

Denholm, 17A Edward Street, Gordon
Assessment of Heritage Significance

For Ku-ring-gai Council
September 2023 • Final issue

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Issue	Date	Purpose
Draft issue	4 September 2023	For review
Final issue	21 September 2023	Assessment purposes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Denholm, 17A Edward Street, Gordon was designed by architect John L Berry as his family home and completed in 1915. The Berrys lived at Denholm until 1930 and remained in possession of the property until 1949. The property was subdivided and in June 1951 the allotment containing Denholm was sold to Charles Hargreaves. It changed hands in 1952 and 1962. Modifications to the property were undertaken between 1978 and 1982.

The following statement of significance is based on the assessment of documentary, physical and comparative evidence undertaken in this report:

Denholm, 17A Edward Street, Gordon is an important Colonial Revival style house in Ku-ring-gai that demonstrates characteristics and is representative of the American Dutch Colonial Revival style, which is rare in Ku-ring-gai. The house is aesthetically significant for its confident use of building materials and is enhanced by its open garden setting. It has retained a relatively high level of integrity. The house is associated with architect John L Berry, who is notable for his contribution to the architecture of the firms of Wilson Neave & Berry and Neave & Berry during the 1920s and for his role in architectural discourse during the 1920s. It served as his family home for some 15 years from 1915 to 1930 and is a rare known example of his residential design.

The tennis pavilion has aesthetic significance for its overall form, scale and detailing, and is an important element within the setting of the house.

The following actions are recommended:

- The property should be added to Schedule 5 of Ku-ring-gai Local Environmental Plan 2015 as 'Denholm, 17A Edward Street, Gordon and interiors,' with the curtilage defined as the land contained within Lot 2 Deposited Plan 504958.
- The original section of the residence should be retained and conserved. The surviving original external form, interior configuration of original spaces, original fabric and finishes including timber framed windows, doors and door hardware should be retained and conserved in any future development.
- Consideration should be given to retaining the original form and fabric of the detached pavilion constructed between 1928 and 1943. Although not an original part of development on the site, it was constructed at a relatively early date and likely related to the period when Denholm was divided into two flats.
- The tennis pavilion should be retained and conserved.
- The existing pattern of landscaping should be retained.
- The circa 1980 additions can be retained, sympathetically modified or demolished in any future works. It is desirable to locate garaging in its present location as it does not obscure the significance of Denholm in its overall setting.
- All conservation and new works should be undertaken in accordance with the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (The Burra Charter).
- It is recommended that a Conservation Management Plan or Conservation Management Strategy be prepared to guide future works and conservation at the place.

I INTRODUCTION

I.1 Background

This Assessment of Heritage Significance for 17A Edward Street, Gordon, has been prepared on behalf of Ku-ring-gai Council. The report has been commissioned to assess the heritage significance of the site, to determine if it reaches the threshold for inclusion as a heritage item in Schedule 5 of Ku-ring-gai Local Environmental Plan 2015.

I.2 Report methodology

This report has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines outlined in The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 2013. The Burra Charter is widely acknowledged as the principal guiding document to conservation work and practices of places of cultural significance. The Burra Charter has been adopted widely as the standard for best practice in the conservation of heritage places in Australia.

The content and format of the report also follows the guidelines contained in Assessing heritage significance: Guidelines for assessing places and objects against the Heritage Council of NSW criteria (State of NSW and Department of Planning and Environment, 2023).

Denholm, including its interior, was inspected on 25 July 2023.

I.3 Author identification

This report was written by heritage consultant Dr Roy Lumby of Hericon Consulting.

I.4 Acknowledgments

The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the following in the preparation of this report:

- Claudine Loffi, Heritage Specialist Planner, Ku-ring-gai Council.
- Matthew Taylor, landscape architect and heritage landscape specialist.
- Georgia O'Hara, property owner.

I.5 Site

The subject site is located on the southern side of Edward Street, to the east of Rosedale Road. It is a battle axe block surrounded by residential development. 17A Edward Street is identified as Lot 2 Deposited Plan 504958. The property is located within the Roberts Grant Heritage Conservation Area (C13).



I Site plan (not to scale; SIX Maps).



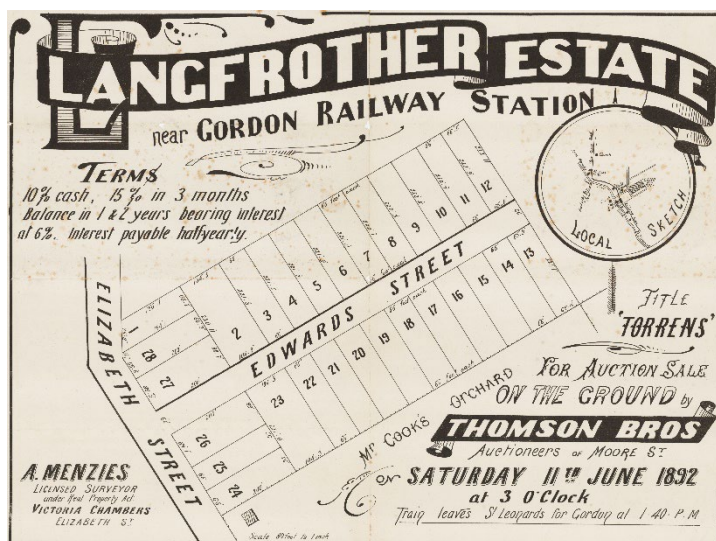
2 HISTORICAL OUTLINE

This outline history is based on the article on Denholm written Kathie Reith that was published in *The Historian*, Volume 36, Number 1. It has been supplemented by additional research.

2.1 Site history

The land which now forms the Ku-ring-gai Council local government area is the traditional land of a number of Aboriginal groups including the Durramuragal people.¹ Aboriginal people occupied the bushland of the locale for many thousands of years prior to European settlement. The local environment, with the fresh water supplied by Middle Harbour and its tributaries, provided plentiful resources for food, shelter, and tools, and to support trade, customs and ceremonies. The arrival of European settlement in the late eighteenth century and the diseases it introduced led to the decline of the local Aboriginal population. Despite this, local Aboriginal people continued to maintain connections to country, with evidence of groups regularly travelling through the area on ancestral routes, stopping to rest at Pymble Hill many decades later.

The subject site is part of Portion 47, granted to William Roberts in 1856. Roberts applied to bring his land under the provisions of the Real Property Act in 1881 and requested the accompanying certificate of title be issued to public school teacher James George Edwards.² Edwards subdivided the land and in June 1887 part of Lot 28 of the subdivision was purchased by labourer John Cook. Cook's land contained a little over 1.214 hectares and was known as J Cook's Orchard.



2 An 1892 auction notice showing the relationship of Cook's orchard to Edwards Street and Elizabeth Street (State Library of NSW).

Some years later Stanley James Greenaway, understood to have been a Blacktown storekeeper, purchased the northern section of the orchard. The transfer of title took place in January 1912. The land included a narrow right of way to Elizabeth Street (now Rosedale Road). Greenaway in turn sold the property in April 1914. The title was transferred in the name of Hazel Jean Berry, wife of architect John Lionel Berry. At the same time Hazel and John Berry acquired a narrow strip of land from Greenaway giving access to Edward Street.³ Mortgages were taken out in Hazel Berry's name in July and November 1914 and subsequently discharged in October 1928. The mortgages may have assisted

¹ Ku-ring-gai Council, 'Aboriginal History and Heritage within the Ku-ring-gai Local Government Area,' (2015), p3.

² Certificate of Title Volume 610 Folio 146.

³ Greenaway acquired the block of land fronting Edward Street from Mary Bulteau. The transfer of title took place on 12 January 1912 (Certificate of Title Volume 1544 Folio 69).

in financing the construction of the family home, which is understood to have been completed in 1915.⁴ The Berrys named the house Denholm. Its address until 1928 was Elizabeth Street then into the 1940s if not later it was identified as 15 Rosedale Road.



3

Hazel Berry and her son, John St Clair Berry enjoying the sunshine on the front doorstep of Denholm (*The Australian Home Builder*, 15 November 1924).

The Berrys lived at Denholm until 1930, at which time they are understood to have moved to Tasmania (refer to Section 2.2). The house was then occupied by two families, that of Cecil Mallett and of master printer Charles Hargreaves.⁵

⁴ The first entry for the Berry family in Sands Directory appeared in the 1916 edition, indicating the house was completed the year before. Hazel Berry was noted as the head of the household.

⁵ The entry for 15 Rosedale Road in the 1931 edition of *Sands Sydney and suburban directory* lists John Berry as head of the household. The following edition (1932/33) lists Mallett and Hargreaves as heads of households at that address.



- 4 Aerial photograph showing development at 17A Edward Street during 1943. The purpose of the small building to the south of the house has not been determined. The tennis pavilion on the western side of the tennis court can be seen in the photograph (SIX Maps).



Hazel Berry remained in possession of the property until 1949. It was subdivided into two allotments and the title to the western allotment was transferred to company director William Herbert Northam on 1 September 1949. On 14 June 1951 Hazel Berry transferred the title to the second allotment, which contained Denholm, to Charles Hargreaves. He then sold Denholm to company manager Thomas McKechnie McLachlan in November 1952. McLachlan owned the property for about ten years before selling it to Robert and Ruth Delohery. The transfer of title took place in April 1962. The strip of land connecting the body of the site to Edward Street remained on separate title.⁶

Denholm was sold to new owners in June 2015.

2.2 John L Berry

John Lionel Berry was born in Suva, Fiji, on 5 April 1885. His father, the Hon. John Berry had been posted to Fiji as Commissioner of Lands and Survey. John Lionel was his eldest son. In September 1899 the Berry family left Fiji and arrived in Sydney.⁷

John L Berry evidently enrolled at the Sydney Technical College to study architecture. He would have been articulated to a practicing architect at the same time. He exhibited at the first exhibition of the Students Association of the Institute of Architects of New South Wales in December 1904, alongside fellow student William Hardy Wilson. Berry received first prize in the architectural sketches category while Wilson received prizes in several other categories.⁸ Berry left Sydney in 1906 for England, where he furthered his studies in architecture, enrolling as an architecture student at the Royal Academy College in London. He subsequently toured Europe between 1907 and 1910, apparently with young

⁶ Certificate of title Volume 2472 Folio 250.

⁷ "Mr John Berry", *Daily Telegraph*, 16 September 1899, p.9.

⁸ "Institute of Architects. Students' Exhibition", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 December 1904, p.8.

New Zealand-born architect William Henry Gummer, who arrived in England during 1908.⁹ It has also been suggested he met up with fellow Australians William Hardy Wilson and his firm friend and travelling companion Stacey Neave in several locations. While travelling Berry produced numerous sketches and watercolours of architecture and buildings in England, France and Italy, and in 1909 and 1910 he participated in several of the Royal Academy School's architectural drawing competitions.

Following his return to Sydney in 1911, Berry married Hazel Jean Sinclair in Brisbane on 3 June 1913.¹⁰ He was employed in the large office of prominent architectural firm H E Ross & Rowe as chief draftsman. Berry was elected a member of the council of the newly formed Architects Association, an alternate professional body to the Institute of Architects of NSW, in December 1919. The following year he became a partner in the practice of Wilson & Neave, which had been set up by William Hardy Wilson and Stacey Neave in June 1911. In 1921 he was appointed lecturer in Medieval Architecture at the University of Sydney and in 1926 elected to the Council of the Institute of Architects of NSW.

