



## **Egerton Lee Batchelor (1865-1911)**

**Member for South Australia 1901-1903**

**Member for Boothby (South Australia) 1903-1911**

**B**orn in Adelaide, South Australia, Egerton Lee Batchelor trained as a teacher before becoming an engine-fitter. A member of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers while still in his teens, Batchelor was a leader of the early labour movement in South Australia, holding office on the Trades and Labor Council from 1889, and playing an important part in the formation of the United Labor Party in 1891. He was elected to the House of Assembly as the Labor member for West Adelaide in 1893, and held his seat until 1901. Moderate in his approach, he became Minister for Education and Agriculture in F.W. Holder's non-Labor ministry.

In 1901 Batchelor was the only Labor member elected to represent South Australia in the House of Representatives at the first federal election. From 1903 he represented the electorate of Boothby. A respected figure in the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party, Batchelor was a member of the Labor ministries of Watson and Fisher. Always a reformer and liberal thinker, Batchelor, as

Minister for External Affairs, took over responsibility for the Northern Territory in 1911, claiming that "the treatment of the natives formed the blackest page in Australian history."

Batchelor died suddenly while climbing Mt Donna Buang in Victoria in October 1911. He was still a member of the House of Representatives.

The state of South Australia did not divide into electoral divisions for the purposes of the first federal election. South Australia, as a whole, was also represented in the first House of Representatives by:

Sir John Langdon Bonython  
Patrick McMahon Glynn

Frederick William Holder  
Charles Cameron Kingston

Alexander Poynton  
Vaiben Louis Solomon