

Incineration and Incantations.

Simon

When an elderly Marion Griffin reflected on her long and eventful life, she observed that the 1920s had coincided with 'that character-testing decade of one's forties.' Despite the slight miscalculation (Marion was in fact in her fifties), her statement reads true when one examines the range of potentially stressful circumstances that befell Marion — and her husband — during those years. It was in the early years of the 1920s, for example, that Walter severed his connections with Canberra, that Castlecrag was born and that the couple returned to the United States for the first time in a decade. Marion's mother had died in 1923, and Walter's mother in 1927.¹ But of all these events, it was Marion's developing interest in anthroposophy in the latter half of the 1920s that would become particularly 'character-testing' as her intense enthusiasm was not shared by her husband.

The late 1920s coincided with a chance commission to design municipal incinerators. During the most significant period — from late 1929 until early 1932 — the Griffins' struggles with personal demons became enmeshed with ongoing commissions for incinerators. Design became a creative outlet for the turmoil within the architects and this, inevitably, came to be expressed in the form of the buildings themselves.

In order to understand fully the implications of this upheaval, it is necessary to chart the events that led to it — namely, how anthroposophy became a strong influence in Marion's life while having far less impact on Walter's. Timing — be it coincidence, fate or predetermination — played a recurring role. By Marion's own account, her interest in anthroposophy began when she obtained a copy of Rudolf Steiner's *Outline of Occult Science* in about 1926² — a time when there was indeed very little



information available on the subject. Articles discussing anthroposophy rarely appeared in the world press,³ and even Steiner's death in 1925 generated few obituaries.⁴

It was, of course, even more difficult to obtain information in Australia. A Steiner study group was started in Sydney by Lute Drummond in the early 1920s, and soon afterwards Edith Williams was appointed as the first General Secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Australia.⁵ When Mrs Williams and her husband Robert moved to Castlecrag in 1928, Marion would surely have seen it as fate — particularly when the couple actually rented the house beside the Griffins' own. Edith Williams held regular meetings on the estate — attended by both of the Griffins, although Marion records that her husband literally slept through them.⁶ Her own interest was strengthened as more and more information became available. In September of that year, the new world headquarters of the Anthroposophical Society in Dornach, Switzerland (fig. 1) was officially opened.⁷ This milestone was followed by an unprecedented flood of

Figure 1. The Geotheanum at Dornach, Switzerland, 1924–28, by Rudolf Steiner (photograph by Simon Reeves). Steiner broke away from world-teacher orientated theosophy to form human-centred anthroposophy in the second decade of the twentieth century. The Griffins joined the Anthroposophical Society in the early 1930s. (The writings of Goethe were central in anthroposophy; hence the name of the building.)

international publicity as articles suddenly appeared in journals throughout Europe.⁸

The presence of Edith Williams in Castlecrag at this time certainly nurtured Marion's interest in Steiner, but it was yet another anthroposophist who would play a more decisive role in this. In the late 1920s Alfred Meebold (1863–1952), a prominent teacher from Dornach, found himself in Sydney. German-born Meebold was the third generation of a family of textile manufacturers in Heidenheim, but he showed little interest in the family business and embarked instead on a varied career as a traveller, writer and



Figure 2. Ku-ring-gai Incinerator, West Pymble, New South Wales, 1929, by Walter Burley Griffin (photograph from the Sir Henry Baracclough papers, courtesy University of Sydney archives). This incinerator was the first RIECo installation involving a building design by the Griffins. The crowd on opening day gives scale to this somewhat domestic image.

botanist." Formerly a theosophist, Meebold met Steiner in 1904, and they remained friends until the latter's death, after which Meebold became, to use his own words, 'a kind of anthroposophical commercial traveller'.¹⁰ Invited to lecture in New Zealand in 1927, he travelled through Australia on his return journey,

arriving in Sydney in the latter half of 1929.

Almost nothing is known of Meebold's brief time in Australia, but it is virtually unthinkable that the Griffins would not have attended his lectures. Marion briefly mentions Meebold in 'Magic of America', but does not reveal the circumstances of

their first meeting.¹¹ Of course she would have required little persuasion to attend any lectures he may have given in Sydney in 1929. Her husband, lulled by Mrs Williams's gatherings, may have remained politely ambivalent towards the prospect of Meebold's lectures – that is, had Meebold not also been a reputed botanist, 'at home in the institutions and botanical gardens of five continents.'¹² Walter thoroughly enjoyed meeting botanists, and during his career he befriended many, including Edwin Cheel, Constance LePlastrier and Dr Birbal Sahni. When another noted botanist, Josephine Tilden, toured Australia in the 1930s, Walter was unable to meet her, and he expressed his genuine disappointment in a letter to a friend.¹³ Both of the Griffins were thus keen to meet Meebold, although for very different reasons. The irony of this may – or may not – have been lost on Marion.