Amongst other things, Berry evidently had gained a reputation within the profession as a raconteur:

It requires more than the ability to tell a good yarn to make a really good architect, and Berry certainly is that; not only a good one, but one with quite definite ideas of his own. He has studied widely, and bases his own work on a very secure foundation. That is why he has, in a quiet and unobtrusive way, had no little influence on the work of his contemporaries. Many of the younger men now just beginning to make their mark will gladly tell you that they owe much to Berry. In bygone years he constituted himself a sort of honorary coach and mentor to any youngster whose eyes were set towards higher things in matters architectural, and he taught them not only by advice and counsel, but by example as well. His work was not always appreciated – it isn't always appreciated even now – and this has perhaps left Berry a little disappointed, and maybe even a little embittered. But to those who had eyes to see it was good work, worthy of emulation. With his partner, Hardy Wilson, he has always struggled to bring us back to a simpler, more refined manner in design, to something that should be a worthy successor to our earlier colonial beginnings; and from the look of things we are gradually beginning to move definitely in that direction.¹¹

Berry was an advocate for change in Australian architecture. During the 1920s and early 1930s he contributed numerous articles on architecture, design and gardens to publications such as *The Home*, *Art in Australia* and *Architecture*. It has been suggested that his own architectural practice promoted the use of natural light, colour and a correspondence between design and the specific conditions of the Australian climate.

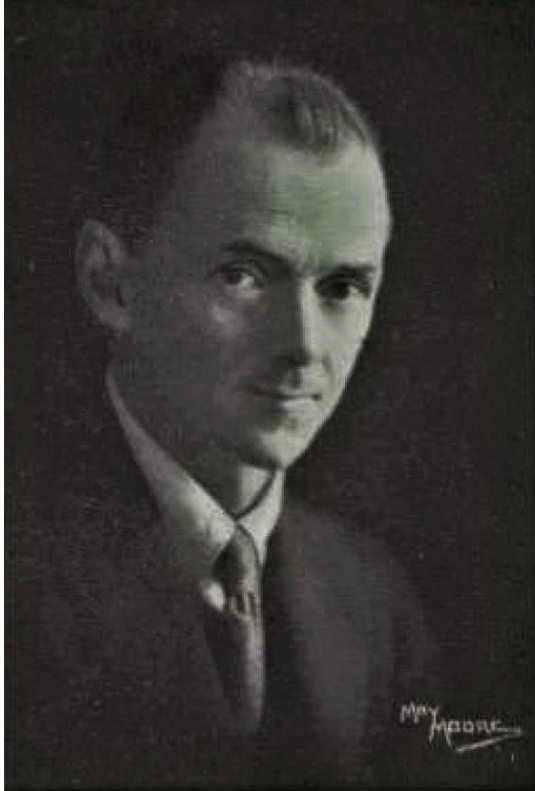
After Hardy Wilson left the firm in 1927, Stacey Neave and John Berry continued in practice as Neave & Berry. Berry did not stand for re-election to the Institute of Architects' Council in 1928 and, after having moved to Tasmania, resigned from Institute in February 1932. The Berry family settled in

⁹ Gummer travelled to England in 1908, where he worked briefly for Leonard Stokes. From 1909 to 1912 he studied architecture at the Royal Academy of Arts, which was dominated by beaux-arts classicism, an approach Gummer quickly absorbed. In 1910 he became an associate of the Royal Institute of British Architecture. The experience of working for Edwin Lutyens during 1911 profoundly influenced the young architect. He contributed to the design of Castle Drogo, the last of Lutyens's romantic country houses, and his mentor's perfectionism, fascination with abstract form and emerging classicism made an indelible impression on him. Returning to New Zealand via the United States, Gummer worked briefly in the office of the Chicago firm of D. H. Burnham and Company during 1912 and 1913 before returning to New Zealand. (<https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/4g24/gummer-william-henry>, accessed 19 July 2023).

¹⁰ "Berry – Sinclair", *The Queenslander*, 14 June 1913, p.6.

¹¹ "Who's Who in The Council. J L Berry", *Architecture*, May 1927, p.85.

Deloraine in the early 1930s and established a sheep farm on a property called Bowerbank. Berry appears to have maintained an interest in architecture and drawing in his retirement, giving lectures on various topics during the 1950s. John Berry died in Deloraine at the age of 77 in April 1962, aged 77. Hazel Berry survived him for six years, dying in May 1968.



5 John Lionel Berry, photographed circa 1927 (*Architecture*, 1 May 1927, p.85; May Moore photograph).

3 DENHOLM

3.1 Documentary evidence

Denholm was one of the houses designed by prominent Australian architects featured in the prestigious limited edition book *Domestic Architecture in Australia*, a special number of *Art in Australia*, which was published in 1919. In 1923 photographs of the house appeared in *The Home* and then an article in 1924 in *The Australian Home Builder*, ensuring it reached a wide national audience. The Harold Cazneaux photo of Denholm's main entry was published in the Institute of Architects of NSW journal *Architecture* during 1926, ensuring it reached a specialised professional audience.



6 Harold Cazneaux's photograph of Denholm published in *Domestic Architecture in Australia*.

The two page feature in *The Home* was limited to a series of captioned photographs, several of which re-appeared in the article published in *The Australian Home Builder* the following year. However, they were accompanied by some descriptive text:

The "Dutch Colonial" style of house is not common in Australia. Originally built by early American colonists to satisfy with dignity the simple needs of those strenuous times, it has gradually become the classic of American architecture. Americans have wakened up to the fact that the architecture of their forefathers is peculiarly adapted to their own temperament and surroundings ... Accordingly, modern architects are kept busy evolving modern versions of this now national style, for those who would be truly American, and yet are not the fortunate possessors of old colonial homes.

In designing Denholm, Mr Berry has proved the absolute "rightness" of this type of home in an Australian setting. Though comparatively new, it might have been built a century ago, almost, so complete is the old world atmosphere. It is built of mellowed brick, the shingles

of the upper storey presenting a medley of rich coloring [sic] from orange to deep red. The majority of these are indeed old and colored [sic] by time. Green painted shutters suggest coolness and shade, and white woodwork, gay flowering shrubs and borders create bright notes of color [sic] against the background of soft green lawns which surround the house ...

Indoors the old world atmosphere is deepened. The front door opens into a square hall ... On the right of the hall is a living room, spacious and many-windowed, with double glass doors opening on to a square pillared porch, with an entrancing view of the garden. ... On the left is a dining alcove furnished in walnut ...

The experience of Americans in evolving a dominant architectural style from simple colonial beginnings is likely to be ours in Australia too ... window shutters, which have been made a feature of the American colonial house, will probably be even more serviceable here, where sunshine is more pronounced. The pillared porch, also a great American feature, has a strong attraction for Australians, who possess a keen sentiment of hospitality, and readily recognise in the porch a welcoming place for the visitor, giving out to him, as it were, the glad hand of greeting from the house itself, and making a shelter where he may be met and cordially bidden to enter the home.

Within, the rooms of such a house are square and spacious, and convey a feeling of solid comfort ... The fact that such houses as Denholm are being built promises success for those who are trying to develop an Australian style of architecture.

A bedroom opening from the other side of the hall is charmingly treated ... The roomy sleeping porch beyond, with its prospect of garden and distant forest, is a delightfully modern touch. In fact, all through the house, although the feeling of antiquity [through furniture] is so charmingly preserved, full advantage has been taken of modern appliances where comfort and convenience are to be served.

The house is situated some distance from the road, and from one side a quiet flagged path leads between high hedges and rose trees – masses of bloom – across a small, beautifully kept paddock up to the steps of the living room porch.

From the main entrance a gravelled driveway sweeps down to the road in the opposite direction. On this side of the house the lawn ends in a bush covered slope, leading down into a deep gully, which is a treasure house of wild flowers, and in which comparatively rare Australian birds still find sanctuary. In a shady nook near the tennis court stands a sundial

...¹²

¹² “‘Denholm’ – A Dutch Colonial House”, *The Australian Home Builder*, 15 November 1924, pp.26-29.



- 7 Northern elevation of Denholm. The Berry family is grouped on the front entry porch (*The Home*, 1 March 1923. The same photograph was reproduced in *The Australian Home Builder*, 15 November 1924).



- 8 Living room verandah on the western side of the house, left, and the northern front of the house viewed from the west (*The Home*, 1 March 1923. The same photograph was reproduced in *The Australian Home Builder*, 15 November 1924).

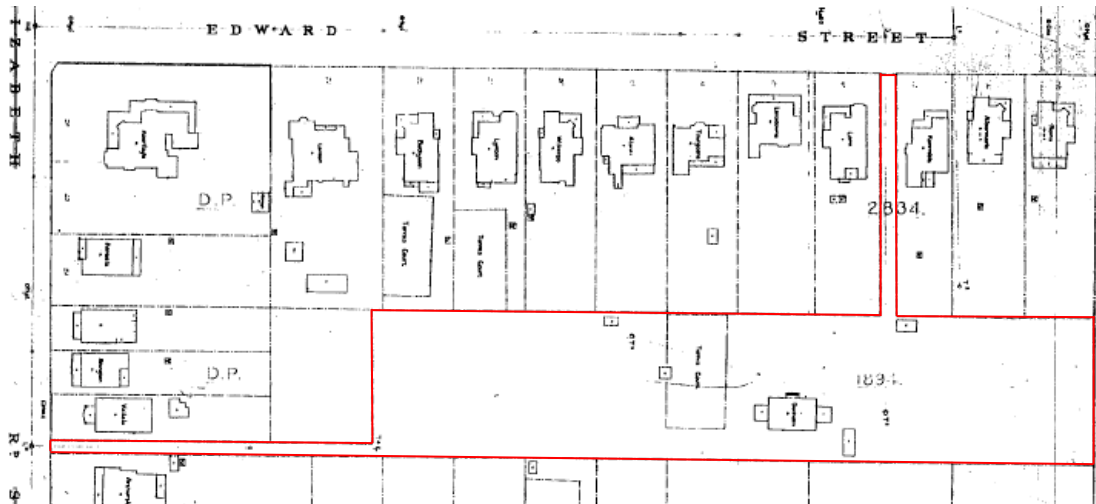


9 Fireplace in the living room, left, the “dining alcove, furnished in walnut”, right (*The Australian Home Builder*, 15 November 1924).



10 Part of the living room at Denholm (*The Home*, 1 March 1923).

A Water Board Survey from the late 1920s shows the footprint of Denholm. Other development on the site included what may have been a detached garage to the south-east of the house, the tennis court and the tennis pavilion on its western side.



- 11 Circa 1928 Water Board survey showing development on the site owned by Hazel and Joh Berry at that time (outlined in red). Denholm, the tennis court and associated pavilion, and a small building, possibly a garage, to the south-east of the house are shown, along with a small building on the northern side of the site, to the west of the tennis court (Ku-ring-gai Council)..

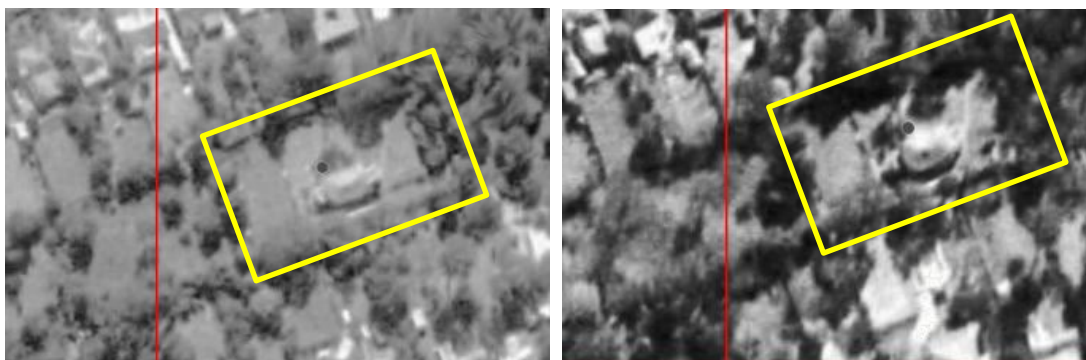


Denholm appears to have remained unaltered for many years. A small detached rectangular building to the south of Denholm was built before 1943. It may have been constructed at the time the property became occupied by two families around 1930. A swimming pool was constructed to the east of the house between 1975 and 1978. By 1982 the garage to the south of the swimming pool and the addition at the south-western corner of the house had been constructed.



