



E.W. Warne c.1940 (Claremont Museum 16.617)

Ernest William Warne (1893-1968) was born 2 July 1893 at Newcastle in County Down, Ireland, the second of four children of English-born naval pensioner and grocer Walter Warne and his wife Jane (née Long). Walter also had six children and Jane one child by previous marriages. Within the 1911 Census Ernest and his older sister were living as boarders at 141 Springfield Road, Belfast, at that time he was serving an apprenticeship as an engine fitter. Warne and his brother Sidney Herbert enlisted for First World War (1914-1918) service with the North Irish Horse during September of 1914, and in May 1915 they embarked for France. Ernest transferred to the Royal Flying Corps in October 1916 with the rank of Air Mechanic Class 2. He transferred to the Royal Air Force on its creation on 1 April 1918, with the rank of Sergeant Mechanic. He returned from France in September 1918, and in March 1919 was demobilized.

Soon after the war Warne was living at 40 Hatfield Street, Belfast, and later at 38 Woodvale Road. He joined the Freemasons in 1919, and in the 1920s was a member of *Hiram's Ancient Band - Lodge no. 103* at Belfast. At some point he qualified as an architect – he was elected to the council of the Ulster Society of Architects in January 1927. In the *Belfast News-Letter* of 2 July 1927, E.W. Warne Architect called tenders for the erection of an Orange Hall at Newcastle, County Down.

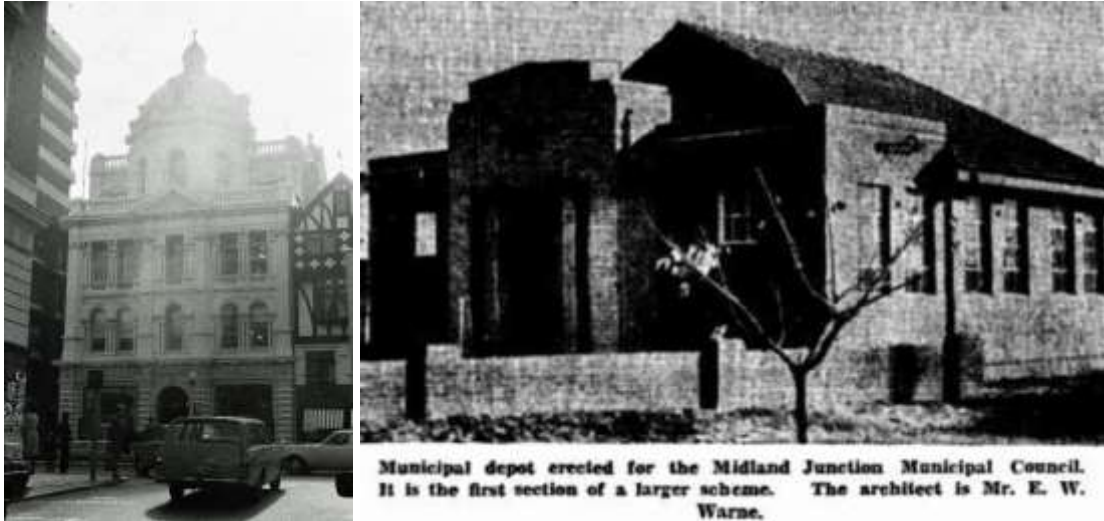
On 22 September 1927 Warne emigrated to Australia, sailing on the *SS Beltana*, a P. & O. Cape Service from London, disembarking 1 November 1927 at the port of Fremantle in Western Australia. He settled in Perth, where in April 1928 he was appointed to the position of Assistant Architect in the WA Department of Public Works on a salary of £456. Around 1928 Warne purchased a modest house at 18 Bernard Street Claremont, where he would reside for the next thirty

years. In January 1930 he married Maud Frances Bull (1900-1966) in St Alban's Church, Highgate Hill, Perth. The couple had their first child on 7 September 1931, a son born at Tresillian Hospital in Nedlands.

In September 1935 it was announced in the press that "Mr. Ernest William Warne has passed the special final examination qualifying him for election as an associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects. Mr. Warne was examined in Perth last June by the West Australian panel of R.I.B.A. examiners. He is a senior assistant architect in the Public Works Department, and an associate member of the Royal Society of Ulster Architects." Subsequently, in January 1936 Warne was registered (no.152) with the Architects Board of Western Australia (ABWA) under Section 14 (a) of the *Architects Act 1921*.

