



Thomas Thomson Ewing (1856-1920)

Member for Richmond (New South Wales) 1901-1910

Born in Pitt Town, New South Wales, Thomas Ewing was the elder brother of Senator Norman Ewing (Western Australia), who was also a member of the first Parliament. The two brothers represented different states for different parties in different houses. Thomas Ewing was a licensed surveyor who was a member of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly 1884-1901. He was a supporter of federation.

In 1901 Ewing was elected to represent the federal seat of Richmond in the House of Representatives at the first federal election. A staunch Protectionist, he became Vice-President of the Executive Council in the Deakin Government of 1905-06, and Minister for Defence 1906-08. He campaigned strongly for a scheme of compulsory military training for young men which became the basis for the Defence Act 1909, and led to the establishment of the pre-World War I "citizen army".

Ill health forced Ewing to retire in 1910 and he devoted himself to a life of farming on the Tweed River in northern New South Wales. He was recognised for his energetic and independent approach to political life and became involved in a variety of issues outside the scope of his local seat. Knighted in 1908, Ewing was well respected and admired by his peers.

The electorate of Richmond was named after its locality.