Amidst this spiritual groundswell, Walter Burley Griffin was commissioned to design his first municipal incinerator. A long-time client, Nisson Leonard-Kanevsky, had formed the Reverberatory Refuse Incinerator Company with engineer John Boadle. Their prototype plant, at Bexley in Sydney, was nondescript in appearance, but functionally successful enough to interest other municipalities. One such council was the City of Essendon in Melbourne, who called tenders for an incinerator (cat. #2908-03) in May 1929. A proposal nine months earlier had been

protested by ratepayers, and now the council insisted that the building must harmonize with the surrounding residential area. Kanevsky prepared a tender, engaging Eric Nicholls (then manager of the Griffin office in Melbourne) to provide design input. Their tender was successful, and Kanevsky immediately incorporated his company under the name of the Reverberatory Incinerator and Engineering Company, or RIECo.⁹ Another tender was being prepared for the Ku-ring-gai municipality in Sydney (cat. 2908-02), and Kanevsky deliberately suggested to the council that 'the building should be of an aesthetic character.'¹⁰ He had hit upon the innovative – and lucrative – idea of including architectural input with the tenders.

The incinerators at Essendon and Ku-ring-gai were being designed while Alfred Meebold was lecturing in Sydney. The latter – the first to be completed – was a tiny and elegant building with a colonnade of concrete columns and a steeply pitched tiled roof. Walter was attempting to evoke an appropriately residential image – but the building also exuded a faintly ecclesiastical quality, moving one contemporary journalist to describe it as being 'church-like in appearance'.¹¹ Such imagery was hardly inappropriate for the incinerator, sited as it was like a folly or garden temple in a bush landscape (fig. 2).

The incinerators at Essendon and Ku-ring-gai were both completed by the middle of 1930, after which point the Griffins experienced an uncomfortable hiatus. Proposals for two more incinerators, at Unley (South Australia) and Granville (Sydney) had fallen through. Alfred Meebold had returned to Dornach, and even Edith Williams had left Sydney after the death of her husband, returning to her native New Zealand. A photograph



of the Griffins taken around that time seems to capture their mood perfectly (fig. 3). This often-published photograph shows the couple propped in the doorway of their Castlecrag house with particularly pensive expressions.¹² Furrowing one's brow in a photograph is not necessarily conclusive evidence of deep-seated inner turmoil – but the shot was taken only two months before Marion became an official member of the Anthroposophical Society and, as she put it, 'I threw up my hands and ran away ... to America.'¹³

Little is known of Marion's trip to the United States, and her memoirs offer few clues to her reasons for 'running away'. An obvious factor would be Walter's reluctance, or perhaps outright refusal, to join the Anthroposophical Society when Marion did. For Walter, anthroposophy was just another philosophy in a long line of ideas that he found to be interesting. He really saw no reason to make a formal commitment to the society, and lacked his

Figure 3. Walter and Marion Griffin at Castlecrag, 27 July 1930 (photograph courtesy of the Pictorial Collection, National Library of Australia, Canberra). The Griffins appear weary and troubled by their practice and personal circumstances. Marion began to embrace anthroposophy at this time. She was soon to depart Castlecrag and live in the United States for many months.

wife's enthusiasm for total involvement. Marion clearly could not comprehend this apparent ambivalence. While she was overseas, her friend and anthroposophical confidante Edith Williams wrote to her, asking 'can it be, Marion, that he doesn't understand? Is it that he really has not seen?'¹⁴ Marion would spend over a year pondering such questions before returning to Australia.

Left alone to practise in Sydney, Walter no doubt dwelt on his wife's parting words: 'Well, now you are a free man.'¹⁵ Soon after she left, he had received a commission to design yet another incinerator, this time for the municipality of Randwick (see cat. #3010-01). His proposal was so vastly different from its two predecessors that it could only be considered as a reflection of his life at that point. It was the first incinerator to use rough-hewn stonework as an integral design element, creating a ruggedness that the earlier incinerators lacked. Instead of the domestic-scaled chimneys he had used at Essendon and Ku-ring-gai, Walter contained the smokestack within an ornate fifty-foot (fifteen-metre) tower. Carved stone was used above the window lintels as a literal representation of flame – a rare instance of semiotic ornament in the entire Griffin oeuvre (fig. 4).