Warne became an associate member of the Royal Institute of the Architects of Western Australia (RIAWA) in 1936. He left the PWD and became a private architect around 1938, initially with offices at the City Mutual Life Building at 62 St George's Terrace in Perth. In early 1938 it was announced in *The West Australian* newspaper that Warne would be giving free lectures on architecture at the University of Western Australia. *'A course of 15 free lantern lectures on 'The History of the Evolution of the Styles of Architecture' has been arranged by the Architects' Board of Western Australia, and will be delivered by Mr. E. W. Warne, A.R.I.B.A., A.R.I.A.W.A. The Course will commence on Monday, May 9, at 8 p.m.,- in Arts room IV at the University. Although the course is designed primarily for students of architecture, the lectures also will be open to all interested in the subject. Warne had succeeded the elderly Alfred R.L. Wright (1861-1939), who had provided architectural history lectures from the 1920s at UWA.*

Reinforcing his growing recognition amongst the local profession, at the opening of the RIAWA's new rooms in the Gledden Building at Perth during May 1938, Warne gave an address titled the 'Psychology of Colour'. In domestic work, he designed a residence in early 1938 for the corner of Strome and Killilan Roads in Applecross; and in early 1939 a residence at Circe Circle in Nedlands. Warne was developing a solid client base in local government work, in 1939 designing additions to the Woodanilling Road Board Hall, and a municipal depot at Midland Junction. Displaying his versatility, he produced drawings in 1939 for a modest timber-framed Presbyterian Church at Kellerberrin.

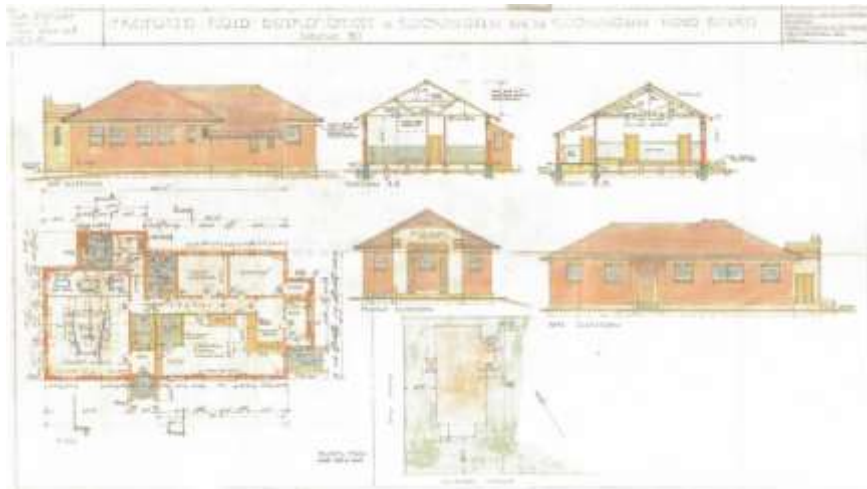


Warne's first office was on the 2nd floor of the City Mutual Building 62 St George's Terrace Perth (Muhling Collection); Midland Municipal Depot (*The West Australian*, 5 August 1939, p.8).

By 1939 Warne took on an articled pupil, Kenneth Broadhurst (1923-2010), but the Second World War (1939-1945) interrupted Broadhurst's work during 1941. In mid-1940 Warne was responsible for a shop at Victoria Street Bunbury built for Thomas and Co Chemists, and two new classrooms for the Presbyterian Ladies College at Peppermint Grove. However with the advent of the war, private architectural work soon became almost non-existent, and Warne's attentions appear to have been primarily in local government during this time. He was a councillor at the Town of Claremont from 1939-1945, and served as the appointed councillor for the Claremont Infants Health Centre Committee.

In October 1942 he called tenders for repairs to the Midland Junction Town Hall roof and porch, in February 1944 was asked to report on problems with the Town Hall floor, and as 'the Council's architect' in 1946 to call tenders for repair of the Town Hall clock tower. In October 1942 Warne replaced Bill Forbes (1904 -1975) on the Architects Board of Western Australia, acting as a Member until 1948.

Warne was made an Associate member of the WA chapter of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA), formed with the dissolution of RIAWA in 1943. From around 1942, Warne may have worked in conjunction with Hobbs Forbes & Partners, also located in the WA Trustees Building at 135 St Georges Terrace Perth. A 1945 drawing for the Rockingham Roads Board offices has both Warne's and Hobbs Forbes & Partners' names in the title block. Warne called tenders for the construction of the Rockingham offices in March 1946.



Drawing of 1945 for Rockingham Road Board Offices, corner Flinders Lane and Kent Street (City of Rockingham).

Within the RAIA (WA) Exhibition of 1947 Warne exhibited drawings of three of his projects – the Roads Board Offices at Rockingham, the Municipal Depot at Midland, and the Mary Adamson Holiday Home at Rockingham.



The Rockingham Road Board Office is now used as the local Museum (Google 2024).



Mary Adamson Holiday Home, Parkin Street, Rockingham (Collections WA cwa-org-213-2143).



Warne, shown at left of photo, was honorary architect of the WA Braille Society for the Blind, and is seen here in 1949 examining Hay Street Perth premises as prospective headquarters with other Braille Society representatives (*Sunday Times*, 13 November 1949, p.5).

