



## **THE HON MR JUSTICE ERNEST DAVID ROPER – FORMER DEPUTY CHANCELLOR (1946–52)**

The Hon Mr Justice Ernest David Roper was a Fellow of Senate elected by the graduates from 1942 to 1958. He was elected Deputy Chancellor by Senate from 1946 to 1952.

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### **PROFILE**

(1901 - 1958)

BA LLB *Sydney*

**Fellow of Senate 1942 - 1958, including election by Senate as  
– Deputy Chancellor 1946 - 1952**

Ernest David Roper, judge, was born on 1 March 1901 in Orange, New South Wales. The family moved to Armidale in 1902 and to Mosman, Sydney, in 1916.

He was educated at Armidale District and North Sydney Boys' High schools, and won the Barker scholarship in mathematics. At the University of Sydney (BA, 1921; LLB, 1925), he graduated in arts with first-class honours in mathematics and philosophy, and was awarded the university medal in each subject.

He was admitted to the Bar on 29 August 1925, and built up a sound practice in crown lands, valuation, equity and income tax matters. He was Challis lecturer in equity and company law (1928-36) at the University and secretary (1935-37) of the Council of the Bar of New South Wales. The Commonwealth government retained him as counsel to assist the royal commission on taxation.

He was appointed to the Land and Valuation Court as deputy-judge from 2 February 1937 and became the sole judge on 25 May. He frequently acted as a Supreme Court judge between 1937 and 1940. His appointment as a Supreme Court judge in 1940 was backdated to 25 May 1937.

In 1947 Roper became chief judge in equity and probate judge. He was also called on to sit with the chief justice and other judges to hear appeals and the Court of Disputed Returns to resolve electoral issues. In 1942 he was a member of the prime minister's Committee of National Morale.

A Fellow of the Senate from 1942 and Deputy Chancellor from 1946 to 1952, he also presided over the Sydney University Law Society for many years. He was a member of the Union and University clubs.

Roper was also a director of the United States Educational Foundation in Australia and of Prince Henry Hospital.

Roper died of cerebrovascular disease on 28 June 1958 in St Luke's Hospital, Darlinghurst. The gates at North Sydney Boys' High School were named after him, as were prizes at the University of Sydney for students in equity and corporate law.

*Information source: Australian Dictionary of Biography*