- 12 Development at 17A Edward Street in 1955 at left and 1965 at right (<https://portal.spatial.nsw.gov.au/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html>).





- 13 Development at 17A Edward Street in 1971 at left and 1975 at right
(<https://portal.spatial.nsw.gov.au/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html>).



- 14 Development at 17A Edward Street in 1978 at left and 1982 at right. Denholm remained relatively unchanged until the four years between 1978 and 1982, in which period the garage and pavilion on the south-western side of the house were constructed. The swimming pool was installed between 1975 and 1978.
(<https://portal.spatial.nsw.gov.au/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html>).



- 15 Development at 17A Edward Street in 1986 at left and 1994 at right
(<https://portal.spatial.nsw.gov.au/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html>).





16 Development at 17A Edward Street in 2005.
(<https://portal.spatial.nsw.gov.au/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html>).

3.2 Physical evidence

3.2.1 Exterior

The original section of the house is a brick building with square porches on its eastern and western sides with flat trafficable roof terraces and a gambrel roof containing first floor spaces. The house demonstrates several of the characteristics of the Dutch Colonial Revival style, which was popular in the United States of America during the first third of the twentieth century, particularly in the eastern part of the country. The shared characteristics include:

- Gambrel roof form.
- A symmetrical façade.
- Dormers associated with spaces within the roof.
- Double hung windows with shutters.
- Often porches/verandahs at the side of a house

The upper section of the gambrel roof is hipped in form, with a shallow pitch and covered with terracotta tiles. The lower section is covered with terracotta shingles on its northern and southern planes, which are broken by dormers that are also clad in terracotta shingles. Eaves are lined with timber boards that have been perforated to provide ventilation. A squat wide brick chimney with terracotta pots is situated in the middle of the roof. The main entry on the northern side of the house is protected by a shallow porch with brick steps and landing, framed on either side by timber balustrades surmounted by open timber screening. The porch roof is supported off simple round columns; similar columns and balustrades are used in the porches on the eastern and western sides of the house. The first floor walls on the eastern and western sides of the house are of brick. The hipped section of roof extends down to shade the door openings in the centre of both elevations. The northern, eastern and western elevations have symmetrically composed fenestration. Windows are multi-paned double hung timber framed sashes, the openings of which are flanked by shutters. Multi-paned French doors in the eastern and western elevations are also flanked by shutters. These items appear to be original or, if replaced, resemble original joinery depicted in archival photographs.

Denholm is linked to a pavilion against the southern site boundary, which shows in early aerial photographs as a detached building and may originally have been a garage as it would have been accessible from the right of way leading to Elizabeth Street. The space linking the pavilion to the main house has a flat roof covered by steel decking. The linking space extends seamlessly into the circa 1980 addition.

The grounds of Denholm have retained elements that are recorded in the 1943 aerial photograph of the site, including the tennis court and the tennis pavilion. Sandstone flagstone paths on the western side of the house and alongside the tennis court have also been retained

Original detailing was replicated in the circa 1980 additions, which shows an endeavour to design in harmony with Denholm. This is most apparent in the columns forming part of the garage and the south-western addition, both of which are brick structures covered by shingled roofs with terracotta ridge cappings.

Denholm and its environs are described in the following photographs.



17 Denholm viewed from the north-east, from the end of the driveway extending from Edward Street.



- 18 Northern elevation of Denholm. The symmetrical composition of the elevation is clearly apparent. Apart from changes to landscaping it remains very much as originally built.



- 19 One of a pair of metal plaques fixed to the northern elevation of the house. They do not appear in photographs taken during the 1920s (left); detailing of the balustrades, screens and porch at the main entrance to Denholm (right).



- 20 The eastern porch (left); interior of the western porch, described in *The Australian Home Builder* as a “sun porch”. The original floor appears to have been replaced –early photographs suggest a margin was installed around the periphery of the floor. The eastern porch has retained a timber floor (right). Otherwise the porches remain very intact.



- 21 The southern side of Denholm viewed from the east. The detached building constructed between 1928 and 1943 is to the left. It has been modified by the installation of a sliding door set and a balcony. The flat roofed lining structure is visible between it and Denholm.



22 Denholm viewed from the south. The projecting canopy forming part of the shallow porch at the main entry was repeated at the back of the house, supported at either end by decorative brackets.



23 Denholm viewed from the tennis court.



- 24 The circa 1980 addition at the rear of Denholm. What is understood to be an early flagstone path was extended to connect to the addition.



- 25 The circa 1980 garage in the south-eastern corner of the site. Materials such as brick and terracotta shingles, along with the columns on the western side of the building relate it to Denholm.



- 26 The swimming pool on the eastern side of the site. Hedging and paving is likely to date to the 1980s if not later.



- 27 Tennis court and pavilion on the western side of the site. Both were in place by 1943 but are likely to predate the 1940s; clipped hedges probably date to the 1980s if not later.



28 Paving and planting on the western side of the house.



29 Flagstone path and landscaping on the southern side of the tennis court.



- 30 The tennis pavilion viewed from the south. The engaging little building has an unexpected level of refinement in the detailing of roof elements around the perimeter of the structure.

3.3 Interior

The plan of the original section of the house is symmetrically laid out. The interior is organized around the hall, located in the centre of the building on its northern side. On the eastern side of the hall is the compact stair to the first floor, which has a simple timber handrail, newel posts and balusters. The large living room is to the west of the hall, which in turn opens onto the western porch. To the west of the hall is a sequence of rooms consisting of a study, a small and relatively recent lavatory and a lounge room, which opens onto the eastern porch. The kitchen, which is a relatively recent installation, is behind the hall to its south.

The kitchen and lounge open onto the circa 1980 addition that contains contiguous dining and family rooms. The ceiling of the family room is octagonal, reflecting the configuration of its western end, and is lined with timber boards. On the southern side of the dining room is the pavilion constructed during the interwar period, which contains a bedroom, ensuite bathroom and laundry. Its original planning is not discernible. A wide opening with a sliding door set has been introduced to the eastern end of the bedroom, opening onto a timber balcony.

The original plan of the first floor is relatively intact and consists of a central landing area that is characteristic of two storey houses constructed during the early twentieth century. It provides access to the master bedroom, three smaller bedrooms and a bathroom. Cornices around the perimeter of the landing may be original but if not are appropriate to the house. The major alterations at this level are associated with the construction of the ensuite attached to the master bedroom. The three minor bedrooms do not have cornices. The lack of cornices in bedrooms on this level is consistent with the age of the house and reflects the hierarchy of spaces; the cornices in the master bedroom may have accompanied the installation of the ensuite.

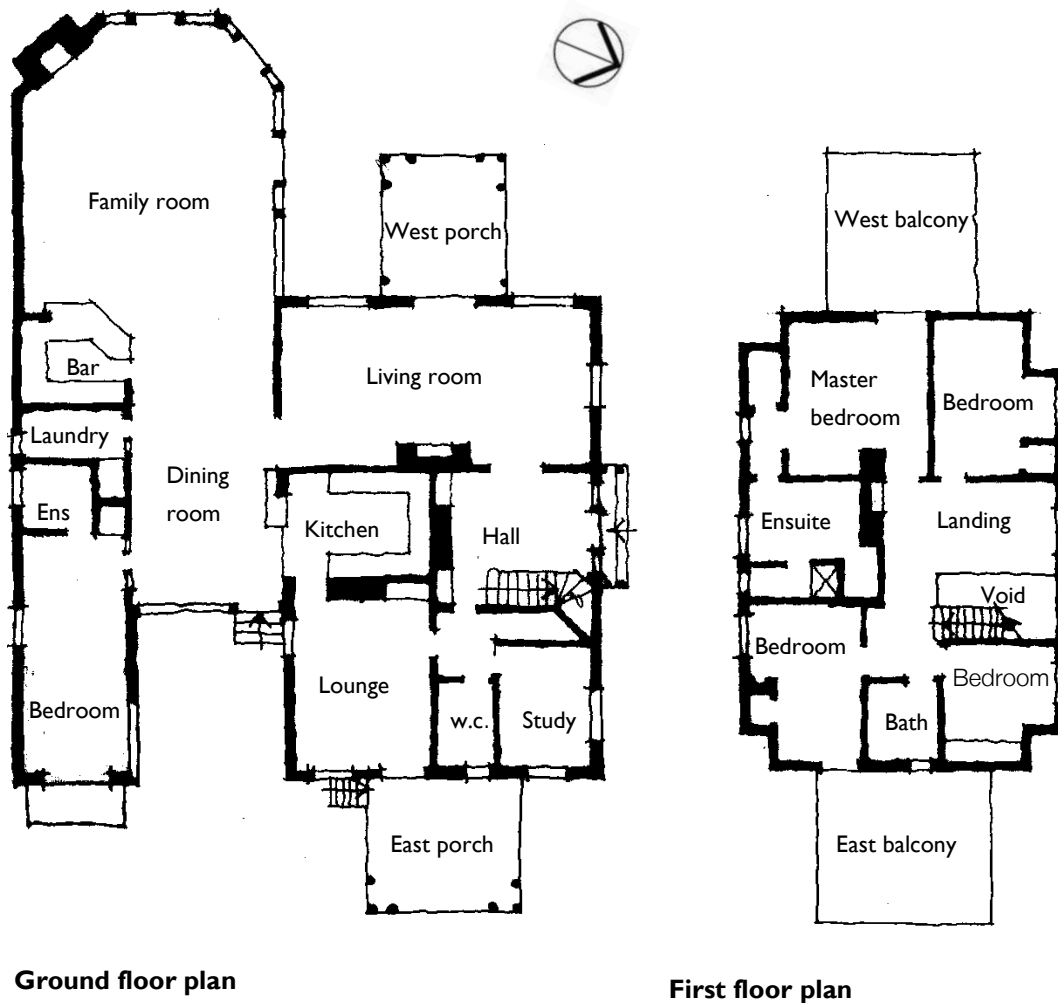
The master bedroom and the south-eastern bedroom have access to the trafficable porch roofs. Timber balustrades around the roofs are similar in appearance to those appearing in archival photographs.

When comparison is made with early archival photographs of Denholm, original internal fabric includes the following items:

- The stair, balustrades, handrails and newel posts.
- Polished timber boards.
- Ground floor doors to original spaces and to first floor bedrooms.
- Ground floor cornices in the hall and living room. Differing cornice profiles in the lounge suggest these may have replaced original cornices but this is not certain.
- Built-in display cabinetry in the hall.
- Timber skirting boards and architraves around window and door openings.

Other fabric assessed as being original includes skirting boards, doors and door hardware, architraves around door and window openings at first floor level and plaster wall vents in the lounge room.

The interior of Denholm is described in the following plans and photographs.



31 Ground and first floor plans of Denholm (not to scale).



- 32 Main entry hall, around which the house was originally organized. Original fabric includes the simply detailed stair, cornices and the pair of timber joinery display cabinets recessed into the southern wall of the room. Originally timber floors were left uncovered and polished. Flooring is likely to be original.



- 33 One of a pair of original built-in display cabinets in the entry hall (left); living room looking to the south. Original cornices and fireplace fabric have been retained (right).



