

# Australia's First Prime Minister: A 15-Minute Look at Edmund Barton's Life and Legacy

Edmund Barton was Australia's first prime minister, serving from 1901 to 1903. He was a lawyer, politician, and judge who played a key role in the federation of Australia.



## Sir Edmund Barton: Australia's First Prime Minister (15-Minute Books Book 621) by Jeannie Meekins

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

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Barton was born in Sydney in 1849. He studied law at the University of Sydney and was admitted to the bar in 1871. He quickly became a successful lawyer and was elected to the New South Wales Legislative Assembly in 1879.

Barton was a strong advocate for federation. He believed that a united Australia would be stronger and more prosperous than its individual colonies. He was a member of the Federal Convention that drafted the

Australian Constitution, and he played a leading role in the campaign for federation.

When the Commonwealth of Australia was proclaimed on January 1, 1901, Barton became the first prime minister. He faced many challenges during his time in office, including the Boer War, the economic depression of the 1890s, and the establishment of a new national government.

Despite these challenges, Barton was able to achieve a number of significant accomplishments during his time as prime minister. He established the High Court of Australia, introduced the old-age pension, and helped to create a national education system.

Barton resigned as prime minister in 1903. He was appointed to the High Court of Australia in 1906, and he served as its first chief justice until his death in 1920.

Edmund Barton was a significant figure in Australian history. He was a key player in the federation of Australia, and he served as the country's first prime minister. His legacy continues to this day.

## Further Reading

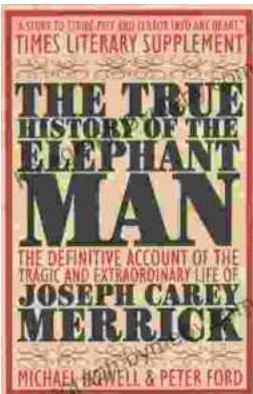
- Edmund Barton - National Archives of Australia
- Sir Edmund Barton - Australian Dictionary of Biography
- Edmund Barton - Encyclopedia Britannica

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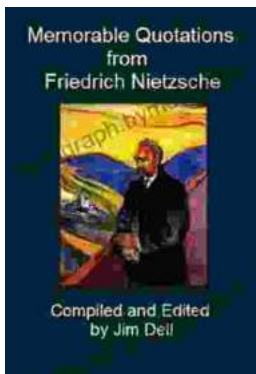


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