



Archer Hoskings

(*Australasian Builder and Contractor's News*, 21 February 1891, p.139)

Archer William Hoskings (1868-1912) was born 21 May 1868 at Bourke Street, Surry Hills in Sydney, NSW - the first of at least six children born to William Henry and Emily (nee Barrett) Hoskings. Archer was educated at Newington College. In May of 1883 he was articled to architect A.A. Tayt for three years, and at 16 years of age won a student competition for a pavilion at Ashfield. Hoskings then worked for architects and engineers Kenwood & Kerle of Sydney, and at the age of 18, won a competition of the design of Wollongong Town Hall. Kenwood & Kerle supervised its building.

In 1888, Hoskings travelled to England and obtained a position as assistant to prominent architect Charles Barry Jnr (1823-1900). Barry, son of the architect of the Houses of Parliament at Westminster, Sir Charles Barry (1795-1860), noted Hoskings as being "a young man of more than average ability" when he was admitted as an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects (ARIBA) in 1889. The *Australasian Builder and Contractor's News* reported that at 21 years old, Hoskings was the youngest member ever admitted to the Institute. In London, Hoskings also worked on church renovation reports with Ewan Christian (1814-1895), architect to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

The *Sydney Morning Herald* stated in January 1891 that Archer Hoskings had been 'bracketed with another competitor' as first for the Soane Medallion (worth £50) a travelling student-ship awarded by RIBA. Hoskings later noted that although he was a co-prize winner, the medal was not awarded. He returned to Australia by 1892, and was present in Sydney for the marriage of his sister Ethel in October 1893, but must soon have moved across the continent in

search of employment, as he was appointed as a draftsman with the Public Works Department (PWD) at Perth, Western Australia in early 1894.

In April of 1895, principal government architect George T. Poole (1856-1934) addressed a gathering of Hoskings' PWD associates who met to farewell the young architect as he entered into private practice. 'Complimentary reference was made to the services which Hoskings had rendered and to his social qualities, which had made him popular among all who knew him'. By July 1895 he called tenders for business premises in Wellington Street, Perth for Boan Brothers, but this project is unlikely to have proceeded as J.J. Talbot Hobbs (1864-1938) designed the Wellington Street Boans building built in 1896. In December of 1895 Archer called tenders for stables at the Ascot Estate, and a bungalow residence at the Osborne Estate in Claremont.

The stables work signalled commencement of an important client relationship with Alexander Perceval Matheson, developer of the Ascot Estate, one of the most prominent 1890s gold-boom entrepreneurs, member of the Legislative Council for the North-East Province (1897), and later a senator in the Commonwealth Government. Hoskings called tenders in December 1895 for office buildings at Kalgoorlie for Alex Matheson & Co, and in March 1896 for five houses at Freshwater Bay, Claremont named Matheson's Terrace. Hoskings also designed offices for Matheson at Coolgardie, completed in 1896 and later converted to the Railway Hotel. In April 1896 Hoskings called tenders for re-roofing a building in St George's Terrace, Perth and a warehouse in Bazaar Terrace (now the Esplanade), both for Alex Matheson & Co; and for stables in St Georges Terrace for Campbell Macklin.

In August 1896 Hoskings called tenders for a villa at Guildford for T.W. Wade, and a hotel at the Ascot Estate for Alex Matheson & Co. The Ascot Hotel, later the Ascot Inn at Epsom Avenue, Belmont was completed in 1897. Archer continued with success in Perth, calling tenders for semi-detached houses at Milligan Street, Perth in September 1896; cottages in Parry Street and a bungalow at Mount Street, Perth in January 1897; a summer residence at Point Dundas (Applecross) for Governor G. Smith in April 1897; buildings in Perth (now Kings) Park in July 1897; a private hospital at Havelock Street, West Perth and a bungalow at Peppermint Grove for Mrs Lefroy in September 1897.

In December of 1897 Archer Hoskings advertised that he had taken Thomas Tandy into partnership, and that Tandy would conduct the practice during Hoskings' 'absence in the Eastern Colonies'. It seems Archer did not return to WA, and may have remained in Sydney with his family, as he wrote a letter titled 'The Education Question' to the editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald* in February 1902. Hoskings travelled to South Africa to seek new opportunities circa 1902, and at some time was joined by Henry Hugh Walford (b.1872) in partnership. Archer married Winifred Vivian at Trenoon, Johannesburg in August 1904, and appears to have been quite successful with his practice there. A highly skilled tennis player and cricketer in his youth, Hoskings died 15 June 1912 at his residence in Johannesburg, aged just 44 years.

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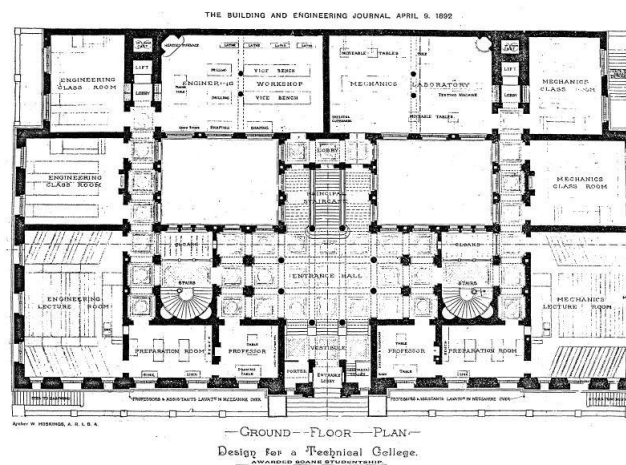
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- 'Marriage', *Illustrated Sydney News*, 21 October 1893, p.14 (marriage of sister Ethel).
- 'Pleasant Reunion', *The West Australian*, 10 April 1895, p.5 (leaves PWD).
- 'Tenders', *Daily News*, 5 July 1895, p.6 (business premises Wellington St for Boan Bros).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 12 December 1895, p.7 (stables at Ascot Estate, bungalow residence at Osborne Estate, Claremont).
- 'Tenders', *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 28 December 1895, p.3 (offices Kalgoorlie for Alex Matheson & Co)
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 11 March 1896, p.8 (5 houses Freshwater Bay, Claremont for Alex Matheson & Co.).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 14 April 1896, p.8 (re-roofing building St George's Tce and warehouse Bazaar Tce for Alex Matheson & Co; stables St Georges Tce for Campbell Macklin).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 27 August 1896, p.3 (villa for T.W. Wade at Guildford, hotel at Ascot Estate for Alex Matheson & Co).
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- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 19 April 1897, p.6 (summer residence Point Dundas for Governor G. Smith).
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 Contributing author: John Taylor

Heritage Committee meeting approval date: 13 February 2014 Last updated: 13 February 2014

Citation details:

Taylor, Dr John J., 'Archer William Hoskings (1868-1912)', Western Australian Architect Biographies, <http://www.architecture.com.au/> accessed DATE.



Plan submitted by Hoskings for Soane Studentship (*Building & Engineering Journal*, 9 April 1892)



Elevation submitted by Hoskings for Soane Studentship (*Building & Engineering Journal*, 9 April 1892)



Matheson's Terrace, later Bayview Mansions, Victoria Avenue Claremont (Google 2013)



The Ascot Hotel (Inn) at Epsom Avenue, Belmont in 1977 (SLWA 328285PD)



Alex Matheson's Offices of 1896, later the Railway Hotel, cnr Lefroy & Bayley Streets, Coolgardie (Google 2014)