JOHN GARRETT BUSSELL
1803–1875

John Garrett Bussell was born in Portsea Hampshire England on August 16, 1803. He was the eldest of nine children born to Reverend William Marchant Bussell and his wife Frances. Reverend Bussell’s death in 1820 left the family in difficult circumstances. Migration to the Swan River settlement seemed their best option.

Following his graduation from Oxford in 1829, John and his brothers Charles, Vernon and Alfred sailed for Western Australia on the Warrior. Governor Stirling encouraged him to take up land at Augusta, with the Turners, Molloys and other families. However, the land proved difficult to clear and cultivate, and crop failures threatened their survival.

In a search for more suitable land, John explored north towards Geographe Bay. The area around the Vasse River showed great promise, and in 1832 the Bussells were granted 3573 acres at the Vasse. On April 14, 1834 John, his brothers, Phoebe Bower (maidservant), Elijah Dawson and George Layman sailed from Augusta to Geographe Bay on the Ellen to begin the new settlement. The Chapman brothers travelled overland to join them with the livestock. The Bussells’ new home at The Vasse was named Cattle Chosen when a favourite cow, lost in Augusta eventually found its way to the property six months later.
In 1835 the fledgling settlement was named Busselton in recognition of the achievements of John Bussell and his brothers. In 1836 their mother Frances, sisters Fanny and Bessie, and brother Lennox joined the family at *Cattle Chosen*.

In 1837 John sailed to England, returning in 1838 with his new wife Charlotte. They had four daughters: Capel (Brockman), Emily (Vines), Caroline and Josephine (Prinsep).

John Garrett Bussell was a generous community leader and successful farmer. He conducted regular church services, taught classics at Hale School in Perth in 1864, was a long-serving JP and was elected to the colony’s first Legislative Council in 1870. He died at *Cattle Chosen* on September 21, 1875 and is buried in a grave next to St Mary’s Anglican Church, the oldest stone church in Western Australia that he designed and helped to build.

The sculpture was unveiled by Ben Vines, Vernon Bussell and Susan Willmott on 6 September 2016.

Sculptor: Greg James, Fremantle, Western Australia.