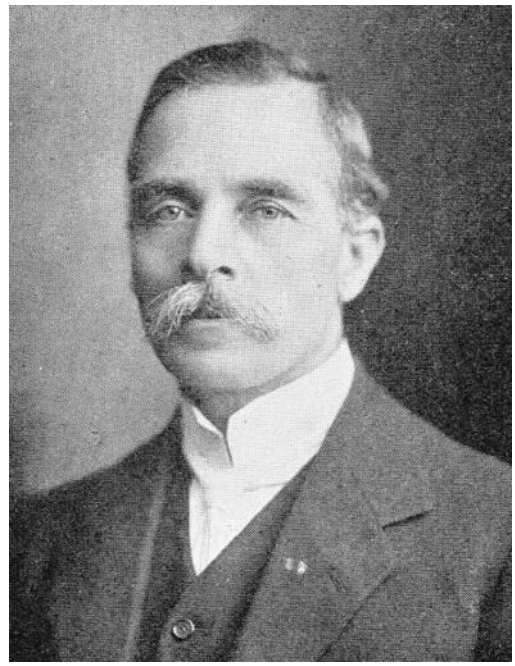
THE RH7 HISTORY GROUP

HENRY JAMES PROCKTER



An architect and a man of – VERY – strong views.

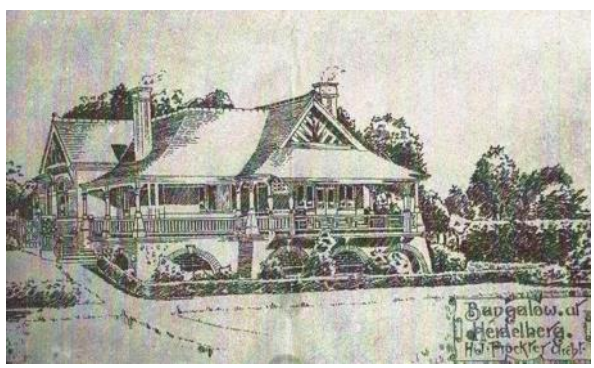
Mr Prockter lived at The Garth in Lingfield from 1911 until sometime after the First World War. It seems he was a man with more than one side to him.

He was known in Lingfield as a prolific writer of strongly expressed letters on a wide range of topics to the local newspapers and someone who was very willing to pursue issues even to the point of ending up in court.

He experienced tragedy when a son died in 1901 at one day old and again in the First World War when one of his sons was killed at Gallipoli – Charlton Hogarth Prockter is commemorated on the plaque in Lingfield church. After his death, a second son was lost in a bombing raid on Germany in 1943.

What we did not know until recently was that he was also an architect of some distinction – but in Australia. For this information we are indebted to John Taylor, an architect now practising in Perth and from whose item much of this is taken, with permission.

He was born in Stoke Newington and trained as an architect. He emigrated to Tasmania and by 1886 had set up in practice in Melbourne, Australia where he built up a substantial architectural practice. An example of a dwelling in Eaglemont, Victoria designed by Prockter is shown below. It sold in 2011 for Australian $1.9million – around £1million.





By 1896 he had followed the gold boom to Perth. An article by Dr John Taylor, also an architect based in Perth, tells us that Prockter designed numerous fine buildings in Perth, many of which still stand today. He designed at least three hotels, the town hall in North Perth, numerous shops and very many private residences.

An example of a building designed by Prockter and still standing is the Brookman's Buildings in Barrack Street, Perth.





Mr Prockter married twice, first to Annie Hogarth, who died aged 34 in 1905 and for the second time to Elizabeth Walter in 1907 in All Saints Church in Margaret Street in London. By 1908, he had returned to Perth but 1914 finds him in Lingfield living at The Gables.

His correspondence with the local newspapers was copious and invariably strongly expressed. He opposed the erection of a war memorial in Lingfield, decried the local council for "wasting" money on road improvements and lambasted the Henry Smith charity for failure to distribute coal properly. In around 1922 he appeared before local magistrates for non-payment of rates, in protest at what he saw as waste of public money. He became a district councillor for Godstone in 1922.

A few of Prockter's finest:

On strikes: "The honest working man is for law and order; the traitor for disorder."

On funding the war memorial: "There are three ways open to us, 1st to be pro-British; 2nd to be neutral…or 3rd to be pro-Hun." Prockter

was of the view that only a “Britisher of British parents” should subscribe to the cost.

On pavements: “They are putting down a concrete kerb, a most expensive article and quite unnecessary”.

On coal distribution: “To me it appears a scandalous position that those responsible for the distribution of the coal have not apparently made any attempts to do so and have not even deigned to give any explanation of their gross negligence.”

Mr Prockter died in 1941 aged 77.

Ian Jones 2026