

Information Sheet No. 19

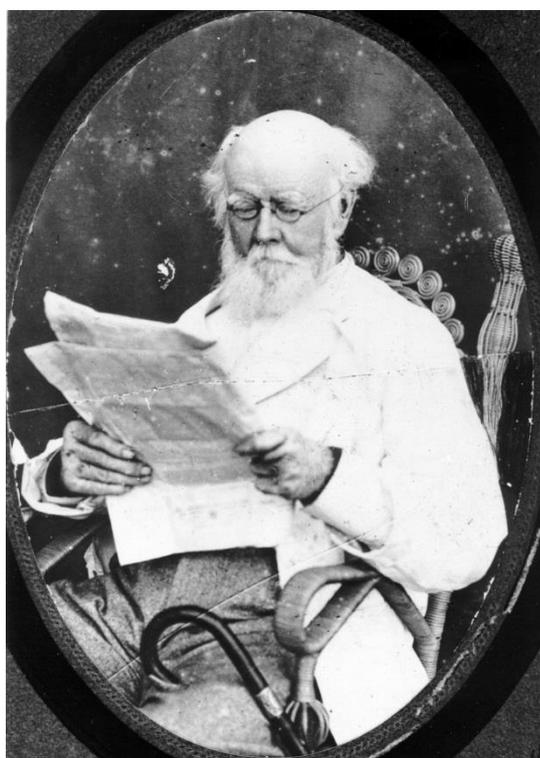


Heritage Services

Geraldton Regional Library

JOHN NICOL DRUMMOND – First Policeman

1816	- Born in England.
1840	- Appointed Native Police Superintendent, York and Toodyay.
1850	- To Champion Bay as Chief Constable.
1852, Feb 19-	- Married Mary Shaw at Guildford, WA.
1857	- Resigned from Police Force.
1875	- Appointed a Justice of the Peace.
1906, Jul 9	- Died in Geraldton, WA.



John Drummond. Photo from *Drummonds of Hawthornden*, Rica Erickson, 1969.

John Nicol Drummond, the son of James Drummond the well-known early Western Australian botanist, was the first police officer stationed in Geraldton. Drummond's police service began in York about 1840, during which he learnt about the ways of local Aborigines and became familiar with the Avon Valley pastoralists; two elements of his future success in the Champion Bay district. In 1845 Drummond gained notoriety for shooting the Aboriginal man Kabinger over a family dispute. Governor Hutt left the colony soon after, and Drummond's suspension from duty was repealed.

A year after Geraldton was established it became evident to the colonial government in Perth that the Naaguja people and their neighbours were not going to acquiesce to the taking of their land. Drummond was ordered to Geraldton as its first Chief Constable. Accompanying the first pastoralists and herds overland, he arrived in November 1850. His early duty reports detail long periods spent in the

saddle on a continuous circuit between Geraldton and the Murchison, Bowes, Greenough and Irwin.

Drummond established himself on 50 acres at Smuggler's Cove (now Drummond Cove) and built the small limestone cottage that still stands. His father joined him there for most of 1851 while collecting plants in the surrounding region. John Drummond married Mary Shaw, who arrived at Geraldton in early 1852, but their one and only baby did not survive. The Drummonds expanded their interests, leasing 7,000 acres in the area around White Peak, and eventually establishing a copper mine. By 1852 he was also appointed Sub-Protector of Natives for the district, and in 1857 Sub-Inspector of Police, yet resigned later that year when he was ordered to transfer to the Albany district. Although he never actually resided in Geraldton, his strong grip on law and order played a large part in Geraldton's beginning. He lived out his years at White Peak station, north of Geraldton.

References

*Text taken from **Geraldton: 150 Years, 150 Lives**, Local Studies Department, Geraldton Regional Library, 2001, p. 52.*

Copies are available from the Library, 37 Marine Terrace, Geraldton (PO Box 101, Geraldton, WA, 6531) for \$27.50 (plus \$6.50 postage and handling).

