

Jack Ochiltree

(Battye, J.S., *Cyclopedia of Western Australia*, Vol.1, 1912, p.542; RAI, c.1930s)

Jack Learmonth Ochiltree (1870-1954) was born 25 April 1870 at Ballarat, Victoria, the son of Thomas and Marion Ochiltree. Jack completed his articles 1887-1891 under the impressive but short-lived Alfred Dunn (1865-1894), joint architect of the splendid be-domed Melbourne head office of the Commercial Bank of Australia in 1890. Fleeing depressed Victoria for Western Australia in 1894, Ochiltree served in the architectural branch of the Government Railways for three years. During the height of the Western Australian gold boom, he moved to the goldfields and worked at Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie-Boulder.

In 1897 Jack was acting as clerk of works on the Maritana Street, Kalgoorlie branch of the Bank of Australasia, designed by architects Porter & Thomas. A volunteer corps officer, Ochiltree departed Kalgoorlie to serve with the Fifth Contingent at the Boer War, embarking at Fremantle in early 1901. While Jack was in South Africa, he received word that his brother William H. Ochiltree, employed by the Harbours and Rivers Branch of the Public Works Department had died prematurely in Perth, aged just 29. Upon Jack Ochiltree's return to Western Australia in May 1902, he resumed practice in Perth.

During 1903-1904 Jack was listed in Perth, working in a partnership with goldfields architects Geoffrey Oswald Hawkins and Hedley Vicars Sprigg, possibly former employers, as Hawkins Sprigg & Ochiltree. His office was located at the Cathedral Chambers, alongside St George's Cathedral, where on 29 December 1903 Jack married Mary Rose Loton, daughter of prominent Perth businessman W.T. Loton. They had two daughters and a son – Isla Rose born 1904, Beryl Marion born 1908, and Jack Edmund born 1910.

Ochiltree's early works appear to have been mostly residential, and included in 1904-1905: six residences at Claremont; eight brick villas at East Perth, and four cottages on Claisebrook Road, East Perth. In 1907 Jack designed a grand two-storey residence for Albert M Birch in Beaufort Street, Mt Lawley, an area where he was to complete many more domestic designs.

Achieving further recognition and importance in early twentieth century WA, Jack was made a Justice of the Peace in 1908, an Associate of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects (ARVIA) in April 1910, and a licentiate of the Royal British Institute of Architects (LRIBA) in July 1911 - proposed by senior professionals in WA, G. T. Poole, M.F. Cavanagh and E. Summerhayes.

In his early sole practitioner period, large buildings Ochiltree designed included the Western Australian Club at St George's Terrace, Perth in 1907; extensive premises opened in 1910 at West Guildford for Cuming, Smith & Co; and the Carnegie Library at Midland Junction, opened during 1912. In addition, he designed large homesteads on pastoral properties in the north-west and in the Geraldton Region. The near-Geraldton Homesteads include *Newmarracarra* for Walter McKenzie Grant, and *Yanget* for Alec Edgar Grant, both in 1910. Stone was quarried locally, and bricks made on the properties for both these large houses. *Koogerena* Homestead at Kojarena followed for Lionel Davis in 1911.

Ochiltree designed additions to the No.1 Fire Station in Murray Street, Perth during 1910, and must have been well received, as by July 1913 he was formally appointed as architect for the West Australian Fire Brigades Board (WAFBB). Amongst a great deal of WAFBB works, he was responsible for further additions at Murray Street in 1914 & 1916, for fire stations at Bunbury, Claremont & Kellerberrin in 1914-15, at McCourt Street, Leederville in 1926 and at Collie in 1929.

Ochiltree served as a Councilor for the South Ward of the City of Perth, holding office as Chairman of the Works Committee. In 1914-15, his design work included the Municipal Hall and Offices at Bayswater; a seven room residence at Richardson Avenue, West Perth; five two-storey residences at Fitzgerald Street, Perth; a warehouse for Perth City Council at Murray Street; substantial additions to the Union Brewery at Palmerston Street, Perth; a two-storey building comprising shops and residential accommodation at the corner of

William and Brisbane Streets; a two storey building in Beaufort Street; electric substations in Perth; and the Wellington Hotel at Bunbury. Ochiltree maintained connections at the goldfields towns, designing a number of important buildings. In 1917 he designed the Majestic Theatre at 110-114 Hannan Street, Kalgoorlie, and the Palace Theatre at 127 Burt Street, Boulder in 1937.

