Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE2900

Holman, Ada Augusta

(1869 - 1949)

Born	18691003, Ballarat Victoria Australia
Died	19490403, Australia
Occupation	Feminist, Journalist, Novelist, Print journalist

Summary

Before she married W.A Holman in 1901, Ada Kidgell had established herself as an intelligent and energetic journalist. By 1896 she was publishing short stories, reviews and political and literary items, using her own name, ‘Marcus Malcolm’ and ‘Nardoo’. As ‘Myee’ she sent ‘Our Sydney letter’ to Melbourne *Punch*. She was a frequent contributor to the *Sydney Mail, Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Freeman’s Journal*. She edited and wrote most of the copy for the *Co-operator*, a trade journal for rural producers. She continued journalism after marriage, sometimes ghosting items which appeared under her husband’s name. The Labor Party benefited from her ability to place items sympathetic to its programme in the non-Labor press.

Ada Holman’s political views were well formed before her marriage to her New South Wales Labor politician husband. She was republican and a critic of the Constitution, of the South African War and of inequality, whether related to class or sex. She enjoyed writing on these topics, but found that once her husband was installed in the NSW cabinet in 1910, her output was restricted; her short stories continued to appear but little else.

Ada Holman resented both the limitations to her own work consequent on being married to a prominent politician, and the demands on women to conform to notions of middle class femininity that restricted women’s experience to that of only wife and mother. Women would be free, she wrote to Australian author Dowell O’Reilly, when motherhood affected woman’s life ‘only to the same degree as parenthood does a man’.

Events

1895 - 1910
Career in journalism active

Published resources

Resource Section
Holman, Ada Augusta (1869-1949), Radi, Heather, 2006,
http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A090343b.htm

Site Exhibition
The Women's Pages: Australian Women and Journalism since 1850, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2008,
http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/cal/cal-home.html

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Archival resources

Mitchell and Dixson Libraries Manuscripts Collection
Ada A. Holman - papers, 1866-1936, together with papers of William Arthur Holman, 1912-1932

Ada A. Holman papers, 1856, ca. 1890-1946

Mrs W. A. Holman, 1917 / painted by John Samuel Watkins

Author Details
Nikki Henningham

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