The Randwick incinerator was like a temple, sublime in its monumentality. Walter had moved beyond the 'church-like' imagery of his earlier incinerators to

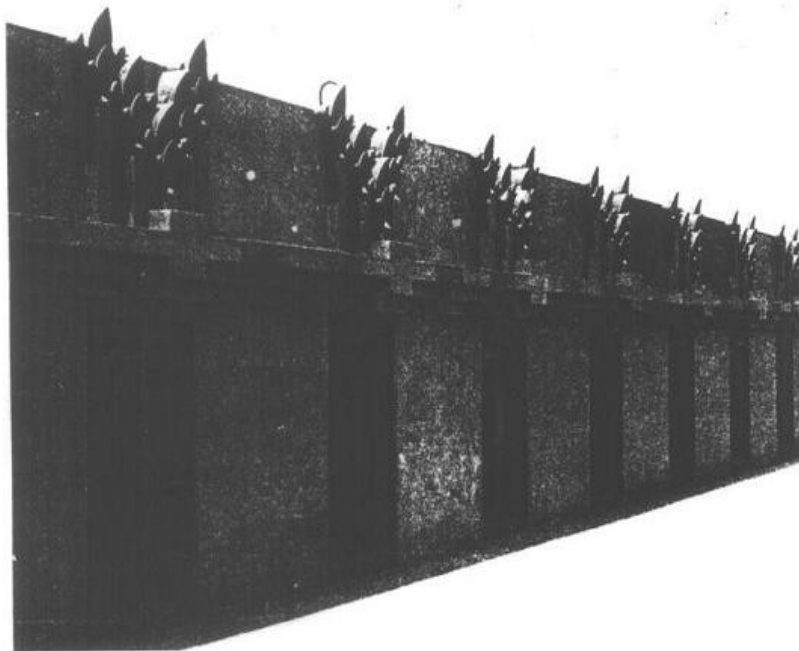


Figure 4. Flame ornament on the Randwick Incinerator, New South Wales, 1932, by Walter Burley Griffin. After Marion's temporary but long return to the United States, the character and form of Walter's incinerator design changed away from a domestic expression to a geometric massing of archaic power embellished with symbols.

something that evoked a far more primitive and archetypal sense of the religious. This cannot be divorced from the fact that the architect was wrestling with personal demons during its design and construction. Indeed, the period between the calling of tenders in November 1930 and the incinerator's official opening in February 1932 coincided almost exactly with Marion's absence from Australia. And it was as this building neared completion, in September 1931, that Walter Burley Griffin finally joined the Anthroposophical Society — exactly one year after his wife had done so.

Marion, however, remained in Chicago, and correspondence with her husband gave no indication of her impending return. 'You wrote to me that you hated my letters,' she later wrote, 'and I wrote you that I hated yours.'²² Coincidence — or fate — struck when Kanevsky arranged for Walter to travel to North America with the

RIECo engineer, John Boadle, to inspect incinerators — including a 'fine new mechanically-charged plant' in Chicago.²³ Walter obviously saw this as an opportunity to bring back his wife. Marion, however, was not ready to return, and the two men travelled without her. Coincidence, or fate, struck again when Alfred Meebold chanced to be passing through Chicago soon after Walter and John Boadle had left.²⁴ Marion presumably met up with them, and he may well have encouraged her to return to Australia, where he intended to travel himself later that year as part of his second world tour.

By the middle of 1932, the three travellers had returned to professional life in Australia, each imbued with new ideas and influences. Boadle, for example, wrote an article about his experiences overseas, and proceeded to lodge four new patents for improvements to his original furnace design. Marion's commitment to anthroposophy had

strengthened enormously, and her niece recalls this time, when Marion 'became almost fanatical in her devotion to Rudolf Steiner's work, and was always attempting to convert everyone she met.'²⁵ Walter attempted to engage in some evangelism of his own, but, as his niece further recalls:

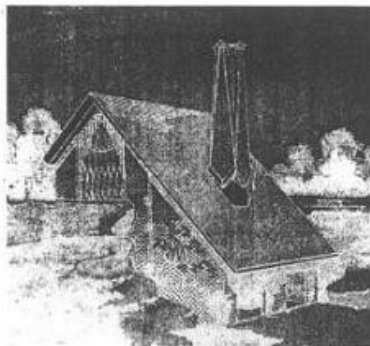
Walter's way was different. One morning ... my mother Genevieve answered the phone and was greeted by a complete stranger who said 'Your brother Walter says you are interested in Anthroposophy. We are to have a very special occasion — Alfred Maybold [*sic*] from Dornach is visiting. He will be giving several lectures, and Walter asked me to invite you and Roy to come.'²⁶

Walter's way was indeed different, and rather tokenistic. He was happy to pass on the names of his sister and brother-in-law as potential converts — but preferred to leave the hands-on proselytizing to others. Roy and Genevieve Lippincott — who subsequently joined the Anthroposophical Society in 1936 — were only two of the prospective converts Marion had in mind.²⁷

Closer to home, Eric Nicholls was another. The young architect moved from Melbourne to run the Griffins' office in Sydney while Walter was abroad. On his return, Walter retained Nicholls to work on the incinerators, and all subsequent

examples were produced under the auspices of 'Griffin and Nicholls, architects'.²⁸ Nicholls had, somewhat ominously, rented the house in Castlecrag formerly occupied by Robert and Edith Williams. Nicholls was experiencing some religious uncertainty of his own, as his move from Melbourne had necessitated leaving the Methodist church with which he had been involved for over fifteen years.²⁹ He proved to be very receptive towards anthroposophy, and it seemed that Marion had at last found someone with whom she could share her spiritual vision.

