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Now You See Them, Now You Don't:  
The Critical Reception of Women's Work  
at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, 1888-1916

Heather Victoria Haskins

A Thesis in the Department of Art History

Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at  
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## ABSTRACT

Now You See Them, Now You Don't: The Critical Reception of Women's Work at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, 1888-1916

Heather Victoria Haskins, PhD  
Concordia University, 2005

This preliminary study of the critical reaction to the work of women practitioners in the decorative arts in the late Victorian and Edwardian periods, has been undertaken in order to further an understanding of the voices which contributed to constructions of contemporary femininity. It investigates the reactions of critics to the work of 730 women who contributed to four exhibitions of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society in London, held in 1888, 1890, 1903 and 1916. The press policy of the ACES, together with the context of contemporary art criticism practices and background information on the critics and periodicals used, are set out in Chapter 1. For each exhibition, critical reaction to women's work is summarised in a section of general comments on women's exhibits, and particularised with an indepth look at the reception of Kate Faulkner, May Morris, Una Taylor, Georgina Gaskin, Grace Christie and Phoebe Stabler. Periodicals which consistently reviewed women's work were from all classes, and criticism of women's decorative arts varied widely, but certain trends emerged which revealed greater support for women designers than makers, and more praise for women designers who worked in acceptable 'feminine' mediums of embroidery, jewellery, or gesso decoration. Often women were named but their work was not discussed. Women who collaborated with their husbands also found their contributions glossed over. Some women's work was discussed with feminised language, some with both masculine and feminine terms, and some with rather gender-neutral language. Formal analysis of women's decorative art was rare. Press notices of women's work dropped significantly between 1903 and 1916, due to a combination of factors. Overall the analysis of women's press reception at ACES was facilitated by knowledge of the critic and editorial policy of the periodical.

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## INTRODUCTION

In March 1865, Francis Turner Palgrave gave a lengthy lecture entitled 'Women and the Fine Arts' at the South Kensington Museum in London. One of the more salient points he made was his belief that "the general laws of criticism [...] have been framed with reference to what men have done."<sup>1</sup> In other words, the reception of women's fine art was dependent on the experiences and judgment of men.

The effects of such criticism could be drastic. Pamela Gerrish Nunn gives the example of the painter Anna Mary Howitt, who stopped painting after reading John Ruskin's scathing criticism of her painting Boadicea Brooding over her Wrongs. Howitt had exhibited her painting at the Crystal Palace Exhibition of 1856. Ruskin sent his criticisms of the painting to Howitt in the form of a personal letter, instead of publishing them, as he did with his criticisms of the Royal Academy exhibitions. He wrote: "What do you know about Boadicea? Leave such subjects alone and paint me a pheasant's wing."<sup>2</sup> Ruskin was highly respected for his opinion of art at that time, but as Nunn points out, from a late twentieth-century perspective it becomes obvious that Ruskin was criticising the subject matter of Boadicea,<sup>3</sup> representing as she does resistance to oppression, rather than Howitt's ability to compose and paint a picture.<sup>4</sup> Yet Ruskin's discouragement of history subjects for women painters also smacks of a deeper fear, a fear of women who did not conform to accepted tropes of femininity. Most assuredly, a woman who painted the rebellious Boadicea did not follow Ruskin's definition of femininity.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Pamela Gerrish Nunn, "Critically Speaking," in CC Orr, ed, Women in the Victorian Art World (Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 1995) 107.

<sup>2</sup> Amice Lee, Laurels and Rosemary: The Life of William and Mary Howitt (Oxford University Press, 1955) 217. See also Chapter 10 in Deborah Cherry, Painting Women: Victorian Women Artists (London and New York: Routledge, 1993).

<sup>3</sup> Boadicea (d.62 CE) was queen of the Iceni, and led an uprising of Britons against the Romans in 61 CE.

<sup>4</sup> Nunn, 119.

<sup>5</sup> The clearest enunciation of Ruskin's view of male and female roles is found in Sesame and Lilies, first published in 1871.

Ruskin's reaction to Howitt's painting was not an isolated incident. Several feminist historians of art and literature have noticed a similar reaction when women's creative work did not comply with the critic's preconceived notions of femininity and feminine creativity. The American sculptor Harriet Hosmer's seven-foot-tall marble sculpture of Zenobia, the self-designated queen of Palmyra, is a case in point. Hosmer lived and worked at Rome during the 1850s and 1860s and exhibited the sculpture in London at the International Exhibition of 1862. Like Boadicea, Zenobia<sup>6</sup> had challenged male authority, in this case the Roman Emperor Aurelian (270-275 CE). The work received a scathing review in the catalogue, written by none other than Frances Turner Palgrave. As Deborah Cherry points out in her discussion of Howitt, "Ruskin's attack was not dissimilar to Palgrave's rejection of *Zenobia* as a sculpture of 'a proud, indolent woman, where we are led to expect a likeness of the gallant Queen of Palmyra'."<sup>7</sup> It was the subject matter that disturbed these critics, not the smooth marble surfaces or the brushstrokes, painstakingly applied. For men such as these, women who had the courage and audacity to depict women thwarting male authority were very dangerous indeed. Their criticism was a warning to conform.

Gender roles have been integral to nineteenth-century literary criticism as well. Nicola Diane Thompson's analysis of reviews of four different novels concludes that critics praised novels by women when both the novel and its author corresponded to accepted gender stereotypes, but criticised them when their writers transgressed these boundaries. She juxtaposes the examples of George Eliot's *Scenes from a Clerical Life* (1853), which was praised by critics until they discovered the author was a woman, with the experience of Charlotte Yonge's *The Heir of Redclyffe* (1855), which espoused the feminine and religious qualities which were uniformly endorsed by the

---

<sup>6</sup> In 267, after recapturing several of Rome's eastern provinces from the Persians, Septimius Odenathus, the King of Palmyra (present-day Syria) and his eldest son were both murdered on the order of his wife, Septimia Zenobia. She then became her son's Regent, but declared herself Queen, (267 or 268-272). She expanded her territories, but when she declared her son Emperor, the current Roman Emperor, Aurelian (270-275) too umbrage, captured her, and paraded her through Rome. Later she was pensioned in Tibur and lived in retirement. Although remembered for her beauty, intelligence and ambition, Zenobia has also been a symbol of ruthless arrogance. [Encyclopedia Britannica Online](http://www.britannica.com/ebc/article?eu=408610) <<http://www.britannica.com/ebc/article?eu=408610>>; [Encyclopedia.com](http://www.encyclopedia.com/html/z/zenobia.asp) <[www.encyclopedia.com/html/z/zenobia.asp](http://www.encyclopedia.com/html/z/zenobia.asp)>

<sup>7</sup> Deborah Cherry, *Beyond the Frame, Feminism and Visual Culture, Britain 1850-1900* (London & New York: Routledge, 2000) 126-127.

critics.<sup>8</sup> The pervasiveness of this trend is reinforced in Thompson's study by the reception of novels by male authors, who received the same treatment by critics: men's novels which reinforced the critic's notions of masculinity received glowing reviews, whilst those that challenged the existing stereotype were criticised. Thompson explains that "[s]ince gender roles were thoroughly patriarchal and sharply polarized in nineteenth-century England, especially in the middle class at mid-century, it is not surprising that a distinctly gendered aesthetics of reception surfaces in Victorian literary criticism."<sup>9</sup>

Women painters suffered a similar fate. In her article comparing the art criticism of portrait paintings by Cecilia Beaux with those of John Singer Sargent, Sarah Burns gives a lucid example of how art critics articulated their engagement with issues of femininity and masculinity in paintings.<sup>10</sup> In the 1890s, Cecilia Beaux enjoyed the position of America's most-reknowned woman painter, but second best painter overall (after Sargent), purely because she was a woman. Although she was extremely talented, her feminine qualities reassured critics that Beaux was not a threat to the status quo; she was, effectively, the exception that proved the rule that women were not artistic geniuses. Burns supports her argument with an array of texts culled from art reviews, medical and professional journals in which a climate of change prompted many critics to use similar gendered language to maintain male hegemony in the face of increased female participation in public life and the professions.

The method used by these critics was to emphasise whether the work itself bore masculine or feminine traits, and to link those traits to the gender of the artist. But whereas the feminine aspects of Sargent's paintings increased his male artistic genius, the reverse was not true for Beaux; even reviewers who described her work as masculine "saw Beaux's portraits in feminized terms, emphasizing their charm, tenderness, and emotionalism."<sup>11</sup> As Christine Battersby explains, "Thus,

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<sup>8</sup> Nicola Diane Thompson. Reviewing Sex: Gender and the Reception of Victorian Novels (New York University Press, 1996).

<sup>9</sup> Thompson, 10. The men's novels were Charles Reade's It Is Never Too Late to Mend, which demonstrated idealised masculinity and Anthony Trollope's Barchester Towers, which did not.

<sup>10</sup> Sarah Burns, "The 'Earnest, Untiring Worker' and the Magician of the Brush: Gender Politics in the Criticism of Cecilia Beaux and John Singer Sargent" Oxford Art Journal 15:1 (1992) 36-53.

<sup>11</sup> Burns, 38.

the mind of a male *benefits* from the emotion, the moodiness and love that Jung associated with his inner femininity. By contrast, the masculine woman merely *parodies* the male. [...] The great artist is a *feminine male*.”<sup>12</sup>

Thus for a great many cultural critics, including Ruskin and Palgrave, the talent of the female artist was not the issue at all. Rather their concern was whether the medium used, or the subject depicted, was appropriate for women. Texts detailing how women were essentially and biologically not creative appeared with increasing frequency around the turn of the century in America and Europe.<sup>13</sup> In his article “Men’s Responses to Feminism at the Turn of the Century,” the sociologist Michael S Kimmel explains why such literature appeared in the USA at that time. He details three types of male reaction to feminism in the USA circa 1900. One reaction was the ‘antifeminist backlash’, which “relied on natural law and religious theories to demand women’s return to the private sphere of hearth and home.”<sup>14</sup> These men did not want women challenging them in the public sphere, and published their often misogynistic, antifeminist texts in religious tracts, medical treatises, political pamphlets and men’s anti-suffrage literature. Secondly, a ‘masculinist’ response opposed the feminisation of American culture in the public sphere, and women’s control of the home, whilst encouraging the cult of male physical fitness, and separate all-male institutions. This latter aspect gave rise to such pro-male groups as the Boy Scouts of America, meant to “counter the forces of feminization and maintain traditional manhood.”<sup>15</sup> Men who subscribed to the third and far less widespread reaction, which Kimmel calls ‘protofeminist’, believed that “the feminist model of social reconstruction,”<sup>16</sup> including women’s suffrage and sexual autonomy, was a way forward for both men and women at that time.

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<sup>12</sup> Christine Battersby Gender and Genius: Towards a Feminist Aesthetics (London: The Women’s Press Ltd, 1989) 7-8.

<sup>13</sup> For an historical overview, see Battersby. After it was translated into English, Otto Weininger’s Sex and Character (1906) were widely read in England.

<sup>14</sup> Michale S Kimmel, “Men’s Responses to Feminism at the Turn of the Century,” Gender & Society 1:3 (September 1987) 262.

<sup>15</sup> Kimmel, 271.

<sup>16</sup> Kimmel, 262.

These male reactions were the result of a specific set of political, economic, and social circumstances present in the United States during the latter part of the nineteenth century, dovetailing neatly with Burns' observations on the critical reaction to Beaux's paintings. They were not unique to the USA though, for similarities arose in both English and French art criticism. Tamar Garb, for example, has borrowed the phrase 'le génie féminin,' from a French art critic to explain the set of personal and artistic qualities used to describe women painters and their work in reviews of the *Salons des femmes* in late nineteenth-century France. Critics, she noted, had two scales by which they judged the femininity of a women's paintings, the woman's personal beauty, and the subject matter and style of her work. In a comment which echoes Burns's comments on American women's experience, Garb states, "While works by male artists were not generally understood as symptomatic of their author's masculinity [...], those by women could not escape the determining origin of their producer's femininity."<sup>17</sup>

One style of French art criticism approached Kimmel's 'protofeminist' label. These critics agreed that women's art was different but equal to men's. However, whether they wrote for the mainstream or the radical press,

supporters of the woman artist, no less than anyone else, regularly couched their appraisals of the shows in the essentialist language of the dominant discourse. Only very rarely, and most often in the more radical sectors of the feminist press, did a critic use the shows as the focus for a call for a wholesale revision of the social order.<sup>18</sup>

There was no escaping it: a woman painter in the nineteenth century was largely imprisoned by her femininity, and more often than not, judged by her conformity to expected tropes of that femininity. In her analysis of the discourse of femininity in French art criticism, Anne Higonnet has determined that stylistically, colour was a particularly feminine trait, "deemed treacherous or unstable."<sup>19</sup> It figures prominently in discussions of women's painting in England as well, where it was, at times, the only derogatory point made in what may be construed as positive reinforcement

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<sup>17</sup> Tamar Garb, *Sisters of the Brush. Women's Artistic Culture in Late Nineteenth-Century Paris* (Yale University Press, 2001) 106.

<sup>18</sup> Garb, 107.

<sup>19</sup> Anne Higonnet, "Writing the Gender of the Image: Art Criticism in Late Nineteenth-Century France" *Genders* 6 (Fall 1989) 62.

for their efforts. In his review of the 1866 Winter Exhibition of the Royal Academy, Philip Gilbert Hamerton opined almost flatteringly on the technique of a woman's work:

There is much good landscape quality in the work of another lady, Mrs Follingsby; her Bavarian views show great intelligence of distance and mass, two very strong points in landscape; her management of gradations is judicious, and her oppositions well arranged; but her colour inclines too visibly to grey.<sup>20</sup>

Hamerton focuses on technical aspects, questioning only the artist's use of colour. In 1878, we find the following comments about the internationally acclaimed painter Clara Montalba's work, again with flattering comments and only a hint of criticism:

Among Miss Clara Montalba's drawings the most beautiful, as well as the largest, is her Venetian view before sunrise in summer, entitled 'the Molo, Venice,' of which we give slight thumb-nail sketch by the artist. For exquisite truth, learning, and charm of manner and colour, this picture is unsurpassed among her works, though it has less of that premeditated effectiveness of which she is fond.<sup>21</sup>

By 1893, women painters were so numerous that The Artist ran an editorial in the form of an open letter to a 'Miss Tayken N. Deavour,' complaining about the female painter's ubiquity, and her misuse of feminine wiles and social connections to assure that her paintings were hung in the choicest positions at the Royal Academy, effectively squeezing out the men. Noting that many women artists had begun producing decorative art, but had switched to fine art, the writer advised them to return to their original endeavour, preferably in the Colonies:

Try Central Africa! [...] Of the sun flower as you paint it they would probably make a fetish. Do go ! [...] Dusky chiefs simply long for lady artists. Wigwams, devoid of dadoes - think of that! [...] And if it sends you there in dozens, hundreds - nay, thousands - this will have not been written in vain. Africa will be regenerated and London --.<sup>22</sup>

Here the critic is reacting to the actions of the woman painters as well as their work. The use of misogyny, thinly disguised as humour, reveals a desire to banish artistic women from the London exhibiting scene altogether. Consummate with this attitude, Brake noticed a decrease in the

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<sup>20</sup> [Philip Gilbert Hamerton], "The Winter Exhibition," The Saturday Review 21 (24 February 1866) 232.

<sup>21</sup> "The Society of Painters in Watercolours," Magazine of Art 1 (1878) 83.

<sup>22</sup> The Artist (1 July 1893) 195-6.

number of articles addressed to, or about, women in The Artist during the late 1880s and 1890s.<sup>23</sup> Jane Beckett and Deborah Cherry also found a marked decrease in reviews of women painters in the first decade of the twentieth century, coinciding with Modernism's emphasis on masculinity:

In the London avant-garde women artists held contradictory positions. Their work was often marginalised by the alliance constructed by men between masculinity and modernity. Certainly histories of modernism have written out or dismissed the active participation of women in the modernist groupings of early twentieth century Britain.<sup>24</sup>

By the second decade of the twentieth century, Modernism was even more deeply entrenched. Lisa Tickner explains that Vorticism's desire to eradicate the decorative and the feminine in art led this group of English painters to "engage in a Nietzschean struggle against the debilitating influence of mass culture, mass politics and the 'feminisation' of social life. Women constituted 'a veritable plague [...] a terrifying stream of mediocrity' in an increasingly professional field."<sup>25</sup> To combat this, the Vorticists used visual signs such as geometric shapes, and 'rational and masculine' types of drawing such as blueprints or grids, together with a rhetoric brimming with terms to match:

'phallic', 'virile', 'savage', 'barbaric' were intended to secure the virility of the avant-garde against contamination from the 'feminine', arising from its skirmishes with the rhythmic, intuitive, expressive or (in its applied arts ventures) the decorative and domestic.<sup>26</sup>

Thus several feminist art historians have pointed out that gender concerns play a pivotal role in art criticism. During the nineteenth century, women's work that did not harmonize with a critic's concept of femininity often meant bad press; after 1900 criticism of women's work decreased to such an extent that women almost cease to be a part of the critical literature at all. In the process of writing art history, the importance of the art critic

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<sup>23</sup> Laurel Brake has suggested in her article that this type of comment may be indicative of a gay discourse in The Artist, introduced by Charles Kains-Jackson, who was a homosexual and edited the magazine from 1888-1893. Laurel Brake, " 'Gay Discourse' and *The Artist and Journal of Home Culture*," in L Brake, B Bell, D Finkelstein eds, Nineteenth-Century Media and the Construction of Identities (Hampshire & New York: Palgrave, 2000) 274.

<sup>24</sup> Jane Beckett and Deborah Cherry, "Art, Class and Gender, 1900-1910," FAN: Feminist Art News 2:5 (1987) 21.

<sup>25</sup> Lisa Tickner, Modern Life & Modern Subjects. British Art in the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2000) 203.

<sup>26</sup> Tickner, 204.



cannot be underestimated. Pamela Gerrish Nunn's research on women art critics of the nineteenth century has shown that the values and mores of Victorian society precluded women's having any critical faculty whatsoever, in effect, making them reliant on the male critical faculty. She has concluded that "the Victorian art critic's voice as a public noise can be generalised as a male voice."<sup>27</sup>

But was the 'generalised male voice' of art criticism equally gendered on the topic of women decorative artists? In an 1884 article in The Magazine of Art, 'Leader Scott' explained that the decorative arts were better suited to women as they required talent and aptitude, whereas fine art required talent, aptitude and in addition genius. Stating that women did not have genius, except in the home, Scott then proceeded to give examples of ways in which women could improve the home, from painting friezes in the dining room to illustrating story-books for children. The article ends with the following lines:

It would be well, too, if we recognised more distinctly the difference between genius and talent. Let genius alone stand as the teacher and apostle of art, and leave to <sup>28</sup>talent and dexterity the handicrafts. Our picture exhibitions would then be temples of art, and our homes the idealisation of utility.<sup>29</sup>

Thus women should leave the fine art world to men, and exercise their creativity at home via the decorative arts, to which their talents were best suited. Now, this would appear to be a male voice, yet Leader Scott was the pseudonym of art writer Lucy E Baxter (1837-1902).<sup>30</sup> Perhaps Baxter was simply following the editorial policy of the Magazine of Art, but what if she really believed that women did not possess genius? Certainly opinion was divided on this question at the time.<sup>31</sup> In the Introduction to a biography of her father, Baxter wrote that her pen-name 'Leader' was chosen because it was genderless. At the time it helped Lucy to get her work published, for the name gave her writing authority. However, a 'male' viewpoint written by a woman under a pseudonym

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<sup>27</sup> Nunn, 109.

<sup>28</sup> Leader Scott [Lucy E Baxter], The Life of William Barnes Poet and Philologist (London: Macmillan & Co, 1887).

<sup>29</sup> Leader Scott [Lucy E Baxter], "Women at Work: Their Functions in Art," The Magazine of Art 7 (1884) 99.

<sup>30</sup> LoveToKnow Free Online Encyclopedia: The 1911 Edition Encyclopedia <<http://87.1911encyclopedia.org/B/BA/BARNIM.htm>>

<sup>31</sup> Many women supported the ideas expressed by Baxter here; the anti-suffrage campaigners are an example of such support.

complicates the interpretation of such criticism; clearly it behoves the historian who enters the delicate terrain of gender politics to ascertain the gender of the author.

The authoritative statements of Leader Scott and Kains-Jackson are only two small voices in the vast periodical literature on the decorative arts. Many factors contribute to this plethora of opinions, such as the intended readership of the periodical; the difficulties critics had writing about collaborative work by combinations of women and men; and the continually changing social structures in which both the critics and the subjects of their criticisms lived and worked during the time covered by my study. With all these variables at play, it becomes clear that there can be no single generalised voice, male or otherwise.

Rather, the question this thesis addresses is, what was the range of reactions to women's efforts in the decorative arts? How did they evolve as the Victorian era moved into the Edwardian era? And most importantly, how did critics deal with the issue of gender as more women became involved in the decorative arts?

To date precious little research has been done on decorative arts critics or their practices during the Victorian and Edwardian periods. Issues of gender and the decorative arts have been addressed from a feminist perspective in A View From the Interior: Women & Design, edited by Judy Attfield and Pat Kirkham. These essays investigate women's involvement in design and production in the fields of fashion, textiles, pottery, architecture, furniture and interiors in the first half of the twentieth century, emphasising how social constructions of femininity affected their involvement.<sup>32</sup> One other study which relates gender and the decorative arts to criticism is Janice Helland's 1994 article "The Critics and the Arts and Crafts: The Instance of Margaret Macdonald and Charles Rennie Mackintosh."<sup>33</sup> Based on a close assessment of the criticism of Macdonald's and Mackintosh's work exhibited at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society in 1896, together with the later reaction of twentieth-century writers, Helland has determined that two Modernist myths were created in the reception of Mackintosh's work within the first five years after his death.

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<sup>32</sup> Judy Attfield & Pat Kirkham eds, A View From the Interior: Women & Design New ed. (London: The Women's Press Ltd, 1995).

<sup>33</sup> Janice Helland, "The Critics and the Arts and Crafts: The Instance of Margaret Macdonald and Charles Rennie Mackintosh," Art History 17:2 (June 1994) 209-227.

Firstly, “Mackintosh becomes the Romantic Hero rejected by an audience unable to understand his innovations; [and] the second [myth] [...] secures his place within modernism by establishing his difference from tradition.”<sup>34</sup> The creation of these myths, mainly the work of P. Morton Shand, was predicated on the erasure of the contributions of his wife, Margaret Macdonald, who collaborated with Mackintosh on many of his projects. Since decoration was feminine in the eyes of Modernist writers, it could have no part in the making of a male artist’s reputation, so Shand simply left it out of his history.<sup>35</sup>

These two studies deal with women and the decorative arts in the early twentieth century, but I would like to begin my investigation a few decades earlier, when women were just beginning to exhibit decorative arts as professional workers. If the foregoing opinions of Leader Scott and Kains-Jackson are any indication, women were not welcomed into the public world of fine art, but were encouraged to produce decorative arts, and to remain at home. The manner in which these two authors reinforced this nineteenth-century feminine stereotype, however, differs greatly. Rather than a ‘generalised male voice’, these texts indicate a potential for a multiplicity of voices on the topic of women and the decorative arts, and my project arises from precisely this possibility.

Decorative arts criticism, however, is a minefield of difficulties, both for the critic to write, and for the historian to interpret. For the critic, the collaborative nature of the decorative arts, involving two or more people, posed primarily problems of attribution. The division of labour between design and production was not always clear, and critics were not in the habit of writing about makers. Although painters and sculptors had used assistants to produce their designs for hundreds of years, these assistants were generally unacknowledged. When women entered the scene, however, the rules changed; the example of Harriet Hosmer, who was refused the credit for her sculptures because they had been produced by assistants, is a case in point: her male assistants suddenly became more important than the female artist. When women began designing and producing work in the decorative arts, critics were even more at a loss as to who to write about, and what to say.

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<sup>34</sup> Helland, 212.

<sup>35</sup> Helland, 213. See PM Shand, “Scenario for a Human Drama: the Glasgow Interlude,” *Architectural Review* (1935); and Shand’s entry for CR Mackintosh in the *Dictionary of National Biography 1922-30*.

Secondly, the decorative arts encompassed a huge variety of work which was daunting for the critic. While embroidery, furniture, metalwork, jewellery, and bookbinding may have been familiar to critics as everyday objects, they were not considered art objects, and many critics were not familiar with their materials and methods of production, and were thus unable to discuss the appropriateness of the decoration to the design, or the fitness of design to purpose. Many an art critic with no training wrote about paintings by describing the picture, but faced with decoration that was not figurative, what was the critic to say without the knowledge or vocabulary?

A third area with which critics had to grapple was the commercial aspect of the decorative arts. Clearly this was pertinent for objects with use value and market value, but it was not immediately apparent in the reviews. In their quest to write about the decorative arts as though they were fine arts, the pecuniary value of the objects was not discussed. The inclusion of comments on financial issues helps to document how criticism of the decorative arts evolved, for this aspect was not openly discussed until halfway through my study. And finally the critic had to tailor the review to the readership of the periodical, the editorial policy, and to keep to press deadlines.

With all these variables to consider, decorative arts criticism becomes as complicated to interpret as it was to write. Presented with a critic's opinion of an embroidered portiere, which names the male designer, but not the woman producer, how would I interpret this exclusion? Was this standard art critical practice? Or was it due to a lack of space? Did the periodical not cater to a female audience, making such information superfluous? Or was it the critic's desire to suppress the woman's participation in a particular craft? Perhaps the catalogue or the label did not give the information. Possibly the quality of work was so poor the critic did not want to embarrass the woman by printing her name in the paper. Suppose her name and her work were mentioned, did this automatically endorse her status as an artist? Or was she known to the critic personally? Was it a political manoeuvre, because she the wife of the President of the exhibiting society? Or was it simply because the quality of the work so impressed the critic?

Without a doubt, interpreting the type of comments about women's work is treacherous territory, which was further complicated by a lack of knowledge about the individual critics and editorial policies. Additionally, some artworks discussed are no longer extant, others are only

visible through line drawings or photographs. This has the potential for difficulty regarding the assessment of the quality of the design or production, however my concern is not to compare the text to the objects, but to compare the texts to each other, and to analyse the texts in light of current constructions of femininity. Obviously being able to see if an object is beautiful or not will lend credence to a critic's praise or criticism of it; however beauty is in the eye of the beholder and I make no claims at authority in such matters. However, where this becomes important is in discerning whether the critics' comments were motivated by issues of aesthetics, politics, or personal predilection. The possibilities for interpretation are endless, which is precisely what prompted this study.

This doctoral thesis is intended as a preliminary mapping of the range of critical reaction to the work of women practitioners in the decorative arts in the late Victorian and Edwardian periods, in order to gain an understanding of the range of voices which contributed to constructions of contemporary femininity. It investigates the reactions of critics, both named and anonymous, to the work of 730 women who contributed to four exhibitions of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society in London, specifically those of 1888, 1890, 1903 and 1916.

Evolving from the all-male Art Worker's Guild, the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society may seem an odd choice of exhibiting venue from which to discuss women's work. Founded in 1887, partly in reaction to the exhibiting policies of the Royal Academy,<sup>36</sup> the *raison d'être* of the ACES

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<sup>36</sup> Several members of the Art Workers' Guild, who were as disillusioned with the Guild's refusal to hold public exhibitions as they were with the Royal Academy's refusal to admit the decorative arts to its exhibitions, met on 2 October 1886 to draft a letter of invitation to artists and craftsmen requesting their support for a 'National Exhibition of the Arts.' The letter read as follows:

Sir, The proposals for a National Exhibition of the Arts lately put forward in the public press have raised the whole question of the adequacy of the present representation of Arts in exhibitions. The principle set forth in these proposals is That the juries for selecting and placing Works of Art must be elected from, and by the Artists of the Kingdom. The undersigned hold that this principle is sound and just, and that it is the basis on which a representative exhibition of the Arts should be conducted. Believing that this principle will, on fair consideration, meet with the agreement and cordial support of Artists generally, they beg to ask you if you will form one of a Provisional Committee to consider the best means of carrying it into effect.

We are, Sirs,

Your obedient Servants

(National Exhibition of the Arts. Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Archives. AAD1/1-1980.)