- 34 Fireplace in the living room. The brick firebox surround has been covered or replaced by marble. The original hearth has also been covered by marble. The timber chimney piece is original (left); living room looking to the north with the hall visible at right. The picture rails visible in early photographs have been removed (right).



- 35 Detail of glazed door and door hardware between the hall and the living room (left); decorative plaster wall vent in the lounge room (right).



36 Ground floor lavatory (left); Lounge room. Cornices are dissimilar to those in original ground floor spaces and may not be original. It is possible the ceiling has been replaced (right).



37 South-western corner of the lounge showing door, architrave and skirting board joinery. The cupboard may be an adaptation of an earlier opening (left); looking into the kitchen (right).



38 Family room in the circa 1980 addition. The ceiling is lined with timber boards. The space is modulated by its octagonal configuration.



39 Looking east across the dining room. Door openings and joinery give access to spaces within the interwar pavilion erected to the south of Denholm.



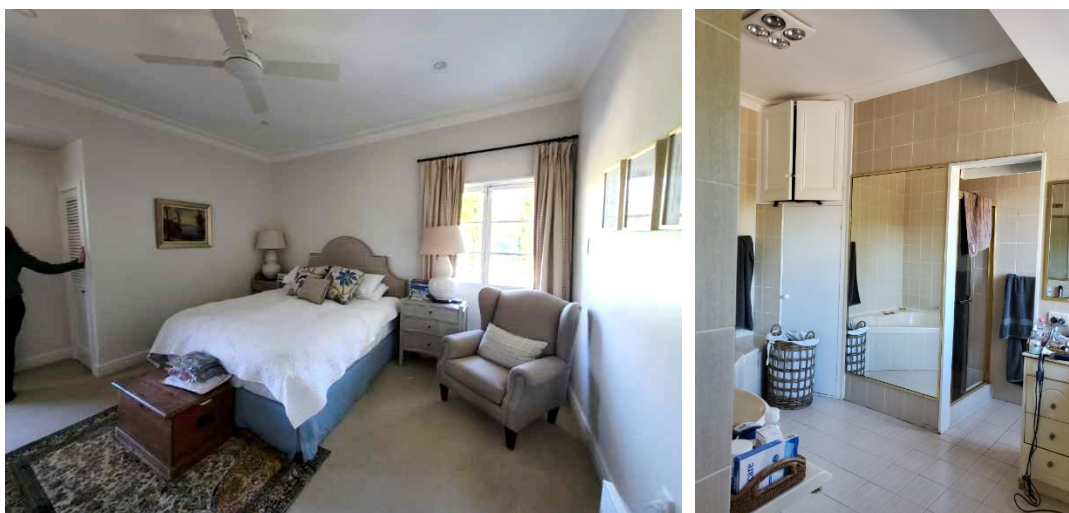
40 Ground floor bedroom looking to the east.



41 Ground floor bedroom looking to the west.



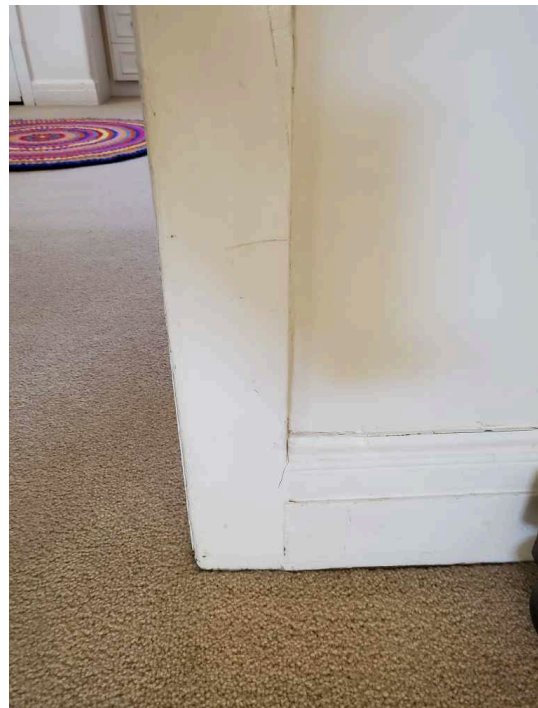
42 Newel post and balustrade joinery at the first floor landing (left); looking across the landing to the north-west (right).



43 Master bedroom and attached ensuite.



44 Bedroom at the south-eastern corner of the first floor.



45 Bedroom at the north-eastern corner of the first floor (left); simple architrave and skirting board profiles at first floor level.

4 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This section of the report Colonial Revival Dutch Colonial Revival as a subset, architecture of Wilson Neave & Berry and John L Berry, comparison with other architect's work in similar idioms.

4.2 Colonial Revival architecture in NSW

During the first two decades of the twentieth century the domestic architecture of the Federation era made way to a range of architectural styles reflecting a strong overseas influence, in part coming from the United States of America. Apart from the California Bungalow and Spanish Mission styles, there was also the Colonial Revival style:

Colonial Revival can be distinguished from the Georgian Revival from the sources from which it is drawn. Georgian Revival tends to look back at original sources in the United Kingdom for inspiration, whereas the Colonial Revival usually directly references United States and Australian Georgian period buildings, using formal symmetry, plain wall surfaces (either stone, brick or stucco), multi-paned windows, simple round-headed arches to arcades and windows, and the incorporation of timber ventilators and lanterns on the roof, with elements, particularly verandahs, and details comparatively simpler than those of the Georgian Revival.¹³

William Hardy Wilson is considered to have been the most notable proponent of a Colonial Revival in Australian architecture, as much through his ideas as through his architecture. Hardy Wilson and Stacey Neave travelled in Europe and the United States of America between 1905 and 1910. Wilson was attracted by the early architecture of the eastern states of America and impressed by the colonial era architecture there and its revived forms.

Determined to make Australians as aware of their early colonial heritage as Americans had become of theirs, in 1912 Wilson began to make drawings of colonial buildings in New South Wales and Tasmania: he 'looked at buildings with a painter's eye as much as an architect's', even noting the plants in their gardens.¹⁴ According to Wilson, "Years ago, when I returned to Australia from the study of architecture in Europe and America, my enthusiasm for ancient buildings was immense. Immediately, I began to search for early architecture, and found a few beautiful old houses in the neighbourhood of Sydney ..."¹⁵ The task of recording them continued until 1922, assisted by Stacey Neave and more latterly John L Berry.¹⁶ One result was a book of the drawings, *Old Colonial Architecture in New South Wales and Tasmania*, first published in 1924.

The Colonial Revival style was to typify Wilson Neave & Berry's domestic design idiom: fat, low-squatting Georgian boxes with colonnaded verandahs, spider-web fanlights on entrance doors and multi-paned windows with shutters. The firm's style followed the Colonial Revival

¹³ Ian Stapleton, "Colonial Revival" in Philip Goad and Julie Willis (editors), *Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), p.164.

¹⁴ Richard E. Apperly, 'Wilson, William Hardy (1881–1955)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/wilson-william-hardy-9147/text16141>, published first in hardcopy 1990, accessed online 9 August 2023.

¹⁵ Hardy Wilson, *Old Colonial Architecture in New South Wales and Tasmania* (Ure Smith in association with the National Trust of Australia (NSW), 1975), p.1.

¹⁶ Wilson, p.2.

based on the United States idiom, but also looked to Australian colonial architecture for inspiration.¹⁷

While America may have sparked Wilson's passion for Colonial architecture, Australian Colonial architecture perhaps provided more inspiration. However, other architectural styles were to prove more popular with the general public as the second decade of the twentieth century moved into the third. A Mediterranean influence pervaded domestic architecture during the interwar period, derived from a variety of sources. Architects and designers travelled to Europe and the United States as part of service during World War I and as part of studies immediately after the war and during the 1920s. Illustrated architectural books and journals imported into Australia and published locally provided much information. As well, prominent architects played a significant part in promoting the Mediterranean regions and North America as suitable locations for seeking inspiration. This became evident immediately after World War I.

One of the most influential architects in Sydney and at a national level was English-born architect Leslie Wilkinson (1882–1973), who arrived in Sydney during August 1919 to assume the new chair of architecture at the University of Sydney. Wilkinson had travelled extensively in through Spain, France and Italy in 1906 and travelled to Australia via North America. He came to appreciate the quality of Australia's colonial heritage which, with Mediterranean architecture, became the main influence on his work, both as teacher and practising architect.¹⁸ Not long after arriving in Australia he wrote:

Although it is generally granted that most English domestic work reaches a high standard, the climatic and other conditions here are such that considerable modifications must be made in adapting it to these new circumstances.

And is it certain that it is wise to attempt to follow Northern methods of building under conditions so dissimilar? Geography suggests that the shores of the Mediterranean may be richer in suggestion, or the Californian coast manner so largely derived therefrom.¹⁹

Similarly, South Australian architect Walter Hervey Bagot, who was designing in a Mediterranean idiom during the 1910s, wrote of the parallels between the Mediterranean and Australian climate and the shared characteristics of Spanish, Italian and Levantine domestic architecture.²⁰

¹⁷ Zeny Edwards, "Wilson, Neave & Berry" in Philip Goad and Julie Willis, *Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), p.768.

¹⁸ Clive Lucas, 'Wilkinson, Leslie (1882–1973)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/wilkinson-leslie-9104/text16053>, published first in hardcopy 1990, accessed online 20 September 2022; Suzanne Falkner (compiler and editor), *Leslie Wilkinson: a practical idealist* (Valadon Publishing, 1982), pp.12–14 and 20–21.

¹⁹ Leslie Wilkinson, "Domestic Architecture" in Sydney Ure Smith, Bertram Stevens and W Hardy Wilson (editors), *Domestic Architecture in Australia* (Angus & Robertson, 1919), p.3.

²⁰ W H Bagot, "A Plea for Tradition" in Smith, Stevens and Wilson, p.27. Bagot believed that the simplicity of Italian domestic architecture and of English Georgian offered the best models for South Australia's Mediterranean climate (Dean W. Berry, 'Bagot, Walter Hervey (1880-1963)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/bagot-walter-hervey-5092/text8501>, published first in hardcopy 1979, accessed online 20 September 2022).



- 46 Houses by Leslie Wilkinson in Ku-ring-gai that demonstrate his interpretation of Mediterranean architecture: "Woodcourt", left, and "Maiala", right (<https://www.realestate.com.au/sold/property-house-nsw-warrawee-126098782>; National Library of Australia PIC Cold Store Row A2/3/2 Folder 6 #PIC/14196/1660, Wes Stacey photograph).

Apart from the Colonial Revival, an American influence on Australian residential architecture became evident during the second decade of the twentieth century, most notably with the advent of the California Bungalow. The Spanish Mission Style, part of the nostalgic response to Americans looking back to their Colonial past, also began to emerge around the end of World War I. Little "true [Spanish] Mission Style ever appeared in the antipodes, although some stylistic elements associated with the Californian examples ... were incorporated into the more popularised Spanish styles in the cities."²¹ Indeed, the Colonial (or Georgian) Revival, Mediterranean and Spanish Mission styles shared a number of similarities in terms of detailing and fenestration.



- 47 Unidentified street lined with California Bungalows, circa 1930, left, and Boomerang at Elizabeth Bay, the epitome of the Spanish Mission style in NSW, right (State Library of NSW PXE 789 (v.10) - Sam Hood photograph; National Library of Australia PIC HC 101/8 LOC Cold store Box HC 101/8 – Harold Cazneaux photograph).

