



On Bracken's Memorial in Dunedin's Northern Cemetery, beneath the inscription, are the words 'J.A. Burnside Architect' and as the memorial is in need of some conservation work I set about investigating the architect and hopefully to find the construction drawings for the memorial.

John Arthur Burnside was born in Tokomairiro and is said to have been the first New Zealand born architect. His parents were early settlers; John Burnside and Janet, nee Gillies, were married in Dunedin in 1854. John Arthur, the only son of a family of 10, received his education by private tuition. He was indentured to the architects Mason and Wales, and worked for them during the 1870s. His model of Otekaieke, the great house Mason and Wales designed for Robert Campbell, was displayed at the Ballarat Industrial Exhibition and the Sydney international Exhibition in 1879. He was a member of the Otago Hussars for many years, and a noted marksman and deerstalker.

In 1880 Burnside set up his own business, at a time when development was taking place on reclaimed land at the harbour end of Rattray Street. One of his first commissions was to plan a building there for Philp's Terminus Hotel (now The Anchorage). Soon afterwards he designed the adjoining building for perpetual Trustees and Agency Co, facing Rattray Street and incorporating

both the Vogel and Cumberland St corners. He had to employ special techniques to avoid subsidence, which time has proved successful. In this building Burnside established his offices.

About the same time he designed Transit House, Park St, for his uncle Robert Gillies. A number of commissions for substantial residences followed, including those for Scobie Mackenzie, George Mundy, Dr Colquhoun, and Dr McKellar. For Professor Scott of the Medical School he designed a concrete house and successfully employed a selection of New Zealand timbers.

He designed Ashburn Hall, and the Bank of New Zealand at Lawrence. Further afield he designed a warehouse in Invercargill, and the Stock Exchange, Auckland (1879). Among his church buildings were the picturesque Presbyterian church at Lovells Flat (1902), which survives little changed, and the Anglican Church of Columba at Wanaka (1902).

Burnside was 54 when he married 24-year-old Elizabeth Tyler Jones, of Timaru, on 21 May 1908, the daughter of a contractor. That year he also designed the Otago Settlers Museum. Amongst his other designs were the monument in the lower Octagon to the memory of Dr Thomas Burns, the City Hall in Dowling Street, and the fine corner building with cupola designed for the Colonial Mutual Life Office at Jacob's Corner – all unfortunately demolished.

John Arthur Burnside died at his St Clair home on 7 July 1920, survived by his wife and four children, and is buried in Anderson Bay Cemetery.

After all this I still have not managed to find the drawing of Bracken's memorial.