouble is settled...'²⁰

Business people were under pressure from all sides. There was a widespread expectation in the Hunter Valley that storekeepers would help families in distress, but at the same time they had to pay their own rents. Few of the local businesses in Newcastle, or the surrounding suburbs like Adamstown and Hamilton owned their own premises. They themselves had to seek some consideration from the landlords of the city. They did this by approaching the Mayor to adjudicate, which was particularly fitting given that the Council owned many of the shops in the main street of Newcastle, Hunter Street.²¹

Small storekeepers in particular were very much dependent on the lines of supply from four major wholesale firms based in Sydney that covered the bulk of the supply and distribution trade for the Hunter Valley. In early November 1909 these large wholesalers withdrew the provision of credit to small storekeepers in the area. This had vital flow-on effects for it made the supply of credit to local customers all the more difficult. If there was no cash to pay for further supplies, then even the provision of credit was worthless, since the shop would more than likely be out of essential supplies.²²

The Hunter Valley experience was repeated in other times and other places before 1945. During the 1938 coal miners' strike in the Illawarra donations were forthcoming from various local businesses. Davis & Penny, a local wholesaler, Wollongong taxi drivers, W. Waters & Son (member of the CTA committee and hardware retailers), Wollongong hotels and the staff from Dions, the local omnibus company, all contributed to relief funds. Prizes for special fund raising events were also donated by local businesses. Many of these events were held in local halls, picture theatres, or hotel meeting rooms free of charge.²³

Storekeepers as the neutral 'third force'

In negotiating a way through the dilemma of either supporting their customers, or siding with the employers – embodied in the decision to offer credit or not to strikers – some storekeepers developed a third strategy, as peacekeepers helping with negotiations. Storekeepers often understood themselves as above the class-based battles that plagued mining and industrial workplaces. Seeing their position as moderates without strong class prejudices they occasionally stepped in to try and arbitrate industrial disputes. This was a common response from well-placed local citizens. Churchmen, Mayors and others attempted to bring warring parties together, but as storekeepers were active in municipal politics, and had major economic as well as emotional investments in their towns, they also had a part to play in such attempts. As in the case of the Victorian Wonthaggi dispute, if the strike action took on overtly political aims, then storekeepers were often hesitant to pursue full support. Towards the end of the 1920s, as industrial action became more widespread in the coal mining, transport and timber industries, this 'third way' for storekeepers became more common, at least in New South Wales.

The CTA presented itself as a non-partisan body; keen to pursue their own interests regardless of whether the conservatives or labor were in power. The CTA, which counted its membership at around 1200 by the end of the 1920s, encouraged the affiliation of small town-based trader groups. One such group was the Port Kembla Traders' Association, which was formed in 1911. Typical of such Associations, the Port Kembla Traders' were concerned with the promotion of local stores, the organisation of street-based entertainment and the scrutiny of the commercial space of Port Kembla to ensure that it was attractive and appealing.²⁴ Throughout the 1920s the Traders' Association organised competitions, bazaars and shopping weeks.

During the Cessnock dispute of 1923, mentioned above, a delegation of businessmen was appointed to meet with the Prime Minister and Premier in order to intervene in the dispute. The Broken Hill branch of the CTA took on a particularly proactive campaign in the 1920s to solve industrial disputes, or even promote the town more generally. There was an obvious economic necessity to take on such a role. The retail and commercial sector in towns like Newcastle and Broken Hill ground to a standstill if there was a major strike, or industrial downturn.²⁵

The local initiatives of CTA members and others had the full support of the CTA. Conferences of major employers and union leaders were criticised as being meetings between 'political employers' and militant unionists, 'two unrepresentative classes'.²⁶ In times of industrial conflict, however, local commercial interest could be relied upon to adjudicate since it was 'the business people of course who suffer most heavily'. In 1929 the Broken Hill branch of the CTA, under its energetic president R.E.A Kitchen, pressured both the municipal council and its employees to avert a potential stoppage.²⁷ As one prominent member of the CTA who had helped avert strikes in the Cessnock areas noted: 'We're coming to be looked upon as the natural unbiased mediators in case of strife, and representatives of the public.'²⁸

