

## Transcript of Pandemic Podcast with Juliette Brodsky and Tony Cunneen

*Hello – welcome to the Pandemic Podcast recorded for the NSW Bar, on 8<sup>th</sup> of May 2020. I'm Juliette Brodsky – freelance journalist and multimedia oral historian – I've been doing the NSW Bar recorded oral history for the past ten years. With me is a major contributor to the Bar history, Tony Cunneen who has written, among other things, for the Bar News and has done ongoing research into WW1 barristers. Tony is Head of Publications at St Pius X College in Chatswood. He's an active member of the Francis Forbes Society for Australian Legal History. Welcome, Tony!*

Thank you very much for the invitation.

*Tony, you're the person I thought of immediately when I was asked to do this podcast on pandemics both now and 100 years ago. You've done a lot of research in this space, particularly this period in NSW between 1910 and 1920 – we're really talking about the First World War. Before we talk about the pandemic that happened at the time, you might want to paint us a picture of the NSW legal landscape as it was in those days.*

Well everyone has their own impression. Mine of the time was that it was very much centred on Phillip Street (Sydney), it was masculine in nature, it was oriented in terms of their spiritual connections towards England. But it was also emerging as an Australian entity, as an Australian culture and very much the First World War was seen as part of that development. For many of the lawyers and judges involved, the war came virtually as a spiritual enterprise that they should as much as possible get involved (in) because they saw it as a connection to their origins but also they saw it as an opportunity for them to develop Australia as an equal member of the British empire. Today many people have little knowledge of the British empire but in those days, it was seen as a spiritual connection of nations. People would become tearful over the empire as a force for civilisation.

*Mmm, "the Motherland" –*

"The Motherland". People in remote towns around the country would go to school and learn about the kings and queens of England. They would see themselves as being connected to Trinidad or some distant part of the empire. A brotherhood and sisterhood – a sort of crimson thread (linking them) would be what it was.

*A crimson thread indeed, which widened considerably - the Bar itself lost quite a number of people in that war.*

They did indeed. When the war broke out, the Governor General, Sir Ronald Munro Ferguson held a garden party here in Sydney and all the legal fraternity were there, at Yaralla (Estate) up on the Parramatta River. You can image him shaking their hands and saying "the empire can rely on your support", and many of them went away and died in Gallipoli and at the Battle of Lone Pine a year later. Yes, you're right - the Bar itself was very enthusiastic about the war. Also, they were led by the Chief Justice of the time, Sir William Cullen.

*I read that about 200 solicitors, barristers, law clerks and students were serving in that first couple of years when the war commenced. 26 of these men fell in action. In 1917, 20 more members of the legal profession would fall in action – far more than the previous two years of the war. 1917, you wrote in one of your pieces, was a “particularly ugly year”.*

1917 was a year of terrible violence on the battlefields. 1916 was the Battle(s) of the Somme, Fromelles and Poitiers. 1917 was the time of mud, the Battle of Passchendaele. By that stage, they were in the heart of the war, and they were determined to prove themselves. The sense of duty was overwhelming. Many of them went to very well-known schools: Sydney Grammar, Riverview, St Joseph's, or Shore or King's – they tended to come from that social stratum. One of the Headmasters had said to his students “To whom much is given, much is expected”. And they lived by it. Many of them died in frontline battle. Many of them could have been kept out – they were obviously well-connected. There are letters on file where people said, “you’ve lost a son already, you’ve done enough, would you like me to take your son out?” and they said no. In fact, the largest professional group to lose sons, as a proportion, were the Supreme Court judges.

