

SIR

EDMUND BARTON

WHAT MADE HIM BECOME THE FIRST PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA?

INTRODUCTION

Edmund Barton was born on the 18th of January, 1849 in Glebe, Sydney. He was the youngest of nine children. George Burnett, William, Sara Sophia, Ellen, Elizabeth Agnes, Harriet, Sydney Fitzgerald and Alice Barton were his siblings. Edmund grew up to be an exceptional leader in the NSW government, This led him to be Australia's first Prime Minister in 1901.

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EDUCATION

When he was seven years old, he was educated in Fort Street School until he was nine. Eventually he went to the University of Sydney where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1868. Two years later he got a Master of Arts degree.



EARLY LIFE

He became a lawyer in 1871 and created a successful legal practice. Later on he learnt the art of debating in the Sydney Mechanics Institute. At the age of 28, he married Jane Mason Ross and had six children over the years. The same year he got married, he joined the colonial parliament. He held various positions over time such as the Speaker of Legislative Assembly (1883-87), Attorney General (1889 and 1891-93) and Leader of Opposition (1898-99).



PRIME MINISTER

Barton became Australia's first Prime Minister at a grand ceremony in Centennial Park, Sydney on the 1st of January, 1901. "Barton was certainly qualified for his new job." " He was a great choice as he had links to free traders and the protectionists." His first act he did was to restrict immigration, this was known as the White Australia Policy (this ended in 1966 by the Holt Government). Soon after, a competition was held for the design of the national flag. 32,823 entries were submitted, a flag including elements from five winning entries were chosen. On the 3rd of September, 1901, it was officially flown as the Australian flag for the first time, over the Exhibition Building in Melbourne. He had many other challenges over time and one of his last challenges as Prime Minister was to unite the separate colonies under one federation.



LATER LIFE

Edmund resigned as a Prime Minister on the 24th of September, 1903 to become the senior puisne judge of the High Court of Australia. He was one of two judges serving with the Chief Justice. During his 16 years in court, relations between state and federal governments were a major focus. In 1915, Barton sat at the Privy Council while his family was in Britain.

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DEATH / CONCLUSION

Edmund died during his vacation at the Hydro Majestic Blue Mountain, Medlow Bath in New South Wales. This happened because of heart failure on the 7th of January, 1920. He is now known as the First Prime Minister of Australia.

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