

W.B. Hardwick

(www.mundia.com; *Daily News*, 3 June 1929, P.6)

William Burden Hardwick (1860-1941) was born at Rylstone, 240 km north-west of Sydney in NSW, the son of Rebecca (née White) and John William Hardwick (1826-1891). John had migrated to Australia in 1852, establishing a general store in Rylstone and marrying in 1856. William was the third of ten children, and in 1873 he commenced senior education in Sydney, as a boarding student of Newington College. Older brothers George and Edward had started there as boarders two years earlier. After leaving school, Hardwick served his architectural articles within private practice in Victoria.

Hardwick moved back to NSW in his twenties, as he displayed a 'plan of a Gothic cottage, a panel of Gothic tracery, and a model of hand railing' at the Goulburn Technical School in late 1886. In January 1887 the Technical School announced that 'A new class of considerable practical importance is now in course of formation ..., that of Architectural planning and designing. We understand that twelve students have already signified their intention of joining. At a meeting of the Board of Technical Education held on Wednesday last, Mr. W.B. Hardwick was appointed the teacher.' The teaching role was relatively short-lived, as by November 1889 Hardwick's office was in Mullany's Buildings at Katoomba, 100 km west of Sydney. Following the east-coast economic crisis of the early 1890s, Hardwick abandoned his modest practice and moved to seek the greater employment opportunities offered in Western Australia.

In 1893 Hardwick came to Perth, and early in 1894 entered the Public Works Department (PWD) as a draughtsman. In this capacity he was involved in the documentation of many public buildings throughout the State during the gold-boom years. Although all competition entries were summarily disqualified for excessive cost, in 1901 Bill Hardwick, Hillson Beasley, William Wilkinson, and Alfred Piferrer, all of the PWD, claimed the £250 first prize for their design of a new Parliament House for Western Australia.

In 1907 Hardwick was belatedly appointed as an architect within the PWD and in 1910 visited England, upon his return publishing a series of articles on town planning. In 1914 he was asked to investigate and report on meat works and cool storage in the other States of Australia. Three years later he again journeyed eastward to report on public markets and State savings banks, and again in 1919 he was commissioned to investigate the latest developments in mental hospitals, with Lemnos (Shenton Park) and Heathcote (Applecross) hospitals built as a result of his reports. Later still he visited the other States of the Commonwealth in search of information in connection with agricultural colleges, and Muresk College near Northam benefited from this research.

Often referred to professionally as W.B. Hardwick, in 1917 he was promoted to the office of Principal Government Architect, a position he held until 1927. While Principal Architect he was responsible for overseeing the design of the Wyndham Meatworks, the General Post Office at Perth (in collaboration with Commonwealth Architect J.S. Murdoch), the Albany, Bunbury and Northam high schools, and a large number of post offices and hospitals throughout the State. The latest period of his service to the State was occupied in the administration of the Workers' Homes Board, of which he was appointed a member at the date of its establishment in 1912, and as chairman from 1915 up to the date of his retirement. He was allied with the Town Planning Association, a justice of the peace, and fellow of the Victorian and West Australian Institutes of Architects.

Preceded as Principal Architect in WA by George Temple-Poole (1891-1897), John Harry Grainger (1897-1905) and Hillson Beasley (1905-1917), Hardwick is noted as being "well known for continuing the high standards of design in public buildings established during the gold boom, particularly in hospitals, schools and post offices throughout the state". Hardwick was in the Public Service of WA for 36 years, and retired in 1930 at the age of 70 years. He died at his home in Suburban Road (now Mill Point Road) South Perth on 1 October 1941, aged 80, and was interred in the family grave at the Anglican section of Karrakatta Cemetery. His first wife Emily Gertrude had died in 1932. Hardwick was survived in 1941 by widow Ethel (nee Gallop), whom he had married in 1938, and five children. Younger brother Harold Robert Hardwick (1866-1935), an architect in NSW, predeceased him.

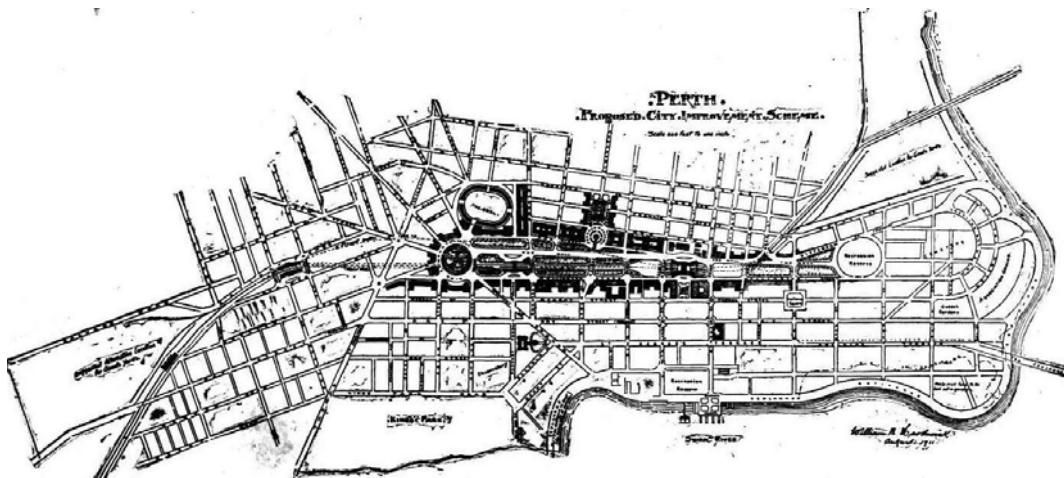
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- 'Tenders', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 December 1889, p.19 (residence Katoomba Alfred Bayly).
- 'Tenders', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 May 1890, p.4 (mountain residence Mount Victoria for A. Kirkpatrick of Beemery Station, Bourke).
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- Contributing author: John Taylor

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Hardwick's plan accompanying his article 'Greater Perth from a City Planning Point of View' (*The West Australian*, 20 December 1911, p.9)



GPO Perth c1929 (Wikipedia)



Albany Senior High School (Wikipedia)