*Isn't that interesting - and Sir William Cullen?*

His two sons served. They were wounded – one of them was sick with flu at the end of the war. He was lucky to survive - they lived right through the war. (Sir William) never tried to keep them out. There was a famous night, when the sons were in Gallipoli, and (Sir William was at Sydney Town Hall. (Sir William) used to turn up at all manner of war related events including recruiting rallies – you can imagine the pressure on the legal profession to follow the Chief Justice. He was there at the Town Hall - and he broke down when he was talking about his sons serving, and the audience shouted out “Cheer up, cheer up!” That was the phrase at the time – it was a cheer up campaign - and he got over his distress – at least in public. It shows in a way the close bond between the people and the legal profession - they were absolutely connected in this shared enterprise of war.

*While all this was roiling away overseas, there was a lot of controversy going on within the legal profession itself. It seemed to be a very volatile time in NSW politics. The Holman government in NSW was described as a “government of lawyers”.*

They were, indeed, and not in a friendly manner. It was during the disputatious moments of the bearpit. 1917 on the home front was a hideous time. In 1916, if we go back one year, the country had split over conscription. From the legal profession letters that came from the battle front, it was assumed that conscription would come in and people would see sense. Then (the referendum) came and (Australia) didn't (vote yes) - they thought Australian had failed and very bitter about it. During the time, the Labour<sup>1</sup> party split, and the National government was filled in NSW and all the lawyers left the Labour party. There was a famous line in the Bulletin saying, “the party has blown its own brains out”. A suitably violent metaphor, because they'd lost

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<sup>1</sup> It was not nationally spelled “Labor” until 1918 when its Federal Conference resolved that state branches should adopt the name “Australian Labor Party”.

these talented people. So, 1917 – there was a lot of disputation - that's when they introduced the bill for the retirement age for judges.

*What brought that about? There was, I know, something ugly that happened in a courtroom - to do with a deaf judge.*

Poor old Justice Simpson got on the wrong side of a man who was representing himself –

*This was a man called Conroy.*

It was quite tragic. Simpson's son, George, was killed at Lone Pine. His other son, Adam was also serving (in the war) and had been evacuated from Gallipoli with influenza - but (Conroy) abused the living daylights out of (Justice Simpson) and said, "it's time you left" and before he was escorted out, Conroy shouted that the Judge "had a maggot in his brain." I don't know the exact reason: there seemed to be a combination of efforts for it – the best description I could find was that (the bill) was described as a "creature of momentary panic". They wanted to be able to appoint some judges. There was a discrepancy between the way (judges) were called, and they had the numbers and got (the bill) through. During one of these arguments, that's when they called it "a government of lawyers - we're all sick to death of you".

*The Attorney General of the time, David Robert Hall – or D.R. Hall - was the subject of quite a bit of criticism by the NSW Bar Council over these judge appointments. There was a lot of argy-bargy between them. He described the Bar Council as irresponsible. They in turn objected to his nominations for the bench. One was a fellow called Cohen – I'm wondering if there was a tinge of anti-semitism going on at the Bar Council at that time?*

Quite possibly - John Jacob Cohen was his full name – as soon as you touch in that area, you have to be a bit suspicious. But Cohen was also well connected – Sir William Cullen was a lifelong friend and wrote a letter of congratulations on Cohen's appointment.

*They said Cohen had no experience – that was their main gripe.*

Cohen came immediately from parliament to the Bench and went on and had quite a successful career after it. They were certainly very upset about it. I read the Bar Council minutes for the time. More or less, they said "if we're silent, you can't assume we agree". But there had been controversies before – in 1913, there was (Albert Bathurst) Piddington who was a traditional figure and said something wrong. It came out in a telegram and he never sat on the High Court. (Also) over (Sir Charles) Wade's appointment. It wasn't unusual for them to be cranky over the judiciary. Even in the pandemic time, when there was an issue over wearing masks in court, the Minister for Health (who was an Irish Catholic barrister) got quite narky with the fact that the Chief Justice and the other senior judges didn't wear masks, and they should have, as an example. There was always that hint, but I found no evidence for it, other than it's an association to be considered. I am not an expert in that area.