The middle of 1932 was thus a significant time – for Marion a period of intense enthusiasm, and for Eric Nicholls a period of change and adjustment. Walter, content to concentrate on the architectural practice, received what would be his most important incinerator commission. In July of that year, the Sydney City Council called tenders for an incinerator to dispose of the entire city's garbage. Cited as the largest incinerator in the southern hemisphere, it represented an incredible design opportunity. The Griffins, now working closely with Nicholls for the first time in a decade, produced an extraordinary proposal, fuelled by the architectural and spiritual influences of their recent trip. The building was to be sited in the inner suburb of Moore Park, and Walter and Marion envisaged a hulking horizontal mass with incised ornament, revealing an obvious debt to pre-Columbian architecture. Such stylistic influence had appeared in the Griffins' earlier work, but never before as explicitly as in this project. In 1931 Marion may well have visited her brother Jerome who lived in Mexico and once 'happened upon the ruins of an ancient city on his own plantation'.³⁰ The use of the pre-Columbian temple form also meant that



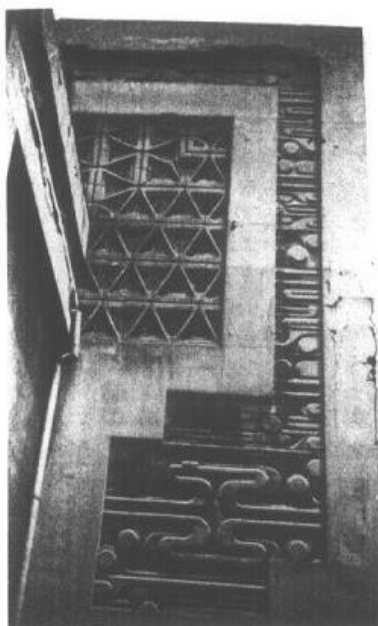
the notion of the incinerator as a sacred building – only hinted at previously – had finally become as explicit as it could possibly be.

The Griffins' proposal for the new Sydney City Council incinerator was stalled indefinitely when the proposed site at Moore Park became unavailable, but the same spiritual and architectural fervour that informed their design manifested itself elsewhere. The opportunity came to design another incinerator – for the Griffins' own municipality of Willoughby, no less. Again, religious allusions were in evidence. One of the three tenders they submitted evoked the Gothic, with trefoil windows, corbelled pointed arches and a chimney edged with crocketed finials (fig. 5). Their successful tender, however, was more of an archetype of a pagan temple (see cat. #3301-01). Rough stone walls and faceted concrete ornament were used, resulting in the same sort of sublime *terribilita* that Walter had created in the Randwick incinerator. Such was the effect of the building that it continued to evoke religious imagery in the minds of observers for decades to come; but rather than being merely 'church-like', as the Ku-ring-gai incinerator had been, the building at Willoughby was likened to 'some strange church', or 'a shrine' or 'a temple in the heart of suburban Sydney'.³¹

Figure 5. Willoughby Incinerator, New South Wales, alternative RIECo tender design, 1933, by Walter Burley Griffin (drawing courtesy Local History Collection, Willoughby City Library). The huge roof plane is adorned with a chimney, having a Gothic ribbed and faceted quality which Griffin also expressed in the window fenestrations.

A year had passed before the Sydney City Council found a new site for their incinerator. Although fresh tenders were called, the Griffin scheme (see cat. #3404-01) was derived substantially from the earlier proposal for Moore Park. The new site was a high promontory at Pyrmont, overlooking Sydney Harbour – a far more dramatic location than the nondescript wasteland at Moore Park. Ironically, the Griffins' incinerator would be shown to a far greater effect. As if such bold siting of a pre-Columbian temple was not sufficient on its own to evoke a dreadful religious awe, the architects went further. The incised ornament proposed for the building was derived directly from anthroposophical sources.

