Buried in the Bendigo Cemetery - Who was he?

Sir John Quick (1852 - 1932)
Images:
QUICK_H1_267.JPG
to
QUICK_H1_267D.JPG

In Loving Memory of
The Hon Sir John QUICK K.B
L.L.D.
dearly loved husband of
Catherine QUICK
died 17th June 1932 Aged 80
First Federal Member of Parliament
for Bendigo

In Loving Memory of
CATHERINE
widow of the late Sir John QUICK
died 7th Dec 1938

The following people were buried in this grave #29185 Sect H1 as per cemetery records.

29185 QUICK John (Sir) 17/06/1932 20/06/1932 80 yrs
31452 QUICK Catherine (Lady) 7/12/1938 9/12/1938 77 yrs

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Daily Mercury (Mackay, Qld. : 1906 - 1954) Sat 18 Jun 1932 Page 7
OBITUARY.
SIR JOHN QUICK.
MELBOURNE, June 17.
The death occurred suddenly today, as the result of a heart attack, of Sir John Quick, former deputy President of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court. Sir John Quick, who was 80 years of age, died at his home in East Camberwell. He was one of the founders of Federation and a former State and Federal Minister. He retired from active public life only two years ago.

No man played a more notable part in the Federation of Australia. He was responsible for the drafting of the bills which were submitted to the State Parliaments and which, when passed, formed the basis of Federation.

He was born in Cornwall in 1852 and came to Australia at an early age. At 10 years of age he worked in a Bendigo foundry to support his widowed mother. He became in turn, mine battery boy, printer's boy reporter, and lawyer. He was elected to the Victorian Parliament in 1880. He was knighted in 1901 for his services to the Federation, and sat in the House of Representatives for Bendigo from 1901 to 1913. He was Postmaster General in the Deakin Cabinet. After his defeat in 1913 he devoted himself to law, becoming deputy President of the Arbitration Court in 1922.

CANBERRA, June 17.
The Governor General, in a tribute to Sir John Quick, described him as a patriotic Australian to whom his country owed a debt of gratitude. His career was one of great service and distinction: his work will live, and with it his name.

and
Sir John Quick (1852 - 1932)
Born 22 April 1852 in St Ives, Cornwall
Died 17 June 1932 at Camberwell Melbourne and he is buried in the Bendigo Cemetery
Occupation - A leading politician during 1890s in promoting Australian Federation.
Sir John Quick was a key figure in getting Australian Federation under way, a self made man and a very active freemason.

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The following story was taken from the pages of TROVE and it is about the 1st public speech John Quick made to launch his election to the Federal Council in 1897.

Bendigo Advertiser (Vic. : 1855 - 1918) Tue 9 Feb 1897 Page 2

BENDIGO TUESDAY, FEB 9, 1897.
DR QUICK'S FEDERATION ADDRESS
The Federal Convention Elections
Dr Quick who is practically the author of the Federal Convention, opened his campaign in the Town Hall, Bendigo, last night, before an audience of several hundred people. He made an able and trenchant address, and met with quite an ovation at the close. A resolution pledging all present to do their utmost to secure the return of the candidate was carried unanimously.

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The following is an extended report of his speech:
The Report

Dr Quick commenced his campaign last night as a candidate for a seat at the forthcoming Federal Convention as one of the 10 representatives of Victoria, when he addressed a very large and enthusiastic assemblage of electors in the Town Hall. As a local resident who has before this, taken a prominent part in the political history making of the colony and as a gentleman who has taken a more than ordinarily active interest in the larger question of federation.

Dr Quick was bound to attract to his first meeting a very large number of adherents, admirers and sympathisers. It was however, something more than the personal popularity of that gentlemen which drew together so many electors to hear him expound his views upon the federation question. It is well known that Dr Quick has taken a very prominent part in the cause, and has in fact been mainly instrumental in laying down the lines upon which the present initiative towards the federal union has been taken. It was, therefore, expected that he would have something of importance to say in his opening address, and in this his hearers were not disappointed.

The learned gentleman did not confine himself to a mere expression of opinion of the subject on broad general lines, but dealt with it in a masterly address of two hours duration, in which he dwelt upon the manifold advantages of federation, what it really was, its importance from a national standpoint, and the advantages that the several colonies were to gain by joining together in a union of the several states.

