

Photo required

### **F.W. Upton**

(courtesy xxx)

**Frederick William Upton** (c.1859-1933) was born in London. Further research is required to discover his upbringing, education and training. Upton migrated to Australia in the 1880s, and by July 1886 was in practice at Little Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria. A lack of tender notices in following years suggests that he may have been working for others, but from 1889 to 1893 Upton was listed as an architect at 325 Collins St, Melbourne, both on his own account and in partnership as Upton & McKay. His design work in late 1889 included a brick villa for J. Williamson in Armadale; a villa in Canterbury Road, Surrey Hills; and a store-residence at Preston.

Upton & McKay had a small number of significant projects in outer Melbourne. They accepted a tender for the erection of the Prince Alfred Hotel and a two-storey brick shop in High Street, South Preston for Charles Showers in January 1890; and in mid-1890 for a large brick residence at Preston. This is likely to have been Thomas Bransgrove's 'Howard Park' at Wood Street, Preston. The *Illustrated Sydney News* reported in July 1890 that 'the marriage of Mr Frederick W. Upton, architect, formerly of Melbourne, now of London, to Miss Alice Gardner, of London, is arranged to take place on August 6'. Upton may in fact have only taken a short trip back from Australia to England, as in January 1891 he accepted a tender for a double fronted brick villa at Coburg, and in February 1891 was approved by the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects (RVIA) as an associate member.

Modest work in mid-1891 included a brick cottage at Garfield Street, Auburn; a schoolhouse at Nunawading; and 3 two-storey brick shops at Church Street, Hawthorn. Business in Melbourne was affected by severely depressed economic conditions during the early 1890s. Newspaper advertisements with

regard to the sale of real estate from Bussell & Upton (at 325 Collins Street) in early 1892 suggest that Upton was forced to seek alternative means of making a living. Upton ceased to be member of the RVIA in 1894. With the paucity of work available, the majority of architects in the State were in extremely difficult financial circumstances.

Upton crossed the continent to Western Australia, and in March 1896 he advertised tenders for a double fronted cottage in East Perth, with the plans to be seen at the office of another former Melbourne architect, C.J. Polain (c.1858-1899). During 1897-1899, Upton is listed with an office in the WA gold-fields at Menzies, but he may have been focused on procuring his fortune there by means other than architecture, as he had made application for a number of 'auriferous leases' and formed a mining syndicate in mid-1896. By the second half of 1897 his tender notices reveal a regular workload in metropolitan Perth.

Along with many domestic and small commercial projects in the late 1890s and early twentieth century, in 1904 Upton designed a warehouse at 61-65 King Street, Perth for B. Rosenstamm, leather merchant. In 1905 Fred Upton won a competition for the design of a Town Hall at Midland, in partnership with Richard Malone Hamilton (1858-1936). Unfortunately Upton had to withdraw from the job due to the pressures of other work, and Hamilton completed the design in partnership with Edgar Jerome Henderson (1861-1928). However Upton was able to design an extension of the Midland Town Hall in 1923.

Evidence of Upton's busy work load in 1905 is found when in January of 1906 *The West Australian* newspaper reported: 'Amongst the chief work done during the 12 months by Mr Fred W. Upton was the erection of two warehouses in Murray Street for Dr Thom at a cost of about £2,000, a factory for Messrs E.S. Wigg and Son, of Hay Street, at the back of the present premises, at a cost of, roundly £2,000; and some factories in Stirling Street at a cost of £4,500 for Mr J.H. Blackburn. He has in course of construction in King Street a warehouse for Mr R.S. Sampson to cost £1,200, and one for Mr N.S. Ward to cost £1,500. Two shops were built in Stirling Street for Mr A. Liddelow, and Mr Upton also put up the buildings known as the Busy Bee at the corner of William and James Streets. ...'

Upton was briefly in partnership 1912-1913 with W.E. Knapman as Upton & Knapman Architects at 23 Barrack Street, Perth, but he appears to have been a busy sole practitioner throughout the remainder of his career. The *Architects Act of Western Australia 1921* received formal assent in 1922, and Whitwell duly registered (no.11) with the Architects Board of WA in May of that year. A Fellow of the Royal West Australian Institute of Architects, the multitude of newspaper tender notices indicate that Fred Upton was continually active in WA through until his death.

Upton died 16 November 1933 at his residence 16 Alvan Street, Mount Lawley, aged 74 years, and was buried in the Anglican section of Karrakatta Cemetery. A notice in *The West Australian* described him as 'one of the leading architects in Perth for a number of years, and designed Warwick House, William Street [sic St George's Terrace], Durham House, Murray Street [sic Hay Street], and the Midland Junction Town Hall. He leaves no family.' His portfolio of work would provide significant material for further research at a tertiary level.

References:

'Tenders', *Argus*, 23 July 1886, p.2, (brick cottage at North Fitzroy).

