

Blow, Detmar Jellings 1867 - 1939



Detmar Jellings Blow [commonly known as Detmar Blow] was born at Two Ashes, Forest Hill, Sydenham, Kent, England on 24 November 1867. He was articled to Andrew Wilson and Thomas William Aldwinckle (1843?-1920) of Wilson Son & Aldwinckle in London, and later to [Philip Webb](#) (1831-1915). He also attended South Kensington School of Art from 1883 and took evening classes Architectural Association Schools in London from 1887. In 1888 he was awarded an Architectural Association travelling scholarship and went to France. Whilst in Abbeville he met [John Ruskin](#) and spent six months travelling with him. Ruskin proved to be an important influence on Blow's subsequent career as an architect.

Following Blow's return to England he met William Morris and Philip Webb whose ideas on architectural preservation he absorbed and led to a long association with the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), for whom he subsequently worked on a number of conservation and restoration projects. Such was his closeness to Morris that he was at his deathbed in 1896 and drove his garland-bedecked wagon to his grave.

By the early 1890s Blow had commenced independent practice and over the next decade or so, whilst based in London he operated as an itinerant architect working on the repair and restoration of buildings as well as new builds throughout England.

During the early years of his career Blow sometimes collaborated with other architects including Ernest Gimson (1864-1919) and Alfred Powell (1865-1960).

From 1899 to c.1907 [Basil Thorold Stallybrass](#) (1879-1922) worked as his chief assistant. From 1905 to 1924 Blow was in partnership with French architect [Fernand Billerey](#) (1878-1951) as [Blow & Billerey](#).

In the first decade of Blow's partnership with Billerey, the practice worked on a high number of commissions "rivalling Lutyens in the country house market" [Michael Drury. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography]. In c.1910 Blow became friends with Hugh Grosvenor, 2nd Duke of Westminster, owner of the Grosvenor Estate in London, and over the next twenty-three years he and his practice worked on numerous architectural projects on the estate. From 1928 Blow appointed was the estate's surveyor, a position he held until 1933.

Blow was elected a member of the Art Workers Guild in 1892 and a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects (FRIBA) in 1906.

In 1933 retired to Hilles, near Painswick, Gloucestershire where he died on 7 February 1939

A biographical file on Detmar Blow is available on request from the Enquiry Desk, Royal Institute of British Architects Library, London

Worked in

UK

Works

Philip Webb introduced Blow to his first client, Hugh Fairfax-Cholmeley, for whom he built Mill Hill (1891), a small house in Brandsby, Yorkshire. Other projects on which he worked included the Old Post Office, a medieval manor house in Tintagel, Cornwall (1896); restoration of Lake House, near Salisbury, Wiltshire (1898); restoration of tower of St Peter and St Paul's Church, Clare, in Clare, Suffolk (1899); repair to Stonehenge, Wiltshire (1900); Stonewell in Ulverscroft, Leicestershire, in collaboration with Ernest Gimson (1899); Happsburgh Manor, Happsburgh, Norfolk (1900); repair to Stonehenge, Wiltshire (1900); Little Ridge, Fonthill, Wiltshire (1904-06) for Hugh Morrison; Wilsford Manor, Wiltshire (1906); All Saints' Chapel, Avon Tyrell House, Sopley, Hampshire (1906); Bovey Castle, Devon (1907); Billesley Manor, near Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire (1906-13); Hatch House, Newtown, Wiltshire (1908) Horwood House, Little Horwood, Buckinghamshire, with Fernand Billerey (1912); Château Woolsack, Mimizan, France (1912); Hilles, Harescombe, Gloucestershire (1913); Schloss Kranzbach, Krün, near Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany (1913-15); and

renovation of Broome Park, Barham, Kent (1915–16).

