

Royal Western Australian Historical Society's
Annual Pioneers Memorial Service
on Sunday 5th June 1988 at St Bartholomews Chapel, East Perth Cemeteries,

Commemorating Richard Roach Jewell

Citation by Mrs. Ray Oldham, O.A.M.

Richard Roach Jewell was the Colonial Architect for the Western Australian Government from 1853 to 1884.

Jewell came to Perth in 1852 as a free settler, mainly to seek in this temperate climate health for his frail wife. He was an Englishman who had trained as an architect at his native town of Barnstaple, Devon, and had carried out many important projects in England, including the Military Prison at Gosport, Stanstead College, extensions to fortifications at Portsea and Southsea Castle, besides churches at Cardiff, Bristol and other places.

Jewell was appointed in 1853 to the establishment of James Austin, Clerk of Works of the Colonial Government, whom he soon succeeded. At first, he spent much time repairing existing buildings. Then, in 1854, he supervised the construction of the Old Perth Boys' School, the design for which had been done before his arrival by William Sanford, the Colonial Secretary and an enthusiastic member of the Camden Society in England, which advocated the Gothic Revival style. The first major building to Jewell's own design was the Old Courthouse and Gaol in Beaufort Street. However, after his experience with these two stone constructions, Jewell found the material too expensive and time-consuming and thereafter all his buildings were of brick construction.

While Governor Macquarie in New South Wales had as his principal architect Francis Howard Greenway, Governor Hampton in Western Australia had Richard Roach Jewell. Jewell built for the Governor and the Government the Perth Town Hall; additions to the Legislative Council; the Hall of the Legislative Assembly; the Guard House, Barrack Street; the Military Hospital the west end of St. George's Terrace; the Colonial Hospital (now incorporated into Royal Perth Hospital); the first sections of government offices on the corner of Barrack Street and St. George's Terrace. He also supervised construction of Government House and designed several additions as he did to the Pensioners' Barracks. For the first Anglican Bishop, Mathew Hale, he designed and built The Cloisters, the first boys' secondary school in W.A.; Bishop's House (recently restored by Lord MacAlpine); the Clergy Lodging nearby; the Sunday Schoolroom; and the Deanery.

As Jewell was for many years the only qualified architect in the Stat he was permitted to design and construct churches for various religious denominations: Trinity Congregational Church (now behind the later Trinity Church in St. George's Terrace); Wesley Church, Perth; a wing of Victoria Square Convent. He also designed the Masonic Lodge, Hay Street; and numerous structures in country towns, including Government House at Rottneest lock-ups at Bunbury and Busselton; Toodyay Gaol (now the Museum); bridges over the Swan, Dale and Avon Rivers; and the first Post and Telegraph Stations for the Overland Telegraph Line at Bremer Bay, Esperance, Israeli Bay, Eyre's Sand Patch and Eucla.

Although Jewell worked always on a shoe-string budget, his buildings are of pleasing proportions and he handled the simple construction material with expertise. He established his profession on a firm footing, winning respect and admiration for architecture. He gave Perth civic pride and dignity and a distinctive character which survived for a hundred years.

The name of Richard Roach Jewell will not be forgotten.

RICHARD ROACH JEWELL was born in 1810 in Barnstaple, Devon and arrived in the Colony in 1852.

He was employed by the Convict Establishment and became Superintendent of Public Works in 1853, a role he retained until his retirement in 1884.

His name appears on drawings for many public buildings, some of which survive today, although there is doubt whether he was responsible for the actual design. The most noteworthy are:

The Old Goal, Perth 1853

Bishop Hales Collegiate School (The Cloisters) 1858

The Pensioner Barracks, Perth 1863

Interior fittings and decor for Government House, Perth 1863

Wesley Church, Perth 1870

Richard Roach Jewell is buried in the Church of England Section of the East Perth Cemetery.