*On the plus side, D.R Hall did one thing a lot of women barristers would be eternally grateful to him for – he ushered in the Women’s Legal Status Act (1918), or at least the groundwork for it.*

The *Women’s Legal Status Act* no. 2. I became fascinated by this – while I was looking at the war, I was wondering what were the women doing? Many of the senior people in the war effort on the home front I noticed were the wives of judges. I’ve got a footnote that said as a result of this, the *Women’s Legal Status Act* came in.

*So, are you saying someone like Lady Cullen, Sir William Cullen’s wife who headed up the Red Cross, might have been a silent moving figure behind this?*

I couldn’t say that exactly - I’ve no concrete evidence for it. But (Sir William) Cullen was the one, when he was working at the Law School, who allowed Ada Evans to come into the Law School. When he came back, Professor Pitt Cobbett was not happy. He allegedly slammed chairs on the ground and shouted out “who is this woman?” You have to admire the tenacity of (the women). If you follow it through, in terms of Cullen’s support, one would assume his wife was supporting him as well. Because they had to get it through Sydney University and of course (Cullen) was involved in the Sydney University Senate. Before the war, the male students at Sydney University were nothing short of thugs to women who turned up – they were absolute hoodlums. That’s why they had to have the women’s colleges and places for women to go to – they were refuges. Certainly before the war, there were attempted women’s meetings and a famous one where all the local male students threw firecrackers in through the windows at the women, and rocks onto the tin roof. They were a howling mob. Famously, some of the women got hockey sticks and went outside and belted them. A little later when they brought in (the *Women’s Legal Status Act*), and Sir William Cullen was on the stage, well, no-one threw rocks at him. I think you’d have to say that the Cullens were supportive of that legislation going through. D.R Hall – to his credit - it required men to stand up in a world of men and say, “we’ve got to change”. Because otherwise, they’d always find a reason not to. Looking back, there’s tremendous pathos. There were wonderful women going in, year after year, and trying and frankly, the Attorney General would laugh at them. So, Hall really did break a tradition, to his eternal credit. But it was still a long hard road for them. You can still find some letters where there’s unpleasant comments about “we’ve got to put women on the committee, but we’ll find a way not to”. Words to that effect.

*I know the first actively practising woman barrister, Sybil Morrison paid tribute to D.R. Hall. He moved her admission, I believe. Even though he might not have been much liked by members of the Bar Council, he has his little place in history. There was another interesting and far-reaching incident in 1917, the Great Industrial Strike, which took place in what we now know as Carriageworks but used to be the old Eveleigh Railway yards.*

That’s where it started, and spread, and it certainly split society. They had strike breakers come in from around the country. They used to camp out at the Showgrounds and at Taronga Zoo. And then there were the strikers. That’s what radicalised (Prime Minister) Ben Chifley – he was a striker. The old expression “their

cards marked" - you can see the old cards in the archives marked "Striker – not to be re-employed". During this bitterness, the industrial judge was Heydon, who was Catholic, and very much an enemy of the archbishop of Melbourne ....

*Daniel Mannix?*

Yes, Mannix. Mannix and Heydon had a real slanging match in the press where Mannix called him a second rate judge and Heydon tried to get Mannix dismissed. He went along to the Vatican Nuncio in North Sydney, at the present day (Australian) Catholic University, and tried to get him dismissed (but) the Nuncio didn't say anything and Mannix stayed for years. Sydney Catholics were not universally opposed to Conscription.

*Very interesting.*

That gives you some background. Heydon was pro-conscription. My understanding is - he basically called in every union before him and dismissed them, one after another. It was a stunning exercise in power. At the same time, his son was serving (in the war) and was wounded. There were men and families he knew – the Fergusons and the Streets - who'd lost sons, and I'm sure he just looked at the strikers and saw traitors.