He recapitulated in a summarised manner the history of the steps which have led up to the present attempt to effect a union of the colonies, and pardonably enough

referred to the part he had taken from the holding of the **Corowa conference**, at which he submitted his motion by which the people should be asked to elect representatives to a convention to frame a constitution, and which, when framed, should be submitted to the people in the form of a referendum for their approval or rejection. He also referred to the draft bill prepared by himself in 1894, which he submitted to the federal authorities in Sydney, and which was accepted by the Premier of New South Wales, and practically embodied in the Enabling bill agreed to by the Premiers of the different colonies at the Hobart conference.

Dr Quick believes in the principle that the government of the people should be by the people. Hitherto the question of federation which had been made the subject of much after-dinner oratory and flowery perorations lacked the stimulating influence of the people's enthusiasm. As Dr Quick observed, it made no headway, and fell as that as the Federal Council had fallen because the people had not hitherto been taken into the confidence of those desirous of bringing about the consummation of so important a project. Parliaments or Governments may move in such a matter, but unless the interest of the masses is aroused by having the responsibility thrown on their shoulders of assisting in the growth of such a fabric all other efforts must fail.

Dr Quick argued that by making it a people's question, and thus broadening and deepening the foundation of a political institution, the more likely was it to be acceptable to the people, and the more likely to work in an acceptable and logical manner. By such means he hoped to establish a federal constitution oh a true democratic basis, and to bring it in line with the advanced principles which underlie the existing legislation of the present era.

Dr Quick referred to the want of knowledge prevailing on the subject of federation, and regarded the period allowed for the election of representatives as altogether too short for them to grasp the full significance and value of the movement.

It would be a pity indeed if the present attempt to bring about the federation of the colonies were to fail from such a cause, but it can be truly said that Dr Quick himself takes much pains towards enlightening the general public on the main issues. He went into a clear exposition of the reasons why federation is advisable, and his explicit reasoning on behalf of the cause is perhaps one or the characteristic features of a brilliant address. He argued that the extent of land, the organised population and the wealth of Australia fitted it "for an advanced and compact empire."

As he observed - "The settlements of today were the portals and gateways to swarming settlements and homes of millions of white men in the future."

We had all the elements of a nation within us, and why should we delay a

movement which was pregnant with so much importance? One of the dangers to be apprehended was in the existence of densely populated colonies contiguous to smaller states, which would lead to conflicting interests and possibly to internal strife.

The speaker made a great point when he referred to the fact that the people of these colonies "were of one blood, speaking one tongue, actuated by the one feeling of loyalty to the British throne, and glorying in the one flag of Great Britain." That was a bond in itself which ought to be strengthened and made impervious to outside aggression by the act of union.

Dr Quick's reference to the disruptive and unifying forces which had been going on for years, led him to remark that it was the duty of the people to check the former and encourage the latter, and in no way could it be done better than by federation. This was indeed the most pithy way the speaker could have put it. Disruption not only retards the growth and prosperity of communities; it leads to possible annihilation. A nation grows out of the union of its people - never out of a disunited or disconnected group of states.

Having touched upon the necessity for federation, Dr Quick proceeded to show that it must be an indissoluble union of the states or colonies, and that when it was once accomplished federation must be for weal or woe for all time. It was one of the weaknesses of the Federal Council that the colonies composing joined it and withdrew from it as they chose. It is, of course, simply impossible that states should be allowed to take up any such position, but unless we have a federation in which more than three colonies are joined together the dangers of such disruptive forces making themselves felt, may be regarded as not altogether impossible.

Dr Quick favours the bicameral system in the federal constitution, and gives excellent reasons. He regards the proposed House of Representatives as representative of the people, whilst the Senate or Upper House would represent the states. The existence of only one chamber would endanger the rights of either the people or the states as their interests are bound to be brought into conflict at one time or another.

Dr Quick referred to what the functions of the Federal Government should be and defined the existence of the Federal Government, the Executive with a Governor-General and the Federal Supreme Court, which latter would guard the interests of both Federal Government and State rights. The speaker referred to the existing border duties, which he condemned as unfriendly between neighbouring colonies, and also to the war of railway tariffs, which he considered monstrous.

He was in favour of a universal suffrage, giving power to all adults to have a voice in the election of representatives of the Federal Government. He touched upon

many other material points in the framing of the constitution, and finally wound up his speech by a magnificent peroration, in which he urged his hearers to recognise the great responsibility, that was being cast upon them in the election of representatives, and to consider and ponder well before giving their vote, so that they would send in representatives capable of dealing with the great work in front of them in a liberal and statesmanlike manner. His address throughout was not only of the most interesting description, but replete with valuable information.