By 12 November, 399 artists had signed the letter of invitation, 27 of whom were women: Dora Abbot, Emily J. (Harding) Adnresd, Constance L. Anson, Janet Archer, Elizabeth A. Armstrong, Frances Bannerman, Edith Berkley, Mary L. Breakell, Alma Broadbridge, Emma Cooper, Marion Ferguson, Alice Fisher, Florence Graham, Jane A. Griffin, Alma Hodge, Edith Hume, Eva E. Hunt, Helen Knapping, Ida Lovering, Mary L. Lucas, Alice Miller, Bertha Newcombe, Marianne Stokes, L. May Watson, Margaret Wildon, Alice Woodward, Louisa Wren. Of these women, only Alice Fisher would exhibit at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society.

was to elevate the status of the decorative arts and their practitioners. It also endeavoured to educate the British public as to the aesthetic and moral benefits of good design by holding regular public exhibitions in fine art galleries. My main reason for choosing the ACES was also the most important plank in the Society's platform: its insistence on identifying each individual involved in the design and production of a work, both in the exhibition and in the catalogue. Its commitment to this ideal is clear from their earliest meetings:

The object in view is to show as far as possible the artistic and inventive powers of the designers and makers of the various works that may be exhibited, and to illustrate the relation of the Arts in application to different materials and uses, which is not attempted in any existing Exhibition. [...] All work will be exhibited under the name of the designer and responsible executant. The name of an employer or firm of employers may be given in addition.<sup>37</sup>

Accordingly, the ACES had the potential to be helpful to women designers and makers, for those women who exhibited would be clearly identified in the catalogues, which could provide a valuable and tangible record of women's work at these exhibitions: they cite the name of the designer, executant, and exhibitor, as well as the title, medium, and from 1903, price of the work. While the number of women who exhibited with ACES was substantial, far greater numbers of women worked in all facets of the decorative arts in the UK at the time. However, the ACES catalogues provide an enormous amount of raw data about women decorative artists from which further analysis may be made, and more importantly, they provide a base from which to trace comments about women in reviews. In addition to their value to the decorative arts historian, the catalogues were also available to critics, thus they had the means to correctly identify the artists whose works they reviewed, should they choose to do so.

Realising that it would be impossible to draw detailed conclusions about hundreds of women, I decided to include summaries of the general comments made about women in each of the exhibitions. These summaries are then supplemented by close investigations of the reception of one or two women in each show. In most cases I simply selected the woman who received the most reviews in a particular year as the case study. The one exception to this method occurred in the 1903 exhibition, where there was a marked increase in the number of women designing

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<sup>37</sup> The Combined Arts (Proof under Revision) [Spring 1887] Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Early Documents AAD 1/14-1980 The Archive Of Art And Design, London, England.

jewellery. Although Phoebe Traquair received the most reviews overall in 1903, I chose Georgina Gaskin for the case study, because she had received the most reviews for her jewellery. This would allow me to explore critical reaction to women jewellers at a time when they were just entering the profession, which has interesting ramifications from a gender perspective.

My use of case studies may appear to be committing a feminist faux-pas by highlighting women who have already had their fifteen minutes of fame. However, a quick glance at the list of names will reveal that most of them have received very little scholarship: Kate Faulkner, May Morris, Una Taylor, Georgina Gaskin, Grace Christie and Phoebe Stabler. Of these women, only May Morris could be said to have an international reputation, and that as a writer rather than an artist. The others may be known to specialists in the field, but they have not been honoured with artistic biographies or critical reception studies.<sup>38</sup> Since I began this project, the inclusion of one of Kate Faulkner's gessoed pianos, now owned by Andrew Lloyd Webber, in an exhibition at the Royal Academy, has afforded her a new degree of public notoriety.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, the extensive archival research I have done in order to assemble artistic biographies and to better interpret the critical reception of these women was intended to restore their place in the history of the decorative arts. It is hoped that this contribution, and the references to a host of other practitioners in the summaries of critical reaction to women, will encourage further research into the careers of these fascinating but long-neglected women.

Why women artists have disappeared from written histories of art is an issue which has received particular attention during the past few decades by feminist and critical art historians in view of its connection with how such histories are configured. Criticism, by its very nature, is rarely complimentary, and as will become clear in the ensuing chapters, the amount of critical attention received was not always indicative of approbation. The most powerful example of this is

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<sup>38</sup> Eliminating Phoebe Traquair as a case study was facilitated by the fact that she has been the subject of much recent scholarship. See Elizabeth Cumming, Phoebe Anna Traquair 1852-1936 and Her Contribution to Arts and Crafts in Edinburgh, PhD dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 1987; E Cumming, Phoebe Anna Traquair 1852-1936, (Scottish National Portrait Gallery, 1993); Nicola Gordon Bowe and E Cumming, The Arts and Crafts Movements in Dublin & Edinburgh 1885-1925 ( Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1998); E Cumming, "Patterns of Life: The Art and Design of Phoebe Anna Traquair and Mary Seton Watts," in Bridget Elliott and Janice Helland eds, Women Artists and the Decorative Arts 1880-1935 (Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2002), 15-33.

Una Taylor's stitching of the Irish National Banner, an object (unfortunately unlocated, if it still exists) which placed its makers squarely in the spotlight, with strikingly different responses. Other less obvious examples also exist. The Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society was well aware of the necessity of promoting public knowledge of their aims via the periodical press, but by dealing with such a wide variety of publications, they could not control press responses, and thus could not guarantee as favorable a reaction as they might have liked. Moreover, ample evidence exists to show that members of the ACES were not uniformly supportive of women's efforts as designers and makers, as some of the most stinging critiques were written by members of the Society. While it is not the purpose of this project to investigate the position of women within the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, this dissertation should provide scholars with useful material to undertake such a study. Certainly, I did not choose this exhibiting society because of their overt support of women, for their efforts vis-à-vis women were completely different from those of the Central Union of Decorative Arts in France, for example, which in the 1890s actively "campaign[ed] for the reentry of women into the leadership of luxury craft production and consumption."<sup>40</sup> The Provisional Committee formed in 1886 to discuss what would become the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society consisted of 100 elected individuals, twenty from each of the disciplines of Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, Engraving and the Arts of Design: among them was only one woman, the sculptor Alice Chaplin.<sup>41</sup> The succeeding three decades do not reveal any overt support of women practitioners or designers on the part of the ACES, beyond furnishing a professional exhibition venue and the opportunity to establish professional credentials.

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<sup>39</sup> Pre-Raphaelite and Other Masters. The Andrew Lloyd Webber Collection Royal Academy, London, 20 September-12 December 2003.

<sup>40</sup> Debora L Silverman, Art Nouveau in Fin-de-Siècle France Politics, Psychology, and Style (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1989) 186.

<sup>41</sup> Alice Mary Chaplin trained as a sculptor, branching out to pottery and metalwork after 1900. She exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery and the Royal Academy. In February 1889 she received a commission from Queen Victoria to produce a sculpture group of two Spanish bullocks in the park at Osborne. "Sculpture," The Artist 14:159 (February 1893) 57. Chaplin exhibited work at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society in 1889, 1893, 1903, 1910 and 1912. Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogues of Exhibitions, 1888-1916. Archive of Art and Design, London.



## Literature Review

A wide range of archival, primary and secondary sources was used for this thesis. Areas of background reading included; the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, women in the Arts & Crafts Movement, art criticism and art critics, and the history of the periodical press. Below I give a brief background to each area, followed by a literature review. The section on the periodical press should prove useful to scholars who share my conviction that the importance of periodicals and newspapers as source material necessitates an understanding of their purpose, motives and contributors.

### *1) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society*

As noted above, the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society was formed by several of the leading members of what is now known as the Arts and Crafts Movement. They mounted large exhibitions in London to increase public awareness of both the importance of high quality design, and of the individuals who designed and produced the work. Notwithstanding its importance, there has been little scholarship which dwells specifically on the Society's organisation and activities.

Gillian Naylor's 1971 study The Arts and Crafts Movement: Sources, Ideals and Influence on Design Theory, although still a frequently cited work on the topic, contains only a few paragraphs outlining the Society's antecedents in the Royal Society of Arts and international trade exhibitions,<sup>42</sup> how the Society was named, who was involved, and the misgivings voiced by William Morris about the wisdom of naming all practitioners. This is followed by a brief mention that the Society held exhibitions, published catalogues and essays, and held lectures by which to publicise their aims.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Paul Greenhalgh claims that international exhibitions were one of the first and most effective cultural arenas in which women expressed their misgivings with established patriarchy, and goes on to say that "women could exert influence [because] they comprised fifty percent of the audience, [...] [t]heir inevitable inclusion as consumers meant they had a certain power of veto which afforded them consideration [...] [and] because of their claims to encyclopædic coverage of world culture." Ephemeral Vistas: Expositions Universelles, Great Exhibitions and World's Fairs 1851-1939 (Manchester University Press, 1988) 174.

<sup>43</sup> Gillian Naylor, The Arts & Crafts Movement. A Study of its Sources, Ideals and Influence on Design Theory 2nd ed (London: Trefoil Publications, 1990) 122-124.

More insight into the objectives of the ACES as well as the dynamics of its leadership are found in Peter Stansky's chapter on the background to the rivalries between the Royal Academy and various artists and designers over exhibiting practices and membership rules.<sup>44</sup>

Primary sources for the ACES are mainly found in articles and reviews of its exhibitions in the periodical press. Autobiographies and biographies are also helpful in this regard, particularly those of the presidents, Walter Crane and William Morris.<sup>45</sup> The Society also published the lectures given at their exhibitions in book form.<sup>46</sup> These essays provide an insight into the ethos of various practitioners of the decorative arts. T.J. Cobden-Sanderson explained the purpose of the lectures in his history of the Society: "(1) To set out the aims of the Society; and (2) by demonstration & otherwise, to direct attention to the processes employed in the arts and crafts, and so to lay a foundation for a just appreciation, both of the processes themselves, and of their importance as methods of expression in design."<sup>47</sup>

The dearth of secondary sources on the ACES necessitated my reliance on archival material. I have made extensive use of the archives of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society in particular, which are held at the Archive of Art and Design in London, England. Dating from 1886 right up to its absorption by the Design & Industries Association in 1922, this archive has an extensive chronological index to the exhibition catalogues, minute books, correspondence, sales figures, photographs and ephemera relating to the society and its exhibitions. Further information was found in the Morris & Co Papers at the National Art Library, Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co Minutes at the Hammersmith & Fulham City Archives, London, and at the William Morris Gallery, London.

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<sup>44</sup> Peter Stansky, Redesigning the World: William Morris, the 1880s, and the Arts and Crafts (Princeton University Press, 1985).

<sup>45</sup> See Walter Crane, An Artist's Reminiscences (London: Methuen & Co, 1907); Introduction in May Morris, ed. Collected Works of William Morris 24 v. (New York: Russell & Russell, 1966); William Rothenstein, Men and Memories. Recollections of William Rothenstein, 1900-1922 (London: Faber & Faber Ltd., 1932).; GB-J, [Georgiana Burne-Jones], Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones 2 vols. (London: Macmillan & Co, 1909).

<sup>46</sup> Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society. Art and Life, and the Building and Decoration of Cities: A Series of Lectures by Members of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, Delivered at the Fifth Exhibition of the Society in 1896 (London: Rivington, Percival, & Co., 1897).

<sup>47</sup> T.J. Cobden-Sanderson, The Arts and Crafts Movement (Hammersmith Publishing Society, 1905) 6-7.

## 2) *Women and The Decorative Arts*

Secondary literature on the Arts & Crafts Movement as a whole reveals some information about women practitioners of the decorative arts, although in general, the current state of the literature in no way reveals the magnitude and scope of women's engagement with the principles and practices of the Movement. Naylor's important study, The Arts & Crafts Movement. A Study of its Sources, Ideals and Influence on Design Theory, (1971, rev 1990) echoes one of the earliest chronicles of the movement, written in 1905 by TJ Cobden-Sanderson, which includes no information about women at all.<sup>48</sup>

In 1979, Anthea Callen sought to rectify this situation with her book, Angel in the Studio: Women in the Arts & Crafts Movement. This meticulously researched and copiously illustrated book describes in great detail the extent to which women of all social classes were involved in the Arts & Crafts. It is written from a Marxist feminist and social history perspective, seeking at once to document women's involvement in both England and America, at the professional and the amateur level. The book begins with chapters on class division among the women in the Arts & Crafts Movement, and design education available to women in the UK and the USA. Following are six chapters on various crafts, including brief histories of women's work in them. Callen gives solid backgrounds to women's education and participation in Ceramics, Embroidery and Needlework, Lacemaking; Jewellery and Metalwork; Woodcarving, Furniture and Interior Design; and Hand-printing, Book-binding and Illustration. In contrast to Cumming and Kaplan's later assessment, it becomes clear that for the majority of women, the Arts & Crafts movement was a route to gainful employment more than anything else. Overall there is a vast amount of information about women's specific conditions of production. In fact Callen's book complements Naylor's quite nicely by showcasing the participation of women in the Arts and Crafts Movement. The conclusion, entitled 'Feminism, Art and Political Conflict', links the women's suffrage movement to both socialism and the decorative arts. The last few sentences of her book are worth quoting:

Despite the enormous extent of women's involvement, the movement remained traditionally structured, and led mostly by men; but it did give many women the

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<sup>48</sup> Cobden-Sanderson, T.J., 1905.

vital economic independence which freed them to struggle towards a new, self-defined identity both socially and politically. However, the hostility between broad-based feminism and growing socialism had by the end of the nineteenth century created a split in radical thinking, which was manifest in the often pro-socialist, patriarchal Arts and Crafts movement, and which has remained sadly unresolved up to the present day.<sup>49</sup>

She follows the text with Biographical Notes on Selected Craftswomen, which contains brief biographical details on eighty-one women, an excellent starting point for new research on these women. Callen's study remains the font of wisdom in this area, and every succeeding book that discusses women in the Arts & Crafts movement mentions a debt to it.

In many respects, however, the promise of Callen's book has not been furthered. Despite the wealth of material made available by Callen's book, in 1984 Alan Crawford commented that "it is generally true that women in the Arts and Crafts have a submerged presence. They figure either as executants of men's designs, or, if as craftworkers in their own right, do not occupy the centre of the stage."<sup>50</sup> Peter Stansky's book on the movement in general, Redesigning the World (1985), focuses mainly on William Morris, and does not include women's contributions.

Women do not fare much better in larger studies. Elizabeth Cumming and Wendy Kaplan's The Arts & Crafts Movement takes a very broad view of what comprises this movement, dividing the book between the English Arts and Crafts Movement, and the American and Continental versions of it. They include the various craft revivals that took place during the nineteenth century as well, citing as an example the Golspie Society in northern Scotland, begun by Harriet, Duchess of Sutherland in 1849 - long before the Arts & Crafts Movement began. A few sentences about the Home Arts and Industries Association do not mention the woman who began that society in 1884, Eglantyne L. Jebb, nor the thousands of women who were involved in it across the UK.<sup>51</sup> Despite world-wide coverage only thirty women are named in the Index. In the Introduction their discussion of women's involvement in the Movement is limited to a few

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<sup>49</sup> Anthea Callen, Women Artists of the Arts and Crafts Movement, 1870-1914 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1979) 221.

<sup>50</sup> Alan Crawford, "The Arts and Crafts Movement, A Sketch," in A. Crawford ed, By Hammer and Hand: The Arts and Crafts Movement in Birmingham (Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1984) 17.

<sup>51</sup> Elizabeth Cumming & Wendy Kaplan, The Arts and Crafts Movement (London: Thames & Hudson, 1991) 19-20.

sentences, intimating that for women, the Arts & Crafts was an amateur or a philanthropic endeavour:

But for Ashbee and indeed the majority of professional designers [...] the ideal of a brotherhood of craftsmen denied the inclusion of women as a full members. Women who were art school-trained were confined to the pursuit of craft as a pastime or as philanthropy, or to crafts considered appropriate to their sex - textiles and pottery decoration. Until the 1890s entry to the design profession was restricted to those women, such as May Morris (1862-1938) or Kate Faulkner (1841-1898), who were related by birth or marriage to men in the profession.<sup>52</sup>

Jan Marsh's article "The Female Side of the Firm" is a short overview of the main female figures in the Arts & Crafts Movement.<sup>53</sup> Of the Morris circle, Marsh briefly mentions Jane Morris, her sister Elizabeth Burden, and May Morris for their involvement in the embroidery section of Morris & Co, as well as Kate and her sister Lucy Faulkner, who painted tiles. Those women who ran their own private presses or stained glass studios, or taught at the various Arts & Crafts schools around the country are mentioned for their contribution. There is no new information here; Marsh has obviously used secondary sources, none of which are noted in the article.

Two essays contained in A View from the Interior: Women and Design, which provide opposing views of the benefit of the Arts and Crafts Movement for women, are of particular interest.<sup>54</sup> Anthea Callen's essay, "Sexual Division of Labour in the Arts & Crafts Movement" takes the view that crafts practiced by women in the Movement merely "reinforced dominant Victorian patriarchal ideology"<sup>55</sup> by dividing the crafts into feminine and masculine, restricting educational opportunities, and offering low salaries. Lynne Walker's essay, "The Arts and Crafts Alternative," presents a far more optimistic view of the Movement's legacy to women, demonstrating that the 'holistic' view of the ACES, combining designer and maker in the same person, offered women a

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<sup>52</sup> Cumming & Kaplan, 28. These few statements are misleading and reveal that Cumming and Kaplan have not done any new research for their book: the definition of women as only amateur or philanthropist is incorrect and outdated (from Callen) and does not reflect women who ran their own design and decorating businesses or who worked in media other than textiles and pottery long before 1890.

<sup>53</sup> Jan Marsh, "The Female Side of the Firm," Crafts 140 (May/June 1996) 43-44.

<sup>54</sup> Judy Attfield and Pat Kirkham, eds, A View From the Interior: Women & Design New ed. (London: The Women's Press Ltd., 1995).

<sup>55</sup> Anthea Callen, "Sexual Division of Labour in the Arts and Crafts Movement," in Attfield and Kirkham, 151.

viable alternative to the trade practices which Callen identifies, and gives as proof the increasing number of women designers and women participants in three ACES exhibitions.<sup>56</sup>

A rare example of a book-length study of women designers of this era is Janice Helland's The Studios of Frances and Margaret Macdonald.<sup>57</sup> As the female half of the 'Glasgow Four', Frances and Margaret Macdonald had been written out of design history by previously published secondary material. By using a combination of written and visual primary sources, Helland's book reconstructs their story, and in the process presents a useful methodology for reassessing women's contributions in the design world.

Regional studies of the Arts & Crafts Movement provide an important counterpoint to the London experience. Annie Brunton's indepth study of the Arts and Crafts in the Lake District grew out of her PhD research on Annie Garnett.<sup>58</sup> The book deals with groups such as the firm of Simpson Woodcarvers & Furniture Makers, the Langdale Linen Industry, the Keswick School of Industrial Arts and Annie Garnett's The Spinnery at Bowness. Attention is spread evenly between male and female practitioners. Mary Greensted's book The Arts and Crafts Movement in the Cotswolds provides a similar broad view of many practitioners. Chapters are devoted to the furniture of Ernest Gimson and the Barnsleys, CR Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft at Chipping Campden, and the diverse accomplishments of Alfred and Louise Powell.<sup>59</sup>

Beyond England's borders,<sup>60</sup> the arts and crafts movement took paths particular to each country. Paul Larmour's The Arts & Crafts Movement in Ireland (1992) reveals important new

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<sup>56</sup> Lynne Walker, "The Arts and Crafts Alternative," in Attfield and Kirkham, 165-173.

<sup>57</sup> Janice Helland, The Studios of Frances and Margaret Macdonald (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1996).

<sup>58</sup> Brunton, Jennie, The Arts & Crafts Movement in the Lake District: A Social History (Lancaster: Centre for North-West Regional Studies, University of Lancaster, 2001).

<sup>59</sup> Mary Greensted, The Arts and Crafts Movement in the Cotswolds (Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd, 1993).

<sup>60</sup> Further afield, Ann Calhoun's recent study of the Arts and Crafts in New Zealand provides new information about the practitioners and institutions for the 'artcrafts', as they came to be called there. She includes a section on art education for women as well as discussing how the movement differed from that in London for all involved. Ann Calhoun, The Arts & Crafts Movement in New Zealand 1870-1940. Women Make Their Mark (Auckland University Press, 2000). The first book on Australian women artists, painstakingly researched, covers both fine and decorative arts, with particular emphasis on print-making, and demonstrates how the advances achieved by female emancipation affected women's art during the first four decades of the twentieth century. Many Australian women studied the decorative arts in London, afterwards

contextual information about Irish arts and crafts. The Arts & Crafts Movements in Dublin and Edinburgh (1998), written to accompany exhibitions in these cities, elucidates the influence the two cities had on each other. Both books provide some information on Irish and Scottish women, many of whom exhibited in London.

Other studies which include information on women designers are generally devoted to particular techniques, and are thus more object-oriented. Marianne Tidcombe's study of women bookbinders emphasises women's attempts to learn their trade, and their subsequent conditions of production.<sup>61</sup> This well-researched book provides a great deal of information about women involved in the artistic aspect of bookbinding, which Tidcombe gleaned from exhibition catalogues. Regarding the more technical details Tidcombe refers to contemporary periodicals, such as The Bookbinder, and The British Bookmaker, and technical manuals.<sup>62</sup> However, Tidcombe does her subject a disservice by frequently belittling the women's attempts. For example, in her discussion of the Royal School of Art Needlework's painted vellum bindings, Tidcombe first details the vast amount of work shown at many exhibitions by students of the RSAN such as the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, Karslake's (London) in 1897; or the Goupil Gallery in 1898, before adding: "It must not be assumed, however, that all or even, necessarily, the best examples of painted vellum bindings were by members of the Royal School."<sup>63</sup> It struck me as defeating the purpose of writing a book about women's accomplishments, only to constantly point out every failing, particularly in an area as difficult to enter professionally as bookbinding.<sup>64</sup>

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enjoying a more enthusiastic response to their artwork than those women who remained at home in Australia. Helen Topliss, Modernism and Feminism. Australian Women Artists 1900-1940 ([Sydney]: Craftsman House, 1996).

<sup>61</sup> Marianne Tidcombe, Women Bookbinders 1880 - 1920 (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press & London: The British Library, 1996).

<sup>62</sup> She cites, among others: Joseph Cundall, On Bookbindings, Ancient and Modern (London, 1881); Sarah T. Prideaux, A Historical Sketch of Bookbinding (London 1893); Douglas Cockerell, Bookbinding and the Care of Books (London, 1901, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. 1978).

<sup>63</sup> Tidcombe, 84.

<sup>64</sup> Although women were employed in the bookbinding trade throughout the nineteenth century, the type of work they did was generally limited to the lighter tasks, such as sewing. When bookbinding became one of the popular Arts & Crafts in the 1890s, women began designing, producing and exhibiting bound books, despite criticisms of their abilities. See CR Ashbee Craftmanship in Competitive Industry (London, 1908), 37-8, and The Lady Bookbinder, The British Bookmaker 7 (1892/3) 7.

Charlotte Gere and Geoffrey C. Munn's Pre-Raphaelite to Arts and Crafts Jewellery is a beautifully illustrated book which focuses on the social history of the pieces produced. Despite several factual errors, the book provides much information on the various workshops and partnerships that developed among jewellers, in Britain, Europe and America.<sup>65</sup> Gere has also written on European and American jewellery, which gives some useful biographical information about Birmingham jewellers in particular.<sup>66</sup>

In the area of ceramics, I consulted the work of Moira Vincentelli. Women and Ceramics: Gendered Vessels is organised thematically, and deals with women ceramicists from all over the world. For my purposes, particularly helpful were her discussion of Phoebe Stabler's small modelled ceramic figurines in this book and the reception of Stabler's figurines in her essay "Potters of the 1920s: Contemporary Criticism."<sup>67</sup>

The Myers' book William Morris Tiles again centers on the technical aspects of production, and is itself well produced.<sup>68</sup> Among the copious coloured illustrations are those tiles painted by Kate Faulkner and her sister Lucy Faulkner Orrinsmith. Both women painted tiles for Morris & Co. when the Faulkners lived in Queen Square, where Morris & Co was located.

Better overall sources of information on women in the Arts & Crafts Movement are two books on textiles by Linda Parry.<sup>69</sup> In particular, Textiles of the Arts and Crafts Movement has a section at the back containing brief biographies of individuals and companies that Parry deems to be the important players in the area of textiles. Much of this information is gleaned from the catalogues of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society and from the collections of the Victoria & Albert Museum.

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<sup>65</sup> Charlotte Gere & Geoffrey C. Munn, Pre-Raphaelite to Arts and Crafts Jewellery (Woodbridge: Antique Collectors' Club, 1996). For example, Gere & Munn confuse the dates of several Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society shows, claiming the first was in 1886 (p. 17), and that there was one in 1894, which should read 1893.

<sup>66</sup> Charlotte Gere, American and European Jewelry 1830-1914 (New York: Crown Publications Inc, 1975).

<sup>67</sup> Moira Vincentelli, Women and Ceramics: Gendered Vessels (Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 2000); and "Potters of the 1920s: Contemporary Criticism," in Gillian Elinor et al, eds, Women and Craft (London: Virago Press Ltd, 1987) 74-83.

<sup>68</sup> Richard & Hilary Myers, William Morris Tiles. The Tile Designs of Morris and his Fellow-Workers (Shepton Beauchamp, Somerset: Richard Dennis, 1996).

<sup>69</sup> Linda Parry, Textiles of the Arts and Crafts Movement (London: Thames and Hudson, 1997 (1988)); William Morris Textiles (New York: Viking Press, 1982).



Exhibition catalogues of women in the Arts & Crafts are few, and have necessarily been limited to those women who produced a large volume of work, which was both well-documented at the time, and still extant, either in public or private collections. These are not easy criteria to fulfill, particularly in the decorative arts. Retrospective exhibitions which included biographical essays in the catalogue were held for May Morris (William Morris Gallery, 1986), and Ellen Mary Rope, (Joanne Barnes Gallery, London, c1989). The catalogue Arthur & Georgie Gaskin, compiled for an exhibition at the Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery in 1981, contained several illuminating essays about the couple's life and work. Unfortunately it contained some factual errors, particularly pertaining to Georgina Gaskin's birth and early life, which I have discussed in Chapter 4. Regarding both Georgie and Arthur Gaskin, Joseph E. Southall's "Foreword" in the catalogue Memorial Exhibition Arthur Joseph Gaskin, ARE (1862-1928) (City of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, 1929) was helpful. Catalogues were not always printed for smaller shows, but fortunately, those from several group shows at the Baillie Gallery, London have survived. Jessie Bayes, who exhibited at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society from 1899,<sup>70</sup> participated in many group exhibitions there from 1906 onwards, including a solo show, Paintings & Decorations by Jessie Bayes, in 1913.

Aside from information found in the ACES catalogues, exhibition reviews and articles in periodicals are the next best information source about women in the Arts and Crafts movement. Throughout the nineteenth century, many articles were written about women and art and contain information about individual women, techniques, and other exhibitions where women showed work.

Archival sources which mentioned the women practitioners in my case studies were generally those of the men who were associated with them, either personally or professionally. Many were 'major figures' in the Arts and Crafts Movement, and their comments provided much information for this study. Archives consulted for information on Kate Faulkner: the Ford Madox Brown Papers, Bills and Letters to AA Ionides, Letters to Constantine Ionides, at the National Art Library, London; the Hipkins Papers, British Library; Philip Webb's letters to Sydney Carlyle

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<sup>70</sup> Catalogues of Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, passim.

Cockerell, George P Boyce, Mrs Wickham Flower, and William Morris, in both the British Library and the National Art Library; and The Broadwood Archive, Surrey History Centre. Information on both Kate Faulkner and May Morris was found in the many volumes of the Morris Papers and especially the William Morris Diary 1881, both in the British Library; the Morris & Co. Papers at the National Art Library, with further letters from May Morris in the Andreas Scheu Archive, Amsterdam. Regarding Una Taylor, I checked the Autobiography of Sir Henry Taylor, British Library. Information about Georgina and Arthur Gaskin was found in the Cockerell Papers, British Library, and in clippings books in the Local History section of the Birmingham Public Library.

### 3) *The Periodical Press*

The periodical press provides a vast amount of information about how gender norms were fabricated, naturalized and maintained during the period under study. Over 25,000 journals, magazines, and newspapers were published during the Victorian era; a figure which dropped slightly after 1900, due to the subsequent decline in quality and quantity of the British periodical.<sup>71</sup> The study of Victorian periodicals is a relatively new area of scholarly attention and is mainly the realm of English, journalism, communications, media and cultural studies. Equal attention has not yet been accorded to the subsequent Edwardian era. A new academic discipline requires a Society to ratify it, and the creation of the American-based Research Society for Victorian Periodicals (RSVP) in 1968 encouraged interdisciplinary and international scholarship on the Victorian periodical press. According to their web site,

The Society hopes through scholarship to increase awareness of Victorian journals, proprietors, editors, illustrators, publishers and authors and the role of the press in shaping Victorians' beliefs and debates about their society, culture, and politics.<sup>72</sup>

This new area of study also spawned several periodicals in which to publish the latest scholarship.

These are: Victorian Periodicals Newsletter (1968-1970), continued as RSVP from 1970; Victorian Periodicals Review (1970-present); Journal of Newspaper and Periodical History (1984-1992)

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<sup>71</sup> Walter Houghton, "Periodical Literature and the Articulate Classes," in The Victorian Periodical Press: Samplings & Soundings (Leicester UP & University of Toronto Press, 1982) 3. Houghton notes that he took this information from Michael Wolff, John S North, and Dorothy Deering, eds The Waterloo Directory of Victorian Periodicals, 1824-1900, Phase I (Waterloo, 1976).