In July 1950, the *Pingelly-Brookton Leader* reported that Warne was engaged to draw up preliminary plans and specifications for a proposed Pingelly District Memorial Hall, and with cost constraints was asked to suggest a two-stage project. Further regional work in 1951 included calling tenders for a Methodist Church Hall at Dowerin, and for alterations to the National Bank at Dowerin.

Continuing his charitable works, by October of 1952, Warne had designed new works, alterations and additions for the Braille Rest Home at Sunbury Road in Victoria Park. Warne's 1950 designs for the Pingelly Road Board may not have been realised, as in late 1953 the *Pingelly-Brookton Leader* carried his call for tenders for alterations to the existing Pingelly Town Hall. The National Bank of Australasia was a solid client in these times, in March 1954 Warne called tenders for a new bank at Williams, and in May 1954 for extensive alterations to the National Bank at Stirling Terrace in Albany.

Warne was elevated to a Fellow of the RAI A in 1956. He remained in Western Australia until about 1960, maintaining an office in the WA Trustees Building from the mid-1940s. In the 1959-1960 RAI A Year Book he is listed with the WA Chapter, but in 1961-1962 he is listed with the New South Wales Chapter, suggesting a move east at this time for retirement and perhaps family reasons. By 1968 he was living at Warner's Bay, NSW. He died there on 29 August 1968. Maud had passed away in 1966.

Warne made solid, albeit unspectacular, contributions to the architecture of his adopted country, with many community works and service to the profession as a Board Member of ABWA, as a councillor of the RAI A, and with lecturing at UWA.

References:

- 'Motor Accident', *Northern Whig*, 28 March 1913 (knocked unconscious at Ballymartin).
- 'Ulster Society of Architects', *Irish Times*, 13 January 1927 (elected to Council).
- 'Expected at West Australian Ports', *Daily Commercial News and Shipping List*, 3 Oct 1927, p.5.
- 'Beltana Due Today', *Daily Commercial News and Shipping List*, 1 November 1927, p.5.
- 'Marriages', *The West Australian*, 21 February 1930, p.1 (at St Alban's Church, Highgate Hill).
- 'Professional and General Divisions', Government Gazette WA, 19 August 1930, p.66 (PWD).
- 'Births', *The West Australian*, 11 September 1931, p.1 (a son at Tresillian Hospital Nedlands).
- 'Personal', *The West Australian*, 25 September 1935, p.16 (passed ARIBA exam).
- 'Report of Council for the year 1936-1937', Royal Institute of Architects of Western Australia minute books p.238, held at AIA WA (elected as Associate of RIAWA).
- 'Free Lectures on Architecture', *The West Australian*, 30 April 1938, p.20 (by Warne at UWA).
- 'Real Estate', *The West Australian*, 14 May 1938, p.4 (Warne architect, tender accepted for residence cnr Strome Rd and Killilan Road Applecross).
- 'Colour In Rooms', *The West Australian*, 28 May 1938, p.8 (Warne lecture to RIAWA).
- 'Woodanilling Hall', *The West Australian*, 3 June 1939, p.8 (opening of extension).
- 'Other Work', *The West Australian*, 8 July 1939, p.8 (residence Circe Circle Nedlands).
- 'Kellerberrin Church', *The West Australian*, 9 December 1939, p.6 (tender accepted).
- 'Country ,Shops' *The West Australian*, 27 July 1940, p.4 (Victoria St Bunbury shop Thomas & Co).
- 'Schools', *The West Australian*, 24 August 1940, p.10 (2 classrooms for PLC Peppermint Grove).
- 'Personal', *The West Australian*, 17 October 1942, p.4 (replaces H.T Forbes on ABWA).
- 'Tenders', *Swan Express*, 25 October 1942, p.2 (repairs to Town Hall roof and porch).
- 'Special Council Meeting', *Swan Express*, 10 February 1944, p.4 (re Town Hall Floor).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 27 March 1946, p.3 (Rockingham Roads Board offices).
- 'Midland Affairs', *The West Australian*, 15 April 1946, p.8 (Midland Town Hall clock tower).
- 'General', *Pingelly-Brookton Leader*, 6 July 1950, p.2 (Pingelly Memorial Hall).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 16 June 1951, p.19 (brick hall for Methodist Church Dowerin, alterations to National Bank Dowerin).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 17 October 1952, p.22 (Braille Rest Home Sunbury Rd, Vic Park).
- 'Tenders', *Pingelly-Brookton Leader*, 4 November 1953, p.3 (alterations Pingelly Town Hall).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 23 March 1954, p.29 (new bank Williams for National Bank).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 31 May 1954, p.28 (alterations to National Bank Albany).
- 'A Century of Service', Architects Board of Western Australia, 2022, p.84.
- Phillip Tardif, *The North Irish Horse in the Great War*, 2015, 'Sergeant Ernest William Warne', <https://northirishhorse.com.au/NIH/Images/People/Full%20pictures/Warne%20EW.html>
- Heritage Committee review: 15 August 2024 Last updated: 15 August 2024

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