*Moving to the pandemic, at the time of this recording, we're well into the sixth or is it the seventh week or so of lockdown here in Sydney and Australia generally, the coronavirus having spread around the globe since December 2019. Going back 100 years, we talk today about the so-called Spanish flu epidemic of 1918 – but in fact, looking through Australian newspaper articles a hundred or so years ago – they barely refer to it as "Spanish flu" – they called it "pneumonic flu – pneumonic influenza". There were very interesting stats: the majority of fatalities here in Australia were men in their prime, aged between 30-50. With a lot of soldiers returning from the war, there were in fact a couple of barristers who passed away from pneumonic influenza.*

It was the case that a number of men passed away. That's where the influenza started, in the camps, and (the soldiers) brought it back with them. Two barristers who died (from flu) did not serve, but a large number of men who came back had been gassed and were quite debilitated from it. They were horribly injured.

*So, they were weakened (by the gas) –*

The soldiers were quarantined on return – one quarantine in South Australia supposedly led to a mutiny. They'd been away and were being sent into quarantine within sight of home. Well, there wasn't much hope: these were men getting off the ship – they wanted to go home. The actual way it impacted on the profession was that it intruded into court life at the time. They had started wearing masks in 1918. At the beginning of 1919, they were wearing masks in court and it came in as a law. In terms of exploring what happened, the events were very similar to today, in that there was a lot of discussion over inoculation. There were quack cures –  
(LAUGHTER)

*If I may digress for a moment, the one I'm intrigued with – they were claiming that “millions” of people were taking these to combat the Spanish flu, or pneumonic influenza – is Dr Morse's Indian Root Pills.*

That's it - yes! (LAUGHTER)

*“Millions” of these pills, and I've got this ad: “keep fit by using Dr Morse's Indian Root Pills – the golden rule of all times is to keep fit”. Now, no-one would dispute that today. They go on to advocate “ordinary rules of cleanliness and health – unfortunately immediately when restriction rules are relaxed, many people assume that the danger is over”. That sounds familiar.*

It does. (LAUGHTER)

*It goes on to say, “Ever since the influenza first made its appearance in Australia, the people have been advised to take Dr Morse's Indian Root pills freely”. I thought, “What is in these pills?” You can see them in museums now; there was stuff like mandrake and cayenne pepper.*

Well, of course, some of them had drugs inside them too, and people were saying “if you take this, you'll feel better”. Well, you did. Some of them were quite potent, I think, but they had placebo effects.

*From what I read, they had a laxative effect! (LAUGHTER) Yes, so, quack cures -*

There were quack cures and there was a lot of discussion over the legality of these government regulations and proclamations. There were squabbles between the states and Federal Parliament over regulations, and it's eerily close to what we're seeing now. For a while, you could be put into jail for not wearing a mask. One of the doctors was, and he sued them for false imprisonment and got 150 pounds' compensation - this was one of H.V. Evatt's early cases. What happened in January had changed by September. But certainly within the Bar and the Supreme Court, all of this was against the background of the end of the war. They were welcoming people back from overseas service while worrying about the influenza outbreak. Many of these people had had fascinating careers and were (returning). They were welcomed back – you can see from the court transcripts (of the time). Dr (E. Mayhew) Brissenden was known as a leading legal luminary. Brissenden was actually appointed to the bench at the same time as (John Jacob) Cohen. Brissenden was still on active service when he was appointed and was seen very favourably as a soldier being on the bench. He came back to Australia in June 1919. There was a great welcome, he was a popular man, but he decided that the restrictions of the bench were too much and he resigned and went back to the Bar soon after. He was quite a character – he was known for roaring down Phillip Street on a motorbike with his gown flailing in the air –

*What a pity there are no photos.*

Yes, though there's a great photo of him when he was on the Western Front. Because he got a job as a Claims Officer – a few barristers and solicitors did this very important role.