The Cooperatives

The relationship between local workers, storekeepers and employers was further complicated by the existence of the Retail Cooperatives. Cooperative Stores could play important roles in industrial disputes. Worker-sponsored Cooperatives, like those active in coal mining areas like the Hunter Valley, the Illawarra, and at Wonthaggi, could use their considerable resources to provide support and assistance to striking workers.²⁹

In the coalfields of NSW and Victoria, mining unions and others in the local labour movement controlled the activities of the local Co-op. In other towns, however, such as Port Pirie, Port Kembla (before 1928) and Queenstown in Tasmania, it was management who controlled the local 'Co-operative' Store, and in such cases the provision of credit during industrial action was strictly forbidden. This highlights the way in which both capital and labour had identified control of the commercial sector as a crucial dimension to ongoing industrial battles. Credit was the mechanism that allowed working-class households to survive between paydays, but it also could become a politicised expression of support and empathy during industrial action. The withdrawal of credit effectively meant the curtailment of strike action.

Managements of mining and industrial companies were fully aware of this potential, and this was one of the motivating factors behind schemes to establish employer-sponsored 'Co-operatives', popular from the end of the Great War. In Port Pirie for example the local zinc/lead smelter operated by Broken Hill Associated Smelters established a Cooperative Store in 1917. These stores were useful for employers. They operated on a strictly non-

credit basis, and thus were of no use during industrial disturbances. Outstanding debts were simply garnisheed from workers' fortnightly wages. They also lowered the cost of living in such isolated towns. While this may appear an act of unbounded generosity and good citizenship on the part of management the hidden agenda was to undermine the arguments for increasing the wages of local workers. During this period wages were influenced by determinations of the cost of living established by the state-based board of trade and the commonwealth statistician. Employer cooperative could, in a very real sense, place a cap on rising wage costs.

Cooperatives could also threaten the viability of local storekeeper business, and they were commonly attacked in the pages of *The Storekeeper*. The NSW traders shared this virulent anti-Cooperative mentality with their British counterparts.³⁰ In towns where management sought to introduce cooperative retailing a coalition of storekeepers and the local labour movement were firmly opposed to such moves. When the labour movement discussed workers' cooperatives, however, the storekeepers were naturally opposed to the concept.

Both the worker and the employer-sponsored Co-ops achieved some limited success before 1945, and gradually expanded their business and the range of goods they supplied. This occasionally brought complaints of unfair competition from storekeeper organisations as in the case of Port Pirie and Broken Hill. The organisation and control of cooperatives had major implications for local class relations. The industrial and political significance of these organisations should not be underestimated, especially given they way they complicated relationships between storekeepers, local workers, and managements.

Storekeeper/Working Class Tension

Therefore, one possible source of friction between workers and storekeeper was the organisation of co-operative stores. They were others too. I have argued that the relationship was a close and generally good one in mining and industrial towns before 1940, but there was a darker side to the relationship. There is sporadic evidence from some industrial conflicts throughout Australia that storekeeper support was not always freely given. John Lack has noted the intimidation of storekeepers at Footscray, an industrial suburb of Melbourne, to support the Harvester strike of 1911.³¹

Another more coercive response available to organised labour was the boycott. Unions could organise for a store to be declared 'black' and unionists, or their family members, would not shop there. The boycott was an effective weapon in towns where labour was well organised and held sufficient local authority to enforce such a boycott. But as *The Storekeeper* noted, such towns were few and far between. Mining, industrial and railway towns such as Broken Hill, Newcastle, and Kurri Kurri were the most feared sites for boycotts, since the local unions were so central to local working class political and community organisation. Broken Hill in particular was in many ways a unique location, where labour achieved a degree of local organisation and influence rarely matched throughout Australia. The vast majority of country towns were rural farming communities, with comparatively few working-class households, few permanent local workers, and little working class political and industrial organisation. In such places storekeepers had nothing to fear from the boycott movement. *The Storekeeper* summed up the situation neatly in 1930. Commenting on a planned boycott by railway workers of stores that utilised motor transport instead of railway transport *The Storekeeper* noted that in railway towns the storekeeper 'must take notice of the boycott movement. So also must those in towns which are composed mainly of militant unionists who would be likely to support the railway employees in any such boycott.' *The*

