

Gimson, Ernest William 1864 - 1919



Ernest William Gimson [commonly known as Ernest Gimson] was born in Leicester, Leicestershire, England, on 21 December 1864 and was articled to Isaac Barradale (1845-1902) in Leicester. He also attended Leicester School of Art. In 1884 he met William Morris following a lecture he gave at the Leicester Secular Society on 'Art and socialism'. He encouraged Gimson to go to London and recommended him to the architect [John Dando Sedding](#) (1838-1891). He subsequently worked in Sedding's office from 1886 to 1888. He met [Ernest Barnsley](#) (1863-1926) at Sedding's studio and through him, his brother [Sidney Barnsley](#) (1865-1926), with whom he formed a lasting friendship.

In 1889 Gimson joined the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) founded by William Morris, and in late 1890 or early 1891, with the Barnsley brothers, [Mervyn Macartney](#), [Reginald Blomfield](#), and Stephen Webb, he set up Kenton & Co., a cabinet-making workshop in London, to make furniture to their designs. The enterprise was short-lived and closed down in 1892.

In 1893, Sidney Barnsley and Gimson moved to Ewen in the Cotswolds, and established a furniture workshop at Pinsbury Park a few miles away. Ernest Barnsley joined them the following year. In 1902 they relocated their workshop to the nearby village of Sapperton, however, because of a disagreement between Gimson and Ernest Barnsley, the partnership between the three designers dissolved after a few years and they went their own way, meanwhile Gimson remained in Sapperton where he died on 12 August 1919.

Worked in

UK

Works

Gimson is primarily known as a designer, however, he always saw himself as an architect, nevertheless his work in this field was not extensive. Several of his commissions came from family members and friends. It included Inglewood, Ratcliffe Road, Leicester (1892); The White House, Leicester (1897) for Arthur Gimson; two cottages near Markfield in the Charnwood Forest, Leicestershire (1897) for James Billson; Lea Cottage in the Charnwood Forest, Leicestershire (1898) for Mentor Gimson; Stoneywell Cottage at Ulverscroft in the Charnwood Forest, Leicestershire in collaboration with [Detmar Blow](#) (1899) for Sydney Gimson; The Leasowes, a cottage for himself at Sapperton, Gloucestershire (1903); Rockyfield Cottage in the Charnwood Forest, Leicestershire (1908) for Margaret Gimson; The assembly hall at Bedales School, Hampshire (1910); Long Orchard, a cob cottage at Budleigh Salterton (1912) for Basil Young; two cottages at Kelmscott, Gloucestershire (1915) for May Morris; The memorial library at Bedales School, Hampshire (built posthumously, 1920); and The village hall at Kelmscott (built posthumously, 1933) for May Morris. He also worked on the extension of several houses in Gloucestershire

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Acknowledgements

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- Historic England - over 50 records relating to Ernest Gimson

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