*Now, this was because Australian soldiers were stealing French fences and burning them for firewood – something like that?*

Yes, the claims officers were a much-overlooked part of the military. They existed just behind the front line. Soldiers in the middle of winter had a lot of trouble understanding the rule that a house they had been trying to save from the enemy, which was blown up by enemy gunfire – then they couldn't use the broken timbers from the house for a fire to warm themselves. It still belonged to the owner of the house, and there were difficult scenes. Claims Officer needed some impressive people to go around to liaise between the French farmers whose claims were perhaps imaginative and the soldiers who were going to deny everything. It takes a certain kind of person to walk into a candlelit barn in which there are 50 frontline troops lounging around, and say "Who took this yesterday?" Brissenden gained a reputation for the fact that he used a pushbike as well as his motorbike and even in the middle of winter, he often wore shorts –

*How did he do that when it was so cold over there?*

There's pictures of him in his shorts with his pushbike. I'll send (one) to you. It's a fantastic photo.

*It was freezing in France. Shaving water was icy cold and shaving brushes, I read, were like blocks of wood. It was pretty hellish over there. There were also interesting descriptions by Australian soldiers of the French being either surly or quite welcoming.*

Don't forget too that some of the Australian soldiers could be fairly unpleasant. It wasn't Disneyland. Some of these men coming in could be bullying to the French households. Some were quite nasty, and complaints about them were quite genuine, but I don't think that was the rule. Certainly it was the claims officers who gained a reputation for fair dealing, which is one of the reasons why the French eventually saw Australians as being a welcome presence. Don't forget, you had thousands of young men living in your fields. They had to set up an extremely complicated system for where you could walk, where you could get forage for your animals. Many of the people would go and help in the harvests. It was more than just dealing with claims – it was liaison – and it really deserves some attention.

*Did you get a sense of how much this influenced them as lawyers and judges later on?*

Well, there's one or two people around who will say – and Justice (Michael) Slattery is one of them – that the skills of an army officer are quite transferrable to the skills of the Bar. Justice Slattery has mentioned that you're getting order out of chaos. What made them a good army officer made you a good barrister. The two (professions) are fairly congruent. During the first world war, you had many senior officers, you had the Prime Minister Billy Hughes, you had (NSW Premier) Holman – they were all Sydney barristers. The education they had helped them, and it gave them skills in a lot of other areas. Barristers entirely ran the Red Cross Missing and Wounded

Enquiry Bureau, run by (Sir) Langer Owen<sup>2</sup> on the suggestion of his wife Mary. You could go and stay there as long as you liked, and he would try and find out what happened to your son. It was really chaotic – but if you were lucky, you might get your son's personal effects – if you were unlucky, you got someone else's. He did a fine job in that area. The Red Cross did a fine job in the pandemic as well – Lady Cullen was very heavily involved in that.

*I might allude to a (Red Cross) fundraising fete that she and Sir William held at Tregoyd, their Mosman home, years ago. A lot of Sir William's plants are still there.*

Some time ago, when I was researching his life, the residents of the house very kindly allowed me into the property and let me walk around. He owned six acres, all the way down to Balmoral Beach. He liked Australian plants and would collect them. It was a wondrous place – it still is. His wife Eliza was a very energetic lady but really, she wore herself out in the war and died soon afterwards. A lot of women did: Mary Langer Owen - who suggested the Red Cross: Missing and Wounded (Enquiry Bureau) - died during the war. Jean Curlewis, the daughter of Ethel Turner and Judge (Herbert) Curlewis, contracted TB from dealing with soldiers. Ethel Turner never wrote again after that. Lady Cullen was really not well after the war. You think of them travelling around, making big speeches without any amplification, shouting at a room of 200 people – it would have been an enormous strain on anybody. It's an untold story.

*One for future research. A number of nurses also passed away from the flu in that time. There was a lot of coverage about the loss of nurses, people who were working as volunteers. Apparently, there were more (people) that died of the flu then than during the First World War. Yet they called it the "forgotten flu". Well, maybe not now, with COVID-19.*

It was a massive event but faded with history, but of course, now it's come back. The loss of people: as you'd mentioned, the two barristers died of the flu – one was George Long Innes – he was the son of a Supreme Court judge, Sir Joseph George Long Innes. George was the Parliamentary Draughtsman and described as 'one of the best-known men in the State.' He died barely a week after contracting influenza, supposedly at the first Rugby game between New South Wales and New Zealand in June 1919.