4.3 Dutch Colonial Revival architecture

Historically, in America, the "Dutch Colonial" is represented by eighteenth and early nineteenth century buildings. According to architectural historian Marcus Whiffen, they are manifested in two main types. "One has a steep double-pitch roof with eaves to back and front only and a straight-sided gable, crowned by a chimney, at each end; the other is characterized by a very broad gambrel roof with flared eaves to the lower slopes."²² Whiffen suggests this idiom did not come from Holland and

²¹ Erika Esau, *Images of the Pacific Rim: Australia & California 1850–1935* (Power Publications, 2010), p.304.

²² Marcus Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780: a guide to the styles* (MIT Press, 1981, 1988), p.13.

may instead represent the influence of several European groups including the Dutch, Swedes and Rhinelanders who settled in Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey and New York.

From the late 19th century, Americans started looking back romantically to their colonial roots. This was reflected in residential architecture. One of the more popular idioms was a revival of features of the original Dutch Colonial. According to one source,

The term “Dutch” wasn’t used as it is today, but rather as a catch-all term for non-British settlers. Many so-called Dutch settlers did come from the then Dutch Republic, but others were French-Belgian Huguenots, Flemish or German. As a result, Dutch Colonial architecture shows influence from all these groups, and not every feature can be traced back to the modern-day Netherlands.

To complicate matters, few original 17th-century Dutch buildings remain today. Most existing Dutch Colonial-style buildings were built in the 20th century and are more accurately called Dutch Colonial Revival, a sub-type of Colonial Revival. This style emerged from the nostalgic and often patriotic romanticizing of the Colonial Period. It wasn’t intended to precisely replicate Dutch colonial construction methods, but to evoke the mood of the old Dutch colonial farmhouses and period. Because of this, modern Dutch Colonials vary widely in terms of which original Dutch-style features they include.

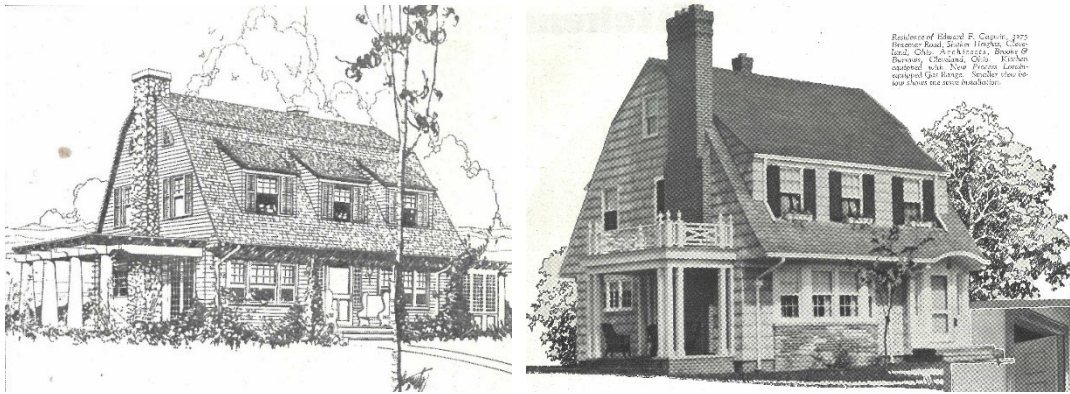
After its 17th-century debut, the popularity of Dutch Colonial architecture rose again starting in 1890 and really took off between 1925 and 1940. The homes built earlier in this revival period showed more variation and decorative flourishes, while later homes returned to classical simplicity. The style hit another peak in the 1950 and ’60s.²³

The style proved sufficiently respectable to inspire serious books on the topic. In 1913 the significant New York architect Aymar Embury II published *The Dutch Colonial House: Its Origin, Design, Modern Plan and Construction; Illustrated with Photographs of Old Examples and American Adaptations of the Style*.

The facades of Dutch Colonials are most often symmetrical with a central front door and orderly rows of windows, but the interior layouts vary. Many were based on open layouts two or three rooms across with fireplaces on each end. The most distinctive feature of Dutch Colonial architecture is the gambrel roof, which allowed roof space to be fully utilised. Space is expanded by means of dormers. Between 1880 and 1910, a small number of Dutch Colonial Revival (and Colonial Revival) structures were constructed. However, from 1910 to the 1930s, the Dutch Colonial became a dominant architecture style. The style was most popular in the north-eastern part of the United States.²⁴ Companies such as Sears Roebuck even sold ready-cut versions of the houses, such was their popularity.

²³ Henry Parker, “Dutch Colonial Architectural Style” at <https://todayshomeowner.com/blog/guides/dutch-colonial/>, accessed 8 August 2023.

²⁴ Royal Gorge Regional Museum & History Center at <https://museum.canoncity.org/?p=4669>, accessed 5 August 2023.



48 Dutch Colonial Revival houses illustrating advertisements in an American architectural periodical of the 1920s - *The Architectural Forum*, December 1925.

One indication of the popularity of the Dutch Colonial Revival style in the United States of America can be seen in a promotional booklet for paint published by E. I. DuPont de Nemours & Co. Inc in 1919. Six “Classic Homes” in various styles were featured. Of these, the first was “All-American suburban houses #1: Dutch Colonial house with a gambrel roof”:

There is probably no style so charmingly adaptable to small residences as the Dutch Colonial with its gambrel roof. It is so “homey” and inviting, looking quite as well on a tiny lot as in a large area. Then, too, it requires very little in the way of landscaping — just a few old-fashioned flowers, a small assortment of shrubs, a hedge or a bit of lattice and a charming setting for the house is the result.

The painting problem is equally simple. Keep the body quite light in color — yellow as shown, or pale gray or white, the shutters a green tone with deeper or grayer shade for the roof. The sash and lattice both look best in white.

Perhaps the chief advantage of this particular style of house is the fact that it looks so attractive placed near the street line, giving the owner, in consequence, the larger part of his property for a more intimate and sheltered garden.²⁵

²⁵ E. I. DuPont de Nemours & Co. Inc., *Modern House Painting with Bridgeport Standard Prepared Paint*, 1919 (<https://clickamericana.com/topics/home-garden/charming-classic-all-american-suburban-houses-from-1919>).



DU PONT

Dutch Colonial—Gambrel Roof

DU PONT

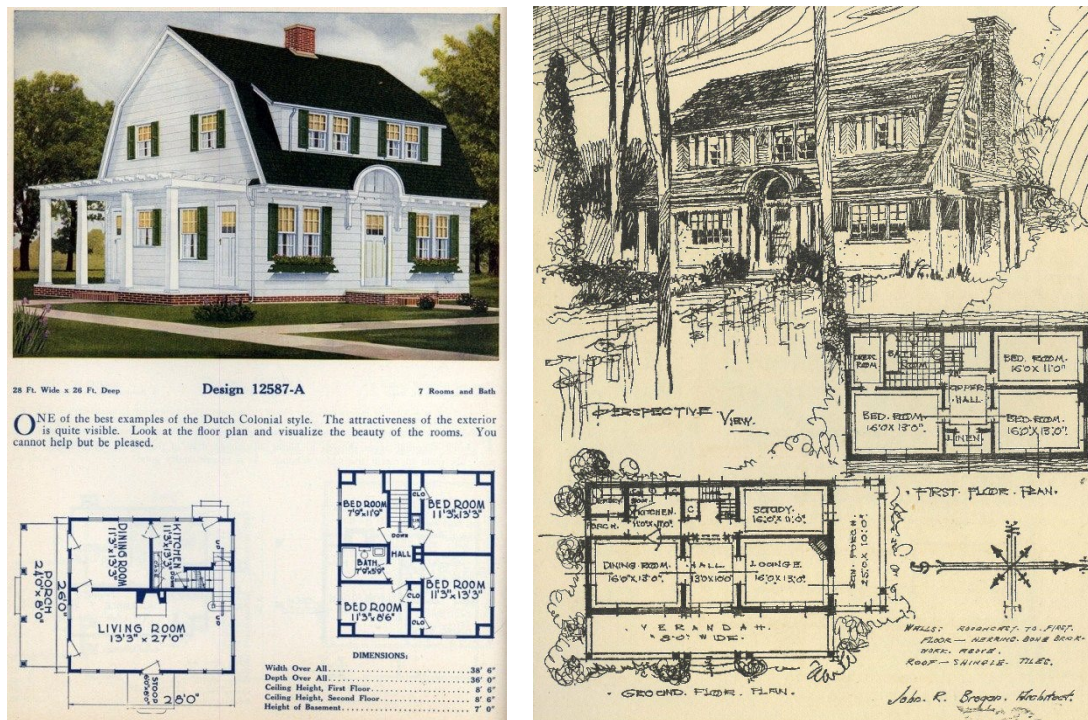
- 49 A charming rendering of a Dutch Colonial Revival cottage in an idealised garden setting, as depicted in E. I. DuPont de Nemours & Co.'s *Modern House Painting with Bridgeport Standard Prepared Paint* (<https://clickamericana.com/topics/home-garden/charming-classic-all-american-suburban-houses-from-1919>)

Evidence available online from newspapers suggests that the Dutch Colonial Revival style may have enjoyed a level of popularity in South Australia and Queensland during the 1920s and 1930, rather less in NSW. Sydney architect John Brogan produced an architectural pattern book in 1936 in which 101 house plans with exteriors in various fashionable styles were reproduced. Only one was an interpretation of the Dutch Colonial Revival style.²⁶ Examples of the style continued to be constructed in Adelaide (if not elsewhere) in the post-war period.



- 50 Post World War II Dutch Colonial Revival house in Adelaide.
(https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dutch_Colonial_Revival_house_in_Adelaide.jpg ; Michael Irvine photograph).

²⁶ John R Brogan, *101 Australian Homes* (Building Publishing Co, 1936), Plate no. 20.



- 51 A page from an American C.L. Bowles catalogue of 1925, one of several Dutch Colonial cottages appearing in this catalogue of home plans. The building is similar but not identical to the Dutch Colonial dwelling designed by John R Brogan at right. Brogan has extended a verandah across the front of the house and his planning is more formal (Brogan, Plate no. 20; <https://modthesims.info/d/639145/1920-s-vintage-home-design-4bed-1bath-dutch-colonial-revival-5th-in-the-series.html>)

4.4 The work of John L Berry

Though it has been suggested that Berry's architectural work was influenced by Hardy Wilson early in his career, in the period of time between returning to Australia in 1911 and joining Wilson and Neave in 1920, evidence suggests he was already a confident designer, though in a similar architectural idiom to that of Wilson. It is possible that his time working with H E Ross & Rowe may have had some influence.

The firm of H E Ross & Rowe was established in 1911 when architects Herbert Ernest Ross and Harry Ruskin Rowe went into partnership. H E Ross & Rowe is best known for their commercial work, although they had a substantial body of residential commissions. Herbert Ross's own home in Darling Point (1922) was an interpretation of the fashionable Mediterranean idiom promulgated by Leslie Wilkinson. The firm's approach was conservative rather than ground-breaking – a block of flats at Manly completed in 1919 was described as "Italian Renaissance".²⁷ From 1912 H E Ross & Rowe designed numerous Free Classical style branch buildings for the Government Savings Bank of NSW, along with its extraordinary Beaux Arts style head office at 50 Martin Place, Sydney (1928). Other notable city buildings exploiting the Georgian Revival style included Ushers Metropolitan Hotel in Castlereagh Street, Sydney (1915) and the Royal Automobile Club in Macquarie Street, Sydney (1928).

²⁷ "Buildings and Works. Modern Flats", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 October 1919, p.5.



- 52 H E Ross & Rowe's Ushers Metropolitan Hotel in Castlereagh Street, Sydney (left) and the Royal Automobile Club in Macquarie Street, Sydney (right). Both are listed as heritage items by the City of Sydney.