<sup>72</sup> Research Society for Victorian Periodicals Homepage. <<http://aztec.asu.edu/rsvp/>>.

continued as Studies in Newspaper and Periodical History (1992-1998), with a third name change to Media History, from 1998.<sup>73</sup> Further information can be found in Victorian Studies (1957-present). The ensuing interest in Victorian periodicals as sources of historical information has also resulted in several bibliographical finding aids, books of collected essays, and periodical articles.<sup>74</sup>

The publication of the Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals has allowed scholars access to information contained in these periodicals far more easily.<sup>75</sup> One particular advantage of the Index is the attribution of anonymous journal articles, however, this not helpful in my research, since the Wellesely does not index art, trade or women's magazines or newspapers, where most of the reviews of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society appeared.

Several other indexes included art, either solely or as one component of their contents. The American Poole's Index to Periodical Literature, 1802-1881, plus supplements to 1906, includes several English art and literary magazines.<sup>76</sup> A great boon for scholars in America, Poole's Index is not so helpful for women's magazines, however; Doughan notes that it includes Victoria Magazine,<sup>77</sup> but when I checked the Fifth Supplement, (1 January 1902 - 1 January 1907), there were no women's magazines listed at all.

Some art, architecture and women's magazines are included in the major North American indexes, the Art Index, and the Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals. The Nineteenth-Century

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<sup>73</sup> Laurel Brake, Bill Bell & David Finkelstein, eds Nineteenth-Century Media and the Construction of Identities (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2000) 2.

<sup>74</sup> In Volume 2 of Victorian Periodicals: A Guide to Research (1989), the editors recommend four main finding aids for the study of Victorian periodicals. These include the Waterloo Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals, England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, 1800-1900 (1989), the Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals (1966-1989), Victorian Periodicals: A Guide to Research, ed Vann/VanArsdel, (1978) and Alvin Sullivan, ed. British Literary Magazines: The Victorian and Edwardian Age, 1837-1913 (1984; also known as BLM3). J Don Vann & Rosemary T VanArsdel, eds, Victorian Periodicals. A Guide to Research Vol 2 (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1989) 15.

<sup>75</sup> Walter E. Houghton ed, The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals, 1824-1900 (Toronto : University of Toronto Press & [London] : Routledge & K. Paul, 1966-1989).

<sup>76</sup> These are the Art Journal, the Magazine of Art, the Fine Arts Quarterly Review, the Academy, The Studio, and the Portfolio, the Athenaeum, Fraser's Magazine, the Spectator, and the Saturday Review. Mary Poole and William I Fletcher, eds, Poole's Index to Periodical Literature (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co Ltd), 1881-1908.

<sup>77</sup> David Doughan, "British Women's Serials," in J Don Vann & Rosemary T Van Arsdel, eds Victorian Periodicals A Guide to Research Vol. 2 (New York: MLA, 1989) 72. In the course of actually reading through these art periodicals, I have discovered authors and articles that do not appear in the on-line version as well.

Press in Britain: A Bibliography of Modern Studies, 1901-1971, focuses on general interest periodicals, thus there are no women's periodicals and the only art periodicals listed are the Studio and the Art Journal.<sup>78</sup> Other bibliographic aids include: The Union List of Serials in Libraries of the United States and Canada, The Nineteenth-Century Periodical Press in Britain: A Bibliography of Modern Studies, 1972-1987; and a supplement to Victorian Periodicals Review, Women and British Periodicals 1832-1867.

However, it is important to consider that indexes are only of value when searching for titled articles. Victorian periodicals contain many untitled filler articles, and regular trade news or gossip columns, whose varied contents cannot be indexed. For example, The Studio included columns such as 'Round the Studios' and 'Studio Talk' which contain valuable information about artists and trends. There is no substitute for leafing through a periodical page by page to get a clear idea of what the periodical was about.

Several books of collected essays on various aspects of Victorian periodicals have been published since 1980. These include, among others, Joanne Shattock and Michael Wolff, eds, The Victorian Periodical Press: Samplings & Soundings (1982); Michael Harris and Alan Lee, eds, The Press in English Society from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries (1986); Brake, Bell and Finkelstein, eds. Nineteenth-Century Media and the Construction of Identities (2000). The study of women's periodicals tends to follow the 'separate spheres' parameter: Victorian Periodicals and Victorian Society, published in 1994, states in its Introduction that neither the arts nor women are included:

The structure of the collection, divided among five sections of society, guides the reader through periodicals associated with the professions, the arts, occupations and commerce, popular culture, and both the university educated and the working classes. (*For additional information on the arts, and on women's periodicals, see Guide II.*)<sup>79</sup>

Published five years previously in 1989, 'Guide II' refers to Vann and VanArsdel's second edited volume, Victorian Periodicals: A Guide to Research Volume II, which includes essays on art history periodicals and women's serials. In her essay on art periodicals in Guide II, Helene E

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<sup>78</sup> Lionel Madden & Diana Dixon (compilers), The Nineteenth-Century Periodical Press in Britain: A Bibliography of Modern Studies, 1901-1971 (Toronto: Supplement to Victorian Periodicals Newsletter. VIII:3 September 1975).

<sup>79</sup> J Don Vann & RT VanArsdel, 3. (emphasis added) Guide II refers to Victorian Periodicals: A Guide to Research Vol. II, published in 1989.

Roberts noted that there were over 317 periodicals which dealt solely with art during the Victorian era, but also that there is no single bibliography that lists all the periodicals that deal with art.<sup>80</sup> Her own checklist of Victorian art periodicals, published in 1970, remains only partially complete.<sup>81</sup> The 1890s: An Encyclopedia of British Literature, Art, and Culture published in 1993, includes only two bibliographic entries for art periodicals, as the work was compiled from secondary sources only.<sup>82</sup>

In his bibliographic article in Guide II, David Doughan found that Victorian women's periodicals were so numerous that he had to divide them into three categories: commercial, political, and organisational. Rather than offer any new information though, he refers the reader to Cynthia White's inaugural study, Women's Magazines: 1693-1968 (1970) for commercial women's magazines such as The Queen, and to three useful listings for political and organisational women's magazines: EM Palmegiano, Women and British Periodicals (1976); R. Harrison et al, Warwick Guide to British Labour Periodicals (1977); and D Doughan and D Sanchez, Feminist Periodicals 1855-1984: An Annotated Bibliography of British, Irish, Commonwealth and International Titles (1987). He states unequivocally that little or no serious analysis of the nineteenth-century women's political press has yet been undertaken.<sup>83</sup>

Since his essay was written, however, more studies of women's periodicals have appeared, such as Victorian Women's Magazines: An Anthology (2001), co-edited by Margaret Beetham and Kay Boardman and Brian Braithwaite's Women's Magazines: The First 300 Years (1995). The latter includes a useful section on lending libraries and publishing houses. Braithwaite and Joan Barrell's The Business of Women's Magazines is an economic study of women's magazines that is "peculiarly symptomatic of the perspectives and attitudes of the producers of women's

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<sup>80</sup> Roberts, (1989) 59.

<sup>81</sup> Helene E Roberts, "British Art Periodicals of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries," Victorian Periodicals Newsletter 9 (July 1970).

<sup>82</sup> GA Cevasco, ed, The 1890s: An Encyclopedia of British Literature, Art, and Culture (New York & London: Garland Publishing Inc, 1993).

<sup>83</sup> Doughan, 69-71.

magazines.”<sup>84</sup> With its comprehensive catalogue of ‘births’ and ‘deaths’ of magazines, this publication is an important counterpart to the more textual analyses used by other scholars.

Other recent scholarship tends to be more theoretical. The several authors of Women’s Worlds: Ideology, Femininity and the Woman’s Magazine (1991), “focus on the conflict between two ‘dominant’ analyses of women’s magazines,” namely, literary theory and social theory. “Broadly the first represents the magazine as a bearer of pleasure, the second sees it as a purveyor of oppressive ideologies of sex, class and race difference.”<sup>85</sup> In the preface to A Magazine of Her Own? Domesticity and Desire in the Woman’s Magazine, 1800-1914 (1996), Margaret Beetham is concerned with issues of capitalism and gender politics as they relate to publications for women: “The woman’s magazine works at the intersection of these different economies - of money, public discourse and individual desire - and it is there I situate the history I trace in the rest of this book.”<sup>86</sup> She also noted that the dearth of research on women’s magazines made her own research all the more laborious.

Gender and the Victorian Periodical, a recent study by Hilary Fraser, Stephanie Green and Judith Johnston, “investigates the role of the periodical press in mediating gender ideologies.”<sup>87</sup> Their empirical research covered 120 periodical titles, which they then subjected to formal and rhetorical analysis of texts informed by the methods of cultural, media, and women’s studies.<sup>88</sup> The issue of gender is foregrounded in each chapter, although their interpretation of ‘gender’ means ‘women’ most of the time. They look at the gendered reader, writer, and editor, giving examples of women in all cases; and at gender and the politics of home, cultural imperialism, and feminism, concluding that the periodical press was a point of cultural exchange and identification

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<sup>84</sup> Ros Ballaster et al, Women’s Worlds: Ideology, Femininity and the Woman’s Magazine (London and Houndmills: Macmillan Education Ltd, 1991) 5. See also Brian Braithwaite & Joan Barrell, The Business of Women’s Magazines 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Kogan Page, 1988).

<sup>85</sup> Ballaster et al, 2.

<sup>86</sup> Margaret Beetham, A Magazine of Her Own? Domesticity and Desire in the Woman’s Magazine, 1800-1914 (London and New York: Routledge, 1996) 2.

<sup>87</sup> Hilary Fraser, Stephanie Green, & Judith Johnston, Gender and the Victorian Periodical (Cambridge University Press, 2003) xi.

<sup>88</sup> Fraser et al, 16.

for women, and that it helped to break down the definitions of 'male' and 'female'.<sup>89</sup> The Appendix of periodicals used gives editors, publication details, and a brief description of each. Collectively, these books are useful for an insight into the different women's magazines, treating variously of their content, readership, and influence on their women readers, as well as the theoretical issues.

Primary sources about women's periodicals offer a contemporary perspective, and usually take the form of articles in other periodicals. Evelyn March-Phillips begins her 1894 article by noting the rapid increase of publishing for women since the publication of The Queen in 1861. She lists seven new magazines from 1862 to 1888, and twelve new publications between 1890 and 1894. March-Phillips concludes that women's magazines dwell too much on fashion, are overly controlled by advertising 'puffs' and ought not to include society columns or be edited by men.<sup>90</sup> Two years later, an article entitled "Fifty Years of Women's Papers and Magazines" appeared in the Newspaper Press Directory, which attributed the exponential increase in women's magazines between 1846 and 1896 to a corresponding increase in women's education:

The time is past when it was thought that anyone could write well enough for women; the feminine reading public increases at an enormous pace, and demands, in that enlargement, the versatility which is synonymous with the name of Englishwoman. Women are no longer content, thanks to their artistic education, to revel in badly drawn diagrams and faulty designs; they have sense enough, in many instances, to evolve costumes for themselves, which they know will be truly becoming. [...] The musical woman has no patience with the scientific, nor the literary genius with the society butterfly, hence all these diverse interests have to be catered for, so that the paper in its weekly advent shall receive equal homage from all.<sup>91</sup>

In contrast, Robert Bell's "Ladies Papers a Hundred Years Ago" (1900) is very light in tone, and pokes fun at the prudish tendencies and comments of the earlier women's papers: "It at once strikes the casual observer that the ladies' magazines of last century were not so much given over to the lust of the fashions as are their progeny to-day"<sup>92</sup> or "even in 1799 editors had not learned

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<sup>89</sup> Fraser et al, 197-199.

<sup>90</sup> Evelyn March-Phillips, "Women's Newspapers," The Fortnightly Review New Series 56 (1894) 661-667.

<sup>91</sup> Laura Alex Smith, "Fifty Years of Women's Papers and Magazines," Newspaper Press Directory (1896) 13.

<sup>92</sup> Robert Bell, "Ladies Papers a Hundred Years Ago," The Lady's Realm 8 (September 1900) 629.

that the Political Situation weighs as little in the mind of woman as the Binomial Theorem.”<sup>93</sup> He does not comment on the role of the male editors in the majority of women’s papers in choosing the content.

English art and architectural periodicals have received little scholarly attention in their own right. The Art Press: Two Centuries of Art Magazines, published to accompany an exhibition of the same name held at the Victoria & Albert Museum in 1976, includes several useful essays. The exhibition included many European as well as English periodicals, and due to the huge number of them, contained the proviso that periodicals dealing primarily with the following topics were excluded: “archaeology, architecture; applied arts, design, crafts; photography; collecting, conservation, museology; aesthetics; art education; classical art; non-western art”<sup>94</sup> - notably, all the areas covered by this thesis. The essays explore selected nineteenth-century art periodicals in both England and Europe. The Connoisseur issued a special number on ‘The Art Press’ to accompany the exhibition, which included histories of the Connoisseur, the Burlington Magazine and Apollo, as well as an article on “English Art Magazines before 1901.”<sup>95</sup> This article takes the term ‘art magazines’ rather broadly, including the illustrated literary magazines of the 1890s such as The Yellow Book, as well as magazines dedicated to the visual arts. The article has no footnotes or references, which prompted Helene Roberts to refer to it as “a somewhat less complete overview”<sup>96</sup> than the articles in the book which accompanied the exhibition. However, it does give a useful overview of some major art magazines. I also consulted the recently acquired Charles Holme Archive at the Archive of Art and Design, London, for information about The Studio.

Studies of the architectural press are equally rare. There is one chapter on Architectural Periodicals in Victorian Periodicals and Victorian Society, which includes a page and a half of history, and a brief bibliography of finding aids and sources. These include Ruth Kamen’s British

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<sup>93</sup> Bell, 630.

<sup>94</sup> Trevor Fawcett & Clive Phillpot, “Introduction,” in The Art Press: Two Centuries of Art Magazines Art Documents Number One (London: The Art Book Company, 1976) 1.

<sup>95</sup> The Connoisseur 191:769 (March 1976).

<sup>96</sup> Roberts, (1989) 60. See Michael Collins, “English Art Magazines before 1901,” The Connoisseur 191:769 (March 1976): 198-205.



and Irish Architectural History: A Bibliography and Guide to Sources of Information (1981), the Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals. The chapter also gives brief histories of main architectural periodicals, along with where to find them. The entry for The Builder is the most copious, listing a dozen secondary information sources. Only two articles were listed as primary source materials: Maurice Adams's "Architectural Journalism" Journal of the RIBA (1907), and Frank Jenkins' chapter, "Nineteenth-Century Architectural Periodicals" in Concerning Architecture: Essays on Architectural Writers and Writing (1968). Both provide useful background information, but much remains to be done in this area. Not mentioned as a source is Nikolaus Pevsner's 1972 book, Some Architectural Writers of the Nineteenth Century. The first chapter details a history of architectural periodicals as well as their interrelationships with early professional societies, and how architecture came to be taught at university, all issues which impact on the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society.

Newspapers have a much longer history than journals or magazines, albeit one which has received academic interest only in the past two decades. Linton and Boston noted in the Introduction to their 1987 Annotated Bibliography:

Belatedly, it is now recognized in most British universities and polytechnics that the printed press in Britain, despite its sharp decline in political importance during this century, is a mirror of society reflecting what most people in the country, at the time of publication, believed was happening to them and their world. It is also an agenda-setting agency, more important even than Parliament, for a business-led democratic society.<sup>97</sup>

Linton and Boston chart the development of newspapers from the late middle ages, when wealthy landowners kept a support staff of 'intelligencers' in London, clerical officers who would supply them with information about the court and business affairs while they were at their country seat.<sup>98</sup> From these short, private, hand-written communications, the size and circulation of newspapers grew, commensurate with the increase in the reading public, the need for and standardization of information, and improvements in paper-making and printing. By the Reformation, these communications were most often from bankers to their clients. Mechanically-printed newspapers

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<sup>97</sup> David Linton and Ray Boston eds, The Newspaper Press in Britain. an Annotated Bibliography (London & New York: Mansell Publishing Ltd, 1987) vii.

<sup>98</sup> Linton and Boston, ix.

originated with the Augsburg banking firm, Fuggers, who were also the first to include human-interest stories along with their business news.<sup>99</sup>

In the wake of the French Revolution, early nineteenth-century opinion of the English newspaper press was not good: journalists were thought to be controlled by bribes from politicians, with the sole function of rousing the people against their established rulers.<sup>100</sup> To prevent a recurrence of what had happened in France, the English government instigated what have since become known as the 'taxes on knowledge.'<sup>101</sup> These multiple taxes caused the price of a daily newspaper to soar far above the means of the working classes.

When Richard Cobden, M.P. (1804-1865) began his fight to repeal the taxes on paper and the stamp duty in 1850, the most popular weekly newspapers were to the left of center politically. In this field 'cheap' and 'radical' were to many people synonymous,<sup>102</sup> meaning that Cobden had to convince the Select Committee in the House of Commons that the people's taste and political sagacity had greatly improved in recent years and that they could be trusted to read a cheaper paper. Cobden's goal was to reduce the power of conservative journalism<sup>103</sup> at a time when there was nothing between the conservative voice of The Times and the radical press. At the first set of hearings in 1851, Cobden argued that if the working classes could afford to purchase a better class of daily newspaper, popular taste would improve, and temperance would increase, for the men would read their newspapers at home rather than seeking out the day's news down the pub. Unfortunately, his efforts were unsuccessful.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Linton and Boston, ix-x.

<sup>100</sup> George Boyce, "The Fourth Estate," in G Boyce, J Curran & P Wingate eds, Newspaper History from the Seventeenth Century to the Present Day (London: Constable, 1978) 20.

<sup>101</sup> In the early 1830s these included the Stamp Tax of 4d. a sheet, a tax on pamphlets of 3s. an edition, an advertisement tax of 3s. 6d. per advertisement, and a paper duty of 3d. per pound weight. Lucy Brown, "The Growth of a National Press," in Laurel Brake, Aled Jones, Lionel Madden, eds Investigating Victorian Journalism (Houndmills: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1990) 134.

<sup>102</sup> Richard D. Altick, The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public 1800-1900 (University of Chicago Press, 1957) 348-349.

<sup>103</sup> Altick, 348.

<sup>104</sup> Altick, 352-3.

When the issue came before Parliament again in 1855, The Times got into the fray. They published a long tirade against the newspaper tax, calling it

a tax on knowledge [...] a tax on light, a tax on education, a tax on truth, a tax on public opinion, a tax on good order and good government, a tax on society, a tax on the progress of human affairs, and on the working of human institutions.<sup>105</sup>

This time the stamp duty was repealed; in 1861 the paper duty was also repealed.<sup>106</sup> From this date the number of newspapers, and other periodicals increased dramatically.

Book-length studies of newspaper history are far more common than histories of journals or magazines. Curran and Seaton begin their fascinating study with the following bold statement:

It is equally mistaken to believe that the press and broadcasting simply reflect contemporary political forces. In the first place, some groups - stronger, richer, and with better access - are always able to secure more attention than others. Secondly, the media do have some political autonomy.<sup>107</sup>

Part one of the book deals with the history of newspapers, with a heavy emphasis on the relationship between the press and politics. The authors review many sources which give different versions of this history, for example the conventional Whig version is a two-volume study by Steven Koss, with the view that the progress of the press is directly responsible for the increase in civil liberties.<sup>108</sup> Raymond Williams writes the Marxist version of newspaper history, while Alan Lee, whom they term a radical historian called the late Victorian period a 'golden age' of British journalism.<sup>109</sup> Curran and Seaton attempt to critically examine this history, and to reappraise it, noting that,

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<sup>105</sup> Altick, 353, quoted in Hansard, ser.3, CXXXVII (1855), col. 782.

<sup>106</sup> Richard Cobden believed in free trade, and was one of the seven original members of the Manchester-based Anti-Corn-Law League, formed in 1838. Elected MP for Stockwell in 1841, his most important contribution to English politics was his role in the repeal of the Corn Laws, which led to Free Trade in food. He was also one of the first to lobby for a national system of education. See Introduction, in Richard Cobden, Speeches on Questions of Public Policy by Richard Cobden, MP3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (London: T Fisher Unwin, 1908 (1870)); and Richard Cobden, Dictionary of National Biography (London: Oxford University Press, 1949).

<sup>107</sup> James Curran & Jean Seaton, Power Without Responsibility: The Press and Broadcasting in Britain 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 1997).

<sup>108</sup> Stephen Koss, The Rise and Fall of the Political Press in Britain Vol.1- Nineteenth Century. Vol.II: Twentieth Century (London: Hamilton, 1981-4).

<sup>109</sup> Raymond Williams, The Long Revolution (Harmondsworth: Pelican, 1965); and R Williams, "The Press and Popular Culture: An Historical Perspective," in G Boyce, J Curran, and P Wingate, eds Newspaper History (London: Constable, 1978); Alan J Lee, The Origins of the Popular Press in England. 1855-1914

The period around the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> C [...] did not inaugurate a new era of press freedom and liberty: it introduced a new system of press censorship more effective than anything that had gone before. Market forces succeeded where legal repression had failed in conscripting the press to the social order.<sup>110</sup>

Indeed, the importance of the selling newspapers and periodicals cannot be underestimated.

The literature pertaining to individual periodicals used in this study is discussed in the background to these periodicals in Chapter 1.

#### 4) Art Criticism

Recent scholarly interest in the Victorian art world has not emphasised the practice of art criticism. Despite the escalation of the number of art societies, exhibitions and periodicals devoted to Victorian art, and the corresponding increase in the use of published art criticism as source material, these sources are not generally discussed or analysed in their own right. The sources I have been able to locate discuss criticism of the fine arts, particularly painting. To date I have not found any secondary sources on the criticism of the decorative arts.

One study which I have been unable to read is Meaghan Clarke's forthcoming book on women art critics, Critical Voices in British Art: Women Writing 1880-1905 (Ashgate, 2005). Clarke discusses Florence Fenwick Miller and Alice Meynell, both of whom reviewed the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society.

Most writing on art criticism concerns late nineteenth and twentieth century French painting.<sup>111</sup> The "Studies in the Fine Arts: Criticism" series, edited by Donald B Kuspit, is a case in point. Of ten volumes, only two treat of English critics, while the rest are American and French critics and painting movements. In his foreword, Kuspit makes an important point about the function of the art critic. He explains that the art critic has

the first, and presumably freshest, response to the work of art [...] Indeed, part of the critic's task is to win it a hearing at the court of history. [...] Yet - and this is the paradox - the temporary opinion of the critic often becomes the characteristic one.

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(London: Croom Helm, 1976). See also Michael Harris and Alan Lee, eds, The Press in English Society from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries (London: Associated University Press, 1986).

<sup>110</sup> Curran & Seaton, 9.

<sup>111</sup> Elizabeth Prettejohn, "Aesthetic Value and the Professionalization of Victorian Art Criticism," 1837-78, Journal of Victorian Culture 2:1 (Spring 1997): 71-72.

The critic's response is, if not the model, then the condition for all future interpretation. His attention is the work's ticket into history.<sup>112</sup>

This could not be truer where women artists are concerned, especially when the first critic's response is to ignore the work altogether! But that is one of the reasons why I am writing this thesis.

An early book with a promising, if rather misleading, title, is Lionello Venturi's History of Art Criticism.<sup>113</sup> This book is not, in my opinion, a history of art criticism. Rather, it is a chronological series of ideas about art, written by historians or philosophers. The chapter on the nineteenth century is mainly about French painting and French critics, whom they criticized and whom they defended, but there is no discussion of the role of the critic or criticism itself in society. Venturi is concerned with technique, and with form, which is not surprising as he wrote this book in 1936, when formalism was at its height.

Collections of reprinted art criticism from Victorian periodicals are useful, particularly to scholars outside of the UK who may not have easy access to the original periodicals. The third volume of John Charles Olmsted's three-volume Victorian Painting: Essays and Reviews contains 44 reprinted articles dating from 1861 to 1880, from eleven periodicals. Noticeably, only one of these articles is from an art magazine - the Art Journal - leading me to suspect that Olmsted found these articles by using the Wellesley Index, which indexes the 'reviews' rather than art magazines.<sup>114</sup> The book is worthwhile for information about painting and criticism of it, but not helpful for the decorative arts. Elizabeth Gilmore Holt's book, The Art of All Nations 1850-73 The Emerging Role of Exhibitions and Critics, contains reviews of the Paris Salon, the English Royal

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<sup>112</sup> Donald B Kuspit, Foreword in Jacqueline V Falkenheim, Roger Fry and the Beginnings of Formalist Art Criticism. (Ann Arbor, Mich. : UMI Research Press, 1980), ix. The other volumes are: 1. David A Flanary Champfleury: the Realist Writer as Art Critic; 2. Stephen C Foster The Critics of Abstract Expressionism; 3. Arlene R Olson Art Critics and the Avant-Garde: New York, 1900-1913; 4. Lynne L Gelber In/Stability: The Shape and Space of Claudel's Art Criticism; 5. Lynn Gamwell Cubist Criticism; 6. Joan Ungersma Halperin Felix Feneon and the Language of Art Criticism; 7. Lee McKay Johnson The Metaphor of Painting: Essays on Baudelaire, Ruskin, Proust, and Pater; 8. Reinhild Janzen Albrecht Altdorfer: Four Centuries of Criticism; 9. Carol M Zemel The Formation of a Legend: van Gogh Criticism, 1890-1920.

<sup>113</sup> Lionello Venturi, History of Art Criticism trans. Charles Marriott rev.ed.( New York: EP Dutton & Co. Inc., 1964 (1936)).

<sup>114</sup> The other periodicals were the Athenæum, Fortnightly Review, Fraser's, Cornhill Magazine, Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, Temple Bar, Quarterly Review, Westminster Review, Macmillan's Magazine, and Nineteenth Century.

Academy, and various European and International Exhibitions from 1850 to 1873. In the introductions to each exhibition, Holt gives some background information on the exhibition and on the critics chosen. Taken together, these two compilations provide a quick overview of critical opinion of fine art in England and the continent at mid-century - keeping in mind that they have been selected by their editors.

Helene E Roberts has written several articles about Victorian fine art exhibitions and reviewing practices. She explains that as opposition to the Royal Academy increased, new exhibiting societies were founded, and new galleries opened, which afforded painters more choice of exhibiting venues.<sup>115</sup> This background information provides a fuller context for my study of decorative arts reviews, which Roberts unfortunately does not include in her article. In an earlier article, "Art Reviewing in the Early Nineteenth-Century Art Periodicals," Roberts notes that art reviews could only appear when exhibitions began to be held regularly, beginning with the Royal Academy's first exhibition in 1769. Art reviews were published in newspapers and general or literary periodicals until 1785 when the Artist's Repository, the first magazine devoted entirely to art topics, was founded by Charles Taylor.<sup>116</sup> It was followed by four other short-lived periodicals before the Art Journal was begun in 1839.

The difference between art reviewing and art criticism, according to Roberts, is that "the purpose of the art review was to describe and evaluate works of art,"<sup>117</sup> whereas art criticism contained a deeper analysis of the work. Reviews also provided information about the society of the day, and many disparaging comments about the Royal Academy, despite the fact that "[p]ropriety required that the reviewers take some notice of paintings by the leading Academicians so prominently displayed."<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Helene E. Roberts, "Exhibition And Review: The Periodical Press and The Victorian Art Exhibition System," in Joanne Shattock & Michael Wolff, eds The Victorian Periodical Press: Samplings And Soundings (Leicester University Press & University of Toronto Press, 1982) 79-107.

<sup>116</sup> Helene E Roberts, "Art Reviewing in the Early Nineteenth-Century Art Periodicals," Victorian Periodicals Newsletter 19 (March 1973) 9.

<sup>117</sup> Roberts, (1973) 10.

<sup>118</sup> Roberts, (1973) 12.

Some technical language appeared in art reviews before 1850, following the vocabulary of the French art theorist Roger de Piles, whose influential text, 'Balance of Painters' included a system of grading paintings on a scale of twenty points, using four major elements: composition, design, expression, and colouring.<sup>119</sup> Roberts found that the art reviews used stock phrases, revealing that their authors did not always understand the concepts behind their flowery terms.<sup>120</sup> The critics preferred to discuss the associations - sentimental, imaginative or literary - that the painting aroused in the viewer. Many of the sentiments expressed were similar to those used in romantic poetry, pointing to a similarity in methods of criticism of poetry and painting during the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>121</sup> Towards mid-century, the subject matter of genre paintings became increasingly cloying in their sentimentality, however, as Roberts notes at the end of her article, "One needs the reviews to reconstruct the spirit that encouraged them and to confront the mentality that appreciated them."<sup>122</sup>

Elizabeth Prettejohn's 1997 article "Aesthetic Value and the Professionalization of Victorian Art Criticism 1837-78" continues the story where Roberts' article leaves off, adding some further analysis in her discussion of art criticism. Using mainly periodical articles about Victorian art as source material, Prettejohn notes that art reviews had several functions in early Victorian society. First of all, they were the major link between the artist and potential buyers, and thus could make or break an artist's reputation. Secondly, reviews served to educate the public about art, and to teach cultural values.<sup>123</sup> In the early Victorian era, critics wrote about several topics, often some combination of literature, music, drama and art simply in order to make enough

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<sup>119</sup> Roger de Piles (1635-1709) was a French art theoretician. He studied painting, and knew many painters of his day, but never painted a picture. He was employed by Louis XIV, who sent him on diplomatic missions to many countries, during which de Piles studied the local art. He published five books on art theory, and was made a *Conseiller Honoraire Amateur* of the French Academy. His final book, Cours de peinture par principes avec une balance de peintres (1708), contains all his theories. In opposition to the French Academy, de Piles thought that colour, light and shade had equal value in a painting, and that history painting should include all subject matter, not just famous battles. De Piles' book was translated into English in 1743.