In June 1914, Jack Ochiltree was elected a Fellow of the West Australian Institute of Architects (FWAIA). Closely involved with professional matters by this time, Ochiltree was President of the recently constituted Royal Institute of Architects of Western Australia (RIAWA) in 1922-1923. After the *Architects Act of Western Australia 1921* received formal assent, he was one of the first to register with the Architects Board on 29 May 1922, receiving registration number 5 - in alphabetical order behind J.F. Allen, M.F. Cavanagh, J.H. Eales and J.J.T. Hobbs.

Ochiltree continued on through the 1920s, gaining significant commissions and maintaining a steady work load. In October 1927, *The West Australian* noted that on behalf of A.F. Palandri, Ochiltree had accepted a tender of £8,650 for the construction of the Ship Hotel at Busselton. The timber building erected around sixty years previous was to be demolished, and a two-storey structure with frontage to two streets, containing 22 bedrooms, bars and other accommodation would take its place. Other examples of his varied urban and regional projects included McNess Memorial Hall in Pier Street, Perth of 1929; a foundry for George Kent Ltd in Railway Parade, West Perth and the Bank of Australasia at Carnamah, both in 1930.

In March 1931 tragedy struck Ochiltree with the early death of his wife Mary at their 37 Ord Street, West Perth home, aged only 56. To assist in coping with the loss, in May 1931 Jack departed with his daughter Isla on the *Ormonde* for six months holiday in Europe, returning to Fremantle on the *RMS Cathay*. Happier times came with the marriage of Isla in November 1933, although she soon moved to Bridgetown, and Jack was left with his work as a main focus. Illustrating a varied clientele, Jack designed a monumental Sunday School for the First Church of Christ, Scientist at Perth in 1933, and called tenders for a new two-storey brick with tile roof nurses' quarters for the children's hospital (Princess Margaret Hospital) at Roberts Road, Subiaco in early 1936.

In mid-1936 Ochiltree acted in association with emerging architect John Harrison Osborne Hargrave on a project at Fremantle, and at the end of that year they entered into partnership as Ochiltree & Hargrave with offices in T & G Chambers, inviting tenders for the erection of a brick residence in George Street, Pinjarra for W.E.C. McLarty. Following projects included a brick warehouse at Hay Street, on the east side of Elder Street, Perth in 1937; a branch of the Bank of Australasia at High Street, Fremantle in 1938. The design influence of Hargrave is evident in the firm's two acclaimed Perth buildings in the Inter-War Art Deco style - the fine church for the First Church of Christ, Scientist, at Elder Street of 1938, and the St John Ambulance Building at Wellington Street of 1939. The two buildings are of comparable scale and the exterior treatment of both is imitation stone stucco.

By the end of the 1930s, having practised as an architect in Western Australia for over 40 years, Ochiltree was well-established and well known. With building austerity following the onset of the Second World War, and having achieved seventy-five years by the end of the conflict, Ochiltree stepped back and left Hargrave to direct and continue the work of the practice. By 1953, Hargrave had taken on another partner, with the firm styled Ochiltree Hargrave & Moran. Jack Ochiltree died aged 83 on 5 January 1954, at his Ord Street home where he had resided for over forty years. Ironically, his house was later demolished to construct new premises for architectural firm Hobbs Winning Leighton.

