



Sydney Smith (1856-1934)

Member for Macquarie (New South Wales) 1901-1906

Sydney 'Syd' Smith was born at Colyton, New South Wales, and joined the railways branch of the Department of Public Works in 1870. He was chief clerk when he resigned in 1880, and by 1888 was running his own successful auctioneering and land agency business. Active in municipal politics, he was Mayor of Leichhardt 1888-89. Smith was the member for East Macquarie in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly 1882-94 and the member for Bathurst 1894-98. He was a loyal supporter of Sir Henry Parkes and later Sir George Reid. He opposed the Constitution Bill at the referendums, while claiming to be in favour of federation. Smith said he supported federation but objected to the Constitution Bill.

In 1901 Smith, a Freetrader, was elected to the federal seat of Macquarie in the House of Representatives. As Opposition Whip in the first Parliament he played a strategic role in marshalling the Freetrade Opposition; he became Postmaster-General in the Reid-McLean Government of 1904-05.

Smith was defeated in the election of 1906 and retired to his estate, Thornton Hall, at Penrith.

The electorate of Macquarie was named after Lachlan Macquarie (1761–1824), a Governor of New South Wales.