<sup>120</sup> Roberts, (1973) 13.

<sup>121</sup> Roberts, (1973) 15. By the end of the nineteenth century, there was a demand for rules, and a less biased criticism of poetry. See "A New Criticism of Poetry," The Contemporary Review 72 (September 1897) 390-399.

<sup>122</sup> Roberts, (1973) 19.

<sup>123</sup> Prettejohn, 73.

money to survive.<sup>124</sup> However, changes began to appear in the reviews as the practice of art criticism became 'professionalised.'

Generalist critics emphasised the dramatic narrative of paintings, their moral messages, and in particular, consistently privileged the picture's emotional impact over its formal or visual qualities.<sup>125</sup> These critics wrote what Roberts terms art reviews. Treating art as only one aspect of everyday life, this more popular art criticism was found in periodicals and newspapers with large readerships right up to the end of the Victorian period.

Professional art criticism appeared more gradually. A pivotal year was 1863, which saw the inauguration of the Fine Arts Quarterly Review. All the art critics of the major journals and newspapers contributed to this new publication. That same year, the parameters of the discipline were set out in Philip Gilbert Hamerton's article in Cornhill Magazine defining an art critic's roles and responsibilities.<sup>126</sup> The first critic to apply these formal criteria was William Michael Rossetti. In the Preface to his republished essays (1867), Rossetti effectively reverses the hierarchy of values ascribed to art, telling his readers that

earlier chief homage is rendered to works of strong sentiment or expression, [...] [yet] all these qualities, important and attractive as they are, do not constitute the central requirement, which is simply this - that a work professedly of fine art shall above all things fulfill this profession, be primarily a work of art, and that *fine* art.<sup>127</sup>

In addition to privileging visual over emotional responses to fine art, professional critics began using a more technical vocabulary to describe works of art. Hamerton introduced the terms 'analytic' and 'synthetic' in 1864, which helped to create a marked difference in the language used between the two types of art reviews.<sup>128</sup> Each critic had characteristic phrases, drawn from foreign art theory and criticism such as Roger de Piles' ideas, and the increasing literature on art history. In addition to a new vocabulary, a shift occurred in the use of art historical stylistic comparisons,

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<sup>124</sup> See Chapter 1 and Christopher Kent, "Periodical Critics of Drama, Music, & Art, 1830-1914: A Preliminary List," Victorian Periodicals Review 13:1&2 (Spring Summer 1980) 31-54; C. Kent, "More Critics of Drama, Music and Art," Victorian Periodicals Review 19:3 (Fall 1986) 99-102.

<sup>125</sup> Prettejohn, 81.

<sup>126</sup> PGH[amerton], "Art Criticism," Cornhill Magazine 8 (1863).

<sup>127</sup> WM Rossetti, Fine Art, Chiefly Contemporary (London: 1867), quoted in Prettejohn, 83.

<sup>128</sup> See PG Hamerton, "Analysis and Synthesis in Painting," Fine Arts Quarterly Review 2 (1864) 236-254.



where “professional critics altered the function of comparison, using it to locate contemporary British art within their own sphere of professional expertise, the transhistorical and cross-cultural sphere of ‘art great in the abstract’.”<sup>129</sup> In so doing, the critics were also creating a self-referential field for art, where art was only evaluated in reference to other works of art, and at times did not even mention the subject of the painting.<sup>130</sup> However, the language used was not stagnant. By the end of the 1860s, popular critics still relied on explaining the narrative story of the painting, whereas the use of musical terminology belied a professional critic. Clara Montalba's watercolour paintings of Venice were described this way in 1878: “The green of her skies, for instance, is a most truly exquisite colour, and fulfils the *harmonies of her chord*, yet her invariable use of it does some little violence to nature.”<sup>131</sup> A decade later, musical terms following the example of titles of James McNeill Whistler's paintings had seeped into the critic's vocabulary, as in this description of the same artist's work from the Portfolio:

It matters not that Miss Montalba strikes a compromise with actuality to attain her juicy harmonies of olive and golden brown, of red and black and grey, of gold and grey; the concord is so absolutely right, the artistic fitness is so satisfying, that one accepts the result as holding a higher truth than mere imitative veracity - that of individualised impression and interpretation.<sup>132</sup>

Professional art critics continued in an elitist fashion, united in their antipathy to commercialism and concerned to find ways to assert the superiority of their judgments to those of the public.<sup>133</sup> Popular art critics had no such aspirations; they were happy to follow the taste of the much larger public who read their articles, and who ultimately spent far more money buying art. Professional art critics believed that ‘purely artistic’ value could not be measured in the financial terms of the marketplace,<sup>134</sup> a concept which, over time, would develop into what we now term Modernism.

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<sup>129</sup> Prettejohn, 85.

<sup>130</sup> Prettejohn, 85.

<sup>131</sup> “The Dudley Gallery, 1878,” Magazine of Art 2 (1879) 19.

<sup>132</sup> “Art Chronicle,” The Portfolio (March 1888) 64.

<sup>133</sup> Prettejohn, 88.

<sup>134</sup> Prettejohn, 88.

## 5) Art Critics

Studies of individual art critics provide a more indepth look at a particular critic's *modus operandi*. The few studies to date prioritise critics of painting. John Ruskin: The Critical Heritage was the only art critic in over seventy titles of the Critical Heritage series;<sup>135</sup> as the most vociferous and voluminous English art critic, Ruskin has been credited with "establishing the intellectual respectability of art criticism in England."<sup>136</sup> The book consists of a series of published reviews of Ruskin's writings, with an Introduction and a few comments - thus leaving the reader to draw conclusions about Ruskin's thought and contribution to the discipline. Ruskin's popularity was great as long as he was teaching the masses about art; it waned significantly in the UK when he began to write about political economy, especially after his series of articles, "Until This Last" was withdrawn from Cornhill Magazine after the second instalment.

Julie L'Enfant's recent book William Rossetti's Art Criticism provides some background information on how the world of fine art criticism worked, using Rossetti's experiences as an example. Rossetti was writing during the 1850s, 60s and 70s mainly thus did not review the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, however L'Enfant's introduction was very useful. It includes a section on the role of the art critic, which explains who the major art critics were, and how the critics related to each other and to their publics.

Maureen Borland's study of the Scottish critic and painter Dugald Sutherland MacColl covers both his personal and professional life. A bold and fearless critic, MacColl's insights into both the art world were informed by his education, his painting practice, his travels, his friendships with other artists and writers, and the various stages of his career as painter, art critic, director of the Tate Gallery, Keeper of the Wallace Collection, and editor of the magazine Artwork

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<sup>135</sup> JL Bradley ed, Ruskin: The Critical Heritage (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984). The series only includes two volumes about women authors: the Bronte sisters and Virginia Woolf.

<sup>136</sup> Julie L'Enfant, William Rossetti's Art Criticism (University Press of America Inc, 1999) 8. L'Enfant takes this idea from John Charles Olmsted, Victorian Painting: Essays and Reviews, Vol. 3, 1861-1880 (New York: Garland Publishing, 1985) xvii.

at the age of 70.<sup>137</sup> As we shall see in Chapter 4, MacColl was the first critic to seriously criticise the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society.

Roger Fry and the Beginnings of Modernist Art Criticism is a short but concise book, divided into two parts.<sup>138</sup> The first section explains how the English public was exposed to, and educated about French art via exhibitions, books and critical commentary. Fry was responsible for defining Post-Impressionism as a movement held together by a unifying theory of art,<sup>139</sup> for introducing it to England, and for identifying the artists associated with it, both in France and in England. Although Fry reviewed only one Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society show,<sup>140</sup> his contribution to the more theoretical basis of art criticism in the twentieth century is important for an understanding of why the decorative arts fell out of favour.

The effects of exhibiting practices and art criticism on women artists in the Victorian period is more difficult to ascertain and must be pieced together from various sources. One of the best sources for this is Pamela Gerrish Nunn's Victorian Women Artists, in which she devotes an entire chapter to the issue of women exhibiting paintings in the mid-Victorian period, 1850-1880.<sup>141</sup> She dwells particularly on what the critics had to say about women's painting, using the Society of Female Artists' exhibitions as an example. "Reviews of the first show, in 1857," Nunn writes,

indicate the spectrum of critical attitudes which the press consistently applied to the Society over the years. In the beginning a gallant encouragement, often couched in very patronising terms, was the order of the day. As time went on, petulance and impatience crept in as if a just punishment for the critics' disappointment, [...] From the start, critics complained of the artistic standard of the shows, some ostensibly kindly and others plainly gleeful.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Maureen Borland, DS MacColl Painter, Poet, Art Critic (Harpenden: Lennard Publishing, 1995).

<sup>138</sup> Jacqueline Victoria Falkenheim, Roger Fry and the Beginnings of Modernist Art Criticism (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1980).

<sup>139</sup> Falkenheim, 9.

<sup>140</sup> This was the 1906 exhibition held at the Grafton Gallery. See "The Grafton Gallery," Athenaeum (3 February 1906): 144-45. Item C458 in Donald A Laing, Roger Fry: An Annotated Bibliography of the Published Writings (New York & London: Garland Publishing, Inc. 1979).

<sup>141</sup> See also Meaghan Clarke's forthcoming book on women art critics, Critical Voices in British Art: Women Writing 1880-1905 (Ashgate, 2005).

<sup>142</sup> Pamela Gerrish Nunn, Victorian Women Artists (London: The Women's Press Ltd, 1987) 74-5.

In a note at the end of the chapter, we learn that some daily newspapers such as The Times did not always review the Society of Female Artists' shows, and that others, such as The Critic, stopped reviewing them altogether after a few years.<sup>143</sup> Further on in this chapter, Nunn returns to the subject of the critics' response to SFA shows. This time she writes that after a few years of reviewing women's paintings, the tone of the reviews changed for the better:

In 1857, critics displayed their established opinions about women artists uncritically, but their continuing contemplation of women's art, brought about simply by having to review the SFA show each year, made them more aware of women's art appearing elsewhere, and to reassess (or modify in some cases) their prejudices, and their aims. So over the years comments like these became ever more frequent in the art press: '(This is) [...] a very spirited work - we were about to say, for a lady; but ladies now paint with as much power as the other sex' (1859) [...] 'Worthy, we will not say, of a female artist, now a term of contempt - it holds its place strongly by its genuine pictorial merits' (1870).<sup>144</sup>

Nunn points out how in the space of a decade, different points of view were easily discernable in art reviews. By 1870 the Art Journal's critic can discuss the 'genuine pictorial merits' of a work, whereas the Critic is not even reviewing the exhibition. Nunn is careful to point out that all the periodicals she used were read by the middle classes - it becomes obvious that the choice of periodicals read by the middle classes could greatly affect their knowledge about women artists.

In the brief discussion of art criticism in Painting Women, Deborah Cherry explains that the criticism of women's art was complicated by the development of the new discipline of art history: "Critics and historians were engaged in profound struggles over language and power when they discussed or denied the representation of women as cultural producers."<sup>145</sup> When Eve Blantyre Simpson wrote about women artists, for example, she was not shy to detail the inequities in the production and consumption of women's art, while other art critics, such as Emilia Dilke, the art editor of the Academy from 1873, maintained a neutral or impartial stance which only contributed to the "framing of those discourses of art which became hegemonic in the later

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<sup>143</sup> There were several different journals titled The Critic during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Nunn may be referring to one published by Serjeant Cox, which ceased publication in 1863; another The Critic was published in the 1880s.

<sup>144</sup> Both reviews were in the Art Journal. Quoted in Nunn, Victorian Women Artists, 86.

<sup>145</sup> Cherry, (1993) 71-72.

nineteenth century, in which masculinity was inscribed as the central area of study and the pivotal term of reference.”<sup>146</sup>

With so few secondary sources, the bulk of the information about art criticism and art critics is found in the periodical press of the day. Articles written by the critics themselves are of course of primary importance, and much can be gleaned about their opinions by reading their commentary. The designer Lewis Foreman Day wrote the only article I have found specifically about decorative arts criticism, either primary or secondary. Day begins by announcing that, in order to write good criticism, the art critic must be an artist to understand the medium under discussion, thus clarifying his position in the literary vs artistic critic debate. The critic’s purpose, he adds, should be to interest the reader in the subject at hand without boring them with technical jargon. Of decorative art criticism, Day notes there are particular hazards. Due to the connection of applied art to the business world, “There is always a danger that anything one may say of a work of applied art may affect, one way or other, [or] harm someone’s business [thus] the reviewer may appear to be influenced by personal or interested motives.”<sup>147</sup> Day himself is a good example of this, as he cheerfully names all the companies he designed for in his review of the 1903 ACES show. Any other critical bias, due to a critic’s very artistic nature, could be excused so long as the critic was brave enough to sign the review:

A certain personal bias there must naturally be in opinions frankly expressed, more especially in the opinions of an artist, for his very calling is presumptive evidence that his forte is not judicial impartiality and calm; but there is less harm in any possible leaning to one side or the other when the critic gives his name; and if he make no secret of his preferences, the reader may fairly be expected to make allowance for them.<sup>148</sup>

However, although Day almost always signed his writings, art critics did not routinely sign their articles until the 1890s in journals and magazines, and in newspapers the anonymous review had a much longer life. This makes identification of the critics difficult and time-consuming, and is largely the reason for the lack of writing on these sources. I have identified over thirty writers who

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<sup>146</sup> Cherry, (1993) 72.

<sup>147</sup> Lewis F Day, “The Criticism of Decorative Art. An Editorial Statement,” *Art Journal* (1893) 64.

<sup>148</sup> Day, 64.

reviewed Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society shows, and wrote about the decorative arts, and the more prolific of these critics are discussed further in Chapter 1. Short biographies of other critics are included in the chapters where appropriate.

## Methodology

### *1) Approach to Primary Material*

Having determined the general parameters of my project, I began with quantitative research, using the exhibition catalogues of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society between 1888 and 1916 to determine exactly how many women were involved in each show.<sup>149</sup> For each of the eleven exhibitions that took place during those years, I compiled a chart of all the women involved and the objects they designed or made. With this information, I created a database of information on the 730 women who designed or produced pieces for the four exhibitions which I explore in this thesis. The statistical information derived from these databases is vital to my discussion as quantitative evidence of how many women were involved in exhibiting with the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society.<sup>150</sup> I also compiled databases of all the objects designed or made by women for each of the four the exhibitions in my study, in order to have an idea of what media were designed and made by women. The purpose of compiling these two databases was to ascertain how many women were involved in each exhibition, and what type of work they were doing, in order to accurately assess the proportion of press devoted to women's work.

A note of caution is warranted where the ACES catalogues are concerned, as their compilation was generally carried out in great haste, during the last few days before the exhibition opened, leading to mistakes and omissions. Sometimes the information was not provided by the exhibitors in time for publication, leaving a blank space in the catalogue; alternatively written information was misread, or spelling mistakes were made. As will be demonstrated, it is in this

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<sup>149</sup> I have used only the London exhibitions.

<sup>150</sup> The Women Exhibiting with the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society database includes the following fields: designer, maker, or both; medium used; work exhibited in each of the 11 ACES exhibitions between 1888-1916; personal information such as birth, death, and marriage dates, address, husband's name where applicable; education; work partners (such as schools, companies or individuals); followed by sections for literature, reviews and comments.

regard that the reviews can be extremely helpful in conjunction with the catalogues, for at times the reviewers mention information which was left out of the catalogue.

The next step was to peruse the periodical press for reviews of the four ACES exhibitions, as well as more general articles about women and decorative arts during the years encompassed by this study. I decided to choose a wide selection of periodicals, so as to include as many points of view as possible. I did not use an index, as I did not want to limit my search by focusing on the reactions of the 'established' art world. Rather, I looked at titles at random, in the type of magazine or journal I thought might review the ACES or have an interest in the decorative arts: fine arts and decorative arts magazines, trade journals (furniture, wallpaper, and jewellery), architecture journals, women's magazines, and from the more generalised press, London newspapers, provincial newspapers, weekly and monthly reviews. In all, 65 titles were used in order to amass a sample of thirty reviews for each exhibition (see Periodicals List in Bibliography, and Chapter 1). This approach proved to be as valuable as it was serendipitous, for I often found reviews and articles in unexpected places. With the information on the women who exhibited I had previously compiled I was then able to compare which women were named in the reviews. This information is summarised in the Appendices to each chapter.

## *2) Theoretical Underpinnings: General to Specific*

My research methodology has been influenced by Michel Foucault's concept of effective history. For Foucault, effective history is "a history which is aware that truth is not an absolute concept, but is historically and culturally specific."<sup>151</sup> Nor is history one smooth continuous storyline. Rather, it is a series of breaks, changes, beginnings and endings. Effective history looks at 'practices' rather than institutions or theories, in an attempt to understand the various contexts which made such practices possible at a certain time, in a certain place. The practice I am investigating is that of reviewing exhibitions of decorative art in England between 1888 and 1916, following the introduction of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society to the London exhibition season,

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<sup>151</sup> Eileen Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge* (London & New York: Routledge, 1992) 9-11. I have used Hooper-Greenhill's explanation of Foucault because she has amalgamated several of Foucault's works and ideas together. The concept of effective history comes primarily from Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1974).

and the concurrent introduction of large numbers of female decorative artists. In order to chart this practise across the breaks, changes, beginnings and endings, I have used a very broad range of periodical sources, many of which are rarely used in art historical research.

It became obvious when reading through the reviews of each exhibition that there was very little consensus of opinion about the ACES exhibitions, or about the women's work exhibited there. Linda M Shires makes some very interesting theoretical points in her "Afterword" to Rewriting the Victorians, that proved apt for my interpretation of such diverse material as was presented in the periodicals. Shires is concerned that any reassessment of Victorian era must take into account what she sees as the instability of Victorian ideology. She writes, "The instability of any ideology in the period and the even more radical instability of Victorian representations must count as defining characteristics of the age."<sup>152</sup> For Shires, "[t]he airing of multiple points of view fosters intervention into the status quo, and thus challenges hegemony."<sup>153</sup> While this instability is by no means unique to the Victorian era, taken as a theoretical starting point, it is actually rather liberating, for it necessitates multiple viewpoints, and allows for alternatives stories.

While Foucault's was more useful for collecting research, my interpretation and analysis of the range of responses to women's work exhibited at ACES was facilitated by the use of the reception theory developed by the Konstanz School. I have made particular use of Hans Robert Jauss's concept of the 'horizon of expectation' to explain the reactions of nineteenth and early twentieth-century writers to the decorative arts and design. Jauss is a member of a group of scholars and theorists from the University of Konstanz, Germany, that emerged in 1963. The Konstanz School has developed a methodology known as *Rezeptionsästhetik*, which translates roughly as the 'aesthetics of reception.' This methodology is a combination of poetics (*Werkstruktur*) and hermeneutics (*Interpretationssystem*), wherein one has to have 'read' the text in terms of poetics to arrive at a hermeneutic conclusion.<sup>154</sup> Jauss' contribution to the thought

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<sup>152</sup> Linda M Shires, "Afterword: Ideology and the Subject as Agent," in Rewriting the Victorians: Theory, History and the Politics of Gender (New York & London: Routledge, 1992) 185.

<sup>153</sup> Shires, 185.

<sup>154</sup> Paul de Man, "Introduction," in Hans Robert Jauss, Toward an Aesthetic of Reception trans. Timothy Bahti (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1982) viii-ix.



of this school is the concept of 'horizon of expectation,' a term borrowed from Husserl's phenomenology of perception in its application to the experience of consciousness. For Husserl, one is only conscious of the 'horizon of distraction' or the background, when attempting to perceive something, which "implies that the condition of existence of a consciousness is not available to this consciousness in a conscious mode."<sup>155</sup> This means that we perceive things - whether objects, ideas, or sounds - by their difference to their background, or, simply put, to what we already know. Similarly, in Jauss' interpretation of this concept, one sees the 'horizon of expectation' when reconstructing the past, rather than the past itself, because historical consciousness of a given period can never exist as a set of openly stated or recorded propositions. A particular historical past, whether a work of art or a text, "is never available in objective or even objectifiable form, neither to its author nor to its contemporaries or later recipients."<sup>156</sup> All that is available is a condition of not-knowing, which requires interpretation via hermeneutics by the later recipient of the text. The later recipient can only know this hermeneutic interpretation of the past time, which Jauss calls the 'horizon of expectation.'

This is not a stagnant concept. The horizon of expectation may be understood as a set of received ideas in a certain time and place which are in a continual state of flux, similar to Antonio Gramsci's conception of the organic nature of 'common sense.'<sup>157</sup> These received ideas form the background, from which a new idea, text or artwork will stand out in relief. With time, each new idea dissolves into the background, becoming part of the set of received ideas. As a visual metaphor, new ideas may be likened to drops of water falling onto a smooth pool of water, causing a few ripples, which slowly become further apart, until the surface is smooth once again. If the pool of water is the 'horizon of expectation,' it is constantly changing, depending on how many drops of water fall onto it - how many new ideas the critics or the readers experience; in this way every critic's and every reader's 'horizon of expectation' is not only different but in a constant state of

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<sup>155</sup> de Man, xii.

<sup>156</sup> de Man, xii.

<sup>157</sup> " 'common sense' [...] is used by Gramsci to mean the uncritical and largely unconscious way of perceiving and understanding the world that has become 'common' in any given epoch" which also grows and evolves with personal experience. Quintin Hoare & Geoffrey N Smith, eds and trans, Selections From the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1971) 322.

flux.<sup>158</sup> The temporal aspect is vital to understanding how ideas work; if we think of the visual analogy of the drop of water as a little film rather than a still photograph, we can incorporate the temporal aspect of Jauss's theory. It is precisely this movement of ideas which accounts for the plethora of different viewpoints and opinions seen in periodicals, as new concepts are amalgamated with existing ones.

In relation to reviews of women's work exhibited at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, gender is the particular 'horizon of expectation' which interests me, as it varies from one critic to another, from one periodical to another, and also evolves over time. I have also tried to keep it in mind for my own interpretation of these articles - for as Jauss says, I can never know what the original authors meant when they penned their reviews, any more than readers in the nineteenth century could, thus I must continually re-examine my own 'horizon of expectation' with regard to my material.

Feminism is accordingly an important part of my analysis, for it proposes a critique of the dominant hegemony, ergo a critique of the social construction of the 'woman decorative artist,' be she a designer, a maker, or both. The critics discussed and described these women and their work in a multitude of ways, thus my analysis will entail an exploration of these, and their variance among different periodicals, and over the time period under review.

My use of feminism for writing about women is rather basic. I foreground events and conditions of production and reception which are specific to the women's experiences, but do not theorise extensively, for this study is primarily a fact-gathering mission. Authors whose work I have found most useful for purposes of combining feminist ideas with writing about women decorative artists working between 1888 and 1916 include Anthea Callen, Pamela Gerrish Nunn, Deborah Cherry, and Griselda Pollock's and Rozsika Parker's groundbreaking book, Old Mistresses. Apart from Callen, and one chapter of Old Mistresses, it is worthwhile mentioning here that these sources are about women painters; their usefulness stems from the similarities of the situations of women desirous of exhibiting their artwork, whether an oil painting or a wallpaper design.

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<sup>158</sup> James L Machor & Philip Goldstein, eds Reception Study: From Literary Theory to Cultural Studies (New York and London: Routledge, 2001) 2.

With these precautions in mind, I decided to summarise the critical general responses to women's work in each chapter, followed by one or two case studies of women whose work had been particularly singled out, in order to cover both the general and the specific. My choice of case studies was prompted partly by pragmatic reasons: the women with the most reviews generally meant more information to go by; it also allowed me to explore what the critics of the day felt were the works that merited attention, which is invaluable in understanding the temporal context. Thus it is the critics who chose the case studies. In addition to what the critics wrote, the biographical stories of each of the case studies reveal clues as to how each woman negotiated her own agency, allowing that their agency also took forms that may not be easy for me to recognise. Collectively, the case studies offer a sampling of the different strategies used to achieve success by women decorative artists over the period under study.

Women decorative artists were well aware that success, both artistic and financial, depended on their making a 'name' for themselves through their artistic output. Michel Foucault's concept of authorship, and Jacques Derrida's theorization of the signature are useful theoretical adjuncts in this regard. Foucault distinguishes between the proper name (the one we are given at birth) and the author name (the name signed on creative work) of an individual, while allowing that these names can be the same. Deborah Cherry points out the importance of this: "By the mid-nineteenth century, the 'author' in the figure of the artist was one of the principal categories governing art criticism, in exhibition reviews as well as biographical features."<sup>159</sup> The making and subsequent maintenance of the author name was vital to any artist at the time, yet was complicated in the instance of women artists who married and had to change their proper names.

Jacques Derrida's essay on the signature works well alongside Foucault's concept of the author, and has been useful in my study. The signature, according to Derrida, serves as a regulatory borderline moving between the object and the author, authenticating the first as the product of the second. But the signature does not only connect, it also acts as a promise and

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<sup>159</sup> Cherry, (2000) 118. See also M. Foucault, "What is an author?" DF Bouchared, trans. *Screen* (Spring 1979) 13-29.

guarantee.<sup>160</sup> In the case of written works, or paintings that are signed, the signature is a visible marker of the author. It helps to create the author name by authenticating the work. In the decorative arts, however, few articles were signed in a way that was visible, thus the artists exhibiting with the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society relied heavily on the catalogue, and on the critics to put their names in the paper. Rather than the authors themselves authenticating their work by appending their signatures to it, they were reliant upon the critics to do this for them.

Finally, I have included a great deal of biography and social history in this thesis. Each woman whose life and work became a case study required biographical details and sociological data to situate her artistically and historically. Likewise, for each exhibition and each medium discussed, there were particular circumstances which needed to be examined. Accordingly, I provide an historical framework, together with contemporary opinions wherever possible, to provide a fuller context for the reception of women's work.

## OUTLINE FOR CHAPTERS

### *Chapter 1: Dealing with the Press*

This chapter considers how the ACES dealt with the press, and how, in turn, the press dealt with the ACES. The first section, "Approaching the Press," outlines the policy of self-promotion begun by the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society in 1888 to raise public awareness of its goals. Using archival information, it then provides further detail about the periodicals in which the ACES placed advertisements for the 1903 exhibition. The next section, "Challenging the Press," begins with a brief outline of how fine art and industrial art exhibitions were reviewed, and then explains how ACES exhibitions purposely broke with this tradition, thereby presenting critics with a challenging new responsibilities. The third and final section, entitled "The Press Responds," covers published responses to the ACES' exhibitions and ideals, and includes background material on periodicals and critics, whether named or anonymous, that were most consistent in their coverage of the women I have chosen as case studies: Kate Faulkner (1888), May Morris and Una

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<sup>160</sup> Cherry, (2000) 118. See also Jacques Derrida, "Otobiographies: The Teaching of Nietzsche and the Politics of the Proper Name," in CB McDonald, ed. *The Ear of the Other* P Kamuf and & A Ronell, trans. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984, rev. ed 1988).

Ashworth Taylor (1890), Georgina Cave France Gaskin (1903), Phoebe McLeish Stabler and Grace Chadburn Christie (1916).

*Chapter 2: 1888, The First Arts & Crafts Exhibition: The Critics Grapple with Craft as Art, and Women as Designers.*  
*Case Study: Kate Faulkner*

This chapter has five sections. To begin I outline the various innovations introduced by the Society with this inaugural exhibition. For the purposes of my project, the participation of women in the exhibition and their reception are of primary interest. Accordingly, the succeeding sections commence with the context in which the professional woman designer worked in the late 1880s. I then include a brief statistical analysis of women's work in the 1888 exhibition, followed by the press's comments on women's work in general, and end with a case study of Kate Faulkner (1841-1898), and her work on the gesso-decorated grand piano that attracted so much attention.

*Chapter 3: 1890, Embroidery Designed by Women: The Critics Speak*  
*Case Studies: Una Taylor and May Morris*

The third ACES exhibition showcased embroidery and furniture. This chapter will focus on the critical reception of the embroidery in the 1890 Arts & Crafts Exhibition, with special emphasis on what the critics had to say about women as designers of embroidery. I begin with background information, firstly the history of embroidery design, and secondly a section on women's art education for embroidery. This provides a context for the statistical discussion of women's embroidery design and production at the 1890 exhibition. The next section summarizes the general press reception of women's work, and is followed by two case studies May Morris (1862-1938) and Una Ashworth Taylor (1858-1924), both of whom contributed embroidery to the 1890 event.

