

James Backhouse Walker

James Backhouse Walker (1841 -1899) was the son of [George Washington Walker](#) and Sarah Benson Walker, daughter of Robert Mather. James was born in Hobart Town and educated both in Hobart and the Friends school, *Bootham*, in York, England. He was employed as a junior clerk in his father's Hobart Savings Bank and in 1872 took articles and was admitted as barrister, solicitor and proctor of the Supreme Court of Tasmania in 1876. His social commitment was evident in his many pursuits. He sought improved conditions for workers as secretary of the Working men's Club. He was a member of various educational boards and in 1889 proposed an examining university as the first step towards a teaching university. In the following year he was appointed member of the first council of the new university and in 1898 became its second vice - chancellor. He was a trustee of the Tasmanian Public Library and elected to the council of the Royal Society of Tasmania in 1888. His papers on the discovery, early settlement and Aboriginal inhabitants of Tasmania, published in 1902 became a standard authority.

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