KIRSTEN ORR
Richard Francis-Jones/Spain & Cosh
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The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture is the first major work of reference to be published on Australian architecture and provides an unparalleled compendium of architectural knowledge. It draws together 225 contributing scholars resulting in over 1,000 entries and 500 images that document and analyse Australian architecture and architects from indigenous beginnings to colonial, modern and contemporary eras. Its significance is in part because no such study existed previously and because it recovers gaps in the record.

Both Richard Francis-Jones (1960–) and Spain & Cosh (1904-1938) have been instrumental in the development of Australian architecture. While the architectural work of Francis-Jones has been widely published in the mainstream architectural press, no complete biographical account previously existed. Material was gathered from primary sources, including a literature review of articles on individual buildings and an interview with Francis-Jones in November 2008. The architectural work of Spain & Cosh has been overlooked in architectural histories and previous biographical registers of Australian architects. The Australian Dictionary of Biography includes an entry for Alfred Spain but makes only a fleeting reference to Spain & Cosh. Material for the entry was gathered from primary sources, including journal articles (1904-1938), and a study of original drawings.
Mauritius Judkins (1897–1960) joined the firm in 1919, thus linking it to the early practice of Daniel Garlick and Herbert Louis Jackman.

Soward’s designs were large stone residences generally in the Gothic style, of which a number survive: St Leonard’s, Alexandria (1885); St Clement’s, Alexandria (1892); however, his later houses in the interwar period were more classically derived, such as 19 Palmer Place, North Adelaide (1928). Commercial premises in Adelaide designed by English & Soward include the Edward Building (1883), Beehive Corner (1886), Gower Chambers (1913) and Ipswich Building (1927). These buildings display a range of styles from Italianate to Gothic. The firm also designed a number of grandstands, including one at the University of Adelaide sports field (1908) and at Morphettville Racecourse (1913).

Soward was aning member of the SALA in 1886, although he resigned on a matter of principle when it was realized that Joseph English was charging less than the recommended fee for his father’s old clients. He did not resign until 1924 and became a Fellow in 1925. Active in public life, Soward lived at Glenelg and was mayor there from 1891 to 1898. He was also Member for Torrens in the South Australian Parliament from 1902 to 1905. Soward retired in 1936. In that year he was an over the age of 80 as the Architectural Honours and Gardens titled. One hundred years of building, in which he expressed his strong interest in the historic built environment and its value to society. 

Kathryn McQuigget

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF

Spanish & Cosh was a respected but conservative commercial firm that adopted contemporary styles in its work. Its pre-WWII buildings tended to be variations on the Federation style/character, which was usually derived from the American Romanesque and Sunglenorks Museum. Their commercial work of the interwar period was dominated by a style known as Classical Puniciv. The firm was always willing to incorporate new technologies and building materials, and it was notable for having advanced technical and aesthetic concerns that were at the forefront of the Federation style to the present day. The Balmain Building (1907) at Hunter Street was a fine example of this style and a landmark of the Federation style in that city. The Australian Drug Company Building (1917) at Wynyard Square, Sydney, was one of Australia’s first reinforced concrete-framed buildings.

The firm designed commercial buildings, flats, hotels, restaurants, hotels, warehousing, and manufacturing establishments. NSW heritage items, the Mosman Hotel, 25–27 George Street (1914) and the former Salons and Home (1904 addition), both in The Rocks, Sydney, are significant reminders of the original physical and social character of the area. Buildings listed by local government and state agencies include the ACP Office, Sydney (originally Evening News Building, 1925), the Lincolis Building (originally the Mechanics School of Arts, 1920) the Marine Club Building, TAFE, Railway Square, Sydney (1928), the Menzies Hotel, Cazaniga Street, Sydney (originally Staff House, 1908), Road House (originally Hope & Harrington, 1909), Singapore Airlines House, Bridge Street, Sydney (originally Scottish House, 1925, 1927), the Singleton District Hospital (1907), St Clement’s Church, Marrickville, NSW (1897, 1897), and Stoddarts House (originally premises for Boardwalk, 1908).

The firm continued to remain active in the Federation Free Style in Australia, and was one of the leading firms of the Federation Free Style in Australia. Alfred Spight was a founder of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1917. Alongside architecture, he pursued a distinguished career in the NSW and Commonwealth Military Forces. Thomas Cosh was a founder member of the Sydney Architectural Association and later influential in the IAA NSW.

KIRSTEN ORR

Spight, Richard

Richard Spight (c.1866–1927) was an eclectic architect best known for his designs of the Victorian Arts & Society Building (1893) in East Melbourne.