*Chapter 4: 1903, The Jewellery Exhibition*  
*Case Study: Georgina Gaskin*

An increase in women's jewellery production was easily remarkable at the 1903 Arts & Crafts Exhibition, and thus jewellery is the major focus of this chapter. I begin, however, with the critics' assessment of the progress of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, and how this relates to the women who exhibited that year. This is followed by a statistical analysis of women's participation in the 1903 exhibition. Next I discuss the possibilities for jewellery education for women at the time, and the factors which led to the popularity of Arts & Crafts jewellery. Finally I detail the general reception of women jewellers by the periodical press, and conclude the chapter with a case study of the reception of Georgina Gaskin's jewellery.

*Chapter 5: 1916: Now You See Them, Now You Don't*  
*Case Studies: Grace Christie and Phoebe Stabler*

The 1916 ACES exhibition was memorable at the time for transforming the galleries of the Royal Academy, but for my purposes, it is remarkable for generating the least amount of press about women's work. My attempt to understand this phenomenon begins with the contribution of women towards the redecorating of these spaces, followed by a statistical analysis of women's work in the show, and the press reaction to it. I then discuss how the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society's publicity policy was implicated in these press responses, and include short case studies of the careers and reception of Grace Christie and Phoebe Stabler, who received more press attention than the other women exhibitors. The last section of the chapter details the critics' preoccupations with the mural decoration, and the work of the Design and Industries Association.

*Conclusion*

In the conclusion I summarize the main points I have been following in the chapters, explore some reasons why the case studies stood out so much from the other women in the reviews and suggest some preliminary ideas for further research.

## CHAPTER 1 DEALING WITH THE PRESS

But the pen wields a great and increasing power in another direction, viz., the newspaper and magazine article. The latter we may be content to pass over, for its readers as compared with those of the former are comparatively few; but the leading article of the daily newspaper must exert an immense influence, although it may not for the most part affect the mass of the people directly. It is chiefly political, but it assists materially to form public opinion on matters which indirectly affect the welfare, political and social, of every human being who, as a consequence, is compelled to take an interest, and finds it necessary, moreover, to keep himself well posted in the opinions therein expressed.<sup>1</sup>

This comment comes from an article entitled “The Power of the Pen,” published in The Queen in October 1888, during the first Arts & Crafts Exhibition. That it should appear in a woman’s magazine is interesting, considering that it tells its female readers that the information found in such magazines does not affect public opinion nearly as much as leading articles in newspapers do, due to their larger audiences. In relation to this thesis, this text is significant, for it demonstrates that the nineteenth century was aware of the power of the press to impact on its readership.

Among those who thought about the press in this way were the founders of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society. The Society had been formed by like-minded thinkers with a common cause, that of raising the perceived status of the decorative arts, and were cognisant that their exhibitions and catalogues would not be left unmediated by the press as the sole representations of their goals. As will become evident, they eagerly sought press attention.

This chapter considers how the ACES dealt with the press, and how, in turn, the press dealt with the ACES. The first section, “Approaching the Press,” explores the methods used by the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society to garner press attention for their campaign to raise public awareness of good design, quality workmanship and the proper techniques to use to achieve these ends. In keeping with the didactic and moral overtones of the day, the Society wanted to reach a wide range of people, including designers, makers, and the general public, who were incidentally

potential buyers. The methods of self-promotion used for the 1888 exhibition, the Society's first public display, will be explored in detail as these were maintained throughout the years of my study. Due to the completeness of the Minutes and Financial Records for the 1903 exhibition, I will use that source material to examine in greater detail the periodicals in which the ACES placed advertisements and to suggest why they may have been selected.

Arising from the Society's efforts at self-promotion is the second section, "Challenging the Press." ACES exhibitions purposely broke with tradition in the manner in which the decorative arts were chosen, displayed, labeled, and sold. They were a conflation of fine art and industrial art exhibitions, but it was their insistence that all designers and makers be identified which posed such a challenge to the art reviewing system of the late 1880s. I then outline how both fine art and industrial art exhibitions were reviewed in the nineteenth century, in order to illuminate the new responsibilities critics had to face when reviewing the Arts & Crafts Exhibitions.

The third and final section, entitled "The Press Responds," gives some indication of the variety of published responses to the ACES' exhibitions and ideals, before detailing the periodicals that were most consistent in their coverage of women's work, in particular of the women I have chosen as case studies: Kate Faulkner (1888), May Morris and Una Ashworth Taylor (1890), Georgina Cave France Gaskin (1903), Phoebe McLeish Stabler and Grace Chadburn Christie (1916). A consideration of these periodicals also serves two other useful purposes. It introduces some of the critics whose opinions figure prominently in the following chapters, and it reveals how infrequently the names of ACES critics can be identified with complete certainty, a source of immense frustration to anyone attempting to understand the nature of critical reception.

### Approaching the Press

The primary goal of the men who founded the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society was to create a highly visible public forum in which the decorative arts could be promoted on an equal footing with the fine arts. In a very serious and businesslike manner, three committees were

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<sup>1</sup> C.H.J.B., "The Power Of The Pen," The Queen (13 October 1888) 438.



formed to organise the first exhibition.<sup>2</sup> The Finance Committee would raise the guarantee fund, and pay for the gallery rental and expenses; the Selection Committee would visit prospective exhibitors and choose works for the exhibition; and the Literary Committee would be responsible for the catalogue, and all publicity for the upcoming exhibition.

According to the Minutes, the newly-elected Literary Committee members were: William AS Benson, Somers Clarke, George Thomas Robinson, John Dando Sedding, and Emery Walker. In addition the President, Walter Crane and the Secretary, Ernest Radford, attended all meetings.<sup>3</sup> These choices were astute. Robinson, for example, had had a career as art critic with the Manchester Guardian in the late 1860s and early 1870s, before moving to London.<sup>4</sup> Emery Walker was an expert on printing, who would later collaborate with William Morris at the Kelmscott Press. Crane had vast experience and knowledge of the printing industry and publishers due to his long experience as a wood engraver and an illustrator of books. In addition, all members had connections in both the business and design communities, which would come in very handy.

The work of the Literary Committee was vital to the Society's success. In addition to the advertising campaign to solicit exhibitors, this Committee was responsible for attracting an audience for the exhibition and for educating that audience about the goals of the ACES. They laboured intensely over the catalogue, for it had both educational and publicity value. In addition to a complete listing of objects, designers, makers and exhibitors, it contained a preface by Walter Crane which elucidated the Society's ideals, as well as several essays about the various techniques on display to educate viewers of the exhibition. In this way it was quite a departure from other exhibition catalogues. Exhibition catalogues remain in the viewer's possession long after the exhibition is over, thus the catalogue was also an important historical document.

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<sup>2</sup> The idea was first suggested on 12 July 1887, but thought premature; the committees were officially formed on a motion by Somers Clarke, on 5 March 1888.

<sup>3</sup> "Minutes of the Literary Committee," (18 April 1888-10 September 1888) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers AAD 1/41-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London. The Minutes for the Executive Committee list the same members, with the exception of WAS Benson; there is no mention of why he was later added to the Literary Committee.

<sup>4</sup> David Ayerst, Guardian. Biography of a Newspaper (London: Collins, 1971) 182.

Another way to promote Arts & Crafts ideals was by public lectures. A lecture series was discussed, with the names of several well-known practitioners in the various crafts being suggested as possible speakers. Details about the lecture series were not found in the catalogue or the Minutes, however, notices of the lectures appeared in the Athenaeum and The Queen which enable me to piece together what happened.<sup>5</sup>

Although the catalogue and the lecture series were important, the Committee first had to interest exhibitors in showing work at the exhibition, and then interest an audience in viewing that work. Over this they had less control, but the Minutes reveal their systematic approach to both these tasks. Different promotional strategies were used to reach several audiences. At the first meeting of the Literary Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> April, 1888:

Conversation took place upon the best means of bringing the Society into Public Notice. Suggestions were made that Mr Walter Crane should be asked upon his return to write an article for the Nineteenth Century & Mr GT Robinson for the Art Journal. The Secretary received general instructions to make public the aims of the Society in any way which might commend itself to him.<sup>6</sup>

This quote brings up two important points. Firstly, it reveals that the Secretary, Ernest Radford,<sup>7</sup> had considerable responsibility for the promotion of the Society. According to the Minutes, he wrote all the press advertisements, subject to the approval of the Literary Committee. He also made suggestions: on 2 May 1888, for example, he pointed out “the need of a new circular for general circulation,”<sup>8</sup> and accordingly was asked to write one.

Secondly, the Minutes of the initial meeting reveal that the Literary Committee felt the Nineteenth Century and the Art Journal were the periodicals whose readership they wanted to reach, but articles did not appear in these journals. Instead, a signed article by Lewis Foreman Day

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<sup>5</sup> “Lectures at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition,” The Queen 84:2184 (3 November 1888) 549. The lectures are discussed in Chapter 2.

<sup>6</sup> “Minutes of the Literary Committee” (18 April 1888-10 September 1888) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers AAD 1/41-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London.

<sup>7</sup> Ernest Radford was a poet and author of Dante Gabriel Rossetti: A Biographical Study (London: Newnes, 1890), republished New York: Warner, 1905. His wife Dolly was also a poet. He was described by a contemporary as “a casual disciple of William Morris, [...] a Fabian, a very effective speaker, a poet and a wit.” Ernest Rhys, Everyman Remembers (New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corp, 1931) 54. <[http://www.asu.edu/lib/speccoll/prb/prb\\_r.htm](http://www.asu.edu/lib/speccoll/prb/prb_r.htm)>.

<sup>8</sup> “Minutes of the Literary Committee,” (2 May 1888) AAD 1/41-1980. At the same meeting, the Committee wrote an advertisement for the upcoming exhibition which was inserted in the Catalogue of the Spring Exhibition of Pictures at the New Gallery.

was published in the Magazine of Art, in which he explains to the art community why the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society is holding the exhibition.<sup>9</sup>

The next periodical approached was Pall Mall Gazette. A month before the exhibition opened, Radford wrote to the paper, "calling attention to the importance of the Exhibition, [and] suggesting an Interview with Mr Crane."<sup>10</sup> His letter had the desired result, for an interview with Walter Crane appeared in the Pall Mall Gazette the Saturday before the exhibition opened.<sup>11</sup> The same interview was reprinted in the Pall Mall Budget the following week.<sup>12</sup> In these two weekly papers, a larger and more general audience was introduced to the principles of the Society. The writer saw the purpose of the society as analogous to the situation of journalists:

That the present system is as bad a one for art and for public taste as it is good for the pockets of the manufacturer and the middleman, is now universally admitted: anonymous artistry has all the disadvantages of anonymous journalism with none of its benefits - either to the cause, the public, or the worker himself.<sup>13</sup>

This comparison is not surprising: Walter Crane commented in his Reminiscences that the Pall Mall Gazette was one of a handful of periodicals which supported civil liberties and socialism at that time.<sup>14</sup>

Malcolm Salaman interviewed Walter Crane for the Sunday Times three weeks into the exhibition. Salaman bumped into Walter Crane by accident when he went to review the exhibition, and the impromptu interview and guided tour which he received from Crane were reported using Crane's own words to explain the aims of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Lewis F Day, "Art and Handicraft," Magazine of Art 11 (1888) 410-411.

<sup>10</sup> "Minutes of the Literary Committee," (10 September 1888) AAD 1/41-1980.

<sup>11</sup> "The Arts And Crafts Exhibition: What It Is And What It Is For. A Chat With Mr Walter Crane," Pall Mall Gazette 48:7344 (29 September 1888) 5-6.

<sup>12</sup> "Arts and Crafts. A Chat about the New Exhibition with Mr Walter Crane," Pall Mall Budget (4 October 1888) 12-13. The Budget was a condensed, weekly version of the Pall Mall Gazette, often repeating the same articles.

<sup>13</sup> "The Arts And Crafts Exhibition: What It Is And What It Is For. A Chat With Mr Walter Crane," Pall Mall Gazette 48:7344 (29 September 1888) 5.

<sup>14</sup> Walter Crane, An Artist's Reminiscences (London: Methuen & Co, 1907) 271.

<sup>15</sup> MCS [Malcolm C Salaman], "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition. A Chat with Mr Walter Crane," The Sunday Times (21 October 1888) 8.

The next audience targeted by the Literary Committee consisted of artists, designers and companies whom they wished to extend invitations to exhibit. A Circular explaining the aims of the exhibition was duly written by Radford and sent out to selected artists and designers.

Although the Minutes are not precise at this point, it seems that the call to exhibit was sent to selected periodicals in June, providing evidence of the periodicals read by potential exhibitors. Notices about the upcoming exhibition were printed in The Builder and the British Architect on 1 June 1888, in The Queen's 'Work-Table' column on 9 June;<sup>16</sup> and in the Journal of Decorative Arts for July 1888.<sup>17</sup> The paragraph in The Queen specifies that details of potential exhibits must be sent to the Secretary by 30 June. "The Worktable" was a column for women who produced decorative arts, thus the perfect place to mention the possibility of exhibiting in the upcoming Arts & Crafts Exhibition.

In July, Radford was asked "to issue a circular to proposing Exhibitors giving information as to days for Sending in, and asking also for an opportunity of seeing the intended Exhibits on the Artist's own premises at some time prior to that time."<sup>18</sup> This was sent to those individuals and companies who had already indicated willingness to exhibit.

It is significant that ads for sending-in days were sent to the architectural press first. The Committee obviously felt that readership of those journals – architects and builders - would be more likely to exhibit. Later in July, another announcement about the type of work for exhibition and sending-in days was inserted in the daily and weekly papers. Although the Athenæum's subtitle specified their interest in the fine arts, their large and cultured readership made it an ideal place to advertise. The following notice appeared on 11 August:

ARTS and CRAFTS EXHIBITION SOCIETY  
OCTOBER and NOVEMBER 1888 The New Gallery, Regent-street, W.  
Textiles; Gold and Silversmith' Work, including Enamelling; Metal and Iron Work;  
Fictiles; Decorative Painting and Design; Wall Papers; Bookbinding; Printing; Glass;  
Stained Glass; Wood and Stone Carving; Modelling; Cabinet Making. All Work

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<sup>16</sup> "The Work-Table: The Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society," The Queen 83:2163 (9 June 1888) 743.

<sup>17</sup> "Supplement," Journal of Decorative Art 8 (July 1888) xxxv.

<sup>18</sup> "Minutes of the Literary Committee," (2 July 1888) AAD 1/41-1980.

intended for Exhibition must be delivered at the New Gallery the 17<sup>th</sup> 18<sup>th</sup>, or 19<sup>th</sup> of September. Particulars and Forms of Application will be forwarded as required.  
ERNEST RADFORD, Secretary.<sup>19</sup>

However, this coverage was not enough, for at a meeting on 20 August 1888, held at the New Gallery, Radford was asked to advertise a second time in the Athenæum,<sup>20</sup> The Builder and the Building News. An announcement for more exhibitors also appeared in the September issue of The Artist as well, with the polite request, "The committee ask that applications shall be made to the end of the present month."<sup>21</sup>

The Minutes do not list the daily papers to which Radford sent the advertisement announcing the opening of the 1888 exhibition; nor did I find receipts of bills paid for advertising. Some of the events noted in the Minutes I have only been able to verify by perusing the daily papers. For example, an advertisement for the exhibition appeared in the Daily Telegraph every day during the week prior to opening, from Monday September 24 through Friday September 28, 1888. This was a very short announcement, laid out as follows:

THE NEW GALLERY, Regent-street. ARTS and  
CRAFTS EXHIBITION SOCIETY. The FIRST EXHIBI-  
TION of this society will open on OCT. 1 next.  
WALTER CRANE, President  
ERNEST RADFORD, Secretary

Once the exhibition had officially opened, the wording of the ad changed only slightly:

THE NEW GALLERY, Regent-street. ARTS and  
CRAFTS EXHIBITION SOCIETY. The FIRST EXHIBI-  
TION is NOW OPEN.  
WALTER CRANE, President  
ERNEST RADFORD, Secretary

The succinct nature of these advertisements hints at their cost - advertising then, as now, was expensive!

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<sup>19</sup> The advertisement appeared in the Athenæum on Saturday 11 August 1888, on the front page, 3<sup>rd</sup> ad down in left-hand column, thus fairly prominent.

<sup>20</sup> Athenæum 3175 (1 September 1888), 1. The second ad was in the same position as the first one.

<sup>21</sup> "The New Gallery," The Artist (September 1888) 266.

Further insight into the cultivation of a good relationship with the press is evident in the copious records that survive for the 1903 exhibition.<sup>22</sup> Of particular interest, they contain invoices from an advertising agent, G. Street's British and Colonial Advertising and General Newspaper Agency Offices, which list the newspapers and magazines in which the ACES advertised, along with the dates and the price for the advertisement.<sup>23</sup> Advertising was the third largest expense of the 1903 exhibition, with invoices from Messrs Street totalling £192.13s.3d.<sup>24</sup>

The periodicals chosen indicate the audience the Society wanted to reach: readers of art and architecture periodicals, and London daily newspapers. Significantly, the invoices do not list women's magazines or trade journals, both of which published advance notices in 1888. Excluding these publications was perhaps not the wisest idea, for many of their readers were also potential exhibitors.

Well before the 1903 exhibition opened, announcements were placed in art and architecture magazines. Their frequency gives an indication of the Society's desire to interest the readership of a particular periodical. For example, advertisements appeared three times in The Builder, on 8 and 15 November, and 20 December 1902, but only once in December in the Architectural Review, the British Architect, the Art Journal, and the Magazine of Art. Advertisements were also placed in the Saturday Review and the Spectator for two Saturdays in December prior to the show's opening, but not after the show opened.

The general public learned of the exhibition by reading their daily newspaper. Once the exhibition opened, daily ads were placed in eleven London newspapers, from the beginning of January until 14 April 1903, including The Daily Chronicle, The Daily Graphic, The Daily News, The Daily Telegraph, The Globe, The Morning Post, The Pall Mall Gazette, The St James Gazette, The Standard, The Times, and The Westminster Gazette. The choice included morning and

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<sup>22</sup> The secretary for the 1903 exhibition was Alfred A Longden, and whether due to his careful record-keeping or someone else's preservation, the Society's records for this exhibition were much more voluminous than many others.

<sup>23</sup> "Invoice to Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society dated Feb/03," Papers Relating to 1903 Exhibition, Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers AAD 1/104-1980 (1 of 2) C8/165. Archive of Art and Design, London.

<sup>24</sup> "Accounts of the 7<sup>th</sup> Exhibition of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Jan-April 1903," Papers Relating to 1903 Exhibition, Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers AAD 1/103 - 1980 (1 of 2). Archive of Art and Design, London.

evening papers from both ends of the political spectrum, thus reaching the broadest possible public notice. The advertisement placed in the Daily Chronicle on 2 January, under the rubric 'Art Galleries' read as follows:

ARTS and CRAFTS EXHIBITION SOCIETY.  
NEXT EXHIBITION from middle of January to end  
of March, 1903. BRITISH WORKS ONLY.  
EXHIBITION OPENS JANUARY 16.  
For particulars apply to Secretary, 3, Old Serjeants-Inn, Chancery-lane.

Curiously, other than one ad in the Architectural Review in January, no ads were placed in the architectural press after the exhibition opened. The Society advertised for the entire four months of the exhibition in the Art Journal, but only twice in the Magazine of Art (February and April), possibly because its rates were higher than any other periodical.<sup>25</sup> The Studio carried ads during January and February and the Connoisseur in February only.

With the exception of the Connoisseur, all the above-noted periodicals also reviewed the 1903 exhibition. Reviews also advertise the exhibition, and do so in a far more complete way than any advertisement of opening times and admission prices could hope to, thus it is feasible that the ACES did not bother paying for advertising due to having this 'free' publicity. For example, The Builder, a weekly, published six articles about the show in total, three reviews and three sets of illustrations, which appeared at bi-weekly intervals from 17 January until 28 March 1903. This coverage lasted for the duration of the exhibition, serving as a constant reminder to its readers.

Advertising was stepped up towards the end of the exhibition. Again, no explanation was found in the Minutes, but perhaps the Committee wanted to increase the number of visitors in order to capitalise on the one-shilling entrance fee. During the first week of April, advertisements were placed in three more London papers: the Morning Leader, the Star, and the Daily Mail, as well as for four days in each of 16 provincial newspapers in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Newcastle, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, and Sheffield. All of these cities had large manufacturing sectors, and several had been holding Arts & Crafts Exhibitions of their own

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<sup>25</sup> The February and April ads in the Magazine of Art cost £1 10s each. Other monthlies were not far behind: the Art Journal and the Architectural Review were both £1 5s. In contrast, ads in daily newspapers ranged from 2s 6d to 5s. "Invoice C8/165 from G. Street," (February 1903) Papers Relating to 1903 Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers AAD 1/104-1980 (1 of 2) Archive of Art and Design, London.

already, thus there would be an interest in the London Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society. Indeed, some of the ACES members and exhibitors came from these cities.

In addition to using an advertising agency to place their ads, the Society employed the services of a press cutting agency, Romeike & Curtice. An invoice from this company, addressed to Edward S Prior, who was on the Selecting Committee for the 1903 exhibition, and dated September 1903, states it is for "Subscription for series of 125 Press notices supplied £1.1.0."<sup>26</sup> Although these press cuttings have not survived in the Society's archives, the mere fact that they were professionally collected underscores the importance placed on the Society's reception in the press at the time.

### Challenging the Press

In their efforts to raise the status of the decorative arts and of the decorative artist, the ACES was inadvertently the catalyst in the creation of a new type of art review. In 1888, reviews of decorative arts exhibitions were closely allied to those of industrial arts. The ACES was effectively issuing a challenge to the press to consider textiles and furniture in the same manner as they wrote about paintings and sculpture, with the additional stipulation that the designer and maker be identified. In order to understand this challenge, it is necessary to look more closely at the respective traditions of reviewing fine arts and industrial arts.

The Royal Academy was at once the most revered and the most criticised art institution, having established its artistic hegemony from its inception in the late eighteenth century. While painters worked tirelessly in hopes of having one work admitted to the Summer Exhibition, the restrictive nature of the RA's exhibiting policies was also directly responsible for the creation of several other exhibiting societies. The first of these was the Society of Painters in Water-Colour (1805), which gave watercolourists an exhibition venue as they were frequently excluded from RA shows. The Royal Society of British Artists (1823; Royal Charter granted 1887) was next, followed quickly by the British Institution (1825), and the Free Exhibition (1847), later known as the

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<sup>26</sup> "Accounts from Chiswick Press," Papers Relating to 1903 Exhibition Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers AAD 1/104-1980 (1 of 2) Archive of Art and Design, London.



National Institution of the Fine Arts, where the Pre-Raphaelites first exhibited their paintings.<sup>27</sup> Among other societies formed due to the RA's exclusionary policies were the Society of Female Artists (1857), the Society of Etchers (1882) later the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers and Engravers, the New English Art Club (1886), and ultimately, the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society (1887). All these societies held exhibitions, thus the press had no shortage of choice of shows to review.

By all accounts, the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition was the single most important art exhibition of the London season in the nineteenth century. It received the most attention from the press and from the public, and as the oldest art institution in Britain, was the model for all those that followed. The Summer Exhibition was held from the first Monday in May until the first Monday in August. During the 1880s and 1890s it was thronged by an average of 355,000 visitors each year.<sup>28</sup> Accordingly, the review of the RA's Summer Exhibition was also the yardstick by which other articles on art were measured. If a periodical published only one article on art each year, more than likely it would be about the Royal Academy. Liz Prettejohn summarizes the situation succinctly:

Every major kind of Victorian periodical published Royal Academy reviews. In newspapers and weeklies the review was serialized in a number of instalments, which provided a comprehensive enumeration of the works on view; in monthly and quarterly journals it appeared as an essay, covering fewer works but introducing more general commentary; in a satirical periodical such as *Punch* it could take the form of humorous verses.<sup>29</sup>

In 1845, the monthly *Art Journal*, devoted an entire issue to its review of the Royal Academy, advising its readers of its educational intention in advance: "Our object will be to give some notice of *every work of interest and merit* hung upon the walls of the Royal Academy; and we trust we shall not be considered presumptuous if we express our design to submit it to the public as a

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<sup>27</sup> See Helene E Roberts, 'Exhibition And Review: The Periodical Press and The Victorian Art Exhibition System,' in Joanne Shattock & Michael Wolff eds, *The Victorian Periodical Press: Samplings & Soundings* (Leicester University Press & University of Toronto Press, 1982) 79-107.

<sup>28</sup> Paula Gillett, *The Victorian Painter's World* (London: Alan Sutton, 1990) 193.

<sup>29</sup> Prettejohn, 72.

practical guide to the Exhibition.”<sup>30</sup> The works were itemised numerically as they appeared in the exhibition. The following quote may serve as an example of the style of commentary:

No.246. *Prawn Fishing - Coasts of Sussex*, Wilkie Collins, RA. An extensive flat of sand and sea is here seen, which retires to the remote cliffs that close the horizon. The foreground is broken by a few rough objects, among which are the prawn fishers. This admirable picture is in the feeling of the earlier works to which this skilful artist is indebted for his abiding reputation.<sup>31</sup>

Two decades later, the weekly *Saturday Review* ran a series of thirteen thematic reviews of the 1866 Royal Academy exhibition, written by their art critic Philip Gilbert Hamerton.<sup>32</sup> The third article's theme was foreign landscape painting, and included the works of only two painters, John Phillip and John Lewis. “We very much doubt,” Hamerton begins,

whether Mr Phillip could have made such an attractive picture of a British fireside as he has given us, in this year's Royal Academy Exhibition, of “A Chat Round the Brasero.” A facetious and fat priest is lighting his cigarette and entertaining an admiring audience. Nothing could exceed the felicity of characterization in the priest's faces; [...] And how lively the women are, especially the one with the guitar! We are sorry not to be able to extend this praise to another member of the little society round the brasero - the cat - who is lamentably formless and wooden. The painting has Mr Phillip's well-known technical merits - great power of handling, occasional heaviness and coarseness slightly bordering on vulgarity, and vivid realization, of which last quality no better instances could be cited than the riband of the guitar and the piece of panelling on the left.<sup>33</sup>

Although the Royal Academy was the main exhibition to review each year, there was by no means a consensus in the way the reviews were to be written. The continual controversy over the superiority of the literary art critic or the artist critic was waged amongst critics themselves in the periodical press. Literary art-critics such as Francis Turner Palgrave, William Rossetti or Thackeray reviewed literature and politics as well as art; artist art-critics such as Frederick George Stephens, Philip Gilbert Hamerton, and George Augustus Sala tended to review art exhibitions only.<sup>34</sup> By the 1860s, journalism had diversified and professionalised to the extent that reviews in the art press and in newspapers directed at a more educated audience were increasingly written by

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<sup>30</sup> “Varieties” *The Art-Union* 80 (May 1845) 137.

<sup>31</sup> “The Royal Academy 77<sup>th</sup> Exhibition, 1845” *The Art-Union* 82 (June 1845) 185.

<sup>32</sup> Christopher Kent, “Periodical Critics of Drama, Music, & Art, 1830-1914: A Preliminary List,” *Victorian Periodicals Review* (1980), 31-54; P G Hamerton, *An Autobiography 1834-1858 and a Memoir by his Wife 1858-1894* (London: Seeley and Co. Ltd, 1897); James Kissane, “Art Historians and Art Critics - IX: PG Hamerton, Victorian Art Critic,” *Burlington Magazine* 114 (January 1972), 22-29.

<sup>33</sup> [Philip Gilbert Hamerton], “Pictures of the Year. III,” *The Saturday Review* 21 (9 June 1866) 688.

<sup>34</sup> Gillet, 206.

specialist art critics, professionals who devoted their time and energies to learning both technical knowledge and the history of art. These came mainly from the ranks of the literary art-critics. According to Liz Pettejohn, the major professional art critics in 1863 were “[Joseph Beavington] Atkinson at Blackwood’s and probably the Art Journal, [Francis Turner] Palgrave at the Saturday Review, [William Michael] Rossetti at Fraser’s, [FG] Stephens at the Athenæum; and [Tom] Taylor at The Times.”<sup>35</sup> The criticism of the professional art critic, who was neither a literary art critic nor an artist critic, was moving away from a mere description of the narrative story of the painting or its emotional impact on the viewer toward an in-depth discussion of technique, colour and design qualities. Art no longer needed to tell a story, moral or otherwise. Its value was only in reference to itself or other works of art.

This created a ‘bifurcation’ in art criticism from the 1860s onward, because many of the newspapers and weekly papers still employed a generalist critic, one without any specialist knowledge about art, who would also review theatre shows, music concerts, or even news events in addition to art exhibitions. Newspapers had far greater circulations than art magazines, and the views of the untrained critic were foisted on a sector of the population that was quite unfamiliar with the art world. This sort of criticism was potentially more dangerous, as George Bernard Shaw noted in his Autobiography: “Editors sent their worst and wordiest reporters to the galleries, the theatre, and the opera, reserving their best for political meetings and the criminal courts.”<sup>36</sup> These critics often used their lack of professional knowledge as a method of rapprochement with their readers. Their reviews were characterized by a privileging of the emotional impact of a painting on the viewer, and the use of sentimental language to point out a moral message.<sup>37</sup>

Other factors which contributed to this ‘lesser’ sort of art criticism were embedded in the workings of journalism itself: the practice of anonymity, and the low wages for journalists. These factors did nothing to improve the quality of art reviewing. Not having their name in print, writers were not encouraged to improve their knowledge or their style; rather they wrote what their

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<sup>35</sup> Pettejohn, 76.