Storekeeper went on: 'But when all is said and done, are there a dozen centres in the State which could be included in the above centre category? In every other centre the boycott movement simply doesn't matter.'³²

Conclusion

Social and political relationships between storekeepers and workers appeared on the whole very close in industrial and mining towns. In country towns however storekeepers were less supportive of workers. In terms of the peak body, the CTA were suspicious but not overly hostile to unions such as the Shop Assistants' union. While storekeepers expressed concern over the claims for higher wages, shorter working hours and better conditions of some of their workers, and the growth of the Cooperatives, they also presented themselves as moderates, amenable to the claims of reasonable men and women.

More specifically this research suggests that storekeepers need to be seen in their community context. Their role in country towns as compared to industrial and mining towns was significantly different. Even with the towns where the working class was politically influential politically, there were differences. Broken Hill stands out as a special case, while the coal mining towns also indicate a high degree of support from storekeepers for the local labour movement.

Such arguments will be strengthened through a closer inspection of the 'types' of storekeepers and their relationship to labour. Were small family-run stores, where members of the household had working-class occupations, more likely to support strikers? What of the role of larger commercial premises increasingly run not by owners but by managers and a small though growing number of employers? In my own survey I have not found any substantial differences in approach between these two groups, though occupations like barbers, butchers and publicans do appear to have an especially close affinity with their working-class customers. Many questions remain unanswered as to the role of the storekeepers. As for their alleged 'anxiety' we can see many good reasons why storekeepers may have been anxious; threats of boycotts, pressure from wholesalers, and the close relationship between irregular working-class incomes and the commercial trade among them. But at the same time organisational development through groups like the CTA, and increasing attempts to mediate between capital and labour indicate a growing confidence from storekeepers, and an assuredness of their unique role in local communities. Carefully positioning themselves within local class relations was a major challenge for storekeepers before 1940. Our understanding of class relations in these local communities would be enhanced greatly by a more subtle appreciation of the role of such groups.

Endnotes

- 1 S. Macintyre, *The Oxford History of Australia* vol.4, 1901-1942: *The succeeding age*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1986, p.49. Thanks to Lynne Milne for expert research assistance.
- 2 Nicos Poulantzas, for example, developed a Marxian three-class model that incorporated this group as the 'petite bourgeoisie'. See Nicos Poulantzas, *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism*, Verso Press, London, 1978, p. 224. Others, such as Ralph Miliband, argued for the sanctity of the two-class Marxist model. See 'Ralph Miliband, *Marxism and Politics*, Oxford University Press, London, 1977, pp.22ff. See also Anthony Giddens, *The Class Structure of Advanced Societies*, Hutchinson, London, 1973 & E.O. Wright, *Classes*, Verso Press, London, 1985.
- 3 G. Crossick (ed), *The lower middle class in Britain, 1870-1914*, Croom Helm, London, 1977, esp pp.1-11 & 184-210.