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- 'Our Returned Soldiers Interview with Captain Ochiltree', *Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 13 May 1902, p.20.
- 'Midland Junction Municipal Council', *The West Australian*, 5 September 1910, p.7 (Carnegie).
- 'Opening of Messrs Cuming, Smith & Co', *Western Mail*, 1 October 1910, p.27 (photos).
- 'The Superphosphate Industry', *Western Mail*, 1 October 1910, p.45 (Cuming, Smith & Co).
- 'Newmarracarra Homestead', *Geraldton Guardian*, 14 January 1911, p.2.
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 1 May 1911, p.3 (homestead at Kojarena for Lionel R. Davis).
- 'A Carnegie Library', *The West Australian*, 4 May 1912, p.6 (opening by Premier Scaddan).
- Battye, J.S., 'Councillor Jack Learmonth Ochiltree', *Cyclopedia of Western Australia*, Hussey & Gillingham for the Cyclopedia Co. Adelaide, 1912, Vol.1, p.542-3.
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 13 July 1914, p.4 (Perth no.2 & no.3 electricity sub-stations).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 2 January 1915, p.3 (Perth no.1 & no.4 electricity sub-stations).

'Yarloop District War Memorial', *Daily News*, 17 June 1922, p.9.

'Work at Busselton', *The West Australian*, 29 October 1927, p.4 (Ship Hotel, Busselton).

'An Improved Locality', *The West Australian*, 21 April 1928, p.10 (residence 15 Baker Avenue, Perth, facing Birdwood Square, for R.C. Leslie).

'McNess Memorial Hall, Pier Street', *The West Australian*, 27 July 1929, p.11 (photo).

'Bank of Australasia, Carnamah', *The West Australian*, 4 October 1930, p.6 (sketch).

'Deaths', *The West Australian*, 4 March 1931, p.1 (Mary Rose).

'Mr J.L. Ochiltree', *The West Australian*, 28 May 1931, p.8 (Children's Hospital, departure).

'Personal', *The West Australian*, 28 November 1931, p.16 (return to WA).

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'A New Sunday School', *The West Australian*, 25 March 1933, p.7 (First Church of Christ Scientist).

'A Perth Sunday School', *The West Australian*, 5 August 1933, p.6 (First Church of Christ Scientist).

'Weddings: Stuart-Ochiltree', *The West Australian*, 16 November 1933, p.3 (Isla to Bridgetown).

'Current Work', *The West Australian*, 6 April 1935, p.4 (Yaringa Homestead, Carnarvon district).

'Children's Hospital', *The West Australian*, 15 February 1936, p.6 (nurses quarters Roberts Rd).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 18 July 1936, p.29 (associated architects, Henry St Fremantle).

'Residences', *The West Australian*, 12 December 1936, p.14 (partnership, George St Pinjarra).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 14 December 1936, p.13 (residence Pinjarra W.E.C. McLarty).

'Hay Street Warehouse', *The West Australian*, 21 August 1937, p.6 (east side of Elder St).

'Bank of Australasia, Fremantle', *The West Australian*, 19 March 1938, p.10 (sketch).

'Deaths', *The West Australian*, 7 January 1954, p.26 (death of Jack, notes Isla pre-deceased).

'Yacht Club Expands', *The West Australian*, 9 October 1954 (Claremont Yacht Club by Ochiltree, Hargrave & Moran).

Ochiltree, Jack Learmonth, *Directory of British Architects, 1834-1914*, Vol 2, L-Z, p.684.

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Pers comm. John Taylor with Beryl Marion Ochiltree 13 April 1996, and certificates provided by Beryl Ochiltree.

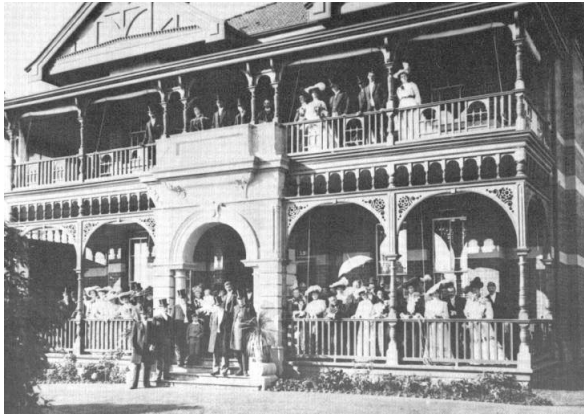
Steedman, Alice & Munt, Helen; draft City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder Local Government Heritage Inventory 2010; places 59, 124, 154.