<sup>36</sup> Quoted in Gillet, 206.

<sup>37</sup> Pettejohn, 80.

audiences wanted to read. Many of these popular art critics wrote art reviews purely for money, contenting themselves. The writer William Makepeace Thackeray and the painter HS Marks, for example, both abandoned writing art criticism as soon as they were able to support themselves without the income it supplied them.<sup>38</sup> Another critic who wrote art criticism under duress was Alice Meynell, who referred to doing the rounds of the art exhibitions as ‘trudging;’ she was only too happy to let her husband and her 19-year-old son Everard take over her “Art Notes” column in the Pall Mall Gazette while she went to America, or whenever she was too busy with other literary work.<sup>39</sup>

Throughout most of the nineteenth century, the periodical press was the major disseminator of information on the fine arts. Artists depended upon reviews to further their careers, and the public learned about art by reading articles and reviews.<sup>40</sup> By the end of the century, art criticism had professionalised to the point where specialist knowledge was necessary to write for certain periodicals, as evidenced by the following advice to would-be art critics from an anonymous ‘Editor’ in 1904:

With regard to Art criticism, on most of the second-rate newspapers an ordinary reporter is supposed to be able to ‘do the pictures’; but in the case of journals of first standing, if there is no one on the permanent staff who has specialised in Art criticism, then outside aid is enlisted - and the outsider will probably be the curator of the local Art gallery, a collector, a picture dealer, or one who has some particular qualification for the work.<sup>41</sup>

One of the results of such professionalisation was the vast amount of published material on the history of art in the form of books, monographs, and catalogue essays. By 1903, this confusing mass of information prompted many readers of the Sunday Times to write to its ‘Art Critic’, asking which was the best source on a particular painter. To accommodate these many requests, the ‘Art Critic’ [Frank Rutter] published his list of the authoritative work on each of the

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<sup>38</sup> Prettejohn, 74.

<sup>39</sup> Viola Meynell, Alice Meynell. A Memoir (London: Jonathan Cape, 1929) 193, 212.

<sup>40</sup> Prettejohn, 73.

<sup>41</sup> An Editor, How to Write for the Press. A Practical Handbook for Beginners in Journalism New and Revised Edition, (London: Horace Cox, 1904[1899]) 74-75.

most popular painters of the day, living or dead.<sup>42</sup> This list is very informative. It indicates Rutter's choice of sources; it reveals which critics had especially studied which artists, and it demonstrates that a much larger number were monographs than periodical articles. The advent of the professional art critic had given rise to the discipline of art history.

While the first Arts & Crafts Exhibition was being organised in the summer of 1888, there were many art exhibitions to visit in London. A quick perusal of the 'Art Exhibitions' column on the front page of The Times during June and July 1888 reveals advertisements for twenty-seven exhibitions. There were three large industrial exhibitions: the Glasgow International Exhibition, the Irish Exhibition, and the Italian Exhibition; several exhibiting societies: the Royal Academy, the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours, the Royal Institute of Painters in Water-Colours, the Home Arts and Industries Association, and the Japanese Fine Art Association; and no fewer than sixteen exhibitions of oil paintings at commercial galleries. Two exhibitions of illustrations were on view, Edwin Abbey's Illustrations to *She Stoops to Conquer* at The Fine Art Society, and the Sixth Annual Exhibition of Original Drawings at Cassell and Company; and the last notice in the column was an exhibition of Old Nankin China at A. Johnson and Sons Galleries.

Displays of decorative arts were limited to those in the industrial exhibitions, the Home Arts and Industries Association's three-day annual show, and the exhibition of Old Nankin China. Reviews of decorative arts exhibitions were not given the same attention as the fine arts in the press. This was due in part to the fact that exhibitions of industrial arts were viewed and written about in terms of their production, sales, or technical aspects, rather than their artistic or aesthetic value. With the advent of the ACES, a change of terminology was taking place. What was called 'industrial arts' and displayed in international trade shows, would soon be called 'decorative arts' and displayed in art galleries.

In her study of the Arts & Crafts Movement, Gillian Naylor states that the Arts & Crafts Exhibitions were patterned after exhibitions organised by the Royal Society of Arts, and the

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<sup>42</sup> Our Art Critic [Frank Rutter], "Painters and Critics," Sunday Times (22 February 1903): 2.

international trade exhibitions.<sup>43</sup> Superficially, this is an obvious connection to make, as the same type of objects were exhibited. However the history of the Royal Society of Arts,<sup>44</sup> and the literature on the 1851 Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations reveals that there were significant differences.<sup>45</sup> From its inception in 1754, the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (later the Royal Society of Arts, or RSA) emphasised competition among manufacturers, with cash and medal prizes as the inducement for the discovery or improvement of industrial techniques, tools, or designs, whereas the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society felt that improvement in designed objects was linked to the value placed on the creative input of the designers and makers. Both the RSA and the ACES desired the improvement of public taste, and both felt that public exhibitions could achieve this. The catalogue from the RSA's 1847 exhibition of British Manufacturers and Decorative Art reveals their dilemma: "the public prefer the vulgar, the gaudy, the ugly even, to the beautiful and perfect. [...] We believe that this Exhibition, when thrown open gratuitously to all, will tend to improve the public taste."<sup>46</sup>

With their exhibitions, the ACES sought to change the way the public thought about the objects and the people who made them. Rather than industrial objects manufactured by a company, they looked upon the same types of objects as works of art, created by individuals. They set the example by naming every person involved in each work, forcing a change to the press's usual method of reviewing exhibitions of this type of work. The vast amount of press resulting from the 1851 Great Exhibition was largely engineered by Henry Cole, one of the major players in mounting the 1851 exhibition. Despite opposition from the organizing Committee, Cole was

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<sup>43</sup> Naylor, 123.

<sup>44</sup> Derek Hudson & Kenneth W Luckhurst, The Royal Society of Arts 1754-1954 (London: John Murray, 1954).

<sup>45</sup> John R Davis, The Great Exhibition (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1999); Michael Leapman, The World for a Shilling: How the Great Exhibition of 1851 Shaped A Nation (London: Headline Book Publishing, 2001); Hermione Hobhouse, The Crystal palace and the Great Exhibition: Art, Science and Productive Industry : A History of the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851. (London: Athlone Press, 2002).

<sup>46</sup> The 1847 Exhibition was mounted to allow the public to view the prize-winning items from two competitions organised by the FSA to encourage manufacturers to produce improved designs. The competitions had sparked the interest of the manufacturers, while the exhibitions were meant to spark the interest of the public. This it did, for 20,000 people visited the exhibition. At this point the FSA began to organise a National Exhibition of the Products of Industry in Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, which in the event became the 1851 Great Exhibition. Hudson and Luckhurst, 193.

adamant that the press should have free and unlimited access to the exhibition, saying that “the interest of the exhibition was to attract the Press to come and report on everything that was going on as much as possible.”<sup>47</sup> This they did, in great profusion. According to Yvonne ffrench, the 1851 exhibition was much

puffed and publicised [...] [producing] the torrent of literature, the press notices, the enormous illustrated supplements, the thousand contemporary ephemera: the souvenirs, the burlesques, the panoramas and the squibs; the articles, the speeches, [and] the pamphlets.<sup>48</sup>

As the Great Exhibition was the first international exhibition in London, the torrent of articles in newspapers were mainly of an explanatory nature. A random example, taken from The Times of 13 May 1851, shows one format of early reviews of industrial arts exhibitions. With its heavy dose of factual information, the article was an art review, as Roberts would define it, rather than art criticism. The introductory paragraph detailed attendance figures, ticket sales, and a few other details and concluded: “In the meantime we continue our synoptical account of the articles exhibited.”<sup>49</sup> The Department of the Precious Metals was the topic for that day, and began with a lengthy explanation of Electro-Metallurgy, a technique discovered in 1839, whereby a metal in solution could be used to coat another metal object, by use of a galvanic battery. The writer informs us that “These processes have, as may be imagined, completely revolutionised the art of the silversmith and goldsmith.”<sup>50</sup> After this educational background, English examples of silversmithing are then described in some detail. Decorative silversmithing was described, but identified only by the company name:

Messrs Morell and Co exhibit an equestrian statue of Queen Elizabeth, taken from the bas-relief of on the great seal of England under her reign. The height of this figure is 4 feet 2 inches, and its length 3 feet; it is embossed with the hammer, and presents a specimen of silversmith’s work as practised in the 16th century, and lately to some extent revived.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Henry Cole, quoted in CH Gibbs-Smith, comp, The Great Exhibition of 1851. A Commemorative Album (London: His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1950) 28.

<sup>48</sup> Yvonne ffrench. The Great Exhibition: 1851 (London: The Harvill Press, 1950) 199.

<sup>49</sup> “The Great Exhibition,” The Times (13 May 1851) 5.

<sup>50</sup> “The Great Exhibition,” 5.

<sup>51</sup> “The Great Exhibition,” 5.

However, a sculpture which had been silverplated was dignified by the name of its designer in addition to that of the company:

Messrs Hunt and Roskell are the most considerable exhibitors in this department; the number of objects presented by them being nearly 100, among which are many of great magnitude, beauty, and value. One of these is a piece of work in silver, showing its application to sculpture combined with the metallurgic art. The groups of figures represent the Seasons, the quarters of the globe, and the Elements. The *alti relievi* represent Day and Night. This work has been both designed and modelled by Mr A Brown."<sup>52</sup>

The anonymous author shows an obvious delight in detailing the latest technological advances, but at the same time reveals in the description of these objects that a fine art, such as sculpture, warranted the identification of its designer, whereas the decorative arts did not.

The reviewing system for decorative or industrial arts after the close of the Great Exhibition was by no means consistent. By the late 1870s, changes were taking place, changes alluded to in the inaugural issue of the Magazine of Art in May 1878:

The criticism of art, indeed, has grown into a special province of literature, with technical terms, almost a language of its own. And if we are right that great masters express themselves in characters only to be understood by study and experience, we cannot wonder if descriptions and decisions are often unsound and clothed in words borrowed but not mastered. We claim the sympathy then of our readers, not because we shall be doubtful of the conclusions we may have to express, but because we desire to share with them all the knowledge we have when we are forced to stop short of conclusions.<sup>53</sup>

At this time, designers were named only if they were internationally or historically known. An 1878 review of a furniture exhibition in Bethnal Green demonstrates this, as well as the practice of identifying the current owner, and the original owner, for whom the piece was made:

Another rich and costly kind of work, belonging to the age of Louis XIV, is that made of tortoiseshell and brass, invented, or perfected, by Andre Charles Boule, whose name ("Boule") it has retained. The museum is poor in this kind of furniture, but a beautiful example has been lent to the exhibition by the Queen. It is a small escritoire supported on two sets of legs, one at each of the sides. The brass is varied by plates of white metal, and others enamelled blue. The ornament is made up of scrolls, leafage, dancing figures and animals, with massive gilt metal mounts on the angles. The proportion of shell to metal varies in different parts. It belonged to the Duc de Retz, and bears his arms, with a double E monogram in the corners of the table.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> "The Great Exhibition," 5.

<sup>53</sup> "Introduction" Magazine of Art 1:1 (May 1878) 4.

<sup>54</sup> J.H.P. "Furniture Exhibition at Bethnal Green Museum, 1878" Magazine of Art 1 (1878-1879) 246.



That same year, reviews of the 1878 Paris International Exhibition provide further examples of the range of methods used by critics to discuss the decorative arts at this time. The Athenæum carried six reviews of the fine art sections of the Paris show,<sup>55</sup> with decorative arts items in the Historic Galleries covered in the seventh and concluding notice. The pieces were described, but this time only the owners of the collections were identified:

The centre case contains a collection of small objects in bronze, enamel, ivory, &c, from Etruscan children's toys to seals of the fifteenth century, belonging to M. Victor Gay. [...] A case of textile fabrics, belonging to M. Chatel, [...] From the collection of Baron Seillières are five book covers in silver.<sup>56</sup>

The Art Journal's Illustrated Catalogue of the Paris International Exhibition of 1878 included reviews of the contemporary decorative arts of England and France in a comments section which revealed a degree of ambivalence toward those designing and producing the work. At times they named designers:

To the works of Messrs Jeffrey & Co of Islington, we allot a second page, to which they are well entitled, for they have so improved British Wall Papers as not only to compete with, but to surpass, the productions of France, which long held supremacy wherever Art of a higher order was required. The first of our engravings is the 'Sunflower Decoration,' designed by BJ Talbert. It is a production of entire harmony: on the frieze and dado gold is introduced. The other is designed by Walter Crane; its prevailing character is that of the old Venetian leather.<sup>57</sup>

Yet with regards to other, equally famous companies, they did not: "The firm of Minton & Co, of Stoke-upon-Trent, the capital of the Staffordshire Potteries, is known throughout Europe, and in the New World also [...] The hands they employ to design as well as to execute are those of true and educated artists."<sup>58</sup> These various styles of review foreground designer, company, or owner but never maker. It is this lacunae which the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society sought to rectify in their insistence on naming both makers and designers.

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<sup>55</sup> These included: 1. English oil painting and a comparison with International Exhibitions of 1855 and 1867; 2. British Watercolours; 3. French painting; 4. Modern German Pictures; 5. Paintings from Austro-Hungary, Italy, Sweden and Norway; 6. Paintings from Switzerland, the Netherlands, Spain, Russia & Belgium.

<sup>56</sup> "The International Exhibition. (Seventh and Concluding Notice). The Historic Galleries - Rooms IV to XVIII" The Athenæum 2645 (6 July 1878) 21.

<sup>57</sup> The Art Journal, The Illustrated Catalogue of the Paris International Exhibition (London: Virtue & Co, 1878), 88.

<sup>58</sup> Illustrated Catalogue of the Paris International Exhibition, 2.

Although the ACES used their exhibitions and various publications to put across their goals, they really needed to have the critics onside in order to induce society at large to value decorative and industrial arts as they did fine art, and to accord decorative artists the same prestige as fine artists. This was not an easy task. Generalist fine art criticism, which emphasised the narrative or moral impact of a painting, was not easily transferable to decorated objects. Professional art criticism implied an in-depth knowledge of methods and techniques, of which there were far too many present in any one exhibit of the ACES for a critic to be immediately conversant. The following section of this chapter details the many ways in which critics applied themselves to these new tasks.

### The Press Responds

Despite the challenge set by the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, a far wider variety of periodicals reviewed its exhibitions than exhibitions of fine arts. These included daily newspapers, weekly scholarly and illustrated papers, the art press, the architectural press, women's papers, and trade journals. The only sectors of the press that did not comment on the ACES came from the two extremes; at one end the so-called journals of opinion, and at the other end of the spectrum, the Sunday papers.<sup>59</sup>

Interest in the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society was thus broadly spread across periodicals of many types, for many audiences, both in London and in the provinces. This was mainly due to the Society's approach to decorative arts as a means of improving both the worker who made them and the society that used them. Reviews of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society differed greatly, depending on the audience for whom the review was written. For readers of The Lady, the Arts & Crafts was reviewed as a social function, with great attention paid to who was present, and what they wore. Other women's magazines focussed on those techniques thought suitable for women, at times to the exclusion of all else. Building and furniture trade workers and architects were far more interested in the quality of design and craftsmanship of the furniture or metal items, and this becomes clear in the technical discussions in the trade magazines. The daily newspapers, having

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<sup>59</sup> Journals of opinion carried articles about art, but only occasionally reviews of the Royal Academy. Sunday papers rarely contained art reviews.

the broadest audiences, were more general in their approach, giving a synopsis of the aims of the society in the early shows, a comparison of this year's exhibition with those that had preceded it, and guidelines for the uninitiated as to which exhibits were worth perusing.

The timing of the reviews is also important in relation to their impact. Reviews in the daily newspapers generally appeared first, on the day after the Press View, which coincided with the first day the exhibition was open to the public. Weekly reviews appeared next, with the monthly journals (art, trade, architecture) generally appearing at some point during the course of the exhibition, which averaged two months in duration.

Major art magazines that reviewed the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society in the nineteenth century include The Art Journal, The Artist, The Magazine Of Art, The Portfolio and The Studio. I also used reviews in Art et décoration, a Parisian publication whose editor, Gabriel Mourey, was a friend of Charles Holme, and contributed to The Studio, as well as running the Paris office of The Studio. Neither of the new twentieth-century art magazines, The Connoisseur and Burlington Magazine, reviewed the 1903 Arts & Crafts Exhibition, but they did review later exhibitions.

Reviews of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society in the women's press were surprisingly erratic. In The Gentlewoman, The Queen, The Lady's Pictorial, and the Ladies' Field one consistently finds reviews of ACES, albeit geared towards their female readers thus at times excluding men's work. Women's papers that contained less complete coverage tended to have an agenda, either conservative or feminist. The Lady, a conservative woman's paper which is still in publication, reviewed the first Arts and Crafts exhibition in 1888, skipped over the 1890s, and resumed coverage after 1900. However, it was coverage with an agenda. In 1903, for example, only women's embroidery was mentioned, despite the fact that this accounted for only one third of women's work in the show. In 1916, the costumes worn at the Private View received more column inches than the works on view, with only a few items of traditionally acceptable women's work - textiles and pottery - mentioned.

The more feminist journals reviewed ACES for the first few exhibitions only. Neither the most serious of these, the Englishwoman's Review, nor the monthly magazine Woman reviewed the Arts and Crafts exhibitions after 1890. This may be attributable to a change in editorial staff, but more likely the avoidance of the ACES by the feminist women's press has more to do with their

realisation that the ACES did not further their feminist agendas. Similarly, ACES reviews disappeared after 1890 in Florence Fenwick Miller's women's column in the Illustrated London News. After 1890 the Ladies Column itself disappeared from several local London weekly newspapers, along with reviews of art exhibitions. Changes in local newspapers in the 1890s, possibly due to the increase in women's papers and magazines, may have precluded the need for a women's column in the local paper; in any event, more research is needed in this area.

Many architects designed and supervised the creation of decorative arts in their buildings, and thus almost all the architecture journals reviewed the Arts & Crafts Exhibitions regularly. I used the British Architect, The Builder, Building News, Builders Journal & Architectural Record, The Architect, and Architectural Journal (later The Journal Of The RIBA). The Architectural Review, subtitled "for the artist & craftsman" noticed the exhibitions, but did not mention women's work at all. After a preliminary scathing review in 1888, the Proceedings of the Society Of Architects, later the Journal of the Society Of Architects, did not review Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society shows again.<sup>60</sup>

The trade journals I consulted include The Cabinet Maker & Art Furnisher, Furniture & Decoration (later Furniture Record and the Furnisher), The Furniture Gazette, Irish Textile Journal, and Watchmaker Jeweler Silversmith & Optician. Each of these trade journals spoke to a specific audience, thus the reviews were geared to that audience. For example, both the Cabinet Maker and Furniture & Decoration generally reviewed only the furniture in the exhibition, while the Watchmaker dwelt on the jewellery and silverwork. Reviews in these journals are vital to a complete understanding of the reception of the Arts & Crafts Exhibitions, for they give the trade's opinion of the work exhibited, as well as on other issues which affected their readership, such as technical education. It became clear very early on that the trade was not in agreement with what the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society was trying to do, hence their import as the earliest voice of dissent.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> The Royal Institute of British Architects never saw eye to eye with the Society of Architects, differing mainly over issues of education of architects. This issue is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2.

<sup>61</sup> Several such points are brought up in the succeeding chapters.

Journals devoted more specifically to the decorative arts were also directed at amateurs. I looked at The Art Designer (later Home Art Work), and Art Worker's Quarterly. Home Art Work (1884-1912) published full-scale designs by several leading proponents of the Arts & Crafts Movement, some of which were exhibited at the Arts & Crafts Exhibitions. Also a quarterly, its reviews of the ACES often appeared after the exhibition had closed, and were almost invariably self-interested, with the anonymous critic discussing either pieces designed by Walter Crane, Aymer Vallance, or George C Haité, whose designs were regularly published in the magazine, or work designed and made by one of the many women whose businesses were the subject of regular 'puffs.' Any work produced or purchased by the editor, Blanche de Montmorency Conyers-Morrell, was also mentioned. But although Home Art Work began by praising the ACES, and encouraging its readers to exhibit there, Conyers-Morrell stopped exhibiting in 1899, and the paper stopped reviewing the exhibitions after 1903.

The Art Worker's Quarterly, subtitled A Portfolio Of Practical Designs For Decorative And Applied Art, was also for amateurs. Its aims were:

to supply designs in a readily applicable form to those who do not invent, plan, or adapt ornament, and who find difficulty in obtaining good and suitable suggestions for their work. [...] to assist those who may have some knowledge of the principles on which ornamental design is constructed, by publishing specimens of good work from the best historical and contemporary sources.<sup>62</sup>

These aims were followed closely. ACES and Home Arts & Industries Association exhibitions were reviewed at some length by practitioners of the various trades, and copiously illustrated. A lot of attention was directed to exhibitions and competitions at the various art schools. Like other periodicals with a narrow range of interest, though, it only lasted from January 1902 until November 1906.

Newspapers catered to a much broader audience, thus their reviews tended to cover everything in the exhibition. Of the many London daily newspapers, I used The Times, the Standard, the Daily Chronicle and the Daily Telegraph, which all reviewed the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society for the duration of my study, as well as most other art exhibitions in London. The Daily Graphic did not review the ACES exhibitions after 1899. As representatives of the

provincial press I chose the Manchester Guardian, the Glasgow Herald, and the Birmingham Daily Post, all of which ran regular reviews of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society.

Weekly papers which reviewed the shows regularly included: the Saturday Review, Country Life, the Court Circular and Court News, the Pall Mall Gazette, and the Illustrated London News which reviewed all except the 1916 show. The Sunday Times and the Athenæum both provided sporadic coverage, which is not surprising given their preference for literature and, in the case of the Athenæum, a subtitle which stipulated coverage of 'the Fine Arts'.<sup>63</sup>

Certain periodicals in my sample revealed a distinct bias towards female exhibitors at the Arts & Crafts Exhibitions in the years of this study, and in particular discussed the women who became my case studies. While none of the periodicals named all six case studies, three periodicals -- The Builder, The Queen and the Manchester Guardian -- mentioned five of them. Although it only included three of my case studies, I have also included a section on The Studio, due to its indepth coverage of the Arts & Crafts Movement from its inception in 1893. The rest of this section gives a brief historical background of these periodicals, their editors and art critics where identified, and their interest in the decorative arts.

### The Builder

The first issue of The Builder, subtitled *An Illustrated Weekly Magazine for the Drawing Room, the Studio, the Office, the Workshop, and the Cottage*, was published on 31 December 1842. It was founded by Joseph Aloysius Hansom, who was concerned to provide "the building trade with some channel of inter-communication."<sup>64</sup> As such, its stated purpose was "To instruct and inform, to disseminate knowledge as to discoveries and inventions, to advertise wants and form

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<sup>62</sup> "A Foreword," Art Worker's Quarterly 1:1 (1 Jan 1902).

<sup>63</sup> The Athenæum's art critic until 1901 was Frederick George Stephens (1828-1907), whose writings reveal that he was far more interested in the fine arts than in decorative arts. He also wrote about the working class collector and the rise of the 'nouveau riche' class as art collectors. See Dianne Sachko Macleod, "F.G. Stephens, Pre-Raphaelite Critic and Art Historian," Burlington Magazine 128 (1986) 398-406.

<sup>64</sup> "Through the Century. *The Builder's* Contribution to Progress," The Builder (1 January 1943) 10. The Builder bought the British Architect in 1916, and Architecture in 1937. In 1966 the journal was renamed Building, and is still in publication today.

for it a general nucleus of strength, light and union.”<sup>65</sup> Hansom was also the first editor and publisher, although he was soon forced to sell the copyright of the journal to the printers, John Lewis Cox and Sons, in July 1843.<sup>66</sup> Hansom then left The Builder, going on to a successful architectural career.<sup>67</sup>

Alfred Bartholomew<sup>68</sup> next held the editorial post, but after a year he was succeeded by George Godwin, who was editor from December 1844 to 1884. Godwin shaped the contents of The Builder to a great extent, imbuing it with his own broad range of social, artistic and architectural concerns. Innovations which are mentioned in the literature include publishing architectural competition drawings, scathing editorials about the dire condition of London’s working-class housing and sanitation, and the introduction of art reviews. He worked tirelessly to promote what he believed in, but there is also a very practical reason why Godwin worked so hard to make The Builder a successful periodical. His contract contained a clause which gave him “a life interest in the profits and the power to continue in office as long as he pleased, with the right of nominating his successor.”<sup>69</sup>

Godwin had hired Henry Heathcote Statham (1838-1924) to write articles for The Builder in the 1860s, while Statham was working as an architect in Liverpool. Impressed with Statham’s writing, Godwin encouraged him, and in 1868 Statham moved to London to take up a writing career, contributing articles to The Builder as well as The Building News.<sup>70</sup> Following his contractual privilege, Godwin appointed Statham his successor as editor, a post Statham held from 1883 until 1910.

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<sup>65</sup> The Builder Precursor Number (31 December 1842) 16.

<sup>66</sup> From this point until 1881, when Edward Webster Cox was appointed as Trustee-Manager, the Cox family was not involved in the day to day running of The Builder. Herbert Arthur Cox, compiler, “These Stones: The Story of ‘The Builder’ and of Other Builders (London: The Builder Ltd, 1937) 53, 152.

<sup>67</sup> “Through the Century,” 10. Hansom (1803-1882) is best known as inventor of the Hansom cab, which he patented on 23 December 1834.

<sup>68</sup> Bartholomew (1801-1845) was in ill health when he took on the editorship of The Builder, and retired with the last issue of 1844. He died a few weeks later. “Through the Century,” 12.

<sup>69</sup> Cox, 75.

<sup>70</sup> “The Late H. Heathcote Statham,” The Builder (6 June 1924) 902.

One of the first changes Statham made when he became editor was to introduce more updated forms of illustration. He had tried to encourage their use under Godwin, who had staunchly insisted on woodcut illustrations or steel engravings, which were both time-consuming and expensive to produce. In addition, Statham reworded the masthead of The Builder to represent its broader readership: *An illustrated weekly magazine for the architect, engineer, constructor, sanitary reformer and art lover*. Of note here is that the subtitle now refers to the type of person intended to read the magazine, rather than the places it could be found, as the original subtitle.

Statham edited The Builder throughout the majority of the time of this study, and although he had to submit to the wishes of the board of directors, as editor he still had considerable influence on the journal's content. A useful glimpse of his ideas about art, architecture, art criticism and women may be found in his tome of short essays called Winged Words. His critique of the Royal Academy clearly reveals Statham's understanding of, and support for the principles espoused by the ACES:

Art does not consist merely in painting pictures; it lies also in sculpture, in stained glass, in jewellery design, in furniture design; all which the Academy neglects, with the exception of sculpture [...] If the Academy were to commence the reform of their exhibitions by devoting the large room to sculpture and decorative painting; by setting apart a room for architectural models and another for goldsmiths' work and *bijouterie*; reducing the number of their pictures, and keeping thereby a higher standard, they would perhaps do more for art, and more to raise their own institution in the opinion of the best educated class of people, than by any other means.<sup>71</sup>

Of art criticism circa 1907, he writes, "The function of that criticism is now not to find fault, nor to point out beauties; its ostensible object, its *raison d'être* apparently, is to point out ugliness."<sup>72</sup> He went on to explain that partisan art critics mislead their readers by their praise of those paintings produced by members of clubs to which they also belonged, doing their readers a grave disservice. On the topic of women, he begins with the disclaimer that he does not harbour "that paltry and foolish attitude of indulgent contempt towards women which some men affect," but believes "that in great matters women are on the whole more often capable of noble, heroic

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<sup>71</sup> [H.H. Statham], "The Royal Academy" in Winged Words 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, rev. (London: John Lane The Bodley Head, 1907) 34-35.

<sup>72</sup> [Statham] "The Madness of the Modern Art Critic," in Winged Words 29-30.



and self-denying conduct than men.”<sup>73</sup> His observations of the inequities of women’s behaviour include only one comment about art:

A woman cannot draw houses or other buildings vertical in a picture or sketch. I do not, of course, speak of eminent lady artists who are in the habit of painting architectural subjects; they are exceptional women (I am not sure that there is more than one in this country, after all). But you will find ladies who can paint general landscape with a great deal of ability and effect, but when it comes to introducing buildings in the scene, they can no more make them stand upright than a member of the New English Art Club could.<sup>74</sup>

One is not certain whether he is attempting to insult the NEAC or women painters; however it seems clear that Statham had definite ideas about many things, and based much of his commentary on personal experience. Statham’s obituary in The Builder noted that he wrote “Leading articles, competition and book reviews, articles on art and science, building and the crafts, notes, and even news paragraphs, [...] with an apparent ease which was made possible only by a vast accumulation of knowledge and a logical and orderly mind.”<sup>75</sup> A colleague, Maurice B Adams, editor of The Building News, wrote that he “frequently met him [Statham] at different places when reviewing exhibitions and competitions.”<sup>76</sup> Thus, although all articles in The Builder were unsigned, there is a good chance that some of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society reviews were written by Statham himself during his tenure as editor.

