

Keen, Arthur 1861 - 1938

Arthur Keen was born in Islington, London, England in 1861 and was articled to Richard Norman Shaw (1831-1912) in London from 1877 to 1880. During this period he also attended the Royal Academy Schools in London. He then worked as worked as an assistant to Ernest Newton (1856-1922) from 1881 to 1884, Edward Robert Robson (1835-1917) in 1884 and to Robert William Edis (1839-1927) from 1885 to 1889.

Keen established his own independent practice in London in 1889 and initially shared an office with Ernest Newton.

Architectural projects by Keen ranged from cottage housing, to commercial buildings, factories, schools and a few Nonconformist churches. He designed the Baptist Church with Kingsway Chapel on Southampton Row, London and the Baptist Church in Cricklewood, London. He also designed the interior decoration of the Royal Society and Geological Society in London in c.1905.

A photograph and a ground-floor plan of 'Edgehill' in Limpsfield, Surrey, designed by Keen is illustrated in 'The Studio yearbook of Decorative Art' 1911 (p.46). With Ernest Gimson, W.R. Lethaby, Sidney Barnsley, Reginald Blomfield and Mervyn Macartney, Keen was one of a group of architects and craftsmen who founded the short-lived furniture making enterprise Kenton & Co. in London in 1890.

Between the early 1880s and the early 1930s Keen exhibited at the Royal Academy in London and at the Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects (FRIBA) in 1904. He was a President of the Architectural Association and was Vice-President of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1925-27.

[Note: it is sometimes stated that Keen was a member of the Art Workers Guild, however, his name does not appear in the AWG's list of members].

Keen's address was given as 12 Cathcart Hill in 1883; 41 Bedford Row in 1889; 4 Raymond Buildings, Gray's Inn, London in 1894 and 1930; and Snatts, Limpsfield, Surrey in 1935 and 1938. He died on 15 December in 1938.

Worked in

UK

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

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

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

'Obituary'. RIBA Journal 9 January 1939 pp. 255-256

'Obituary'. RIBA Journal 20 March 1939 p. 523

'Obituary'. The Builder 23 December 1938 p. 1201

'Obituary'. The Builder 13 January 1939 p.116

'Obituary'. The Times 17 December 1938 p.16

Links

- The National Archives

<https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/c/F60873>

- Dictionary of Scottish Architects 1660-1980

http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=203656

- Limpsfield, Surrey <https://limpsfieldsurrey.com/2017/04/04/dont-miss-exhibition-of-arthur-keens-limpsfield-prints-this-week/>

- Edenbridge Chronicle <http://www.edenbridge-chronicle.co.uk/article.cfm?id=113256&headline=Keen%20prints%20of%20old%20building>

- Wikimedia Commons https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Arthur_Keen

- Historic England - Nos. 114 and 115 High Holborn, London

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1378878>

- Historic England - Baptist Church and Kingsgate House, Camden, London

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1378782>