Contributing author: John Taylor

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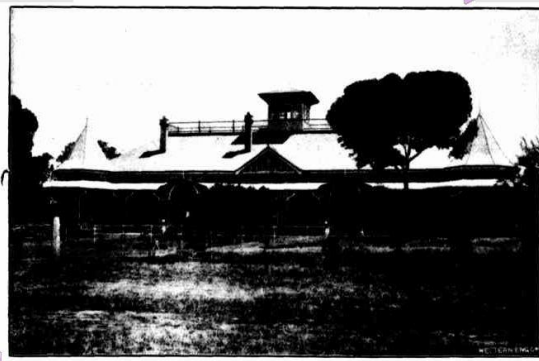
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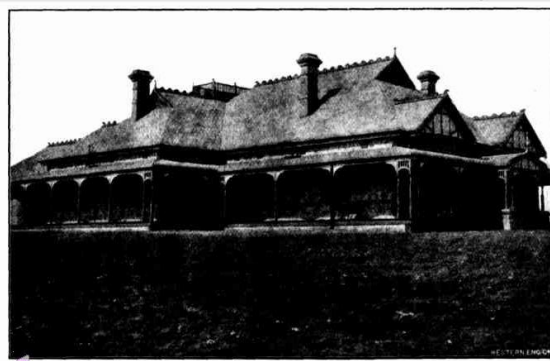


Carnegie Library and Court House, Midland Junction

Ochiltree wedding day in December 1903 at the Talbot Hobbs designed *Dilhorn*, home of Jack's father-in-law William T. Loton (Hasluck, A. & Lukis, M., *Victorian and Edwardian Perth*, John Ferguson Pty Ltd, NSW, 1977, photo 166); Carnegie Library at Midland Junction, designed by Ochiltree in 1910-11 and opened during 1912 (SLWA 007171D).

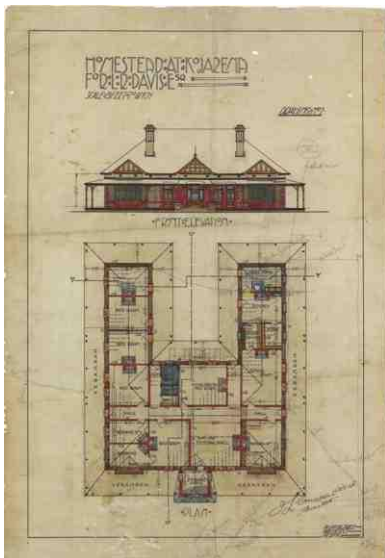


NEWMARRACARRA HOMESTEAD, THE PROPERTY OF MR. W. MCKENZIE GRANT: J. L. OCHILTREE, ARCHITECT.



MR. ALEC. GRANT'S HOME AT YANGET, ON THE NEWMARRACARRA ESTATE: J. L. OCHILTREE, A.R.V.I.A., ARCHITECT.

The massive *Newmarracarra* and *Yanget* Homesteads (Western Mail, 6 April 1912, p.5s).



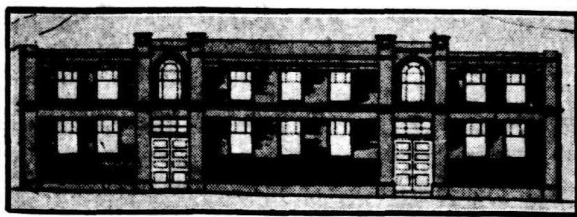
Plan of *Koogerena* Homestead at Kojarena c.1911 (Bruce Sherwood); *Newmarracarra* c.1920's from the south-west (courtesy Don Grant, *Conservation Plan for Newmarracarra Homestead*, John Taylor Architect, 1996).



Perth electricity sub-stations: no.2 at 333 Murray Street and no.3 at 98 Colin Street built in 1914. Ochiltree also designed no.1 in Wellington Street, and no.4 in Palmerston Street (2010 photos courtesy Katrina Chisholm).