Edward Webster Cox (1838-1921), who was a Trustee-Manager of The Builder from 1881-1911, wrote less glowingly of Statham than his architectural colleagues did after his death.

Although Statham was a trained architect, Cox wrote that he

was more the literary man with artistic and musical tastes; an extremely able writer and caustic critic, he was altogether a man of remarkably high attainments. Unfortunately, he gave frequent occasions for threatened libel actions and caused alienation of friends by his severe criticism. Eventually, in 1910, he had to be parted with, owing to the constant friction between him and the Trustees.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> “Little Peculiarities among Women”, in Winged Words 125-126.

<sup>74</sup> “Little Peculiarities among Women” 130-131. Statham did not hold the New English Art Club in very high esteem, viewing them as a clique which contained both painters and the critics who praised their work. See “The Profession of Expressing Opinions” and “The Madness of the Modern Art Critic”, *passim*.

<sup>75</sup> “The Late H. Heathcote Statham,” 902. The anonymous writer (possibly the editor, WT Plume) also cites many of Statham’s comments, indicating the two knew each other.

<sup>76</sup> “The Late H. Heathcote Statham,” 903.

<sup>77</sup> Cox, 77-79.

This friction with the Trustees was over their attempts to control the contents of the periodical. According to Herbert Arthur Cox, Edward Cox's son and chartered accountant for The Builder until 1910 when he became joint Director with his cousin Frank Henry Finlaison, Statham "was passionately fond of sculpture and resented the attempts made by the Trustees to limit the space devoted to this art."<sup>78</sup> This comment gives a clue as to the true power of the editor of The Builder – the final word went to the Trustees.

Another reason given for parting with Statham was purely financial. Apparently Statham did not edit contributions until they had been set up in type which involved unnecessary expense and produced over-long articles,<sup>79</sup> and the company auditor, Herbert Cox, found these working habits less than desirable. By December 1909 profits had been sliding for twenty years. The owners blamed the editor, and gave Statham six months notice; he left after three months when he found an editorial post with The Builders' Journal.<sup>80</sup>

Statham continued his writing and editing career after leaving The Builder. In all he wrote over a dozen books and numerous articles on architecture, art, poetry and music in the Edinburgh Review, the Fortnightly Review and Nineteenth Century. A gifted musician, Statham was also music critic for the Edinburgh Review, and gave regular Sunday afternoon organ concerts at the Albert Hall.<sup>81</sup>

Henry Vaughan Lanchester was chosen as editor following Statham. As a practicing architect with a large and busy practice, it was hoped he would increase the paper's prestige within the architectural community. Unfortunately he had several overseas contracts and left in 1912 to work in New Delhi.<sup>82</sup> He was followed Arthur James Stratton, who stayed only a year, and Herbert Winkler Wills, who edited The Builder from 1913 until the end of World War I. Wills (1864-1937), studied at South Kensington and the Architectural Association, became a Fellow of the RIBA, and

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<sup>78</sup> Cox, 80.

<sup>79</sup> Cox, 80.

<sup>80</sup> Cox, 81.

<sup>81</sup> "H H Statham," Who Was Who, 1897-1915 (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1916); British Library catalogue; Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals.

<sup>82</sup> Cox, 81.

worked in Hong Kong, Vancouver, New York and Boston before returning to London to practice architecture. In addition to designing many public buildings, Wills published monographs on the City Companies of London, and edited The Architect from 1918 to 1926 after leaving The Builder.<sup>83</sup>

Although all the women in my case studies except Una Taylor were named in The Builder's anonymous reviews of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, their coverage of women's work was irregular. They did not name many women, but they were consistent in choosing the work of the women which was most reviewed in my sample. In 1888 they named five women, in 1890 fourteen; in 1903 they discuss thirteen women, and in 1916 only five were named. The decrease in mentions of women from the 1903 to the 1916 ACES exhibition is a commonality with most other periodicals, including the ones in this section.

#### The Queen: An Illustrated Journal and Review

Begun by Samuel Orchard Beeton in 1861, The Queen was the sole woman's magazine in my study which advertised for contributors to the 1888 Arts & Crafts Exhibition. It is increasingly referred to by scholars in their attempts to interpret Victorian and Edwardian England. Surprisingly, very little has been written about the magazine itself;<sup>84</sup> the following is a brief account of its history and its engagement with the decorative arts.

The Queen was Beeton's second women's magazine. His first was the extremely successful Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine (EDM), an illustrated monthly founded in May 1852. Many of the mainstays of women's magazines were initiated in the EDM, including "essay competitions, problem pages, prize distributions, medical columns and paper dress patterns."<sup>85</sup> Beeton also

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<sup>83</sup> "Wills, Herbert Winkler, 1864-1937," Antonia Brodie, et al, Directory of British Architects 1834-1914. 2 vols. updated & expanded ed, (London & New York: Continuum, 2001) 1016-1017; Who Was Who 1929-1940 (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1941) 1466; "Obituaries," Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects 44 (1937) 517-518.

<sup>84</sup> In his autobiography, Quentin Crewe commented on being asked, in 1961, to write a history of The Queen to celebrate its centenary: "Apart from the fact that proofs of the magazine were always sent to Queen Victoria before publication, Sam [Beeton] was the only object of interest in the magazine's history. It would have made a dull book. I hit on the idea of doing a light-hearted study of the attitudes of Society over the previous hundred years, as reflected in *The Queen*." The book, The Frontiers of Privilege, according to Crewe, "met with little success." Quentin Crewe, Well, I Forget the Rest (London: Hutchinson, 1991), 154-155.

<sup>85</sup> Sam Beeton himself answered the queries about relationships in "Cupid's Letter Bag" becoming England's first 'agony aunt.' Sarah Freeman, Isabella and Sam The Story of Mrs Beeton (New York: Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, Inc, 1978) 79.

appealed to women's intellect in a way that previous women's magazines had not done, a factor which ensured the continued success of the EDM, and was copied in several later women's publications, particularly The Queen. In the Preface to the first issue, Beeton explained his goals for the EDM:

When introducing the ENGLISHWOMAN'S DOMESTIC MAGAZINE to the public, we stated that our object was to produce a work which should tend to the improvement of the intellect, the cultivation of the morals, and the cherishing of domestic virtues.<sup>86</sup>

Beeton's advanced views were evident from the beginning. Although he believed in women's emancipation, he could not safely express this view in the EDM without alienating a portion of his readership.<sup>87</sup> Instead, "he concentrated on the side issues of education, employment, and women's achievements in the arts and medicine. [...] He also tried to broaden his readers' minds by publishing stimulating fiction,"<sup>88</sup> such as Nathaniel Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter whose heroine was an adulteress.

In January 1855, when the EDM was running smoothly, Beeton began the Boy's Own Magazine. This ground-breaking publication, the first for boys, benefitted from the recent broadening of topics for children's literature in England, and from the translation of works by Hans Christian Andersen. During this period, he met Isabella Mayson on one of her weekly visits to London for her piano lesson, and they married after a year-long engagement.

From the time of her marriage Isabella Beeton wrote household and cookery columns for the EDM, adding a column called "The Nursery" after the birth of her first child, and eventually becoming the editress.<sup>89</sup> She worked at first from their home in Pinner, but as she took on more responsibility, she found this arrangement unsatisfactory, and took the train into London with her husband each morning to work in the office, which was highly unconventional at the time. Isabella

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<sup>86</sup> Quoted in Freeman, 77.

<sup>87</sup> The issue of women's suffrage was not openly discussed in periodicals until after June 1866, when John Stuart Mill brought the Ladies' Petition for women's suffrage to the attention of the House of Commons. Theodora Bostick, "The Press and the Launching of the Women's Suffrage movement, 1866-1867," Victorian Periodicals Review 13 (Winter 1980) 125-131.

<sup>88</sup> Freeman, 78.

<sup>89</sup> Freeman, 134.

Beeton also spent a great deal of time during the first years of her marriage on the Book of Household Management, testing the recipes sent in by readers of the Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine, and compiling information from a myriad of sources. This book was the first guide to all aspects of running a household, and revolutionary at the time of its first publication in 1861. It has been reissued as recently as 2000.

By 1860, Beeton's successful publishing and magazine business was situated at 248 Strand, London, where most of 1861 was spent planning a new women's magazine, to be called The Queen: An Illustrated Journal and Review. The first issue appeared in newsstands on Saturday 7 September 1861, and to encourage subscribers, it contained a photograph of Queen Victoria.<sup>90</sup> The Queen was one of the first "class" journals, produced with a very specific audience in mind.<sup>91</sup> It was a weekly newspaper for women, "aimed at a much better heeled, more sophisticated public"<sup>92</sup> than the audience for the EDM, and was accordingly larger in format, better illustrated and, at sixpence, more expensive. Its tone was that of a review rather than a ladies' magazine, containing general news and information to encourage men to read The Queen as well.<sup>93</sup> Women's magazines had been around since the late eighteenth century, but this was the first time a newspaper was directed at intelligent, upper class women. Sarah Freeman explains,

Its function, apart from providing entertainment, was to supply a news sheet for every woman who wanted to keep herself alert and well informed and appear intelligent in society. The contents fell roughly under four headings, all pointing more or less in this direction: society news; news of the arts; subjects of general interest, which besides giving the paper its wide appeal served as useful dinner-party conversation-starters; and women's features - at first only fashion and needlework, but later cookery and housekeeping as well."<sup>94</sup>

A small advertisement on the back page of The Queen announced that it was published by Samuel Orchard Beeton, printed by Charles Wyman of Cox & Wyman, and that Barker Webb was

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<sup>90</sup> An advertisement in the first issue informs readers that "The Photograph of Her Majesty may be had through any Bookseller, or through the Post, with any number of "THE QUEEN" published before the end of November: the Photograph being taken instead of the current Supplement." The Queen I (7 September 1861).

<sup>91</sup> A class journal was originally defined for tax purposes, by its "omission or inclusion of general, or 'public' news," and was a term in general usage by the mid-1840's. Charlotte C Watkins, "Edward William Cox and the Rise of 'Class Journalism'," Victorian Periodicals Review 15:3 (1982) 87.

<sup>92</sup> Freeman, 178.

<sup>93</sup> Freeman, 179.

<sup>94</sup> Freeman, 179.

The Queen's advertising manager. The first editor was Frederick Greenwood.<sup>95</sup> Beeton and Greenwood had met when the two were 'printer's devils,' or apprentice compositors together and Greenwood had worked for Beeton as general assistant, deputy and now editor for a total of thirteen years.<sup>96</sup> The Queen was Greenwood's first editorial post. He would later achieve greater notoriety in his role as the first editor of the Pall Mall Gazette (1865-1880).

Isabella Beeton edited the women's features in The Queen from its appearance in September 1861 until it was sold in April 1862, and wrote the explanatory text for the fashion plates and the instructions for the 'Novelty in Needlework' column included with every issue.<sup>97</sup> After four weeks, the popularity of the needlework page necessitated its increase from a single page to a four-page supplement. New columns were soon included, and with the increase in content, Isabella Beeton oversaw the editing of her contributors' columns, and wrote only the 'Dress' column, handing over her needlework column to 'HBL', while Eliane De Marsi signed a column entitled "Parisian Fashions." A cookery column, 'My Great-Aunt's Receipt Book' was begun in the first year as well, but its author remains anonymous. Reviews of the arts were included in the paper from the beginning, and "were lengthy and informed, covering concerts, plays, exhibitions, and books in much the same way as their modern counterparts."<sup>98</sup> Frederick Greenwood was likely the drama critic.<sup>99</sup>

Although The Queen was successful, Samuel Beeton sold the magazine in April 1862<sup>100</sup> to Serjeant Edward William Cox (1809-1879). Cox was a lawyer, magistrate, publisher and a prolific

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<sup>95</sup> JW Robertson Scott, The Story of the Pall Mall Gazette of its First Editor Frederick Greenwood and of its Founder George Murray Smith (Oxford University Press, 1950) 118.

<sup>96</sup> Freeman, 62.

<sup>97</sup> Freeman, 183.

<sup>98</sup> Freeman, 181.

<sup>99</sup> Scott, 118.

<sup>100</sup> Charlotte C Watkins, "Editing a 'Class Journal': Four Decades of *The Queen*," in Wiener, 1985, 187; RN Rose, The Field 1853-1953 (London: Michael Joseph, 1953) 56. There is much contradictory information about the sale date of The Queen. Sarah Freeman gives the date of sale as July 1863 (Freeman, 184), but the evidence in The Queen, points to April 1862, which Rose and Watkins use. Cox purchased The Lady's Newspaper and Pictorial Times in July 1863, and merged it with the Queen. Watkins (1985), 187. Amongst primary sources, there is a different version. Evelyn March-Phillips's article "Women's Newspapers" in The Fortnightly Review announces, "In 1861 the *Lady's Own Paper*, a feeble little publication, the only representative of its kind, was giving up a languid struggle for life, when it was bought up by Mr Cox, the

writer, publishing no fewer than 35 books on law, spiritualism, psychology, and dreams.<sup>101</sup> As an entrepreneur, Cox's skills found a lucrative outlet in periodicals. He founded and edited The Law Times (1843 -1965), and later began The Critic (1843-1863),<sup>102</sup> the Clerical Journal, and the County Courts Chronicle and Bankruptcy Gazette (1847-1920), among other publications. In 1854, Cox purchased The Field, a men's country magazine, from Benjamin Webster, and proceeded to turn the flagging periodical into a financial success.<sup>103</sup> A contemporary wrote that Cox also acquired The Queen "on very easy terms, which in his hands soon took its place as one of the best papers of its kind in England."<sup>104</sup> Cox later turned the successful "Exchange and Mart" column in The Queen into a periodical in its own right, which was again extremely profitable.<sup>105</sup>

Both Isabella Beeton and Frederick Greenwood ceased their editorial duties when The Queen was sold, and from that time forward the magazine was conducted from the offices of The Field at 346 Strand, London.<sup>106</sup> An editorial entitled "To Our Readers" duly appeared in the 12 April 1862 issue which explained more specifically the new management's aims for the paper. I quote it at length for it shows how similar Cox's aims for the paper were to Beeton's:

In the present number of the QUEEN we have attempted to redeem our promise - that we would make it a perfect LADY'S JOURNAL. Such a Journal has never before been provided for the ladies of this country, though some have attempted the task.

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father of the present proprietors, and given a fresh start as the *Queen*." (56:331 (July 1894) 661). The 1896 Newspaper Press Directory gives a similar story: "In 1861 the *Lady's Own Paper* was purchased by Serjeant Cox and re-named the *Queen*. On September 7 the new venture came out..." (Laura Alex Smith, "Fifty Years of Women's Papers and Magazines," Newspaper Press Directory (1896), 12.)

<sup>101</sup> Frederic Boase, Modern English Biography. 1892-1921 (Frank Cass & Co Ltd, 1965).

<sup>102</sup> The Critic, edited by James Lowe, grew out of the literary and art review column in the Law Times, and carried reviews which were of particular interest to lawyers. Cox and his partner in the new venture, a Mr Crockford, wanted to streamline the 'class' publications, so that the Law Times would only deal with issues of the law. Watkins, 1982, 89. The Critic was far less successful than its major rival, the Athenæum, despite Cox's attempts to boost his own ratings by fudging the circulation statistics. For an interesting view on how Cox did this, see "Rev of The Handbook for Advertisers. By an Old Advertiser. 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Eds. Effingham Wilson and Men of the West: No. II: Edward William Cox, Esq. by James Lowe. Somerset County Gazette Office," The Athenæum 1409 (28 October 1854) 1301-2.

<sup>103</sup> RN Rose, The Field 1853-1953. A Centenary Volume (London: Michael Joseph, 1953), 56.

<sup>104</sup> Thomas Humphrey Ward, Men Of The Reign: A Biographical Dictionary Of Eminent Persons Of British And Colonial Birth Who Have Died During The Reign Of Queen Victoria (London: Routledge, 1885).

<sup>105</sup> Joseph Hatton, Journalistic London. Being a Series of Sketches of Famous Pens and Paper of the Day (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1882) 210. In 1873 Cox started a second gentleman's newspaper devoted to sport, entitled The Country. A Journal Of Rural Pursuits (1873-1879).

<sup>106</sup> Scott, 119.

The problem which we have set ourselves to the solution of is, how to provide a weekly Record and Journal which ladies can read and profit by; one in which their understandings and judgments will not be insulted by a collection of mere trivialities, but which will be to them a help in their daily lives, and which shall provide them with just that information which they require. We point to the fuller statement of our plan, which occupies the previous column, and to the varied and interesting contents of the present number, as evidence of the heartiness and completeness with which we have set about our work.

But considerable as, we hope, our readers will thus far deem our performances to be, we have yet many improvements to make, many additions to introduce. In their development we ask but the aid, co-operation, and encouragement of our subscribers. We say emphatically to all, confide in us - trust to us - ask our advice, and favour us with your hints - make the QUEEN the medium of information to be obtained and to be given; a letter per day from each of the twenty thousand readers of the QUEEN will be most heartily welcome. Thus the Notes and Queries, and the answers to them, which we trust will in future be found under every department of the QUEEN, will become such a repertory and store-house of facts, experiences, and observations, as have never before been collected.<sup>107</sup>

Cox was thus continuing much of what Beeton had already begun in The Queen which made it distinctive from other women's papers, having great success with Beeton's innovation, the "Notes and Queries" section. Cox had used a similar type of column in The Field to create a forum for discussion and at times heated debate on issues of the day amongst readers, which greatly boosted circulation. These concepts were applied to The Queen with equal success. Other new columns which appeared in Volume III included Domestic Pets, Household Economy, Our Institutions, the Library, Natural History, Portraits, Recipes, Rural Economy, and Work Table Supplements.<sup>108</sup> An advertisement for the new journal in The Critic noted that "Political news will be omitted from The Queen, as such news can best be obtained in papers devoted to it."<sup>109</sup>

The next paragraph of this editorial is also revealing of Cox's ideals for The Queen:

It must not be supposed, because the QUEEN is a lady's journal, that it is read by the ladies only. The eyes of the *gentlemen* are upon us, as will be seen by our answer to Henry B., above; and the sterner sex read the QUEEN with avidity. More, it must not be concluded that we rely upon ladies only for contributions. A considerable portion of to-day's number is written by our lords and masters; and for the present, at least, we have no hope or intention of dispensing with their pens.<sup>110</sup> (italics in original)

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<sup>107</sup> "To Our Readers," The Queen (12 April 1862) 96-97.

<sup>108</sup> "Index to Volume III," The Queen: The Lady's Weekly Journal (7 September 1862) iii-iv.

<sup>109</sup> The Critic 24:613 (5 April 1862) 328.

<sup>110</sup> "To Our Readers," The Queen (12 April 1862) 97.



Despite Cox's determination to include both men and women as both writers and readers of The Queen, the changes he made were directed towards women in particular:

In the following expanded plan for the contents of "THE QUEEN," it will be seen that the Conductors have determined to make it as complete a Lady's Journal as is possible. It will be unrivalled in its attractions as a record of that which is fashionable, elegant, and ornamental - useful as a Guide and Companion in the Domestic Household and Circle, and as a Collection of Information and Facts.

The Price of "THE QUEEN" will remain at 6d. weekly, as heretofore.

THE QUEEN will be EDITED by a LADY.<sup>111</sup>

The Lady Editor referred to is not named in these early issues, due to editorial anonymity and feminine propriety. Charlotte Watkins maintains she was Helen Lowe, the daughter of Thomas Lowe, Dean of Exeter, and that she edited the paper from 1862 until 1894.<sup>112</sup> Secondary sources give surprisingly little information about Helen Lowe,<sup>113</sup> so I undertook some genealogical research which has revealed that this Helen Lowe was born in November 1809 in Great Shelsby, Worcestershire, the eldest of the five children of Thomas Hill Peregrine Furrye Lowe (1781-1861), Dean of Exeter Cathedral,<sup>114</sup> and his wife, Ellen Lucy Pardoe. She had a younger sister, Harriet, (b.1822),<sup>115</sup> and three brothers, George (b.1813), Arthur (1814-1882), and Noel (1817-1857). Both George and Noel were ministers like their father; Arthur entered the Navy at the age of 13 and

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<sup>111</sup> [Editorial] The Queen II (5 April 1862) 82.

<sup>112</sup> Watkins, 188. She does not cite a source for this information.

<sup>113</sup> Watkins notes that "Helen Lowe lacks the fame of Frederick Greenwood, and references to her life and works are now scattered and fragmentary." (Watkins, 1985, 188) Margaret Beetham evades the issue of Helen Lowe's background altogether by commenting that "The name and character of Helen Lowe were, however, unimportant." A Magazine of Her Own? Domesticity and Desire in the Woman's Magazine, 1800-1914 (London; New York: Routledge: 1996) 92.

<sup>114</sup> Thomas Hill Lowe was Dean of Exeter Cathedral from 2 August 1839 until his death in 1861. Deans of Exeter Cathedral <<http://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/Clergy/Oliver/Deans.html>>.

<sup>115</sup> 1851 Census for England and Wales. HO 107/1868 folio 313, page 15-16.

retired an Admiral in 1876.<sup>116</sup> At the time of the 1851 Census of England and Wales, Helen Lowe was living at The Deanery, Exeter, with her father, her sister Harriet, and six servants.<sup>117</sup>

But it is her death date which throws a cloud of confusion on the situation, for this Helen Lowe died unmarried on 30 December 1881, at Home Lodge, Battiscombe, Devon, after being ill with epulis for almost a year. Her sister Harriet was at her side.<sup>118</sup> This of course precludes her editing The Queen until 1894, and to some extent whether she edited the paper at all. Death notices for Helen Lowe in two Devon papers and The Times note only that she was the daughter of the Dean of Exeter. Surely if she had edited a popular women's paper in London for twenty years mention would be made of it?

Watkins cites no reference for Helen Lowe being editor of The Queen, and the only named reference to the editor of the The Queen in primary literature that I have located thus far, is in the journalist Dorothy Peel's autobiography, where the editor of The Queen is described as "dear old Miss Lowe, who wore a mushroom hat tied under her chin and looked like Queen Victoria."<sup>119</sup>

Watkins writes that Peel contributed to The Queen in the late 1880s, but Peel herself is very hazy as to dates in her autobiography, and as noted above, Helen Lowe was dead in the late 1880s.

Peel could also have been referring to Miss Frances Helena Low<sup>120</sup>, who was identified to as the editor of The Queen, in two articles in the 1890s.<sup>121</sup> The similarity of names could easily be

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<sup>116</sup> He was also a magistrate for Devonshire, and married three times: "first, to Katharine, daughter of the late Admiral Sir John A Ommanney, KCB; secondly, to Florence, daughter of the late Mr George Strode, of Newnham-park, Devon; and thirdly, to Elizabeth Henrietta, daughter of Admiral Sir Henry D Chads, GCB." "Obituary," The Times (21 December 1882) 4.

<sup>117</sup> 1851 Census for England and Wales. HO 107/1868 folio 313, page 15-16. Other census years are more difficult to trace as I do not have a street address for Helen Lowe after this time.

<sup>118</sup> Certified Copy of an Entry of Death, registered in Newton Abbot, Torquay, Devon in January 1882. Family Records Centre, London.

<sup>119</sup> Mrs CS Peel [Constance Dorothy Evelyn Bayliff], Life's Enchanted Cup: an Autobiography 1872-1933 (London: John Lane The Bodley Head Ltd, 1933) 63-64.

<sup>120</sup> Frances Helena Low (c1862-1939) was one of 11 children, most of whom became journalists, of a Hungarian Jewish refugee family who settled in London. She wrote a textbook on journalism for women, short stories, and articles on women and work, but did not support women's suffrage.

<sup>121</sup> Fanny I Green, "Journalism as a Profession for Women," Monthly Packet of Evening Reading 2 (July-December 1891) 503; MF Billington, "Leading Lady Journalists," Pearson's Weekly (July 1896), 110-111.

confusing, for some references to Frances H Low spell her name Lowe. In any event, further research is necessary to iron out these wrinkles.

While the mysterious female editor of The Queen remains an enigma, assuming Helen Lowe did edit the paper from 1862 - she would have been 53 years of age - until c1880, she certainly had an impact as an editor. Wilfrid Meynell credits her with the success of The Queen in his 1880 beginner's guide to journalism, implying that she has been editing for some years. Unfortunately he does not mention her name: "In its feminine departments -- presided over by a most able editress, under whose conduct the paper has risen to its present eminent position -- it is at once practical, artistic, housewifely, and millinerial."<sup>122</sup> Watkins attributes leaders to Helen Lowe as well, noting that the vocabulary and style of many of them are similar to that used by Lowe in her other writings, yet tempers this statement by adding that Lowe's power as an editor was curtailed somewhat by the proprietors, at first EW Cox, and later Horace Cox, who were more concerned with the magazine's profitability, and other aspects of the business.<sup>123</sup>

Nevertheless, some of the changes begun when EW Cox took over The Queen can be linked to the few details we do know of Helen Lowe's life, and may be an indication of her influence as an editor. The first is the introduction of a column of poetry, entitled "Lyra Domestica," in Volume III (7 Sept 1862-28 February 1863). While it is not clear whose idea the column was, both EW Cox and Helen Lowe commenced their publishing careers as poets. Prior to becoming the 'editress' of The Queen, Helen Lowe had published two volumes of poetry. Her first book, entitled Poems, Chiefly Dramatic, was edited and published anonymously in 1840 by her father, Thomas Hill Lowe, Dean of Exeter. Under her own name, Helen Lowe published The Prophecy of Balaam, and Other Poems in 1841. Both of these received lukewarm reviews in The Athenæum.<sup>124</sup> She later wrote Taormina, and Other Poems (1864) and Zareefa, and other Poems (c1870). According to EW Cox's

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<sup>122</sup> John Oldcastle [Wilfrid Meynell], Journals and Journalism: With a Guide for Literary Beginners (London: Field & Tuer, Ye Leadenhale Presse, 1880) 126. The book is dedicated to Sir Henry Taylor, KCMG.

<sup>123</sup> Watkins, 1985, 189.

<sup>124</sup> "Anthology for 1840," The Athenæum 654 (9 May 1840) 368-369; "The Prophecy of Balaam; and other Poems. By Helen Lowe. Exeter, Hannaford; London, Murray," The Athenæum 744 (29 January 1842) 108-109.

biographers, he wrote or edited 1829, A Poem (1829)<sup>125</sup> and “[i]n early life he wooed the Muses and published a volume of poems, entitled The Opening of the Sixth Seal, in 1830.”<sup>126</sup>

The first in a long list of projected additions to the magazine was a series entitled “An Unprotected Female’s Tour in Switzerland; or A Lady’s Walk Across the Sheideck and Wengern Alps. By the Editress.”<sup>127</sup> This series was begun on 12 April 1862, indicating more clearly the contribution of the new female editor.<sup>128</sup> The title of the series bore uncanny resemblance to that of two books published anonymously a few years before: Unprotected Females in Norway; or, The Pleasantest Way of Travelling There, Passing through Denmark and Sweden: With Scandinavian Sketches from Nature (1857), and Unprotected Females in Sicily, Calabria, and on the Top of Mount Aetna (1859).<sup>129</sup> The latter title is dedicated “To my Mother” and describes the activities undertaken the writer and her mother in Sicily. These books most likely the work of Emily Lowe,<sup>130</sup> said to be Helen’s daughter.<sup>131</sup> Although genealogical research has not substantiated this claim, the similarities in the titles indicate a link between Emily Lowe and whoever was editing The Queen in 1862.

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<sup>125</sup> Frederic Boase, Modern English Biography, 1892-1921 (London: Frank Cass & Co Ltd, 1965).

<sup>126</sup> J. Hutchinson, “Cox, EW. Lawyer and Writer 18-09-1879,” A Catalogue of Notable Middle Templars (1902).

<sup>127</sup> “The Queen: The Lady’s Weekly Journal,” The Queen II (5 April 1862) 82.

<sup>128</sup> The Queen II (5 April 1862) 82; “To Our Readers,” The Queen II:32 (12 April 1862) 97.

<sup>129</sup> The sex of the anonymous author of these travel books is also disputed. In a review of Unprotected Females in Sicily is the following comment: “Doubts, indeed, we remember, were pretty freely expressed concerning the sex of this anonymous author when first publishing the *Unprotected Females in Norway*. Lady critics, especially, were wont to hint broadly that the pen which indited it was, for certain, not held by the hand of any of their sisterhood. It was a quip, they said, put upon ‘fast young ladies,’ by some saucy male remonstrant against the wearers of ‘loud’ red-striped petticoats, pea jackets ‘à large basques,’ miniature ‘navvy’s’ highlows in patent leather, and the feminine varieties of the ‘billy-cock’ hat, or other such ‘wide-awake’.” “Lady Tourists in the Two Sicilies” Dublin University Magazine 314 (February 1859) 189.