George Martin, another barrister, was the youngest son of former Chief Justice Sir James Martin. He died in April 1919. His brother had been killed in the war. These were significant people in society and quite possibly would have gone onto wider careers, had they lived. There was another barrister associate called Gellatly who was in the Commonwealth Institute of Science and Industry. He'd been admitted to the Bar in 1912, but never practised and died (of flu) in 1919. I managed to track down a few barristers who actually had the flu and survived.

*Now, who were these?*

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<sup>2</sup> A KC and founder and council member of the NSW Bar Association.



These were (barrister) soldiers – many went on to the bench and had significant careers, including: Rex Chambers, Thomas O'Mara, John Neild, Roderick Kidston and Alroy Cohen, and a number of others. Looking through their letters, you can see the reference to flu threads through. It was a fatal disease and they worried a great deal about what was happening. As to whether it affected the profession's daily life, the best time was in February 1919 was when they were squabbling with the Minister for Health over whether or not they should wear masks in court. Sir William Cullen had an interesting argument – he said, “yes, everyone should wear masks, but you shouldn't enforce it too strictly”.

*That sounds like now! (LAUGHTER)*

That was the best he could come up with because he was criticised for not wearing a mask - that was at the opening of the Supreme Court law term in 1919. You can image Sir William Cullen being fairly forceful in his opinion. Even in his own quiet way, he was a very impressive character.

*I do see in this particular article dated 10 March 1919 from the Queensland Daily Mercury that (Sir William) was wearing the mask, but the paper itself expressed scepticism about the worthwhile nature of the exercise. There didn't seem to be a lot of unanimity around Australia at the time about whether you should wear masks. And then there's this article which made me laugh, called “Melbourne, the Bad Example”.*

Yes, that's right – interstate rivalry blossomed – Melbourne was criticised for all sorts of things! Yes, Melbourne “set a bad example”, judges set a bad example – it certainly gave people opportunity to give full rein to their hyperbolic rhetoric. Accusations flew around but at least they didn't have social media.

*You said at the beginning of this podcast, Tony, about the strong feelings about Empire. What I picked up, after the war, is a nationalistic flavour in the papers – big ads too about “Australia the land of opportunity”. Also, all the ads for ships and travelling – almost a portent of now, even though we're not travelling during the time of COVID-19. Despite the pandemic, there seemed to be a sense of opening up, a sense of total change about the whole landscape.*

Absolutely. The period after the war was interesting. There were all these people coming back and this song “How do you keep him on the farm, now he's been to gay Paris?” Many of them were shell-shocked – there were a lot of very tragic cases around – they would have been very difficult men to live with. For many of them coming back, they'd seen things they'd only read about in history books, the Tower of London and the Eiffel Tower, so they certainly knew about the world. That's something that makes the country open up. Within the legal profession, you had the growth of the Sydney University Law School and the beginning of the long period of (Challis Professor and Dean of Law) Sir John Peden coming in. He was very close to his students who fought during the war: he wrote to them and they wrote back. It was the golden age of letter writing, which is why we know so much. They did see Australia as on the march and it does come across. With all the kerfuffle over judges at the time, the new breed of judges was educated in Australia. Sir William Cullen, who is a favourite of mine, was born, raised and educated in Australia. He came from Kiama and was a scholarship boy and was recognised as such. Many of the

others had been born in Australia but had studied overseas and were admitted to the English bar and had come over, but now you had a growth of the Australian bar. But there was a sense of disappointment among some of the idealistic ones. Cullen and some of the others must have been slightly disappointed, particularly by the reappearance of factional party - politics. During the war, there had been a national government, a national sense of purpose. They were quite suspicious of the modern world. For many of them, the resurgence of the Labour Party was disheartening. However, Australia expanded. They became ambitious to develop the country – they built the (Harbour) Bridge - it was a new country in that way.