It was a learned and scholarly discourse on the subject, which was regarded by his audience as one of the most brilliant ever given in public by Dr Quick. It undoubtedly stamped him as a gentleman fit not only to take part in such a momentous movement, but as one likely to leave his imprint for all time on the constitution of a Federated Australia.

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And his biography

Sir John Quick was born near St Ives, Cornwall on April 22 1852 and was only 2 when his family arrived on the Bendigo goldfields. His father died soon after and Quick's early life was hard. Leaving school at 10 he worked in foundries, mines and in a printing room for several years. He taught himself shorthand and became a junior reporter with the Bendigo Advertiser before heading to Melbourne in 1872. He put himself through university with the help of scholarships and more newspaper work, particularly as the parliamentary reporter for the Melbourne Age. He graduated as a lawyer in 1877 and was called to the bar in 1878.

Returning to Bendigo, he entered state parliament in 1880 and became a strong advocate for Federation. He married Catherine Harris in 1883 and they settled in Quarry Hill. Despite not being native-born, he was allowed to join the Australia Natives Association and used his presidency of the Bendigo branch as a platform for his efforts towards a single Australian nation.

His key moment came in 1893 at the Corowa Federal Conference when, to break the deadlocked arguments, he put the resolution that each state would pass its own legislation towards the Constitution, then a national referendum would be put to adopt it. This ensured that the decision to federate would be equal between all states, and not seen as being imposed by the stronger ones.

Quick travelled widely over the next few years to promote Federation and was the second elected of the ten Victorian delegates to the 1897-98 Constitutional Convention. His evangelism for the cause is clear in his ringing words:

> "The question is whether there is to be a continuation and intensification of our separate existence as separate colonies, under which there will be antagonism, isolation, parochialism, and

belligerency, with all the frightful family of evils flowing therefrom; or whether there is to be an integration and union into one people with one destiny. There can be no reasonable doubt about the magnitude of the issue, and the supreme importance and fate-begetting character of the alternative.

One will lead to national decay and ruin! the other, as sure as the dawning sun dispels the mists and gloom of night, will lead on to national life and national immortality. Well then may we say in warning tones, at the critical juncture and awe-inspiring moment of our history, 'Unite, and live'; 'Divide, and perish'. The shadow on the dial swiftly moves towards the fateful hour. Australians! quit yourselves as men, and prove yourselves worthy of your heritage!".
(Advance Australia, ANA, 1897)

With the success of the referendum, he was elected federal member for Bendigo in the first Australian Parliament in 1901, as well as being knighted at the opening ceremony for his contribution to the new country. He held the seat until 1913, was appointed Post Master General in 1909, but any hopes for higher office were frustrated by differences with Prime Minister Alfred Deakin.

He returned to the law in 1913 and wrote several key legal and historical texts (Quick and Garran's The Annotated Constitution of the Australian Commonwealth is still a widely quoted standard text on the topic) before being appointed Deputy Chairman of the Arbitration Commission from 1922 to 1930. He was proud to note that all the disputes brought before him (bar one) were resolved without recourse to strike action.

The young John Quick was initiated into Lodge Judah while studying in Melbourne, with the encouragement of his future father-in-law Edward Harris, a former mayor of Eaglehawk and Master of Eaglehawk Lodge. On his return to Bendigo, Quick joined Zenith Lodge. He was their WM in the busy pre-Federation year of 1899 and was appointed Deputy Grand Master for the United Grand Lodge of Victoria in 1914.

But, whether from his need to earn a living in Bendigo (no parliamentary pensions then!), or feuds from his political career, or even his friendship with "Germans" such as WC Vahland in the hysteria of World War 1, he did not become Grand Master.
Editor's comment- ***Close to in life and close to in death.***
It is interesting to note that Sir John was buried in section H1 in the Bendigo Cemetery, as was the famous German born architect, W C Vahland. Their graves are not far from each other.

He died on June 17th, 1932, in retirement in Camberwell, Melbourne, proud of the

country he helped create.

Sourced from an older web page that is no longer available:
by David Beagley
This biography is based on material in The Australian Dictionary of Biography,
Vol. 11 1891 - 1939 (Nes-Smi), and supported by anecdotal material collected by
John Balsillie.

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Compiled by Pat & Ian Belmont
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for the Bendigo Cemetery Obituaries & Notes