



**Harvey Draper**

(*Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 21 October 1902, p.20)

**Harvey George Lloyd Draper** (1869-1921) was born 20 March 1869 at Douglas Parade, North Williamstown, Melbourne. He was one of seventeen children from marine pilot Captain Henry John Mollett and Eileen (nee Young) Draper. In 1884, young Harvey was a Junior Division prize winner at the Williamstown School of Design, and submitting sketches of local scenes to the *Williamstown Chronicle*. He won a gold medal and first prize for architectural drawing at the Geelong Industrial Juvenile Exhibition in early 1888. It is possible that Draper received early instruction from architect Charles James Polain (c.1858-1899). Polain was described in local history book *At the Edge of the Centre* as 'Williamstown's favoured architect', noting that he was 'a frequent competition winner and designer of many local landmarks'.

Polain appears in directories from 1886 as an architect with an office in Footscray, and for a couple of years in the late 1880s he also had an office in Williamstown. In February 1890 the *Williamstown Chronicle* noted that a drawing of Polain's successful competition design for the Masonic Hall in Electra Street, Williamstown was on display, and that 'the work of delineation was performed by Master H.G. Draper ... our rising young local artist'. An inventor of some note, in 1895 Polain left economically-depressed Victoria and moved to Western Australia, where he died at the Fremantle Lunatic Asylum in 1899, aged just 41 years.

Draper is noted as providing an estimate for the construction of a hospital at Williamstown in 1888, without citing his position. He kept up his drawing efforts, winning annual prizes for the centre of the *Williamstown Calendar* in 1890 (showing his hospital design) and 1891. In April 1892 Harvey won the ten guinea first prize in an architectural competition for the design of Williamstown

hospital, and the *Chronicle* congratulated 'our young townsman upon his victory over the talent of the city and suburbs'. This is the first year that he is described as an architect, and may have corresponded with Draper having completed an articulated arrangement. The construction of this project may have been Draper's only major project in Victoria, as the early 1890s were a disastrous economic time in the State, and many businesses had little or no work. Consequently many young men and women were forced by circumstances to move to more prosperous locations. As did Charles Polain and many other Melbourne architects, Draper moved to WA seeking to enjoy better conditions precipitated by a gold boom and period of building expansion.

In June 1895 Draper sailed on the *S.S. Damascus*, intending to pursue his profession in WA. Harvey was soon in practice with Henry Leslie Brookman (1867-1906) as Brookman and Draper, with offices in both Perth and Kalgoorlie – Brookman in the Perth office and Draper in Kalgoorlie. In late 1895 Brookman called tenders for Hannan's Club at Kalgoorlie from his Perth office, but Draper controlled the local work on the place. Of note is the fact that Henry Brookman was the younger brother of infamous speculator William Gordon Brookman (1859-1910), compiler of a fortune from Kalgoorlie area mining leases. Draper was also working jointly (but not in partnership it seems) with Subiaco-based Alexander Rankin in 1899 on a number of Kalgoorlie projects for J.J. Cassidy. Hannan Street buildings tendered jointly with Rankin include a two-storey hotel (the Federal), and blocks of brick shops.

Draper is credited for the design of some of the major buildings in Kalgoorlie from 1896 to 1908, including Hannan's Club and Exchange Buildings (1896), Municipal Council Chambers (1897), first portion of McKenzie's Buildings (1898), Chamber of Mines (1899), Federal Hotel (1899), Masonic Lodge (1899-1900), Kalgoorlie Miner Building (1900), Miners' [Mechanics' from 1904] Institute (1902), a large commercial building adjacent to the Palace Hotel (1903), Classroom Block at Christian Brothers College (1906), Australian Mutual Provident Society Building (1906), and additions to the Kalgoorlie Mechanics' Institute (1907).

In late 1906 it was reported that 'Mr Harvey Draper, the Kalgoorlie architect, has prepared elaborate plans for a magnificent hotel, which the Phillips River

Estates Company is to erect at Ravensthorpe'. In April 1907 Draper was suffering from an attack of influenza at Albany, contracted whilst travelling to Ravensthorpe, where he had the supervision of the Palace Hotel, being erected at a cost of £14,000. It was described as a 'two-storey structure, covering a considerable area, and containing 32 rooms; irrespective of the two bars. Three commodious shops are also included in the building'.

Involved with local tennis, cricket and football clubs, including time as President of the Hannans District Football Association, Draper left Kalgoorlie in May 1908 and moved to Cairns, possibly because of declining business on the WA goldfields, but also to be with family members. Harvey's elder brother Alex was a successful businessman in north Queensland, described on his death as the "Father of Cairns", and was Mayor of Cairns 1891-93, 1897, 1902, 1918-1919 and 1924-27. He established a number of newspapers including the *Cairns Chronicle* and had interests in the *Cairns Post* with another brother, Edwin.

Harvey Draper took on many commissions in Cairns and north Queensland, notably employing Alfred Samuel Hook (1886-1963) as a draftsman in 1909. Hook was to become inaugural president of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects in 1929 and its first life fellow. Draper designed a number of hospitals, including the Atherton Hospital and Cairns Base Hospital, built in 1910. At Cairns, he administered the construction of new offices for Adelaide Steamships Co Ltd (1910), and designed the Palace Theatre (1913), Maritime House for Howard Smith Shipping Co (1914), and Strand Hotel (1915).

Already a Fellow of the West Australian Institute of Architects, in 1911 the Queensland Institute of Architects also elected Draper a Fellow. Travelling by ship to Cairns could be perilous, and in February 1913 Draper was a passenger on the *S.S. Innamincka*, surviving grounding on a reef in cyclonic weather. He married Violet Oakley on 20 December 1916 at St Peter's Church, Townsville. Five years later, an outbreak of bubonic plague claimed many lives in Cairns, including that of Draper. He died 8 December 1921, aged 52 years, and is buried in the Martyn Street Cemetery at Cairns. Harvey Draper was later described as "a man who had many friends and no enemies. He was of a quiet, unobtrusive disposition, well-liked wherever he went." His widow Violet and unborn child (Beth, born the next month) survived him.

## References:

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- 'Word for Advertisers', *Williamstown Chronicle*, 22 November 1890, p.3 (calendar centre, prize).
- 'The Local Hospital', *Williamstown Chronicle*, 25 June 1892, p.2 (10 guineas won, competition).
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- 'Tenders', *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 6 February 1907, p.6 (2 storey brick hotel at Ravensthorpe).
- 'Personal', *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 19 April 1907, p.4 (sick at Albany, work on hotel at Ravensthorpe).
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Federal Hotel of 1899, cnr Hannan & Outridge Streets, Kalgoorlie (Alice Steedman).



Masonic Lodge of 1899-1900, 26 Egan Street, Kalgoorlie (Alice Steedman).



J.J. Dwyer photos of the Miners' Institute, 202 Hannan Street, Kalgoorlie and the AMP Building, 109 Maritana Street, Kalgoorlie (*Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 21 October 1902, p.20; *In Old Kalgoorlie*, p.167).



Palace Hotel of 1907, Morgans Street, Ravensthorpe (Google 2013).



Strand Hotel of 1915, Esplanade, Cairns (c.1930s-1940s, Queensland State Archives).