See also:

[Historic England](#)

[British Listed Buildings](#)

[Country Life Picture Library](#)

Bibliography

Armstrong, Barrie and Armstrong, Wendy. *The Arts and Crafts movement in the North East of England: a handbook*. Wetherby, England: Oblong, 2013

Armstrong, Barrie and Armstrong, Wendy. *The Arts and Crafts movement in Yorkshire: a handbook*. Wetherby, England: Oblong, 2013

Armstrong, Barrie and Armstrong, Wendy. *The Arts and Crafts movement in the North West of England: a handbook*. Wetherby, England: Oblong Creative Ltd., 2006

Clifford, H. Dalton. 'Charles Hill Court, Tilford, Surrey'. [Architects: Detmar Blow & Fernand Billerey] *Country Life* 23 January 1958 pp. 164-165

Directory of British Architects 1834-1914. Compiled by Antonia Brodie, et al. Volume 1: A-K. London; New York: British Architectural Library, Royal Institute of British Architects/Continuum, 2001

Drury, Michael. *Wandering Architects. In Pursuit of an Arts and Crafts Ideal*. Donington: Shaun Tyas, revised edition, 2016 [Chapter 2. Setting out. Detmar Blow's early excursions, 1891-6. pp. 27-43; Chapter 5. A wandering architect. Detmar Blow and his itinerant masons, 1897-1900 pp. 85-108; and Chapter 6. The way continues in Wiltshire. Basily Stallybrass, and Detmar Blow's continuing career, 1901-1906 pp. 109-139; and Chapter 11. The end of the road. Detmar Blow's career, 1906-1939, conclusions pp. 233-258]

Fonthill Recovered: A Cultural History. Edited by Caroline Dakers. London: UCL Press, 2018

Gray, A. Stuart. *Edwardian architecture: a biographical dictionary*. London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., Ltd., 1985

Hamilton, Alec. Arts & Crafts Churches. London: Lund Humphries, 2020

Hussey, Christopher. 'Hilles, Stroud, Gloucestershire: the house of Detmar Blow'. Country Life vol. 88, 7 September 1940 pp. 212-216 [First part of a two-part article on Hilles, the house in Stroud, Gloucestershire designed by D. J. Blow for himself in 1914]

Hussey, Christopher. 'Hilles, Stroud, Gloucestershire: the house of Detmar Blow'. Country Life vol. 88, 14 September 1940 pp. 234-237 [Second part of a two-part article on Hilles, the house in Stroud, Gloucestershire designed by D. J. Blow for himself in 1914]

Hussey, Christopher. Hussey, Christopher. 'Holcombe House, Gloucestershire: the house of the Douager Countess Plymouth'. Country Life vol. 88, 21 December 1940 pp. 542-546 [Discusses the restoration and addition to Holcombe House, Gloucestershire by D. J. Blow in 1925]

Marriott, Charles. Modern English Architecture. London: Chapman & Hall, 1924

Nores, Gordon. 'Wootton Manor, Sussex'. Country Life vol. 117, 7 April 1955 pp. 920-923 [Discusses additions made to Wootton Manor, in Sussex designed by D. J. Blow]

'Obituary'. Architect & Building News vol. 157, 10 February 1939 p. 183

'Obituary'. The Builder vol. 156, 10 February 1939 p. 305

'Obituary'. Royal Institute of British Architects Journal vol. 46, 3 April 1939 p. 571

Senior school, Slough (St. Mary and St. John' [Designed by: Detmar Blow and Fernand Billerey, and Richard Blow]. *Parthenon September 1940 p. 166*

Stamp, Gavin. The English House 1860-1914. Catalogue of an exhibition of photographs and drawings. London: InternationalArchitect and the Building Centre Trust, 1980 pp. 46-47

Links

- Michael Drury, 'Blow, Detmar Jellings (1867-1939)', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, 2004 [Subscription service]

<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/41073>

- Roderick Gradidge. Detmar (Jellings) Blow. Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online [Subscription service]

<http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T009345?q=Blow%2C%20Detmar>

- Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Detmar_Blow

- Dictionary of Scottish Architects 1660-1980

http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=100196

- Historic England -110 entries on architectural projects by Detmar Blow

https://historicengland.org.uk/sitesearch?searchType=site&facetValues=facet_cb_Heritage

- The Esoteric Curiosa http://theesotericcuriosa.blogspot.com/2011/01/hilles-originally-designed-as-one-mans_05.html

- British Listed Buildings - 59 listed buildings by Detmar Blow

<https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/site-search/?q=Detmar%20blow>

- Fonthill Recovered: A Cultural History. Edited by Caroline Dakers. London: UCL Press, 2018 [Open access] <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv1xz0t0.28?seq=1>

- RIBApix

<https://www.ribapix.com/search?adv=false&cid=0&mid=0&vid=0&q=Detmar%20blow&si>

- Country Life Picture Library

<https://www.futurecontenthub.com/search/keyword:Detmar%20blow>