

## Harper, Ewen 1853 - 1920



Ewen Harper was born in Darlaston, Staffordshire, England on 31 May 1853 and was articled to David Smith & Son in Birmingham in 1870. He also attended Birmingham School of Art. In 1872 he was awarded the national Queen's Medal and in 1875 won a South Kensington Art Master's prize, having been a teacher of science and art for some years while studying architecture.

In 1875 he established his own architectural practice at 27 Bennett's Hill, Birmingham. From 1897 he was in partnership with his brother, [James Alfred Henry Harper](#) (1866-1952) as [Ewen & J. Alfred Harper](#) [also known as Ewen Harper, Brother & Co.] in Birmingham

The Harper brothers were fervent Methodists and in addition to designing a wide range of commercial, industrial, public and domestic buildings, were responsible for designing a large number of non-conformist churches. Most of the practice's work was in the Birmingham area.

In 1907 Ewen Harper was elected a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects (FRIBA). His address was given as Ruskin Chambers, 191, Corporation Street, Birmingham in 1914. On his retirement in 1919 his son, Leonard Ewen Harper (1886-1954), became a partner in the practice. Ewen Harper died in Birmingham on 5 February 1920. The firm continued as Ewen Harper, Brother & Co.

The dissolution of the partnership was announced in The London Gazette, 5 October 1937 p.6177 and it was stated that "Leonard Ewen Harper F.R.I.B.A. will continue to practise for commercial and other work under the old firm name of 'Ewen Harper Brother & Co.' at Ruskin Chambers 191 Corporation Street Birmingham as heretofore, who will shortly take into partnership his Sons Bernard Ivan Harper and Dennis Rosslyn Harper. James Alfred Henry Harper (the Senior

Partner in the old firm) and his Son Walter Geoffrey Harper will continue to practice from the 30th September at Union Chambers, Temple Row, Birmingham under the style of 'J. Alfred Harper & Son.'"

Worked in

UK

Works

Works by Ewen & J. Alfred Harper: 32 houses in Cuckoo Road, Aston, Birmingham for Mr. Birkenhead (1875); 32 houses and retail shop, Ickenfield Street and Tindale Street, Birmingham for Mr. Taylor (1875); Variety Works, Frederick Street, Birmingham 1881);

School in Carlyle Road, Edgbaston for Wesleyan Church (1884); 22 houses in Coventry Road, Birmingham (1887); Factory, Rupert Street, Birmingham for Joseph Stevens (1887); Rolling mill, Montgomery Street, Sparkhill, Birmingham for W. & G. Johnson & Co. (1887); Nurse's house and extension for Queen's Hospital, Birmingham (1888); Wesleyan Chapel, Willenhall (1889); Shop and warehouse, Great King Street for Joseph & Son Ltd. (1889); Hart Memorial United Methodist Chapel, Gravelly Hill, Birmingham (1890); 26 houses in Reservoir Road, Edgbaston (1890); Extension to Assay Office, Newhall Street, Birmingham (1890); Wesleyan Chapel, Pershore Road, King's Norton (1891); 36 houses in Brunswick Road, Birmingham (1892); Extensions to St. Agnes Church, St. Agnes Road, Moseley, Birmingham (1893); Offices, sheds, engine house and chimney stack, Dale End, Birmingham for The Electric Supply Co. (1894); Baptist Church, The Green, Stafford, Staffordshire (1895); Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, Waterloo Road, Smethwick (1896); Factory at Great King Street and Burbury Street, Birmingham for Joseph Lucas & Son (1896); Offices and warehouses, Newhall Street, Water Street and Parker Street, Birmingham for the Electric Supply Co. (1896); Headless Cross Wesleyan Methodist Church, Redditch, Worcestershire (1887); Sunday School, Buck Street, Birmingham for the Trustees of the Wesleyan Central Mission (1897); Mission Hall for Adult Schools, Farm Street, Hockley (1897); Friend's Institute, Moseley Road, Balsall Heath for Richard Cadbury (1897); Birmingham Town Mission, Tindal Street, Birmingham, Birmingham (1897); Bournville Almshouses, Mary Vale Road for Richard Cadbury (1897); Ruskin Buildings, Corporation Street, Birmingham for Ewen Harper & Brothers (1899); King Edward's Building, Corporation Street, Birmingham for John Hawkins & Sons (1901); Premises for Wesleyan Assurance Co., Steelhouse Lane, Birmingham (1901); Generating Station, Summer Lane, Birmingham for the Electric Supply Co. (1902); Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, Llandrindod Wells, Wales (1903); Methodist New Connection Church, Blackheath, Rowley Regis, Staffordshire (1904); New premises in Warstone Lane, Birmingham for Joseph Walker (1904); Business

premises, Moor Street, Birmingham for Halford Cycles (1904); Workshops for the Bromsgrove Guild, Station Street, Bromsgrove (1904-08); Factory, Brook Street and Newhall Street, Birmingham for Baker & Finnemore (1911); Premises, Bagot Street, Birmingham for Austin Motors (1914); ; Premises, Camden Street, Birmingham for Hudson Cycle Co. (1915); Premises, Aston Church Road, Aston, Birmingham for Electricity Supply Co. (1915); and Aeroplane factory, Ryder Street, Birmingham for Harris & Sheldon.

## Bibliography

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

Harper, Michael and Shackley, Barbara. 'Ewen and J. Alfred Harper' in Birmingham's Victorian and Edwardian Architects, edited by Phillada Ballard. Wetherby, Yorkshire: Oblong Creative for the Birmingham and West Midlands Group of the Victorian Society, 2009 pp. 323-338

'Obituary'. The Builder vol. 118, 13 February 1920 p. 186

'Obituary'. Royal Institute of British Architects Journal vol. 27, 21 February 1920 p. 184

## Links

- The Victorian Web <https://victorianweb.org/art/architecture/birmingham/3.html>
- Historic England - 46 Frederick Street, Birmingham  
<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1391272>
- Historic England - Derwent House, Birmingham  
<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1391311>
- Historic England Assay House, Birmingham  
<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1392798>
- RIBA <https://www.architecture.com/image-library/ribapix/image-information/poster/former-methodist-central-hall-birmingham/posterid/RIBA47288.html>