The patterned tiles on the incinerator at Pyrmont (fig. 6) were, in Marion's words, 'the record of what remains when matter is destroyed'.³² She saw the process of incineration as the 'dissolution of matter', whereby it changed state from solid to liquid, then to light and finally to heat. This, of course, had parallels with developments in atomic science in the mid-1930s.³³ The Griffins were certainly interested in this scientific aspect – Walter, for example, had discussed the dissipation of radiant energy in correspondence with a friend as early as 1929.³⁴ But now, five years later, scientific interests had merged with mystical ones. The design philosophy of depicting solid, liquid, light and heat was based on the archaic concept of the 'four ethers',

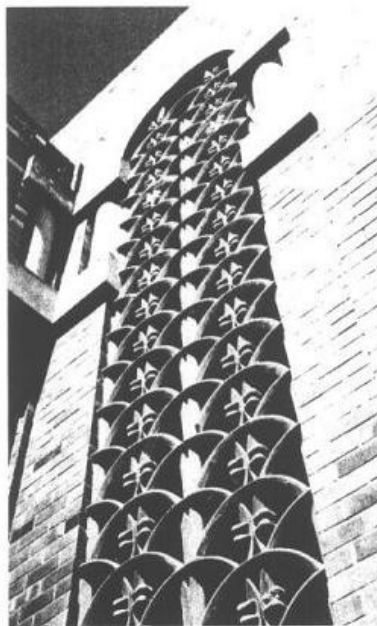


derived ultimately from ancient Greek theory. In the early twentieth century this had found its way into the teachings of Rudolf Steiner, who wrote:

... we esoterically distinguish four forms of ether: firstly fire ether, which makes all bodies capable of being permeated by warmth; secondly light ether; thirdly chemical ether, in which atoms are made to mingle according to certain laws of number; and fourthly the physical or life ether; in all, four kinds of ether bringing life to the earth.³⁵

Marion Griffin uses similar terminology throughout 'Magic of America', variously discussing the ethers and their associated properties – their physical states (solid, liquid, gas and energy), forces (magnetism, sound, light and warmth), colours (lilac, blue, yellow and red), humours (melancholic, phlegmatic, sanguine and choleric) and geometries (rectangle, crescent, triangle and circle).³⁶

The Griffins in Australia and India



It is this last that forms the basis for the ornament on the Sydney City Council incinerator at Pyrmont. Marion wrote that the patterns were depictions of natural phenomena such as human blood crystals, the 'solid earth' and 'the wave form we see in the restless sea'. Her flowery rhetoric recalls a poem by Steiner, with which she may well have been familiar:

See thou, mine eye
The Sun's pure rays
In crystal forms of Earth

See thou, my heart,
The Sun's Spirit-power
In Water's surging wave

See thou, my soul
The Sun's cosmic will
In quivering gleams of Air.

See thou, my spirit,
The Sun's indwelling God
In Fire's abounding love.³⁷

Figure 6. Pyrmont Incinerator, New South Wales, 1935–36, by Walter Burley Griffin (photograph by Ken Edmonds). The building was completed after Walter journeyed to Lucknow, India. The concrete tiles were symbolically patterned to represent the constituent fundamental properties of the universe.

Figure 7. Thebarton Incinerator, South Australia, 1936, by Eric Milton Nicholls (photograph by Simon Reeves). Nicholls, like Marion and Walter, became dedicated to anthroposophy, as the symbolic ornament testifies. He also remained loyal to the Griffins' expression of architectural motifs, such as the embedded cylindrical columns with square bases and capitals.

Such direct anthroposophical sources were certainly fresh in Marion's mind at that time. She tells us in her memoirs, for example, that she read a book entitled *Four Ethers* by Steiner's biographer, Dr Günther Wachsmuth.³⁸ It is also likely that Meebold lectured on the topic while in Chicago, as he had discussed the ethers in European lectures some months before.³⁹ Whilst in Chicago, at the Armstrong School, Marion herself had given a lecture entitled 'Trees', which included a discussion of the geometry of the ethers, illustrated with sketches of the square, circle, triangle and crescent.⁴⁰ These highly significant sketches also appeared in the syllabus for a drawing course that Marion organized with Bertha Nicholls in Melbourne.⁴¹

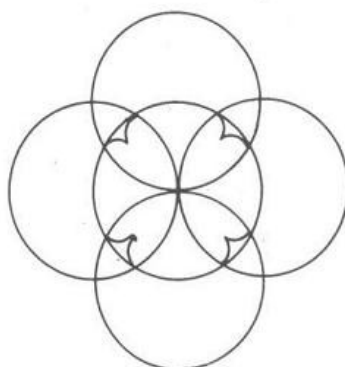
As the incinerator at Pyrmont neared completion towards the end of 1935, Eric Nicholls began to approach the point that Marion had reached in the late 1920s. His burgeoning interest in anthroposophy was given a boost when Alfred Meebold returned to Sydney during this time as part of his third and final tour of Australasia.⁴² In September, Nicholls and

his wife Molly joined the Anthroposophical Society.⁴³ Walter left for India soon afterwards, and the completion of the incinerator at Pymont was thus left in the hands of the two very enthusiastic anthroposophists. On its completion, many observers missed the point of the ornament; contemporary journalists made no mention of it, referring only to the general 'architectural merit' of the building.⁴⁴ But for anthroposophists, the meaning was clear and definitive. Marion stood 'breathless' in front of the incinerator with her friend Lute Drummond, then the general secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Australia. She later recalled:

we both saw the angel forces playing around it as if it were a living thing. She stood beside me and described what she was seeing, and it corresponded with what I was seeing.⁴⁵

