James Mackinnon Fowler (1863-1940)

Member for Perth (Western Australia) 1901-1922

James Fowler was born in Strathaven, Scotland and migrated to Australia in 1891. Upon his arrival in Australia, Fowler spent time prospecting in Victoria, and helped to form the Victorian Socialist League. He settled in Perth in 1898, where he was active in the Western Australian Federal League.

Fowler was elected to the House of Representatives for the seat of Perth as a Freetrader in the first federal election in 1901 and subsequently joined the Labor Party. Fowler left the Party after the fall of the Fisher ministry in 1909, and joined the Liberals. He was Chairman of Committees in the House of Representatives 1913-14. He lost party endorsement and was defeated at the election in 1922.

A freelance journalist, Fowler published material critical of W.M. Hughes and of the protectionist policies of the government, which he felt disadvantaged Western Australia. Following his retirement he lived in Melbourne, where he consolidated a large personal library and wrote newspaper articles, novels and short stories.

The electorate of Perth was named after its locality. The settlement of Perth was named after Perth, Scotland.