



Hugh Mahon (1857-1931)

Member for Coolgardie (Western Australia) 1901-1913

Member for Kalgoorlie (Western Australia) 1913-1917 & 1919-1920

Born at Killurine, King's County, Ireland, Hugh Mahon, a journalist, was imprisoned in Dublin in 1881 for his support for the Irish National Land League. He fled to London on his release, and migrated to Australia in 1882. He edited various newspapers in New South Wales and Western Australia before settling on the Western Australian goldfields.

In March 1901 Mahon, a Labor man, won the federal seat of Coolgardie at the first federal election. He was a minister in four Labor governments. A redistribution of electoral boundaries led to his defeat in the election of 1913. However later that year he was returned unopposed for the federal seat of Kalgoorlie which he held 1913-17 and 1919-20.

Mahon remained an active Irish-Catholic patriot bitterly opposed to the British Empire, which he verbally attacked at a public meeting in Melbourne in 1920, where a motion for the establishment of an Australian republic was passed. He was expelled from the House of Representatives following the passage of a motion introduced by W.M. Hughes, which claimed that his "seditious and disloyal utterances" had made him "guilty of conduct unfitting him to remain a member of this house". Mahon is the only member to be expelled in this fashion from Federal Parliament. He unsuccessfully contested the resulting by-election.

The electorate of Coolgardie was named after its locality.