Ironically — and perhaps fittingly — Walter's interpretation of this, his most significant and symbolic building, is not on record, as he did not live to see the building completed.

Soon after the Sydney City Council incinerator was completed, Marion joined her husband in India, and Nicholls was left in effective control of their entire Australian practice. In June, another incinerator commission came from the municipality of Thebarton in South Australia. Nicholls's design — undertaken with no input from Walter or Marion — was more than an appropriate successor to the building at Pymont. Nicholls's Thebarton incinerator (cat. #3608-01) was an idiosyncratic composition of exposed brick and concrete columns, with window screens in a distinctive pattern of overlapping circles (fig. 7). At the time of its design and construction, Marion wrote in a letter to her sister that 'Mr Nicholls



was growing rapidly into Anthroposophy.⁴⁶ And indeed he was — the overlapping circles he depicted were a literal representation of the ethereal Fire Beings. Marion herself had once lectured on this topic, stating that the Fire Beings were 'personified as great spheres of fire, so we can picture them by drawing a great circle. And we can show these great Fire Beings working and playing together by drawing many circles.'⁴⁷ Marion illustrated this with a diagram of five interlocking circles, with small incisions at the points of intersection (fig. 8). The resemblance to Nicholls's window screens at Thebarton is striking, and the young architect had ably shown himself to be the true heir to Marion's spiritual vision at Pymont.

That the Griffins, and Eric Nicholls, were called upon to design municipal incinerators at the exact time when they were immersed, to varying extents, in anthroposophy was a happy coincidence. Walter, while never really committed to the cause, still experienced great spiritual and personal conflict, which somehow emerged in his incinerator designs. For Marion and Nicholls, anthroposophy was a more decisive presence, and the process of incineration itself had parallels in

Figure 8. 'Fourness Materialized', a diagram sketched by Marion Mahony Griffin (drawn by Simon Reeves from the original in *Magic of America*, c.1940–49, vol. IV, page 340). The overlapping circles represented ethereal Fire Beings, this meaning being depicted also by Nicholls in the circular ornament at the Thebarton Incinerator (figure 7).

Steiner's theory, which became expressed — sometimes explicitly — in the built form.

Destruction by fire has always had deep spiritual associations throughout history, perhaps most notably on the tradition of cremation — an ancient practice that had retained its mysticism up to and including Griffin's lifetime. Writing in the early 1930s, French philosopher Gaston Bachelard described death that is followed by cremation as 'the least lonely of deaths [and] truly a cosmic death in which the whole universe is reduced to nothingness along with the thinker.'⁴⁸ Such words are in line with anthroposophy; Steiner himself was cremated, as was Marion Griffin, as indeed was Eric Nicholls.⁴⁹ But when Walter died in India in 1937, he was 'buried quietly' in Lucknow's Transgumti Civil Cemetery. Even despite the tradition of cremation and ghats in Northern India, Marion Griffin chose to respect her husband's beliefs, just as he had respected hers — eventually — at the end of that 'character-testing decade'.⁵⁰

When one considers the enormous religious significance that the Griffins injected into their incinerator designs, it is a final irony that RIECo, the incinerator company, should soon turn to the manufacture of crematoriums. In October 1935 — that important moment when Walter left Australia, and Nicholls became an anthroposophist — a patent was lodged which adapted the standard reverberatory furnace to the purpose of human

cremation.⁵¹ The company had been approached by a local architect, David Cowell Ham, who had been commissioned to design a new crematorium at Springvale in Victoria.⁵² Within a year, the building had been completed – and contained RIECo furnaces.⁵³ The Griffins and Nicholls would have relished the chance to design such a building, offering as it did the opportunity for even more incisive spiritual symbolism. Even David Cowell Ham – himself a Christian Scientist – incorporated such symbolism into his design of the Springvale crematorium, an otherwise conventional Art Deco building with a fountain motif ‘symbolical of the flow of eternal life’.⁵⁴

While a former employee of the Griffins’ office has claimed that they designed several crematoriums in the 1930s, no firm evidence of this has yet come to light.⁵⁵ One can only speculate that any such structure, if it existed at all, would have expressed the collective religious convictions of Walter, Marion and Eric with even more potency than the fabled incinerator at Pyrmont – a truly magnificent and fitting conclusion to their Australian career.