Sources: SLNSW Home and Away – 34990 Hall & Co National Library of Australia IC/15611/16602 LOC Cold store PIC/15611, Fairfax archive.



- 53 Pitcalnie, the home of Herbert Ross and his family at 12 Greenoaks Avenue, Darling Point. The house is listed as a heritage item by Woollahra Council.

Source: *Building*, 12 September 1931.

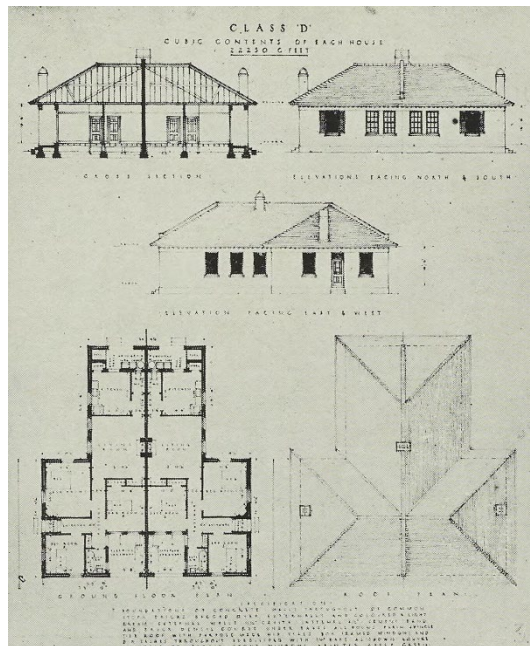
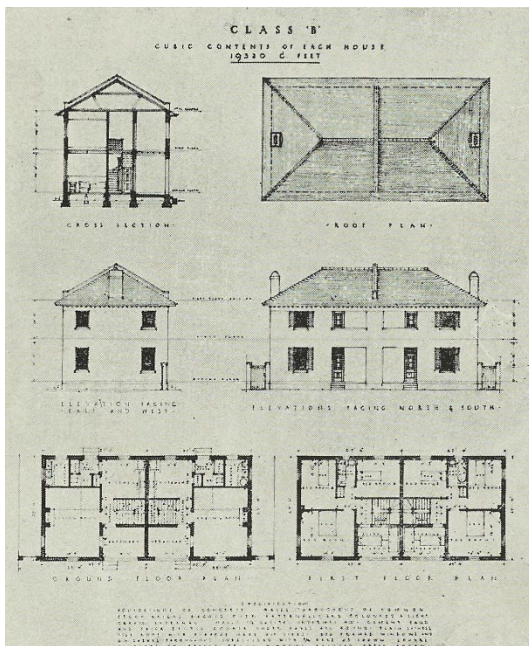
Amongst the earlier commissions Berry received after returning from overseas were the alterations and additions to a cottage for builder R P Blundell at Park Road, Greenwich. The works were completed by 1913. The house still exists although it has been partially modified. The editors of the architectural journal *Building* described it as the “Commonsense Home” and referred to it as “a fine example of common sense design and construction” and “a fine testimony to the architecture of John L Berry”.²⁸ The two storey verandah at the front of the house and the porch on one side of it, both supported off slender columns, balustrade detailing at first floor level and bracketed eaves suggest Colonial Revival influence. So too does internal joinery, particularly architraves around doors and timber chimneypieces on fireplaces.

²⁸ “The Commonsense Home”, *Building*, 12 January 1914, pp.142, 145.



- 54 Exterior of R P Blundell's house at Greenwich (left); looking from the hall into the sitting room of Blundell's house, showing elegant timber joinery in wide openings between rooms. Source: *Building*, 12 January 1914.

Attributing Berry's hand in buildings designed while working with H E Ross & Rowe is difficult. However, he submitted several entries in the State government's White City Housing Scheme 1919 competition, which was ultimately rejected by the government. Three of his entries received honourable mentions.

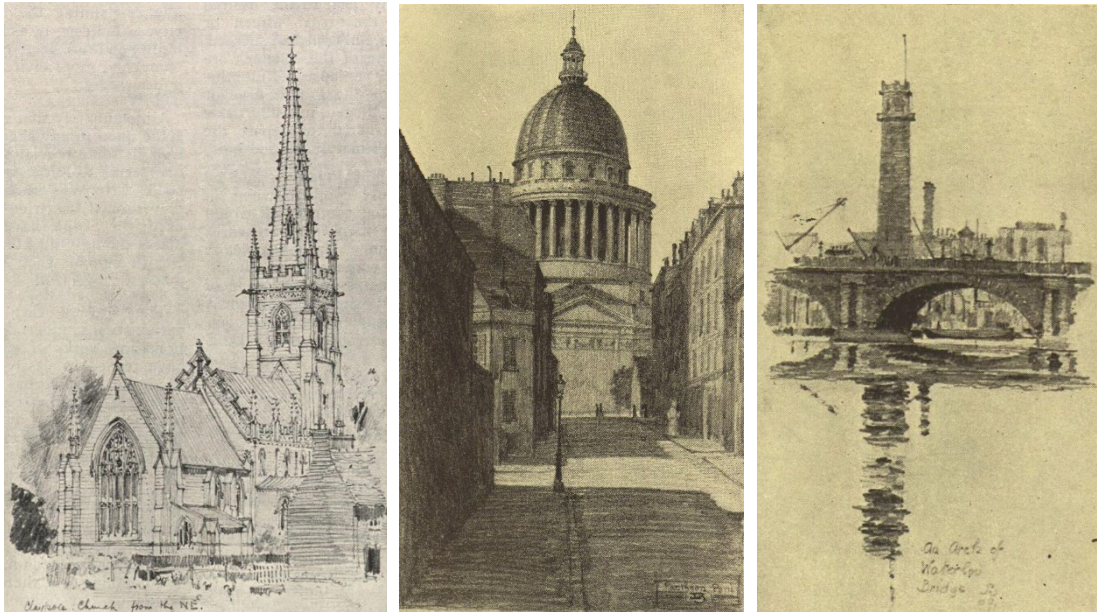


- 55 Two of the entries by John L Berry in the White City Housing Scheme, which received honourable mentions. Source: *Architecture*, 20 November 1919.

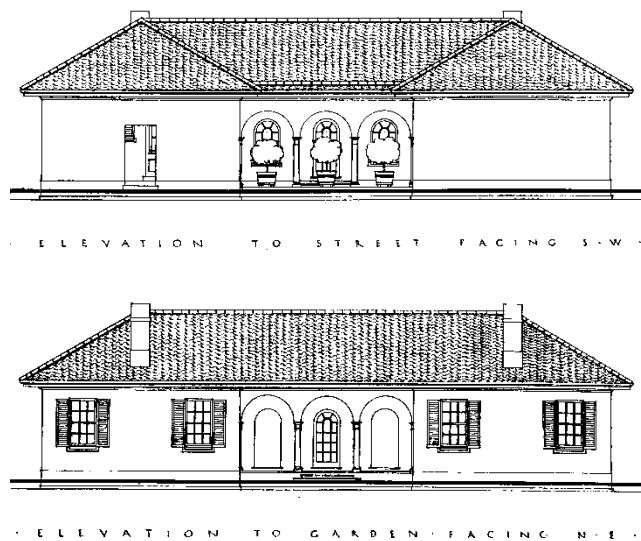
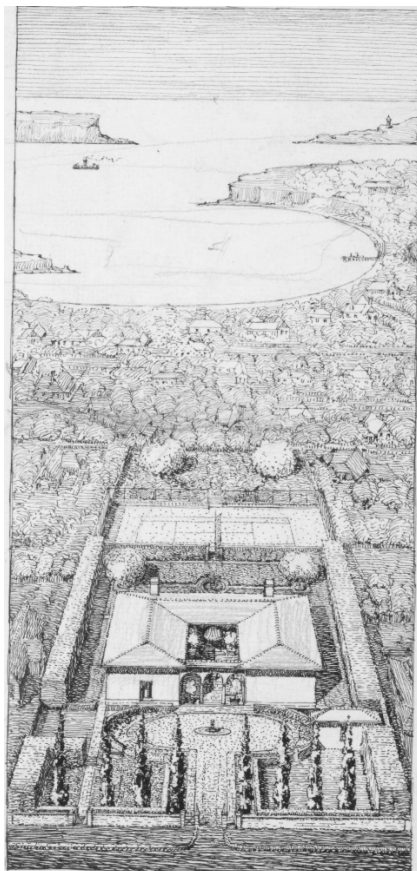
Many of Berry's drawings of architecture and buildings done while travelling abroad were reproduced in professional architectural journals such as *Architecture* and *Building* during the 1910s and 1920s. His essay on An Ideal Australian House for the competition staged by the Architectural Association of NSW at the beginning of the 1920s won the first prize.²⁹ Berry also wrote numerous articles on

²⁹ It was published in *The Home*, 1 March 1921.

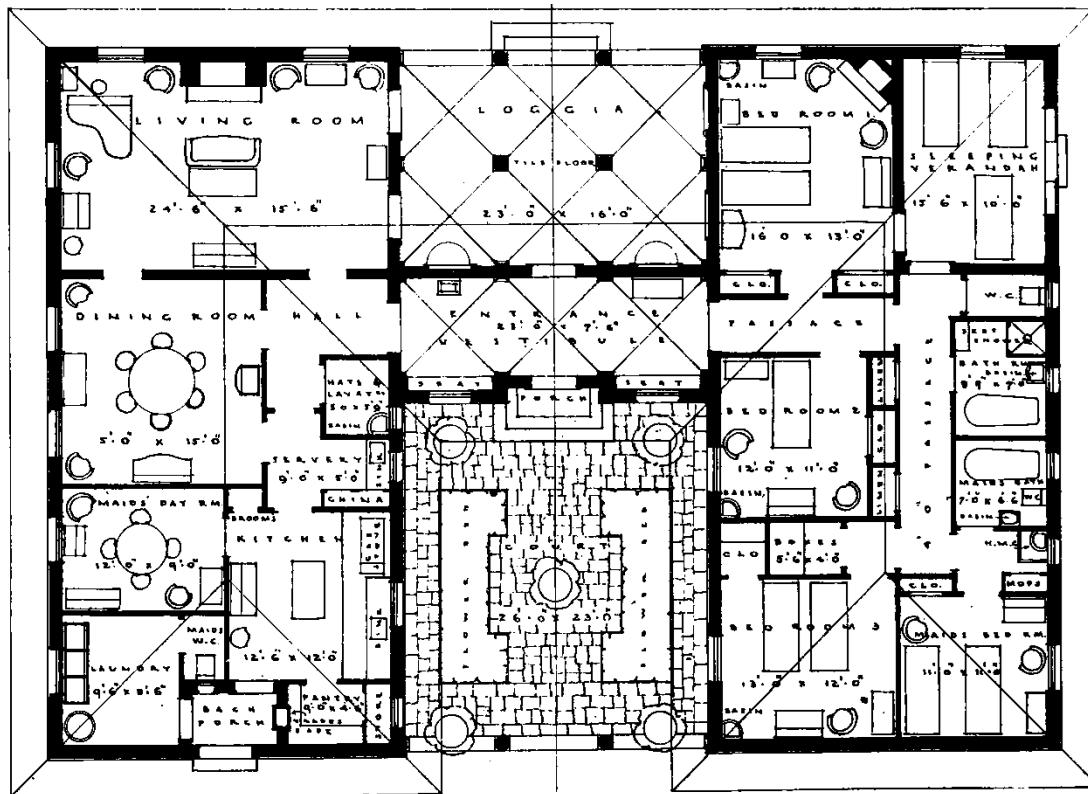
domestic architecture and gardens during the second half of the 1920s that reached a section of the general public via *The Home*. Through these articles he expressed the significance of integrating house and garden, the latter being an essential component of happy domestic life.