*Something that was very interesting, I noticed, looking through the old papers is just how many inoculation depots there were around Sydney. I suppose this was why Sydney was crowing so much about being ahead of Melbourne and the other states. You told me there was in fact a depot in the old Water Police Court, which is now the Sydney Justice Museum.*

It is. Well, that was a very important court for many activities. It was down near the wharves – a lot of maritime activity down there. There was one in Hyde Park as well, at the old recruiting depot. Phillip Street in Sydney lived the war. Going to work there, you would have walked by people selling badges, anything. Yes, the inoculations were everywhere.

*What were they exactly injecting?*

I don't know!

*I mean, I don't know either – I've tried to find out. I think it was a mixture of quinine and something else.*

I don't know that they really knew what they were doing.

*There's lots of pictures of them looking very purposeful. Apart from the Dr Morse root pills, what were they injecting?*

I'd have to bow to a medical historian on that one. All I know is they had these inoculation stations and masks. They had all sorts of other details – travelling was one – they realised if someone got sick, how do you transport them? If you put them in a car, you could catch it (in the car). So, what they came up with was, they put them on a motorbike, in a side car. I don't know how some people would have taken that – roaring around Sydney on a motorbike without getting sick. If you weren't sick to begin with, you might have been afterwards. So, there were quite knotty problems. A number of doctors died too. Quite a number got sick so whatever they were doing wasn't a good move.

*And there were quite a few ships quarantined in the harbour, too. There were arguments about whether they should be told to go down to Jervis Bay. I thought, again, some things don't change that much.*

For the government, it's a hard time to be a leader. You're responding to things you've never thought of before. What might be a good idea on Tuesday is a terrible

idea by Friday. It's very difficult, so the law went along with everything as best they could and tried to operate as best they could. There'd be cases coming before the bench and someone would say "Well, he's determined to be infectious". The jury can't sit – they've been locked up – so they just dismissed the whole thing. It does seem to have created a lot of knotty problems for people, as to what they could do.

*An article I came across – there were two men prosecuted for not wearing masks. They were responsible for steering a ferry or something...*

It was at Grafton.

*That interested me because the main thrust of the article was whether this was a Federal matter or a state matter, and I don't know what happened after that. Did they resolve that point?*

I'm not sure – I haven't been able to find out – I know it was a disputatious element that went from "you haven't obeyed the law" to "what is the law and why should we obey it anyway?" They were stopping people crossing the border as well – very similar to what's been happening here recently. There have been some eerie connections over it all.

*So, out of all this, the Bar clearly survived, flourished into the '20s – its first woman barrister came along in 1924 because poor Ada Evans never actually practised despite the way being cleared for her by D.R. Hall. A great many things came out as a result – there was the Workers Compensation Commission. And the political landscape – well, interesting things happened into the '30s when the Lang government came along, and the appearance for a little while of the New Guard.*

Yes, yes.

*What I'm saying, I suppose, is that wars and pandemics have very interesting consequences, but no-one can ever predict them at that time.*

Yes, they certainly had an unexpected outcome. Sir William Cullen, who I mentioned, was (by then) acting governor – he actually urged (Premier Jack) Lang's dismissal. Mainly because Lang was seen as a destabilising force. For many of the lawyers and many of the judges, they advocated rationality, reason and control. Cullen's statement about masks is good: "yes, we've got to have this law, but you don't enforce it too strictly". I think that's a nice way to characterise his humanity.

*Well, Tony Cunneen, it's been a great pleasure listening to you and talking with you. I think we're all a bit wiser now about the great pandemic a hundred years ago. Thank you.*

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Note:

Acknowledgement of Pain and Suffering – while the Influenza Epidemic of 1919 – 1920 is one hundred years ago, we should remember the pain and suffering of all those who were affected by it – as well as those in the contemporary society who may be affected.