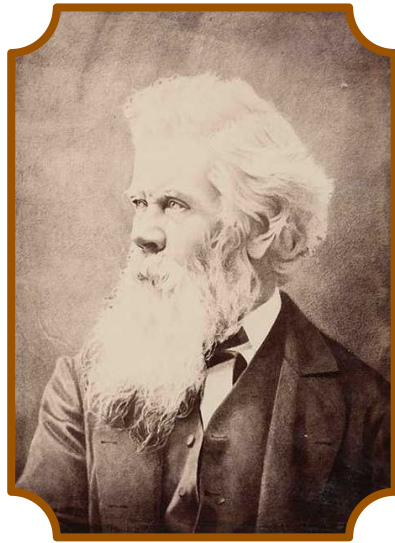


Sir Henry Parkes

1815



Born in 1815, in Moat House Cottage Canley (in those days within the parish of Stoneleigh), the son of a small-scale tenant farmer, he was christened in Stoneleigh Church and briefly attended Stoneleigh School.

Parkes sailed to Australia in 1839, arriving practically penniless. However, by 1872 he had risen to become Premier of New South Wales, a position he held five times between that date and 1891. He is known as the 'Father of Federation' in Australia and gives his name to the town of Parkes, NSW which is twinned with Coventry.

In 1882 he visited Stoneleigh, staying at the Abbey, and lectured to the young people of the village, in the Reading Room: *"You will not all rise to a position of power, honour, influence and responsibility such that I now fill. But by resolving to discharge the duties of life, and in being of use and service in your day and generation, you will do far better than I have done."*