

Richmond bridge

Richmond in southern Tasmania is home to many buildings and structures built by convicts under the most appalling conditions. One such structure, the bridge over the Coal River at Richmond was completed in 1825, making it the oldest surviving freestone bridge in Australia. Its original name recalls

For some years Richmond had been used as a crossing point for people travelling by land to the Tasman and Forestier Peninsulas. The bridge was built by convict labour between 1823 and 1825 for movement of military, police and convicts between Hobart and Port Arthur. It was originally named Bigge's Bridge after John Thomas Bigge (1780-1843), an English judge and royal commissioner, who visited Australia in order to report on the state of the colonies. During his visit to Van Diemen's Land in 1820 he recognised the need for a bridge across the Coal River and authorised its construction.

