

HENRY HARDIE KEMP (1859-1946)

The talented architect Henry Hardie Kemp was born in Lancashire and educated privately. He passed an examination in building construction in 1878, after three years as an articled pupil of Manchester architects Corsen & Aitken, then studied the vernacular architecture around Lancashire. He moved to London and worked in offices of several architects while attending the Royal Academy. In 1881 he became a travelling student and medallist of the Architectural Association, then made a number of sketching tours of France. Upon his arrival in Melbourne in 1886 Kemp was appointed chief assistant with Terry & Oakden and became a partner in Oakden, Addison & Kemp a year later, then of Oakden & Kemp in 1892. His major works by then included Gothic Revival-styled buildings for the Working Men's College and one of Australia's important tall buildings of the 1880s, the innovative 12-storey A. P. & I. Co. Building (1888) in Elizabeth Street, Melbourne. It was Australia's tallest building at 150 feet, taller than any European office building. Kemp married Charlotte Harvey in 1888 at the Presbyterian Church, Kew, for which he had designed a brick manse.

Kemp moved to Sydney in 1896 but returned to Melbourne in 1899 and the Ussher & Kemp partnership was formed, which became renowned for their large, picturesque, multi-gabled, red brick suburban villas in the Federation Queen Anne style, of which Kemp was a key practitioner. Kemp remained in practice after Ussher's death in 1909, briefly with George Inskip. Although he had some significant commissions, his work became less adventurous. The Presbyterian Church, of which Kemp was an elder, was an important client for whom Kemp designed the Assembly Hall in Collins Street, Melbourne (1913-15) and work at Scotch College's new campus in Hawthorn (1917-26). He was appointed an assessor of the competition to complete St Paul's Cathedral, along with Professor Leslie Wilkinson and P.B. Hudson. As they awarded first prize to John Barr in 1925, it is no surprise that Kemp and Barr were appointed in 1927, when the St Paul's project was taking shape, to collaborate in the building of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, hall and manse in Canberra. Kemp's substantial two-storey manse was completed in 1928. Kemp retired from practice in 1929 and died at Kew in 1946.



The former Manse, now St Andrew's House, of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Canberra

References:

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