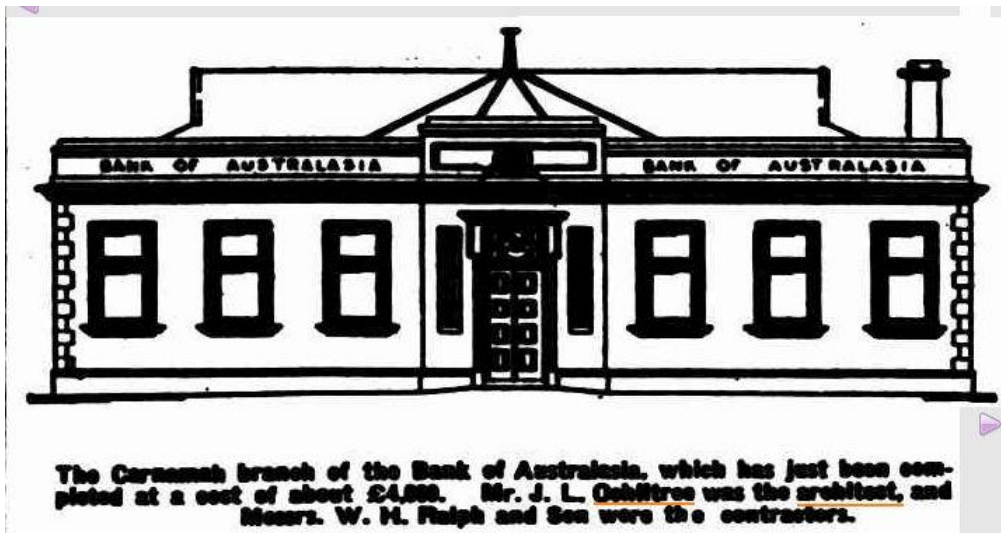
City of Perth Electricity and Gas Department, 132 Murray Street, Perth 1927. Sign posted on building reads: New premises being erected for Electricity & Gas Dept. J.L. Ochiltree, Architect, Todd Bros, Contractor. Became State Energy Commission of W.A. offices (SLWA 095913PD).



A foundry for George Kent, Ltd., is being erected to the above design in Railway-parade, West Perth, at a cost of £3,333. Mr. J. L. Ochiltree is the architect.



George Kent Ltd foundry, 66-70 Railway Parade, West Perth (*The West Australian*, 15 February 1930, p.8; SLWA 237366PD).



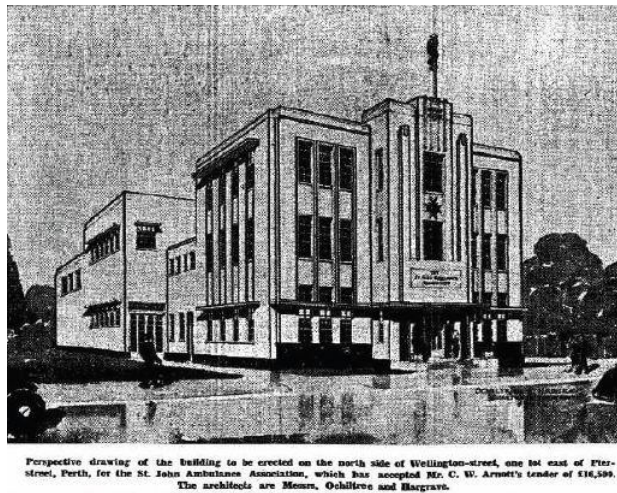
Bank of Australasia (fmr), Carnamah (*The West Australian*, 4 October 1930, p.6; Google 2012).



Sunday School for First Church of Christ, Scientist of 1933 (SLWA 007953D).



Sketch of Bank of Australasia, High St Fremantle (*The West Australian*, 19 March 1938, p.10).



Sketch of St John Ambulance Building in Wellington Street, Perth (*The West Australian*, 14 October 1939, p.6).



First Church of Christ, Scientist in Elder Street, Perth (Google 2012).