

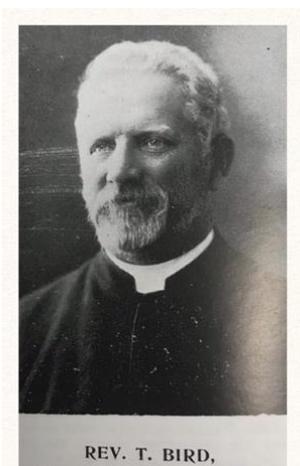
Bird Street



Sometimes the origins of street names are not clear. The first mention of Bird Street in the Eastern Districts Chronicle was in 1885. Prior to this date there were two families with the surname Bird, not related to each other, both with a Thomas Bird as the head of the family.

Thomas Bird (1833 -1886) was a Parkhurst boy who had been convicted of stealing boots and arrived on the "Orient" in 1848 at the age of 14, initially being indentured to W.L.Brockman. He married Selina (b.1837) the daughter of Thomas and Mary Reynolds who had arrived in the 'colony on the "Success" in 1843. Thomas and Selina were mentioned in the 1859 census, Thomas as a farmer and Selina as a farmer and cook. Their farm comprised wheat and barley and they owned 4 horses, 10 cows and 30 pigs. During their marriage they had 13 children, all born in York, living at Woodside and then at Hawkhurst by 1880, before leaving York in 1882 to live in Carnarvon. There Thomas became the publican of the Port Hotel and was elected to the Roads Board before falling from the Carnarvon jetty and breaking his neck in 1886. Selina is recorded in The Northern Times as being the first white woman to settle with a family in Carnarvon. Thomas's older brother Edwin, also a Parkhurst boy, came to York with his family via Tasmania. He was a painter, glazier and paper hanger and carved inscriptions on headstones. His workshop was near the York Agricultural Show Grounds in the 1880/90s.

The Reverend Thomas Bird was a Wesleyan Minister. He arrived in Western Australian in 1878 and had his first parish in Geraldton before being sent to York in 1884. He was greatly respected by his parishioners and is recorded as associating himself "with every institution that tended to promote the



moral and social welfare of the town, among them being the Board of Education and the Mechanics Institute”.

He was heavily involved in the building and opening of the new Wesley Church in York, giving the opening service with the Reverend W.Lowe. The parishioners so admired his efforts that they applied to the Wesley Church Conference to allow him to stay two years longer than the three years of a normal pastorate. He was farewelled in a ceremony at the Oddfellows Hall in 1889 where he was presented with a purse containing 16 gold sovereigns. His life in Perth turned tragically wrong when newspaper articles were written which impugned his character relating to adverse business dealings . He committed suicide by poison in Kings Park.