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Bro. Dr. JOHN JOB CREW BRADFIELD
CMG, DSc, ME, M Inst CE, MIE Aust.
(1867-1943)

The name John Job Crew Bradfield, will be forever associated with such engineering masterpieces as the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Story Bridge in Brisbane. He was born on Boxing Day, 26 December 1867, at Sandgate in Queensland.

His parents, John and Maria Bradfield and family arrived from England in January 1857 and settled in Ipswich. They were joined in 1859 by Maria's brother, William Crew and her sister Susan with husband Charles Pennell. John senior was a brickmaker and he set up in business with his in-laws.

The business prospered until 1867 with the family providing bricks for the Post Office, Telegraph Office, the National School, Ipswich Grammar and the Bank of New South Wales amongst many other buildings. The brick building boom began to falter in 1867 when J. Bradfield junior was born and collapsed altogether in 1871.

Due to the difficult times, the toddler, Jack, as his family called him, went with his eldest brother Dick, a blacksmith/wheelwright, his uncle Charles Pennell and Aunt Susan when they took up some land at Kalbar in the Fassifern scrub. Jack had his first schooling at Engelsberg. He returned to his family in Ipswich and attended the Little Ipswich School and North Ipswich State School and, at the age of twelve in 1880, took up an Ipswich Grammar School scholarship. Jack was a good student and his scholarship was extended to the full five years and he passed all ten subjects at senior level and was Dux of the school. He was awarded the medal for chemistry.

He won a Queensland government university exhibition and, in 1886, matriculated at the University of Sydney.

He graduated a Bachelor of Engineering in 1889 and won the University gold medal, the Levy scholarship for chemistry, the Smith prize for physics and the Sulman prize for architecture.

He commenced work as a draughtsman with the Queensland Government Railways but, following retrenchment in 1891, he returned to Sydney and joined the New South Wales Department of Public Works as a temporary draughtsman.

Bradfield was an Associate of the Institution of Civil Engineers, London and graduated a Master of Engineering with first class honours and the University medal in 1896.