Notes

The author would like to thank Jeffrey Turnbull and particularly Dr Angela Hass for reading and commenting on earlier drafts of this chapter.

¹ Griffin, Marion Mahony, ‘Magic of America’, vol. IV, p. 159.

² *ibid.*, p. 267; Sater, Gertrude 7/8 November 1953 letter to Helmut Behrens, Elmhurst Historical Museum, Illinois. The author is indebted to Janice Pregliasco for a copy of this document.

³ Griffin, ‘Magic’, vol. IV, p. 159.

⁴ Some rare examples in English include Carl Clemen, ‘Anthroposophy’, *Journal of Religion*, IV, 3 (May 1924), pp. 281–92; ‘Modernity in Art: New architectural forms’, *The Times*, 18 November 1925, p. 17.

⁵ ‘Dr Rudolf Steiner, theosophist, dies’, *New York Times*, 31 March 1925, p. 19; Kenneth McKenzie, ‘Rudolf Steiner’, *Contemporary Review*, 714 (June 1925), pp. 281–92; Margaret McMillan, ‘The Passing of Rudolf Steiner’, *Journal of Education and School World*, (June 1925), pp. 392–3.

⁶ Roe, Jill, ‘The Magical World of Marion Mahony Griffin: Culture and Community in Castlecrag in the Interwar years’, in Shirley Fitzgerald and Garry Wotherspoon (eds), *Minorities: Cultural Diversity in Sydney*, 1995, p. 96.

⁷ Griffin, ‘Magic’, vol. I, p. 196a.

⁸ ‘New Goetheanum opened’, *New York Times*, 30 September 1928, p. 24.

⁹ See, for example, ‘La Goetheanum at Dornach’, *Le Bulletin de l’Art*, 55 (March 1929), pp. 111, 115; Robertson, H. and F.R. Yerbury, ‘The Goetheanum at Dornach’, *The Architect and Building News* (15 March 1929), pp. 359ff; ‘Das Goetheanum’, *Wasmuth Monatshefte*, 13 (May 1929), p. 200; Muret, Maurice, ‘Rudolf Steiner et le Goetheanum’, *Revue de Paris*, 18 (15 September 1932), pp. 446–55; ‘Feribesog pas Goetheanum’, *Bygmesteren*, XXV (1932), pp. 319–22; Davy, Charles, ‘Rudolf Steiner and Anthroposophy’, *Bookman*, 506 (November 1933), pp. 101–2; Gigon, Fernand, ‘Dornach: quelques reflexions sur l’architecture anthroposophique’, *Oeuvre/Werk*, 8 (1935), pp. 16–17.

¹⁰ Kosch, Wilhelm, *Deutsches Literatur-Lexicon: Biographisches-Bibliographisches Handbuch*, sv Alfred Meebold; Wagner, Fritz et al, *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, XVI, pp. 604–5;

¹¹ *Anthroposophical News Sheet*, II, 9 (4 March 1934), pp. 35–6. Meebold lectured in Dornach in February 1934 about his travels abroad over the preceding five years. ‘Unrevised shorthand notes’ from this lecture were published in three parts in consecutive issues of this journal. I am greatly indebted to Hans van Florenstein Mulder and Barbara Finn for supplying translated transcripts of these and other articles, as well as additional information about Meebold.

¹² Griffin, Marion, 24 December 1935 letter to W.B.

¹³ Griffin, in Griffin, ‘Magic’, vol. I, p. 54.

¹⁴ Schornstein, W., ‘Alfred Meebold’.

Anthroposophical News Sheet, XX, 5/6 (10 February 1952), p. 21.

¹⁵ Griffin, W.B., 12 October 1935 letter to Alice Henry, Vance Palmer papers, National Library of Australia, Canberra. Josephine Tilden (1869–1957) was professor of Botany at the University of Minnesota, and the leader of a botanical expedition through Australasia in 1934–35.

¹⁶ ‘Reverberatory Incinerator and Engineering Company Pty Ltd’, File C0014832M, VPRS 8268/P1 Defunct Company Records, Public Record Office, Laverton, Victoria.

¹⁷ ‘Another step forward – Ku-ring-gai Municipality opens its new Incinerator’, *Hornsby and Ku-ring-gai Advocate*, 19 June 1930, p. 11.

¹⁸ ‘Ku-ring-gai Incinerator’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 June 1930, p. 19.

¹⁹ This photograph was one of several taken on 27 July 1930 by Dr Jorma Pohjanpalo, now held in the Pictorial Collection of the National Library, Canberra.