56 Three of John Berry's architectural drawings that were reproduced in *Building* magazine. Source: *Building*, 12 May 1913 and 12 January 1914.



57 Perspective study and elevations of Berry's design for An Ideal Australian House (State Library of NSW 1921 PXD 272-284 , PXD 362; *The Home*, 1 March 1921).



58 Plan of Berry's entry into the Ideal Australian House essay competition. Its separation of living areas and bedrooms anticipated the bi-nuclear planning introduced into NSW by Harry Seidler in the 1950s (*The Home*, 1 March 1921).

The house designed by architect Robin Dods for his family, located at Edgecliff, provides another instance of American influence on Australian domestic architecture and an interesting comparison with John L Berry's Denholm. Robin Dods (1885-1920) worked in England during the 1890s, established a successful practice in Brisbane and travelled to the United States of America and Europe for almost a year in 1909. He moved to Sydney in 1913, joining the prominent firm of Spain & Cosh. Like Hardy Wilson he acknowledged the architectural legacy of Australia's colonial past, but suggested American influence was pervading early twentieth century design:

In recent years the persistence of the New York building journals has worn this loyalty [to Britain] thin, and American fashions begin to replace those of England. Long Island houses, a little self-conscious perhaps, endeavour to disguise their accent, and look at home on the shores of Sydney Harbour; while positive evidence of the influence of Virginia is afforded by some charming homes in the Blue Mountains. The best contemporary American work is so good, that it is to be hoped this influence will remain with us. That the mantle of Mr Platt should fall in due time on Professor Wilkinson's pupils is a consummation devoutly to be wished, and in the light of circumstances not too vain to hope for.³⁰

Dods built Fenton, his family home, at 8 Albert Street, Edgecliff. It was completed in 1920. According to architect and adjunct professor of architecture at the University of Queensland, Robert Riddell,

³⁰ Robin Dods, "The Architect and the Future" in *Domestic Architecture in Australia*, p.30. Leslie Wilkinson was Professor of Architecture at the University of Sydney.

Fenton can be compared in some ways, especially in feeling, to Purulia, William Hardy Wilson's own home ... Nevertheless there are important differences. Dods, intent on developing a new style suitable for Sydney, was influenced by a much broader spectrum, including ideas then current in New York. Dods had visited Purulia at least once, as Wilson was later invited to Fenton. Both men were exploring the possibilities of an Australian style, conscious of its heritage, but in Dods's case with an eye toward America and the blend of Christopher Wren based classicism and Mediterranean forms perfected by [American architects] Charles Adams Platt, John Russell Pope and Stanford White. There are similarities in Fenton to Platt's much larger villa Turicum in Lake Forrest, Illinois of 1908.³¹

Fenton has cement rendered walls with sandstone dressings, a steeply pitched hipped roof covered with terracotta shingles, multi-paned window sashes and timber shutters. Like Denholm, its planning was compact and legible, organised about the entrance hall. Unlike Denholm, hall and living room walls were lined with Queensland maple timber panelling. Floors were polished timber, as at Denholm, but the ceiling of virtually every room was devoid of a cornice:

The short entrance hall runs into a transverse hall and opens into the spacious living room. ... The living room is next to the dining-room, and both open on to a wide flagged terrace, from which one gets a view across Double Bay to Manly. ...

From the dining-room a servery connects with an extremely convenient kitchen. The principal bedrooms and bathrooms are at the other side of the house. Below are numerous rooms which look out on to the garden and the Harbour.

One's first impression on entering "FENTON" [sic] is that of restfulness. It has all the best features of a modern home which make for convenience without any meretricious ornament. It might stand as representative of simplicity with comfort.³²



59 Front elevation of Fenton (National Library of Australia PIC Cold Store Row A2/3/2 Folder 6 #PIC/14196/1652 copy - Wes Stacey image).

³¹ Robert Riddell, *Robin Dods 1868-1920: selected works* (Uro Media, 2012), p.183.

³² "Fenton – Edgecliffe, Sydney ... the Residence of Mr R S Dods", *The Home*, 1 February 1920, p.21.

4.5 Wilson Neave & Berry's work

As stated earlier, William Hardy Wilson returned with a profound respect for the colonial architecture of east-coast America.

Immediately he returned to Australia Wilson entered into practice. On 17 January 1911 he announced that he had 'commenced the practice of his profession of architecture in partnership with Mr Stacey Neave, ARIBA'.³³ Neave is understood to have gone into practice during 1910. His name appears in North Sydney Council's building application register that year as the architect for Walden at 23a Wycombe Road, Neutral Bay. Architectural historian Howard Tanner has suggested that 'Wilson's influence [is shown] in modifications to the original design' of Walden.³⁴

Amongst the very first house Wilson designed was a very small dwelling known as Merion (or Meryon) in Burns Road, Wahroonga (1911) for artist Lionel Lindsay. Others at this time included a pair of single storey timber weatherboard cottages: a seven-room country retreat called Blandford at 14 Craigend Street, Leura (1911) and Mulwarree at 59 Wentworth Street, Wentworth Falls (1912). Both are symmetrical when viewed from the street, with hipped roofs and multi-paned double hung window sashes flanked by shutters. Both have porches – that of Blandford, though recessed, also projects forward and is capped by a pediment while that of Mulwaree is recessed behind the wall plane, anticipating later houses by Wilson. Both porches are graced by four slender and simple columns. These may be among the charming homes in the Blue Mountains mentioned by Robin Dods



60 Blandford at Leura (left) and Mulwaree at Wentworth Falls (right).

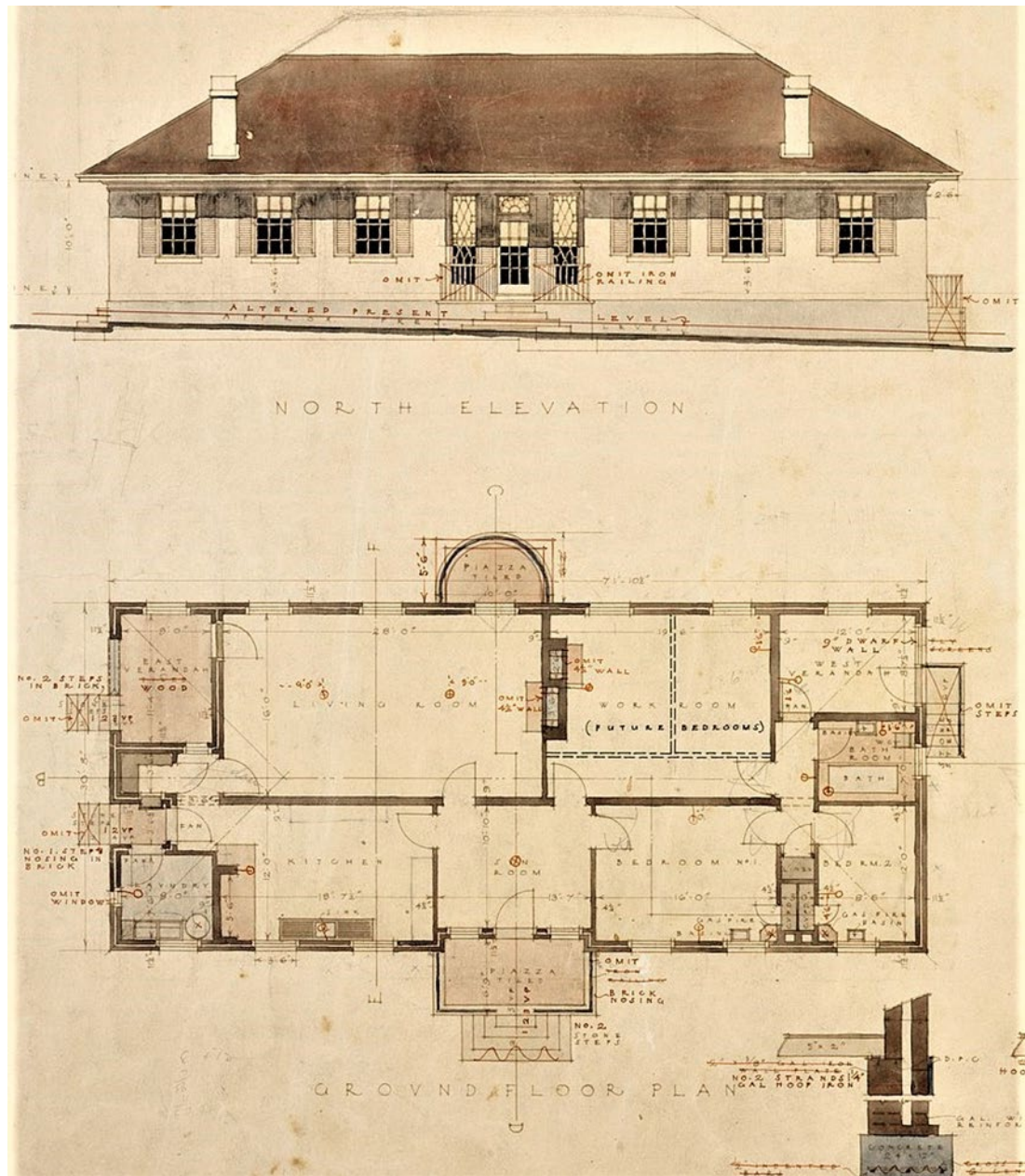
Hardy Wilson's best-known houses are Erydene at 17 McIntosh Street, Gordon, designed for Professor Eben Waterhouse (1913) and Purulia at 16 Fox Valley Road, Warawee (1911-1916), which was his own home for several years. According to the late heritage architect Ian Stapleton, Wilson the design of Erydene was influenced by the 1832 homestead Horsley at Horsley Park.³⁵ Certainly its appearance, if not planning is very similar to Horsley. Purulia was also influenced by a colonial era house, in this case Clarendon between Richmond and Windsor, circa 1809 (demolished in 1924). According to Ian Stapleton Wilson was "a model of restraint in detailing the house" but he also considered Purulia to be American Colonial in character.³⁶

³³ State Library of NSW A 3862/26.

³⁴ *At home in North Sydney: the Neutral Bay houses of Stacey Arthur Neave at* <https://www.athomeinnorthsydney.com.au/wilsons-neutral-bay-houses.html>, accessed 15 August 2023.

³⁵ Stapleton in Goad and Willis, p.164.

³⁶ Stapleton in Goad and Willis, p.164.



- 61 Principal elevation and plan of Purulia. The planning of the house is simple but lacks the clarity of Denholm (State Library of NSW PXD 362/vol. 12).



- 62 The similarity of appearance between Horsley at Horsley Park (left) and Eryldene at Gordon (right) is apparent in these two photographs (<https://www.horsleyhouse.com.au/>, National Library of Australia; Sydney Living Museums record number 56462 Solomon Mitchell photograph).

Apart from residential commissions, Wilson & Neave designed a series of branch buildings for the Bank of New South Wales. The first is understood to have been a small building at Ardlethan (1913). Between 1913 and 1916 branches were constructed at Leeton, Crookwell, Temora, Canowindra and Stockinbingal. John Berry's first project after joining Wilson & Neave is said to have been a house called Springwood at 34 Hastings Road, Warrawee (1920). It was designed for prominent cricketer and solicitor Thomas Garrett.³⁷ While its appearance is generally similar to houses designed by Wilson & Neave, it also has similarities with other Berry projects, such as the Ideal Australian House. Springwood is listed as a heritage item by Ku-ring-gai Council.



- 63 Branches of the Bank of New South Wales designed by Wilson & Neave included Canowindra (1915, left) and Crookwell (1914, right).