- 4 This parallels Winstanley's argument that British shopkeepers expressed the ideology of individualism, hard work and thrift but regularly turned to governments for assistance and moderation of the competitive excesses of the free market. M.J. Winstanley, *The Storekeeper's World, 1830–1914*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1983, pp.90–92. See also C.P. Hosgood, 'The Pymies of Commerce' and working-class community: small shopkeepers in England, 1870–1914', *Journal of Social History*, vol.22, Spring, 1988, pp.439–460.
- 5 B. Kingston, *Basket, Bag and Trolley: a history of shopping in Australia*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1994. See also K. Humphrey, *Shelf life: supermarkets and the changing cultures of consumption*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 1998 & G. Davison, T. Dingle & S. O'Hanlon (eds), *The Cream Brick Frontier: histories of Australian suburbia*, Melbourne, 1995.
- 6 Peter Cochrane, 'The Wonthaggi Coal Strike, 1934', *Labour History*, no.27, 1974, pp.12–30.
- 7 R.W. Connell and T.H. Irving, *Class Structure in Australian History*, Longmans, Melbourne, 1980, pp.191–192.
- 8 See *Illawarra Mercury*, 2 January 1920 and *South Coast Times*, 16 January 1920.
- 9 Ed Stokes, *United We Stand: Impressions of Broken Hill, 1908–1910*, Five Mile Press, Canterbury (Victoria), 1983, p.192 & B. Ellem & J. Shields 'Making a "Union Town": class, gender and workers' control in inter-war Broken Hill' manuscript submitted to *Labour History*, May 1999.
- 10 Connell & Irving, *Class Structure in Australian History*, p.198 and P. Love, *Labour and the money power: Australia labour populism, 1890–1950*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1984. For the exceptions see Verity Burgmann, 'In Our Time': *Socialism and the Rise of Labor, 1885–1905*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1985.
- 11 *The Secret Army and the Premier: conservative paramilitary organisations in NSW, 1930–32*, UNSW Press, Kensington, 1989.
- 12 I am indebted to Jonathon Morris' literature review for my comments in this section. J. Morris, *The political economy of shopkeeping in Milan, 1886–1922*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993, pp.1–11.
- 13 Indeed Crossick suggests that regularity of income was one of the dividing lines between the working class and the 'lower middle class' in Britain. Crossick, *The lower middle class*, pp.12–13.
- 14 Interview with Avis Bright, (Interviewed by Narelle Crux, 14 October 1982), D153/8, Wollongong University Archives. For a review of credit and British storekeepers see M.J. Winstanley, *The storekeeper's world*, pp.55–57.
- 15 See D. Miller et al, *Shopping, place and identity* Routledge, London, 1998, pp.7–14. See also the edition of *Locality* vol. 9, no.1, 1998 on 'main streets'
- 16 *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 29th December 1909 & *Maitland Mercury*, 8th March 1910.
- 17 *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 22nd November 1909.
- 18 *Maitland Mercury*, 24 November 1909.
- 19 On the 1909 strike see R. Gollan, *The Coalminers of New South Wales: A History of the union, 1860–1960*, Melbourne University Press (in association with the ANU), Melbourne, 1963, pp.127–134.
- 20 *The Storekeeper*, 29 June 1923
- 21 *Maitland Mercury*, 27th November 1909.
- 22 *Maitland Mercury*, 8th November 1909.
- 23 *Illawarra Mercury*, 7th October 1938 & 23rd September 1938.
- 24 See *The Storekeeper*, 28 June 1930 & 28th January 1929; *Illawarra Mercury*, 15 September 1911 & 3 June 1927.
- 25 *The Storekeeper*, 23rd & 27th February 1923.
- 26 Editorial, *The Storekeeper*, 28th December 1928.
- 27 *The Storekeeper*, 28th January 1929, p.69.
- 28 Mr d'Argaeval in *The Storekeeper*, 29 July 1929, p.67.
- 29 For overviews of Co-operatives in Australia see P.D. Hampton, *Retail Co-operatives in the Lower Hunter Valley*, Newcastle region Public Library, Newcastle, 1986 & J. Fisher, 'Rochdale Co-operation in Australia: a failure of cultural transmission?', paper presented to the Retail History Seminar, 13th July 1999, University of New South Wales.
- 30 Winstanley, pp.83–89.
- 31 John Lack, *A History of Footscray*, Hargreen publishing, North Melbourne, 1991, p.180.
- 32 *The Storekeeper*, 28 June 1930, p.8.