

Gary E. Demele, a practitioner based in Utica, Minnesota, shares the story of his grandfather, whose indenture offers a fascinating look at architectural internship in the late 19th century.

The Indentured Intern: An IDP State Coordinator Continues to Find His Roots in Architecture

by Gary E. Demele, AIA

I have been at it for years—trying to piece together the story of my grandfather, Guy Wilfred Hayler, who left the family in England and came to this country to pursue his dreams in city planning. Or was it architecture? That’s the current family debate as I sift through the documents left behind. In addition to drawings, project reports, and letters, I recently found his Letter of Indenture (*reprinted on page 19*).

As a State Coordinator involved with IDP, I was fascinated with the way this letter mirrors the conditions we still practice under today. It is quite remarkable in its clarity of the requirements demanded of the architect and his apprentice in late 19th century England. Like current intern requirements, the apprenticeship had a four-year duration and health care was important enough to be spelled out in the contract.

From relatives in England I have learned that my grandfather’s educational background

and indenture were firmly rooted in architecture. I also learned from my mother that he had a passion for city planning. One letter describes how deeply influenced he was as a young man by Daniel Burnham’s “majestic plan” for Chicago and Sir Ebenezer Howard’s Garden City. He certainly dreamed of coming to America.

Over the years, I have continued to track my grandfather’s path learning that he left England for Canada in 1911. He continued his professional work in architecture by designing the chateaus on the new Canadian Pacific rail line. The Chateau at Lake Louise was among this work.

In 1913, he immigrated to the United States and settled in Chicago to begin his long career as land planner, surveyor, and municipal engineer. The list of projects he worked on is vast and varied.

This Indenture made the first day of May One thousand eight hundred and ninety four Between Guy Hayler of 38 Heaton Park Road Newcastle-on-Tyne and 131 Pilgrim Street Newcastle-on-Tyne, of the first part Guy Wilfrid Hayler son of the said Guy Hayler now of the age of Seventeen, and upwards of the Second part and James Charles Parsons of Newcastle-on-Tyne, Architect and Surveyor of the third part.

Witnesseth that the said Guy Wilfrid Hayler of his own free will and with the consent of the said Guy Hayler testified by their respectively executing these presents Hath put placed and bound himself and Doth hereby put place and bind himself Apprentice to and with the said James Charles Parsons his executors and administrators in the profession of an Architect and Surveyor for the term of Four Years from the Seventh day of March, Eighteen Hundred and Ninety Four and the said Guy Hayler for himself his heirs executors and administrators hereby covenants with the said James Charles Parsons his executors and administrators as follows namely That the said apprentice shall and will during the term faithfully honestly and diligently serve the same James Charles Parsons his executors and administrators as an Apprentice in the said profession That he shall and will during the said term obey the lawful directions of the said James Charles Parsons his executors and administrators That he the said Apprentice shall not nor will at any time during the said term neglect or absent himself from the employment of his said Master without his consent nor shall not nor will waste, mispend injure or destroy any of the monies, goods, books, papers, writings, or other property or effects of the said James Charles Parsons his executors or administrators or any of them And also that the said apprentice shall and will in all things during the said term demean conduct and behave himself as a honest, diligent and faithful apprentice And Also that the said Guy Hayler his heirs executors and administrators shall and will during the said term find and provide the said apprentice with all apparel proper for one in his station and with good and sufficient meat, drink, washing and lodging And in case of his illness shall and will from time to time pay and discharge all bills and expenses attending such illness in anywise And this Indenture further Witnesseth that in consideration for such for-said service He the said James Charles Parsons for himself, his heirs executors and administrators doth hereby covenant with the said Guy Hayler and also separately with the said apprentice That he the said James Charles Parsons shall and will during the said term not being prevented or hindered by the said Guy Hayler or the said Apprentice according to the best of skill and knowledge teach and instruct or cause to be taught and instructed the said apprentice in the profession of an Architect and Surveyor

In witness whereof the said Parties to these presents have herewith set their hands and seals

Signed, sealed and delivered by the within named Guy Hayler, Guy Wilfrid Hayler and James Charles Parsons in the presence of
[signatures illegible]

Guy Hayler
Guy Wilfrid Hayler
James C. Parsons

Served,
James C. Parsons
May 1 1898

Two such projects mentioned as career highlights were working in Chicago as a design engineer on Burnham's famous Park and Boulevard system and as a planning consultant for the design of the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. I just recently discovered that he was commissioned in 1915 to survey sections of land in the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul Minnesota.

There are still many of his papers to review and I wonder what other connections to my personal and professional life I will find in there. As to the debate about where his true professional soul lay, the jury is still out.

Gary E. Demele, AIA, is the AIA State IDP Coordinator in Minnesota and a practicing Architect at WCL Associates, Inc., in Minneapolis with specialties in educational and religious facilities design. **DC**