Born in England, Spight was cousin to the well-known architect of the Midland Railway, Robert. In 1884 he arrived in Melbourne with his father, also Richard Spight, who had been appointed Chief Engineer of the Victorian Railways. The younger Spight established himself in Victorian architecture in Collins Street, Melbourne in 1886 and built a commercial and residential practice of some renown. His most significant early work was the Hotel Victoria, a typical Victorian-era, eclectic design on Bourke Street in Albert Park (1887–8). In the following years he went beyond the conventionality of that Victorian style and collaborated on two highly

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quarters, stables and outbuildings in a variety of eclectic styles, culminating in the design of the Victorian Tudor style "Berrima" homestead and outbuildings near Wickliffe, Vic. for Thomas Maidment, and the simpler Gothic homestead of Charles Gray at Naranburee, N.S.W. both in 1869. In the same year, Fox moved to Ballarat to join Percy Oakden in a short-lived, but nevertheless productive architectural practice. Fox & Oakden designed the new Wesleyan Church at Brunswick, Vic. (1872), extensive homestead building works on the Lake Bolac West Estate (1873) and the eccentrically detailed Victorian Free Style Town Hall and Court House at Charters, Vic. (1874).

Fox was appointed quantity and measuring surveyor under William Wardell in the Vic. PWD in 1872, evidently while still involved with Oakden and their new partner Leonard Terry. He held this position, seemingly with the right to private practice, until the infamous 'Black Wednesday' in 1878, when he 'shared the fate of many other Government employees' and was terminated. While the architectural prowess of Thomas and Andrew Chambers's mansion 'Warrigbee Park' is still unresolved and the longstanding attribution to Fox is unsubstantiated, it is otherwise recorded that J.H. Fox spent five years building one of the largest private residences in the colony and overseeing the expenditure of more than £60 000 on this Italian country house.

After 1878, Fox focused on quantity surveying and the preparation of bills of quantities for a number of architects, including his old firm of Terry & Oakden, such as bills for the New Public Library at Adelaide (1879), lands bureau Matthew Henry Davie's mansion 'Brackenhill' in Toorak, Vic., the London Chained Bank in Brisbane, Qld (1886) and Queen's College at The University of Melbourne, Parkville, Vic. (1887). Fox suffered in the 1890s Depression, and in 1894 he was appointed as the honorary assistant secretary of the RYIA (in lieu of payment of outstanding dues), rising to the position of secretary in 1896. Fox's intervention was timely as he steered the Institute through difficult times.

Fox died at his residence in Chapel Street, East St Kilda, of heart disease, on 4 August 1900, and was interred in the St Kilda Cemetery two days later. Some four years later the RYIA paid for the erection of a tombstone at his grave, 'in recognition of services faithfully rendered during seven years of office.'

Allan Willingham


FRANCIS-JONES, RICHARD

Richard Francis Jones (1960-), graduated from the University of Sydney with a Bachelor of Science (Architecture) in 1981 and a Bachelor of Architecture and the University Medal in 1983. He then worked briefly in the office of Alec Trenaman and Bruce Beesley before attending Columbia University in the United States, completing further architectural studies in 1987 under Kenneth Frampton and also teaching there. He worked for John Andrews Associates in New York and then with Harry Wolf at Ellerbe Becket, Santa Monica. Returning to Sydney in 1989, he joined the newly established Sydney office of the Canberra firm Mitchell Giurgola & Thorp, where he became a partner in 1996. After Ronald Giurgola's retirement in 1999, the firm was restructured and became Francis-Jones Morehen Thorp (fjmt) (fjmt) has a commitment to the public domain, designing buildings that sensitively respond to place and culture and that express formal ideas through the nature and assembly of materials and inventive construction systems.

John Milner Science Building (1999), the jewel in the crown of the University of NSW's undergraduate campus (winner of the 2000 Sulman Award), and the Red Centre building (1999), housing the Faculty of the Built Environment, received national acclaim. The restoration and adaptive reuse of the Royal Mint, Sydney, in 2004, as the head office for the Historic Houses Trust also was considerable acclaim. Other significant projects include Edward Gwone University Chancellery & Business School, WA (2003), Max Weiler Library Blacktown, NSW (2005), University of Sydney Eastern Avenue Auditorium (2000) and Law School, NSW (2009), Australian School of Business at the University of NSW (2007), Auckland University Business School, New Zealand (2007) and Auckland Art Gallery (2010-11). Most of the firm's major commissions have been won by competition. Francis-Jones has taught and lectured in architecture, design and theory, locally and abroad, since 1987. He is an editor of Current, has written extensively on architecture and has convened several architectural theory conferences, including 'On Monumentality' (2001) and 'Technics Form and Critical Culture' (2006), and was creative director of the RAIA 2008 national conference. Francis-Jones was RAIA NSW Chapter president (2001-2), and a member of the NSW Architects Registration Board (2001-4). He remains a partner at fjmt and is currently visiting professor at the University of NSW.

Kirsten Orr

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF
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EDITED BY PHILIP READ AND MARGARET WILLIS

This is splendidly presented, beautifully developed and written with clarity.
BERNARD SMITH

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Spain & Cosh

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