*Building Engineering and Mining Journal*, 30 November 1889, supp p.3 (villa for J. Williamson Armadale, Vic).

*Australasian Builder and Contractor's News*, 21 December 1889, p.608 (villa Canterbury Road, Surrey Hills; brick store and residence, Preston).

*Building Engineering and Mining Journal*, 18 January 1890, supp p.3 (hotel and shop South Preston).

*Building Engineering and Mining Journal*, 25 January 1890, supp p.5 (Prince Alfred Hotel, two-storey brick shop High Street, South Preston for Charles Showers).

*Illustrated Sydney News*, 19 July 1890, p.11 (marriage arranged for 6 August in London).

*Building Engineering and Mining Journal*, 26 July 1890, supp p.5 (brick residence Howard Park for J.W. Bramgrove at Preston) [Forster, Harley W., *Preston Lands & People 1838-1967*, p.69 notes Thomas Bransgrove's 'Howard Park' at Wood Street, Preston].

*Royal Victorian Institute of Architects, minutes of Council*, 1890-1895, p.43 (20 February 1891 Frederick W. Upton approved by RVIA Council as Associate Member).

*Building Engineering and Mining Journal*, 3 January 1891, supp p.5 (double fronted brick villa for B.C. Murphy, Coburg).

*Australasian Builder and Contractor's News*, 11 April 1891, p.271 (elected ARVIA 6 April 1891).

*Building Engineering and Mining Journal*, 18 April 1891, supp p.3 (cottage Garfield St Auburn).

*Australasian Builder and Contractor's News*, 18 April 1891, p.291 (schoolhouse Nunawading).

*Building Engineering and Mining Journal*, 25 July 1891, supp p.5 (3 two-storey brick shops Church St Hawthorn).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 12 March 1896, p.8 (double fronted cottage East Perth).

'Notice of Application', *The West Australian*, 15 June 1896, p.6 (applications for gold leases).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 6 June 1902, p.1 (pavilion, store at Helena Vale Racecourse).

'Hotel for Woodlupine', *Daily News*, 5 September 1902, p.2 (Railway Crescent, Woodlupine).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 16 July 1903, p.1 (shop and workrooms Rokeby Road Subiaco for Anning and Young caterers and confectioners).

*W.A. Mining, Building, and Engineering Journal*, 16 January 1904, p.22; 23 January 1904, p.18 (warehouse King Street, Perth for B. Rosenstamm, leather merchant).

'Midland Junction Town Hall', *W.A. Mining Building and Engineering Journal*, 8 April 1905, p.20; 29 April 1905, p.20.

'New Town Hall for Midland Junction', *Western Mail*, 6 May 1905, p.22 (Upton & Hamilton first in competition ahead of G.T. Poole).

'Subiaco Endowment Lands', *The West Australian*, 24 May 1905, p.6 (Upton & Hamilton second in competition behind G.T. Poole).

'Perth and Its Buildings', *The West Australian*, 16 January 1906, p.3 (Upton's work of 1905).

'Perth's Newest Building', *The Western Mail*, 19 February 1915, p.38 (Warwick House for J.D. Connolly and R.D. McKenzie).

'Murray St Improvement', *Daily News*, 19 February 1920, p.6 (Bairds Murray Street, Perth).

'Australian Hotel', *Daily News*, 6 June 1923, p.3 (with Eales & Cohen, hotel at Murray Street Perth for John Guilfoyle).

'Tambellup District Road Board', *Albany Advertiser*, 8 July 1925, p.4 (Tambellup Hall).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 12 January 1926, p.3 (2-storey shop Hay Street Subiaco for E.A. Lums & Co grocers).

'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 12 June 1926, p.6 (3 shops Pier St, Holdway & Co plumbers).

'Three-Storey Warehouse', *The West Australian*, 1 December 1928, p.4 (south side of Murray Street, west of King Street, Perth for Sir James Connolly).

'Mr Frederick William Upton', *The West Australian*, 17 November 1933, p.18 (background).

'The Late Mr F.W. Upton', *The West Australian*, 18 November 1933, p.13 (funeral).

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#### **Citation details:**

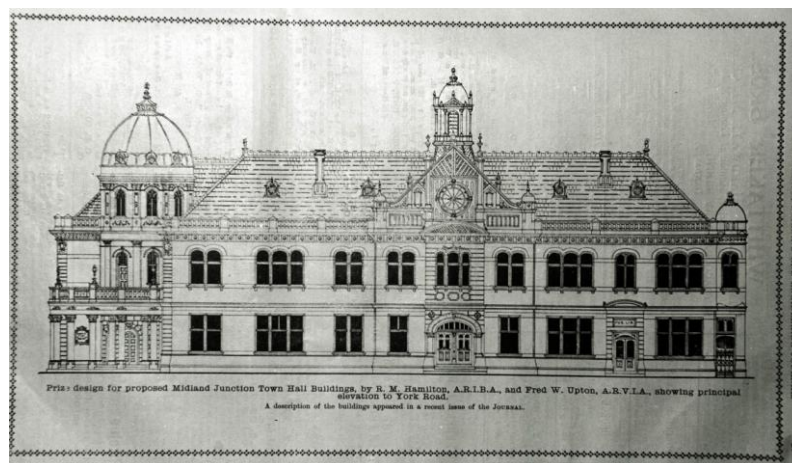
Taylor, Dr John J., 'Frederick William Upton (c.1859-1933) ', *Western Australian Architect Biographies*, <http://www.architecture.com.au/> accessed DATE.



