

LAP, PHAR

Barry Andrews

LAP, PHAR (1926-32), sporting personality, business associate of modest speculators and national hero, was born on 4 October, 1926 at Timaru, New Zealand, the second of eight children of Night Raid and his wife Entreaty, nee Prayer Wheel. The family had military connections, including Carbine and Musket (q.q.v.), although Raid himself had emigrated to Australia during the first World War.

A spindly, unattractive youth with chestnut hair, Lap was educated privately at Timaru until January, 1928, when he formed a liaison with the Sydney entertainment entrepreneur Harold Telford. With Telford, Lap moved to Sydney and established premises in the suburb of Randwick. A number of short term (distance) ventures were unsuccessful, although after James E. Pike (q.v.) commenced employment and Telford became a silent partner, the business flourished. A small, dapper man who dressed flamboyantly in multi-coloured coats and hats, Pike's nervousness caused him to lose weight before each speculation with Lap; yet their affiliation lasted for over two years and proved beneficial to hundreds of Australian investors.

The most successful years were between 1930 and 1932, when the business expanded into Victoria, South Australia and Mexico. Pike and Lap received numerous awards for services to the entertainment industry, including an MC in 1930; they shared with Telford a gross taxable income of over 50,000 pounds. This income was substantially increased, however, by generous donations from several Sydney publishers, including Ken Ranger and Jack Waterhouse (q.q.v.).

Early in 1930 Lap journeyed to North America to strengthen his interests there; Telford, who disliked travelling, and Pike who had weighty problems to contend with, stayed behind. Tall and rangy, known affectionately as 'Bobby', 'The Red Terror' and occasionally as 'you mongrel', Lap died in mysterious circumstances in Atherton, California, on 5 April, 1932, and was buried

in California, Melbourne, Canberra and Wellington. A linguist as well as businessmen, he popularised the phrase 'get stuffed!', although owing to an unfortunate accident in his youth he left no children.

I. Carter, *Phar Lap* (Melbourne, 1971), and for bibliog; information from J. O'Hara and T.H. Mouth; inspiration from anon. ADB contributors.