

(6) Sir Frederick Thomas Sargood K.C.M.C M.L.C Born; 1834

Died; 2.01.1903



Frederick Thomas Sargood, son of Frederick James and Emma Sargood, was born in England in 1834. When 16 years of age, he came from London to Melbourne with his parents and five sisters in 1850, and spent some time in the Public Works Department of Victoria.

In 1858 he married Marian Australia Rolfe, and they subsequently raised a family of ten children.

In 1861 he joined the business firm of Sargood and King of Melbourne and Bendigo. When his father died in 1873-4, in England, he exercised his option under the will and purchased both the Australian and New Zealand businesses, the latter having been started in 1863-4 by John A. Ewen, who had been in charge of the Bendigo branch. He took into partnership Martin, and later Henry Butler, R. Nichol and J.A. Ewen, and formed the firm of Sargood, Butler, Nichol and Ewen of Australia, with headquarters in Melbourne, and Sargood Sons and Ewen in Dunedin, New Zealand. The two separate businesses became under his command the biggest of their kind in both countries and always bore the best of names for integrity and commercial soundness. Two of his sons, Frederick George and Alfred Herbert became partners in the Australian business and Percy Rolfe in New Zealand.

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In 1859 F.T. Sargood joined the Victorian Volunteer Artillery as a private, rising eventually to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. He took a keen interest in rifle shooting, and became one of the best shots in Victoria.

In May 1874 he was elected a member of the Legislative Council, and in the following year became the first Chairman of the Melbourne Harbor Trust. He visited England in 1880, and was appointed a delegate by the Victorian Government to represent the colony in discussions on the protection of British possessions abroad. He later returned to Melbourne, and in November 1883 joined the Service Ministry as the first Minister of Defence, in which capacity he carried through a reorganization of the defence forces; the cadet corps for schoolboys was among the movements established by his efforts. In 1884 he was appointed Minister of Water Supply, and held both portfolios until the resignation of the ministry in February 1886.

Sargood was appointed Vice-President of the Melbourne centennial exhibition in 1888, and was subsequently Executive Vice-President and Treasurer. He was also president of the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce from 1886 to 1888, and his name was respected in the business world.

When W. E. Hearn died in 1888, Sargood became leader in the Legislative Council and piloted the first Factories Act through it, in spite of the fact that he was himself a Conservative. In 1890 he joined the Munro Ministry as Minister of Defence and of Public Instruction, but withdrew when the Ministry was reconstructed under William Shiels in 1892 because he disagreed with Shiel's adherence to the principle of "one man one vote". He joined the Turner Government in 1894 as Minister of Defence and Vice-President of the Board of Land and Works, but resigned within a few months on a question of principle.

In 1896 Sargood re-entered the Legislative Council, and took a leading part in the Federation movement. At the first Federal elections in 1901 he was elected as one of the senators for Victoria.