³⁷ Zeny Edwards, *William Hardy Wilson: artist, architect, orientalist, visionary* (Watermark Press, 2001), p.83.



64 Springwood at 34 Hastings Road, Warrawee. It was John L Berry's first project with Wilson Neave & Berry.

The subsequent success of Wilson Neave & Berry was as much, if not more, due to the efforts of Stacey Neave and John Berry. Wilson visited China in 1921, left for England in 1922 and returned to Australia in 1925 then retired from the practice in 1927. His last project was the tea house at Eryldene, a pavilion on one side of the tennis court on the property. Notwithstanding the oriental curves of its roof, it is not unlike the pavilion on the western side of Denholm's tennis court, which may predate it.



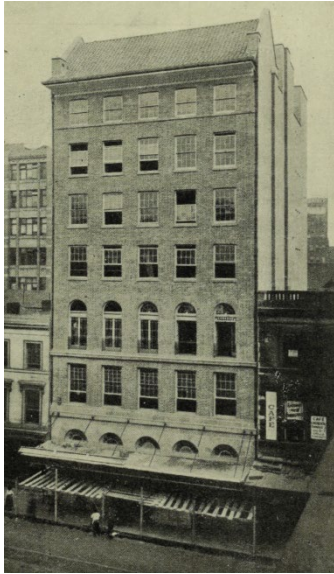
65 William Hardy Wilson's tea house at Eryldene, 1927 (left) and John L Berry's tennis pavilion at Denholm (date not ascertained) (State Library of NSW PIC Box PIC/8893 #PIC/8893/396; author's photograph).

Wilson Neave & Berry attracted mainly residential and small commercial commissions. Apart from ongoing work with the Bank of New South Wales, their most important were Peapes & Co. Ltd menswear store in George Street, Sydney (1923), of which Wilson was responsible for the preliminary design and John Berry the rest of the project,³⁸ the four-storey building for Larke, Hoskins & Co. Ltd motor car importers in William Street, Darlinghurst (1925), and the Foster Clark factory in Thurlow Street, Redfern (1929). In 1923 Wilson, Neave & Berry entered the competition for Gordon Pleasure

³⁸ William Hardy Wilson: artist, architect, orientalist, visionary, p.95.

Grounds, which they won, and were subsequently granted the design rights for Ku-ring-gai Municipal Council's Council at Gordon (1928).

There was also ongoing work at Eryldene - Berry was responsible for the design of the house's interior study. Other notable residential projects included Reid Home at the Burnside Homes in North Parramatta (circa 1923), Honda in Honda Avenue, Neutral Bay (1924) the house for poet Dorothea Mackellar at Pittwater (1924), the apartment building known as Alcombe block, at 14 Harrison Street, Neutral Bay (1927) and Barford at Bellevue Hill for Warwick Fairfax (1931). As with most architectural practices, direct attribution of a building to an architect is difficult to ascertain.



- 66 Peapes menswear store in George Street, Sydney, largely the work of John L Berry, shares a similar Georgian Revival influence with the showroom and office for Larke Hoskins in William Street, Darlinghurst (*Building*, 12 November 1923 and 12 May 1928).



- 67 The building for Foster Clark in Thurlow Street, Redfern (City of Sydney Archives Unique ID A-00020668).

4.6 Conclusions

The following conclusions are drawn from the discussion above.

- Denholm is a distinctive variant of the Colonial Revival style in NSW, being a distinctive local example of the American Dutch Colonial Revival style. It is evidence of the increasing infiltration of American architectural idioms into Australian domestic architecture during the first quarter of the twentieth century.
- The planning and original detailing of the house is typical of houses designed by architects during the second and third decade of the twentieth century, particularly those associated with the Colonial Revival idiom such as Fenton and Purulia.
- Denholm appears to have been significant in the career of architect John L Berry, appearing in several journals aimed at a general readership such as *The Australian Home Builder* and *The Home*.
- The house provides evidence of Berry's skill as an architect and suggests that his contribution to the architecture of Wilson Neave & Berry and then Neave & Berry was substantial.

5 ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

5.1 Introduction

The concept of "cultural significance" embraces the values of places or items to the community, which cannot be expressed in financial terms alone. Assessment of cultural significance endeavours to establish why a place or item is considered important and valued by the community. Significance, therefore, is embodied in the fabric of the place, including the setting, the records associated with the place and the response that the place evokes in the community.

Denholm has been assessed in accordance with the guidelines contained in Assessing heritage significance: Guidelines for assessing places and objects against the Heritage Council of NSW criteria (State of NSW and Department of Planning and Environment, 2023).

5.2 Assessment of significance

Criterion A An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

Denholm is not considered to fulfil this criterion. It is not associated with significant historical events within Ku-ring-gai or with important cultural phases or movements. While its construction is evidence of the consolidation of population in Ku-ring-gai during the second decade of the twentieth century, there are many buildings across the local government area that provide similar evidence.

Denholm does not meet the State or Local significance threshold for Criterion A.

Criterion B An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance to NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

Denholm is associated with architect John L Berry, who is notable for his contribution to the architecture of the firms of Wilson Neave & Berry and Neave & Berry during the 1920s. The three architects shared a common aesthetic approach to design. Although contemporary houses by William Hardy Wilson are better known and celebrated, Denholm indicates that Berry had, in the same period, a firm and confident grasp on Colonial Revival architecture. Although Berry's contribution to Wilson Neave & Berry and Neave & Berry has not been ascertained, he is likely to have been involved in notable projects such as Peapes Building and Ku-ring-gai Council Chambers. Berry also made a large contribution to popular architectural discourse during the 1920s.

Denholm meets the Local significance threshold for Criterion B because of its associations with John L Berry, who made an important contribution to the history of the local area through his architecture.

Criterion C An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).

Denholm is an important Colonial Revival style house in Ku-ring-gai that demonstrates characteristics of the American Dutch Colonial Revival style. This distinguishes it from other Colonial Revival, Georgian Revival style houses and houses in associated styles such as the Inter War Mediterranean style in the local government area and other parts of metropolitan Sydney, such as those designed by Wilson & Neave (Eryldene, Purulia), Eric Apperly, Robin Dods, Leslie Wilkinson, Frederick Glynn Gilling and others. The house is aesthetically significant for its use of materials such as terracotta

shingles and its refined timber joinery, and is enhanced by its open garden setting. It has retained original spaces and internal fabric including timber joinery doors, architraves and skirting boards, fireplaces, ceilings and cornices.

The tennis pavilion has aesthetic significance for its overall form, scale and detailing. It is understood to predate the better known tea house/tennis pavilion at Eryldene, which is generally attributed to William Hardy Wilson.

Denholm meets the Local significance threshold for Criterion C. It is a distinctive Dutch Colonial Revival residence, distinguishing it from other Colonial Revival houses in Ku-ring-gai.

Criterion D An item has strong or special associations with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

Denholm is unlikely to fulfil this criterion. However, further investigation is required to confirm this.

Criterion E An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

Denholm is unlikely to fulfil this criterion. The evidence it reveals about the architectural history of NSW is already revealed by the form, appearance and fabric of the building. Any further information that it can yield can also be obtained from other sites in the local government area. However, further investigation is required to confirm this.

Criterion F An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

Denholm is a rare surviving example of a house in Ku-ring-gai demonstrating the direct influence of American domestic architectural design, in this case the Dutch Colonial Revival style, on local domestic architecture in the first quarter of the twentieth century. It is distinguished by its adaptation of the style to local conditions and confident use of building materials.

Denholm is a rare surviving example of residential architecture that can be directly attributed to architect John L Berry. As part of the firm of Wilson, Neave & Berry and then Neave & Berry, he was part of partnerships that designed notable buildings across the state but his contribution to these buildings is difficult to verify.

Denholm meets the Local significance threshold for Criterion F. It demonstrates a distinctive attribute that is rare within the local area.

Criterion G An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's (or the local areas) cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments.

Denholm is representative of Dutch Colonial Revival Style architecture in NSW. It features many of the characteristics of the style and is given a local character through the use of building materials externally.

Denholm meets the Local significance threshold for Criterion G. It is a particularly fine example of a Dutch Colonial Revival style house in the local area, demonstrating a range of characteristics that are typical of the class.

5.3 Statement of cultural significance

Denholm, 17A Edward Street, Gordon is an important Colonial Revival style house in Ku-ring-gai that demonstrates characteristics and is representative of the American Dutch Colonial Revival style, which is rare in Ku-ring-gai. The house is aesthetically significant for its confident use of building materials and is enhanced by its open garden setting. It has retained a relatively high level of integrity. The house is associated with architect John L Berry, who is notable for his contribution to the architecture of the firms of Wilson Neave & Berry and Neave & Berry during the 1920s and for his role in architectural discourse during the 1920s. It served as his family home for some 15 years from 1915 to 1930 and is a rare known example of his residential design.

The tennis pavilion has aesthetic significance for its overall form, scale and detailing, and is an important element within the setting of the house.

5.4 Conclusions

Evaluating the potential heritage significance by means of the seven NSW Heritage Office assessment criteria establishes that Denholm at 17A Edward Street, Gordon, reaches the threshold for inclusion in Ku-ring-gai LEP 2015.

- Historically Denholm provides evidence of the growth and development of Gordon during the second decade of the twentieth century. However, there are numerous houses throughout Ku-ring-gai that provide similar if not better evidence of consolidation at this time. It is not otherwise associated with significant historical events.
- Denholm is associated with architect John L Berry a person of some historical importance and shows evidence of occupation by Berry and his family.
- Denholm is distinctive externally and internally and demonstrates a level of creative excellence. The house is a fine example of the Dutch Colonial Revival style.
- It is unlikely that Denholm has social significance.
- It is unlikely that Denholm has archaeological significance.
- Denholm is a rare example of Dutch Colonial Revival style residence in Ku-ring-gai.
- Denholm is a representative example of a Dutch Colonial Revival style although not exceptional or distinctive, example of an interwar residence in Ku-ring-gai. Other buildings constructed during the second half of the 1930s are finer examples of the period's residential architecture.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Available documentary evidence, comparative analysis and intact original physical fabric all indicate that Denholm has sufficient associational, aesthetic and technical significance, along with sufficient integrity (notwithstanding modifications undertaken to it in the past) to warrant inclusion in Schedule 5 of Ku-ring-gai Local Environmental Plan 2015. Notwithstanding alterations and additions that have been made to the building its early plan is still legible. A large amount of original fabric survives and the spatial character of the original section of the house is largely intact.

The building is within the Roberts Grant Heritage Conservation Area, which provides some protection. However, its assessed heritage significance is considered to warrant its listing as a heritage item.

The following actions are recommended:

- The property should be added to Schedule 5 of Ku-ring-gai Local Environmental Plan 2015 as 'Denholm, 17A Edward Street, Gordon and interiors,' with the curtilage defined as the land contained within Lot 2 Deposited Plan 504958.
- The original section of the residence should be retained and conserved. The surviving original external form, interior configuration of original spaces, original fabric and finishes including timber framed windows, doors and door hardware should be retained and conserved in any future development.
- Consideration should be given to retaining original form and fabric of the detached pavilion constructed between 1928 and 1943. Although not an original part of development on the site, it was constructed at a relatively early date and is likely related to the period when Denholm was divided into two flats.
- The tennis pavilion should be retained and conserved.
- The existing pattern of landscaping should be retained.
- The circa 1980 additions can be retained, sympathetically modified or demolished in any future works. It is desirable to locate garaging in its present location as it does not obscure the significance of Denholm in its overall setting.
- All conservation and new works should be undertaken in accordance with the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (The Burra Charter).
- It is recommended that a Conservation Management Plan or Conservation Management Strategy be prepared to guide future works and conservation at the place.