Prince Alfred Hotel, 113 High Street, Preston, Victoria 1890 (Google 2013)



B. Rosenstamm's warehouse 61-65 King Street, Perth 1904 (Google 2013)



Prize winning design for Midland Junction Town Hall Buildings (*WAMBEJ*, 27 May 1905, p.21).



Perspective of Midland Town Hall (*Western Mail*, 22 July 1905, p.28).

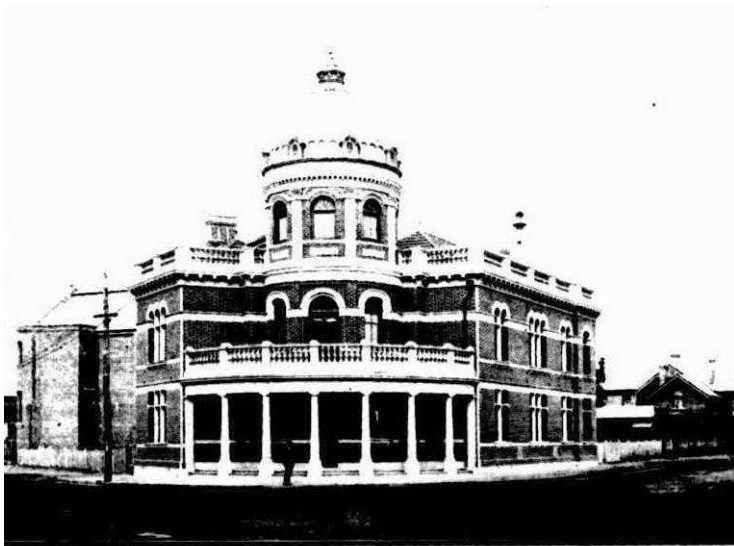


Photo by  
**THE NEW MIDLAND JUNCTION TOWN HALL. OPENED BY THE PREMIER ON JANUARY 23.** U. Bell. Midland Junction.

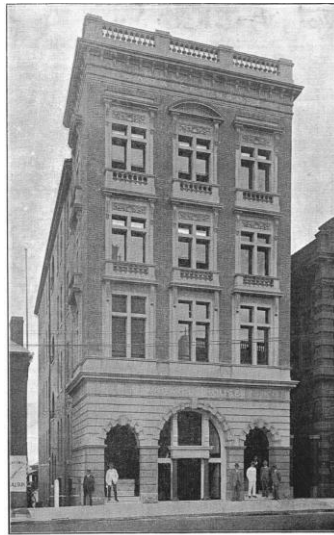
The recently opened Town Hall at Midland (*Western Mail*, 2 February 1907, p.25).



The oddly placed clock turret on top of the dome of Midland Town Hall was unveiled in 1923 as a war memorial, commemorating soldiers of the First World War. Not surprisingly, it is believed that the clock was originally intended for another building. (Google 2013)

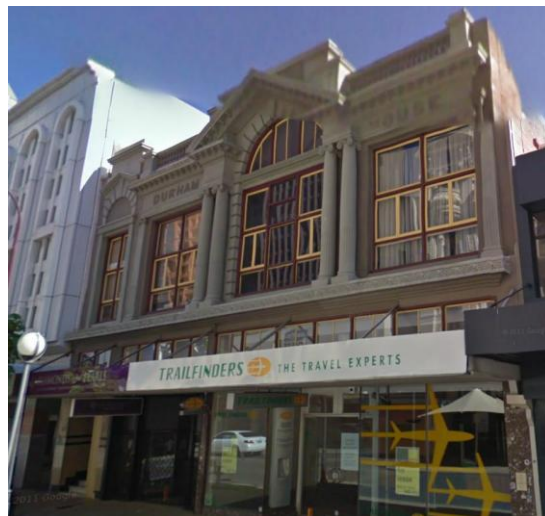


Busy Bee, 201-207 William Street, Northbridge 1905 (Google 2014)



Offices, Perth, W.A.  
Warwick House  
F. W. Upton, F.W.A.I.A.  
Architect

Warwick House, St George's Terrace, Perth 1915. Widening of the laneway on the left was made to form the road Sherwood Court (*The Salon*, November 1915, p.101).



Durham House, 838 Hay Street, Perth of c.1921 (Google 2013)