²⁰ Griffin, ‘Magic’, vol. IV, p. 159.

²¹ Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 160.

²² *ibid.*, p. 159.

²³ *ibid.*, p. 162.

²⁴ John Boadle, ‘Refuse disposal in USA and Canada’, *Commonwealth Engineer* (1 May 1933), p. 287.

²⁵ *Anthroposophical News Sheet*, II, 7 (18 February 1934), p. 26.

²⁶ 24 September 1995 letter from the late Mrs Alstan Hegg.

²⁷ *ibid.* This ‘complete stranger’ was none other than the former Edith Williams, who had since remarried James Coe, the leader of the anthroposophical study group in Auckland.

²⁸ 7 November 1996 letter from Heinrich Libardi, Allgemeine Anthroposophische Gesellschaft.

²⁹ Earlier incinerators were attributed solely to either Walter or Eric, depending on whether they were proposed for New South Wales or Victoria respectively.

³⁰ Letter from Marie Nicholls, 29 August 1996.

³¹ Griffin, ‘Magic’, vol. III, p. 107.

³² Buhrich, Eva, ‘The Man who left a City for a

- Suburb', *Hemisphere*, XX, 4 (April 1976), p. 39; 'Griffin's monumental eyesore', *North Shore Times*, 3 April 1979, p. 9; Robert Ingpen, *Marking Time*, p. 74.
- ³² Griffin, 'Magic', vol. III, p. 424.
- ³³ Markham, Michael, 'The Griffin Incinerators', *Transition* (Autumn 1988), pp. 41–2.
- ³⁴ Griffin, W.B., 7 January 1929 letter to J.A. Smith, James Alexander Smith papers, State Library of Victoria, Melbourne.
- ³⁵ Steiner, Rudolf, 'Concerning the Lost Temple and how it is to be restored', in E.M. Lloyd (ed.), *The Temple Legend: Freemasonry and Related Occult Movements*, p. 185.
- ³⁶ Griffin, 'Magic', vol. I, p. 57; vol. II, pp. 424ff, 444; vol. III, p. 399b.
- ³⁷ Steiner, Rudolf, *Verses and Meditations*, p. 141.
- ³⁸ Griffin, 'Magic', vol. IV, p. 155.
- ³⁹ Meebold, Alfred, *Introductory Course to Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophy: Six lectures given in Vienna, October 1931*, pp. 54–5.
- ⁴⁰ Griffin, 'Magic', vol. IV, pp. 340–45.
- ⁴¹ Nicholls, Bertha, 'Drawing Lessons', in *ibid.*, pp. 224–7. Bertha Nicholls (1898–1952) was Eric's sister, who worked as a freelance perspectivist for many Melbourne architectural firms, including Griffin's.
- ⁴² Burbury, E.E., 'Alfred Meebold', *New Zealand News Sheet*, 31 (March 1952), p. 4.
- ⁴³ 29 August 1995 letter from Heinrich Libardi, Allgemeine Anthroposophische Gesellschaft.
- ⁴⁴ 'An achievement in Concrete', *Constructional Review*, X, 9 (January 1938), p. 17.
- ⁴⁵ Griffin, 'Magic', vol. I, p. 12.
- ⁴⁶ Griffin, Marion, 1 November 1936 letter to Georgine Smith, in *ibid.*, p. 170.
- ⁴⁷ *ibid.*, vol. IV, p. 340.
- ⁴⁸ Bachelard, Gaston, *The Psychoanalysis of Fire*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1968 (1964), p. 19.
- ⁴⁹ Wachsmuth, Günther, *The Life and Work of Rudolf Steiner*, Anthroposophical Society, Dornach, Switzerland, 2nd edn, 1955, p. 585; 29 January 1997 letter from Ms Aki Lew, Trustees of Graceland Cemetery; 'Funerals', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 November 1965, p. 28.
- ⁵⁰ 'Noted architect dead', *Pioneer*, 13 February 1937, p. 3.
- ⁵¹ Department of Patents, application number 24916/35, 'Improvements in cremation furnaces of the reverberatory type' dated 19 October 1935. The actual inventor is listed as Joseph Edgar Boadle, the youngest brother of John Boadle.
- ⁵² 'New Crematorium at Springvale', *Argus*, 10 September 1935, p. 7; 3 March 1997 letter from Miss Ethel Ham, the architect's daughter.
- ⁵³ 'Additional unit for Springvale Crematorium', *Australasian Engineer* (7 January 1937), p. 23.
- ⁵⁴ Letter from Miss Ethel Ham; 'Crematorium at Spring Vale [sic]', *Journal of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects*, March 1937, p. 25.
- ⁵⁵ Peter Navaretti, record of interview with Marshall Fordham, 12 December 1971. Courtesy Peter Navaretti.