<sup>130</sup> The entry for Helen Lowe in the British Biographical Microfiches, British Library, attributing the books on Norway and Sicily to her has been corrected by hand, calling Emily Lowe the author. Emily Lowe was the daughter of RA Lowe, an Indian judge. She was described as “a woman of strong character [and] an ardent pioneer in travel, who wrote books in Norway and in Sicily, and at the top of Mount Etna about the unprotected female.” ATC Pratt, People of the Period (1897) in British Biographical Microfiches I:702.420. Pratt also notes that Emily Lowe was “a frequent contributor to The Athenaeum. This is likely Miss E Lowe, who reviewed travel books in The Athenaeum from 1856-1859. Athenaeum Index. <<http://web.soi.city.ac.uk/~asp/v2/contributors/contributorfiles/LOWE.MissE.html>>.

<sup>131</sup> John Theakstone, “Annotated Bibliography of Selected Works by Women Travelers, 1837-1910” (2003). <<http://victorianresearch.org/travelbibnotes2003.pdf>>

Neither Beeton nor Greenwood came from the aristocratic milieu of their target audience, thus the high society information and court gossip that later distinguished The Queen were not immediately evident. Freeman notes that it was only when “the paper fell into other hands that this side of its potential was fully developed,”<sup>132</sup> that is, when the paper was taken over by Cox, and the women’s columns edited by Helen Lowe, whose family did come from the ‘upper ten thousand’ the paper’s target audience.

Another area where Helen Lowe may have influenced articles in The Queen was in its support for women’s suffrage. It helped that Serjeant EW Cox was not adverse to women’s causes, for on 16 June 1866 he printed a favourable leader about the Ladies’ Petition for Suffrage in the Law Times, one of the first periodicals to do so. Emily Davies spearheaded the publicity campaign on behalf of the suffragists. The first step “was to have the Ladies’ Petition, with the more impressive of its signatures, and highly supportive articles, like the leader in the Law Times, reprinted for circulation to major press organs and to the provincial press.”<sup>133</sup> Davies sent these documents to the major daily newspapers, with “very mixed results.”<sup>134</sup> Later in the summer of 1866, her strategy switched to direct solicitation of editors, asking them to insert articles supporting their cause, with the aim of “favorable comment in important journals with a diversity of political affiliations.”<sup>135</sup> The Queen reacted cautiously to this request by gradually introducing the idea to their readers. They first printed articles supporting the activities of well-known suffragist activists, such as Dr Elizabeth Garrett’s medical dispensary for women and children, and the publication of The Higher Education of Women by Emily Davies. Politics was something EW Cox had vowed to keep out of The Queen, thus it is tempting to think that it was with Helen Lowe’s insistence that

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<sup>132</sup> Freeman, 180.

<sup>133</sup> Eventually her mailing list included some 500 --out of a possible 900-- papers. Bostick, 125.

<sup>134</sup> The Scotsman reprinted some of the Law Times’ leader, neither the Times nor the Athenaeum printed the petition; the Spectator “praised the political sagacity of the petition,” and printed letters from women on both sides of the debate; the Pall Mall Gazette (edited by Fred Greenwood) included a summary of the petition, and the Morning Post gave a full report of Mill’s July 17 1866 speech to Parliament on the issue of women’s suffrage. For complete details see Bostick, 125-131.

<sup>135</sup> Bostick, 128.

by May 1867, after Mill's amendment had been debated in the Commons, the *Queen*, albeit somewhat apologetic for devoting so much space to the matter, printed both its own brief summary and a lengthy parliamentary summary of the debate. By its next issue, however, the *Queen* had thrown apology and caution to the wind with support for the limited female suffrage proposed by Mill, and a pronouncement that it was time for old prejudices to be discarded and political privileges extended to those who bore their share of the burdens of citizenship.<sup>136</sup>

Another member of staff who would doubtless have had some input into the printing of controversial subjects, was Serjeant Cox's nephew Horace Cox, who, as business manager for all the Cox publications including The Queen from 1865 until his retirement in 1912,<sup>137</sup> would have to consider the financial impact of such controversial topics on the sales of the magazine; however, both Horace Cox's and Helen Lowe's opinions on the topic of women's suffrage are as yet shrouded in mystery.

When The Queen changed hands in April 1862, advertisements included 'household decoration' as one of its new interests. Helen Lowe can take some credit in this area as well, for soon after beginning her editorial post, she read an article by Charles Locke Eastlake on "The Fashion of Furniture" in Cornhill Magazine, and promptly asked him to write a series of articles for her magazine along similar lines. He agreed, writing some twenty articles which appeared from 24 June 1865 to 15 June 1867 under his pseudonym 'Jack Easel,' which he also used in Punch.<sup>138</sup> Articles on interior decoration have been a regular feature of the magazine from this time.

In its first decades, the majority of the contributors to The Queen were anonymous. Several editors and staff writers on the other Cox journals penned articles for their sister paper,<sup>139</sup> one of the more prolific being the naturalist William Bernhard Tegetmeier, a staff writer and editor of the

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<sup>136</sup> "The Franchise for Women," The Queen (25 May 1867) 403-405; "Persons," The Queen (1 June 1867) 427.

<sup>137</sup> "Horace [Cox] became connected with these papers by running away from the country to his uncle, who tried to get him to go back. As he would not he was taken into the business." ATC Pratt, People of the Period (1897); Rose, 114.

<sup>138</sup> These articles were later reprinted as a book, Hints on Household Taste in Furniture, Upholstery and Other Details (1868), which was so popular it had to be re-issued four times in ten years. In the Introduction to his book, Eastlake relates the story of how he came to write the articles for The Queen. Watkins, 1985, 191.

<sup>139</sup> These include Edward William Cox, editor of The Law Times (1843-1879), James Lowe, editor of The Critic (1843-1863), and John Henry Walsh, editor of The Field (1858-1888). Watkins, 1985, 189.

Poultry and Pigeon Department of The Field from 1859 to 1907, who wrote over a thousand weekly editorial leaders in The Queen from c1882 to August 1902.<sup>140</sup>

Each of the departments of the magazine had an editor and staff writers. When the editor was a woman this was clearly stated in the by-lines. Horace Cox told The Sketch that Queen Victoria contributed original sketches to The Queen, and “the Princesses have contributed to our columns very frequently,”<sup>141</sup> lending additional credence to the title of the paper. The Court News column became so popular it had to be approved by Buckingham Palace before it was printed.<sup>142</sup>

Several women signed articles on dress or decoration in The Queen in the 1870s and 1880s, women who were well known to their audience through their published work elsewhere. Mary Eliza Haweis (1848-1898), an artist, illustrator and writer, wrote many articles on home decoration and dress in The Queen, both signed and unsigned, during the late 1870s and early 1880s. In her writing she espoused Eastlake’s ideas, as well as those of John Ruskin and William Morris,<sup>143</sup> and in this way introduced her readers to some of the ideas behind the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society. Haweis wrote a great many books on dress, interior decoration, gardening, and housekeeping, including The Art of Decoration (1881), and Beautiful Houses: Being a Description of Certain Well-Known Artistic Houses, a collection of her articles from The Queen (1882). As an artist, Haweis exhibited paintings from the age of sixteen, when she first showed work in the Royal Academy and the Dudley Gallery. She also illustrated several books, often with her own woodcuts, and wrote for several other women’s magazines.<sup>144</sup>

Charlotte Fitzgerald, better known to her readers as Mrs Talbot Coke, edited the Home Decoration department from 1886 to 1888, when she left to write for St Stephen’s Review. In 1892

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<sup>140</sup> EW Richardson, A Veteran Naturalist, Being the Life and Work of WB Tegetmeier (London: Witherby & Co, 1916) 140, 142, 150.

<sup>141</sup> “The Queen,’ ‘The Field,’ ‘The Law Times,’ and Mr Horace Cox,” The Sketch (27 March 1895) 478.

<sup>142</sup> Rose, 56.

<sup>143</sup> Watkins, 1985, 192.

<sup>144</sup> Haweis’ other books on these topics: The Art of Beauty (1878), The Art of Dress (1879), Rus in Urbe; or, Flowers that Thrive in London Gardens (1886), The Art of Housekeeping: A Bridal Garland (1889). “Biography for Mary Eliza Haweis, 1848-1898” Centre for Whistler Studies. The Correspondence <[www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/biog/haweMrsH.htm](http://www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/biog/haweMrsH.htm)>; “Administrative/Biographical History,” Papers of Mary Eliza Haweis and Family The Women’s Library, London. <[www.genesis.ac.uk/archive.jsp?typeofsearch=i&term=notimpl&highlight=1&pk=1037](http://www.genesis.ac.uk/archive.jsp?typeofsearch=i&term=notimpl&highlight=1&pk=1037)>.

she published The Gentlewoman at Home, which was generously reviewed in The Queen.<sup>145</sup> Articles on the design, technique, and historical aspects of various arts and crafts were also included regularly, for example, an article on designs for repoussé by Mrs Hastings R Lees,<sup>146</sup> or an historical article, 'Three Old Samplers' by RE Head.<sup>147</sup>

Charlotte Robinson's weekly column 'Home Decoration' first appeared in The Queen during the mid-1880s. Born in Settle, Yorkshire, Robinson studied at Queen's College and had a brief but promising career as an actress in the early 1880s. A trip to America inspired her to become a house decorator, and after further artistic study she opened her business at 20 Brook Street, London. By 1889 she employed a manager to make her private appointments, and a woman named Mrs McClland (sic) who did her decorative work.<sup>148</sup> As 'Decorator to Queen Victoria,' Robinson's advice carried considerable authority, and she was careful to keep abreast of the latest trends in interiors for her column for The Queen, which included a 'Notes and Queries' section. In 1889, Robinson was answering readers' queries "from Tasmania, Brisbane, India, Boston and even Nova Scotia,"<sup>149</sup> on all matters pertaining to home decoration, giving some indication of the circulation of The Queen at that time. She was less enthusiastic about William Morris than Mary Eliza Haweis; in a column published during the first Arts & Crafts Exhibition she referred to William Morris's ideas on home decoration as "a paradox."<sup>150</sup> Robinson was not afraid to endorse the latest trends in household accoutrements either, and in 1891 gave a glowing review to Alice Gordon's book Decorative Electricity, after having inspected Gordon's home which was fitted with the electric light.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Watkins, 1985, 193.

<sup>146</sup> Mrs Hastings R Lees, "Designs for Repoussé," The Queen 84 (4 August 1888) 146-7.

<sup>147</sup> The Queen 106:2752 (23 September 1899) 505.

<sup>148</sup> "Interview. Miss Charlotte Robinson," Women's Penny Paper I:16 (9 February 1889) 1.

<sup>149</sup> Miss Charlotte Robinson, "Women's Penny Paper, 1.

<sup>150</sup> Charlotte Robinson, "Home Decoration," The Queen (3 November 1888) 573. Neither Robinson nor any of the other female contributors here mentioned exhibited artwork at the ACES exhibitions.

<sup>151</sup> Charlotte Robinson, "Decorative Electricity," The Queen 89 (1891) 554. See Graeme JN Gooday, " 'I Never Will Have the Electric Light in My House': Alice Gordon and the Gendered Periodical Representation of a Contentious New Technology," in Louise Henson et al, eds, Culture and Science in the Nineteenth-Century Media Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2004.



The many contributors of 'dress and shop journalism' also dealt with issues of art and design. Constance Dorothy Evelyn Bayliff (b.1868) began her journalistic career at The Queen, writing dress and shop journalism in the late 1880s. She later married Charles S Peel, and as Mrs CS Peel, wrote for many publications including Hearth and Home and Woman, under the editorship of Arnold Bennett. She returned to The Queen during World War I.<sup>152</sup> The actress Beatrice Stella Campbell, who always used her married name, Mrs Patrick Campbell, was also a contributor and department editor in the 1880s.<sup>153</sup> As Mrs Aria, Eliza Davis (1866-1931) wrote on women's fashions in The Queen from 1890,<sup>154</sup> Truth (c1890-1931), and The World of Dress, which she also edited.<sup>155</sup> She published Costume: Fanciful, Historical and Theatrical (1922), as well as a book of her reminiscences, My Sentimental Self, in the same year. Another fashion writer was Dorothy Lane, also wrote for New Budget and Woman, in addition to editing the dress department of Hearth and Home in 1898.<sup>156</sup>

During the 1890s, several of The Queen's contributors left to work for other papers, and new contributors have been identified. One of these was Blanche de Montmorency Conyers Morell, who wrote on decorative arts in The Queen, the Lady's Pictorial and several other papers in addition to editing Home Art Work. Conyers Morell had illuminated a book of poetry, The Four Seasons at The Lakes by Charles Dent Bell, MA, Rector of Cheltenham and Hon Canon of Carlisle (1878), written All About China Painting with Twelve Descriptive Lessons (1883), and contributed the chapter on "Art Industries" in The Lady At Home And Abroad (1898).<sup>157</sup> A new column entitled "The Collector" signed by MCS [possibly Malcolm C Salaman] appeared in 1903. These columns

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<sup>152</sup> Watkins, 1985, 193-194.

<sup>153</sup> Rose, 98.

<sup>154</sup> "Mrs Aria," The Times (4 September 1931) 12.

<sup>155</sup> Watkins, 1985, 193.

<sup>156</sup> The Lady At Home And Abroad: Her Guide And Friend Consisting Of Articles Contributed By The Pens Of Expert Lady Writers On All Subjects Of Interest And Fact In The Daily Life And Duties Of Matron Wife And Maid (London: Abbott, Jones & Co., Ltd, 1898) v.

<sup>157</sup> This publication included chapters by Queen columnists, Mrs Beaty Pownall, the editress of the "Housewife" department, and Mr J Sieverts Drewett, editor of the "Travel at Home and Abroad" department.

gave advice and showcased private collections of decorative arts, and were reprinted as books at the end of each year until 1907.

These compilations, were edited by Ethel Deane, who, according to the title page, was the “Editress of *The Queen*.”<sup>158</sup> Indeed, the 1901 British Census lists her occupation as “Editor of *Queen*” indicating that Ethel Deane was the editor from c.1901 until c.1907. However, primary and secondary sources report that Percy Stuart Cox (1868-1929), Horace Cox’s son, took over the editorship of *The Queen* upon his graduation from Trinity College in 1894, and remained in the post until 1914.<sup>159</sup> According to Rose, Percy Cox “modernised and illustrated it, and gave *The Queen Travel Book* a great reputation.”<sup>160</sup> He changed the format slightly to keep pace with other women’s magazines and the New Journalism, emphasising literary subjects, book reviews, and including more signed articles by men such as Walter Besant and Douglas Sladen.<sup>161</sup>

Despite his efforts, or perhaps because of them, *The Queen*’s circulation decreased from 23,500 in 1890 to 16,000 in 1900.<sup>162</sup> This may possibly be linked to the change in editor and staff; doubtless it was also affected by a change in the readers, who were by this time more educated, spent more time outside their homes, and demanded different types of information. An article on “Women’s Work in the Press” in the 1900 *Newspaper Press Directory* listed those women’s papers not run by women: “*The Gentlewoman*, the *Lady’s Pictorial*, and *Hearth and Home* are all edited by men. *The Queen*, having various editors and editresses of different departments, can scarcely come under the category of papers managed by women.”<sup>163</sup> The editorial leaders in *The Queen* continued to be written by men; when he stopped writing them in 1902, William Bernhard

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<sup>158</sup> The Collector, Containing articles and illustrations reprinted from The Queen Newspaper, of interest to the great body of Collectors. Edited by Ethel Dean, Editress of The Queen. 3 vols (London: Horace Cox, 1903-1907).

<sup>159</sup> “Mr Percy Stuart Cox,” *The Times* (18 May 1929) 14.

<sup>160</sup> Rose, 114.

<sup>161</sup> Watkins, 1985, 196.

<sup>162</sup> Rose, 138.

<sup>163</sup> Laura Alex Smith, “Women’s Work in the Press” *Newspaper Press Directory* 55 (1900) 80.

Tegetmeier arranged with Horace Cox that his son-in-law, EW Richardson, should continue writing leaders in his place.<sup>164</sup>

The continued popularity of The Queen may be attributed to the many columns which catered to a broad range of women's interests. The correspondence columns in particular served an important educational purpose for women seeking knowledge, and allowed women to participate in the periodical they read by making the readership of the magazine into a community. This promotes loyalty among the readership, ensuring they will buy the paper every week. The many "Answers to Queries" columns in the back of the paper consisted mainly of short answers to readers from the resident expert. In an 1895 interview, Horace Cox commented that the success of The Queen was due to catering to women's great demand for information.

*The Queen* was never a success until we divided it into departments, and began to answer questions. Ladies, you know, will ask questions; some of them are very curious questions. And the moment we undertook to be a bureau for the supply of information upon housekeeping, cookery, dress, and fashions, women's employment, home decorations, &c, our circulation rose.<sup>165</sup>

Illustrations were also solicited from readers. The following "Notice to Lady Artists" appeared on the front page of The Queen during most of 1888:

Those artists who would wish their pictures reproduced in our columns can send sketches, carefully drawn in pen and ink, to us for approval. To prevent misunderstanding, it is as well to mention that no drawing which has been reproduced in any other periodical will be accepted for this purpose, and of course *no remuneration is given* for the drawings.<sup>166</sup> (emphasis added)

In expecting women artists to draw for free, this advertisement reinforces the publication's belief in middle and upper-class women as amateur artists, happy to work and not be paid. Free feminine labour thus contributed to the financial success of the publication.

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<sup>164</sup> Tegetmeier (1816-1912) trained as a doctor, then worked for the London School Board training women teachers, before devoting his energies to writing about birds, his passion since childhood. The leaders he wrote for The Queen were proof-read each week by his wife, Anne Edwards Stone (1826-1909) and covered a wide range of topics, including "Alien Workers, Street Collections, Volunteer Firemen, the Opium Commission, ghost-stories and Psychical Research" as well as topics of particular interest to women, which were suggested by his wife. Tegetmeier wrote over thirty books between 1849 and 1890, on poultry, pheasants, bees, cranes, and horses. He also wrote books for women such as A Manual of Domestic Economy: With Hints on Domestic Medicine and Surgery Prepared under the direction of the Home and Colonial School Society. (1858; 14<sup>th</sup> edition 1894), The Scholar's Handbook of Household Management and Cookery compiled for the School Board of London (1876) and chapters in England's Workshops (1864). Richardson, passim.

<sup>165</sup> "The Queen, The Field, The Law Times, and Mr Horace Cox," Sketch (27 March 1895) 478.

<sup>166</sup> "Notice to Lady Artists," The Queen 83:2162 (2 June 1888) 669.

Although many of the people involved in the creation and writing of The Queen have been identified, I have yet to discover who was responsible for writing reviews of the ACES exhibitions. This is especially frustrating, because notwithstanding the great amount of attention paid to the decorative arts, The Queen's coverage of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society begins in a rather democratic fashion, discussing roughly the same number of men and women, yet shows a distinct waning of interest in women exhibitors by 1916. The four short articles on the 1888 ACES show discussed the work of 21 women and 23 men, including Kate Faulkner; the sole 1890 review mentions 12 women and 14 men, including both case studies, Una Taylor and May Morris; and in 1903 they name 8 women and 9 men. Yet in 1916 only four women of the over 400 women exhibiting were named, Phoebe Stabler and Grace Christie among them, whereas twenty men were named. The significance of these figures lies in the fact that the numbers of women named was dropping just when the numbers of women exhibiting was increasing dramatically.

#### The Manchester Guardian

The Manchester Guardian is the third periodical to consistently name the women who became my case studies, discussing the work of five of them. While only one woman was named in 1888, unsigned reviews discussed five women in 1890, fourteen in 1903, and five in 1916. That a provincial newspaper should champion women's designs at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society in the capital may seem odd, but there are several reasons for this. Firstly, Manchester was a manufacturing city in the nineteenth century, thus anything to do with design for manufacture would be of interest to its citizens. Secondly, the paper had a reputation as being "the most representative voice of English Liberalism."<sup>167</sup> Thirdly, its editors were interested in art, and believed in its civilizing influence, and lastly, the editor, CP Scott was a staunch supporter of women's rights. Championing women's involvement in the decorative arts falls directly into its remit, for the Manchester Guardian was anything but provincial in its outlook. It still exists today as The Guardian, published in London and arguably the most liberal daily paper in the UK.

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<sup>167</sup> Sir William Haley et al, CP Scott, 1846-1932. The Making of the 'Manchester Guardian' (London: Fred. Muller Ltd., 1946) 5.

This heritage was begun by John Edward Taylor (1791-1844), the founder, editor and proprietor of the Manchester Guardian from 5 May 1821. Taylor wielded a great deal of power over the contents of the newspaper. An art lover, he collected “Italian masters, medieval stained glass and Turner watercolours.”<sup>168</sup> According to one of the paper’s “biographers”,

[the] intense and continuous concern for art [in the Manchester Guardian] owes more to Edward Taylor than to [CP] Scott. As long as Taylor was alive, the quality of the judgment which the paper brought to the work of living or dead masters was ensured. He wanted and secured good technical criticism, not just that anecdotalism which was easy when every picture told a story. [...] what Scott added was an equal insistence that all Guardian critics, whatever they wrote about - plays, painting, poetry or music - should write well.”<sup>169</sup>

‘Scott’ was Charles Prestwich Scott (1846-1932), editor from 1871-1930 and proprietor from 1905. Known to all as CP Scott, he gradually introduced the broad-minded policies for which the paper would become famous. He took a fairly neutral stance during the first decade of his editorship, but beginning in the 1880s his staunch support for issues such as Irish Home Rule and women’s suffrage gained him the reputation of a social radical.<sup>170</sup>

He desired nothing less than international status for the paper under his charge, and has been credited with achieving his vision. In order to achieve international standing, a provincial paper must know what goes on in the capital. Accordingly, the Manchester Guardian opened a London bureau in the early 1860s. By World War I, the London office began a news service, which furthered CP Scott’s goal of an international profile for the Manchester Guardian. The service was soon subscribed to by several newspapers from around the world, including the Baltimore Sun (1923), the Winnipeg Free Press (1936), and other papers in South Africa and India.<sup>171</sup>

The London office was instrumental in disseminating information about the London art scene to the rest of the country. A column entitled ‘London Letter’ was begun in the 1860s to

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<sup>168</sup> James Bone, “Art in the Guardian,” in Sir William Haley et al, CP Scott, 1846-1932. The Making of the ‘Manchester Guardian’ (London: Fred. Muller Ltd., 1946) 125.

<sup>169</sup> David Ayerst, Guardian. Biography of a Newspaper (London: Collins, 1971) 184. Ayerst gives different dates for several of the art critics working in the London office than James Bone does; I have used Bone’s dates, as his was the more contemporaneous view.

<sup>170</sup> “CP Scott,” in HCG Matthew and Brian Harrison, eds, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, new ed, (Oxford University Press, 2004) 352.

<sup>171</sup> Ayerst, 122.

report news from the capital. At first two or three times per week, it later became a daily feature.<sup>172</sup> Comments and reviews of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society were at times found in this column.

It was perhaps helpful that some editors of the London office were art critics. The first editor of the London office in the 1860s was Tom Taylor (1817-1880), who, in addition to his editorial work with the Manchester Guardian, was art critic and deputy drama critic for The Times, had a full time job as a civil servant, wrote for several other art periodicals, and was the author of several plays.<sup>173</sup> He held the post for a few years only.

James Bone, art critic and editor of the London office from 1910 until 1945, notes that CP Scott, the editor throughout the time of this study, collected Pre-Raphaelite paintings, and although “Scott himself rarely went to art exhibitions and knew few artists or collectors [...] he thought art important to the civilised life.”<sup>174</sup> In addition, Scott “was a skilful judge of furniture, pottery, and jewellery,”<sup>175</sup> possibly a result of his connections to the world of Arts & Crafts, which began with his friendship with Ford Madox Brown in 1871 shortly after becoming editor of the paper. The two men were involved in the decoration of the Manchester Town Hall in 1884, for which Brown painted several murals which were generously reviewed in the Manchester Guardian. By the 1880s the Manchester Guardian “began to give the same independent and distinguished attention to contemporary art as it was giving to the theatre and had always given to literature.”<sup>176</sup>

Bone also listed the art critics who worked in the London office: Walter Armstrong, 1885-1887, who also contributed in later years; Claude Phillips from 1889 to 1893 and in the early 1900s; Dugald Sutherland MacColl from 1894 to 1898; Robert Alan Mowbray Stevenson from 1898 to the early 1900s; followed by Laurence Housman until 1910. James Bone himself began writing on art and architecture in the London office in 1901, became art critic in 1910, as well as London editor from 1912 until his retirement in 1945.

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<sup>172</sup> Haley et al, 121.

<sup>173</sup> Winton Tolles, Tom Taylor and the Victorian Drama (New York: AMS Press Inc, 1966) 258-265.

<sup>174</sup> Bone, 125.

<sup>175</sup> CE Montague, “Journalist and Editor” in CP Scott 1846-1932. The Making of the Manchester Guardian (London: Frederick Muller Ltd, 1946) 76.

<sup>176</sup> Bone, 125.

These art critics all had rather high profiles in the London art world, in addition to writing for the Guardian. Although trained as a solicitor, Claude Phillips never practiced law. Instead, he was a prolific writer on art, contributing to many periodicals, and writing critically-acclaimed books on Watteau and Titian. His art criticism bears a marked preference for French and other Continental art.<sup>177</sup> He was Keeper of the Wallace Collection from 1897 until January 1911, receiving a knighthood on his retirement for his contribution to the arts.<sup>178</sup>

DS MacColl (1859-1948) began his career as an art critic at The Spectator in December 1889, shortly after graduating from Oxford. His post as the London art critic for the Manchester Guardian (1894-1898) was one of his earlier appointments. Beginning in the 1890s he also wrote articles on fine art in The Artist, Fortnightly Review, National Review, Saturday Review Burlington Magazine, and Architectural Review, whose editorial board he graced from 1899-1903. As an artist, MacColl exhibited watercolours with the New English Art Club, and designs for bookbindings, executed by his sister Elizabeth Mathieson MacColl, at four ACES exhibitions between 1893 and 1903. He did not become a member of the Society, however. His scathing reviews of the 1903 ACES exhibition are possibly his only comments about the society, and he did not exhibit with them again after this time.

MacColl also held high profile administrative posts. He was Keeper of Tate Gallery 1906-1911, then Keeper of the Wallace Collection 1911-1924 after Claude Phillips, in addition to founding the National Art Collections Fund. He also found time to write three volumes of poetry and several books of essays on art and related topics. In 1929, at the age of 70, MacColl accepted a position as editor of Artwork The International Arts and Crafts Quarterly.

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<sup>177</sup> See, for example, his "A Century of French Art, at the Paris Exhibition," The New Review I:3 (June-Dec 1889) 317+. Phillips contributed articles and reviews to the following periodicals: Portfolio; Daily Telegraph 1897-1910s, including a signed review of ACES in 1916; Burlington Magazine, 1903-1913+; Edinburgh Review 1890-99; Quarterly Review 1887; Fortnightly Review c.1895; National Review, 1894; Nineteenth Century, Manchester Guardian (London critic) 1889-93; 1900s. Christopher Kent, "Periodical Critics of Drama, Music, & Art, 1830-1914: A Preliminary List," Victorian Periodicals Review (1980) 31-54; and Walter E Houghton, ed. The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals, 1824-1900 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press & [London]: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966-1989).

<sup>178</sup> "Sir Claude Phillips," The Times (11 August 1924) 12. "Coronation Honours. Three Knights of the Garter. Nine New Peers." The Times (20 June 1911) 10.

It is unclear whether any of these art critics reviewed the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, for art reviews were not signed. However certain writers on art for the paper were associated with the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, thus their connection may have encouraged the Manchester Guardian to look on the Society and its advances favourably, including writing about its many women exhibitors. George Thomas Robinson (1827-1897), was one such writer. Trained as an architect, Robinson practiced in Manchester from 1868-1876. He was also the Manchester art critic for the paper at this time. His obituary in the Art Journal noted that Robinson was “a master in household decoration [and] a directing force in the Aesthetic movement of the time”<sup>179</sup> as well as attempting to revive plaster-working as a builder’s craft. Robinson’s journalistic talents did not end with art, though; he was also the Manchester Guardian’s war correspondent in Metz, later publishing his experiences in book form. Robinson moved to London in 1876, becoming adviser on decoration to Messrs Trollope, Builders, from 1883 until his death. Extremely active in the London art world, he was a member of the Fifteen, the Art Worker’s Guild, and the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, and was a Fellow of both the RIBA and the Society of Arts,<sup>180</sup> in addition to exhibiting at the Royal Academy 1850-1878. As has already been noted, Robinson’s journalistic experience would come in handy twenty years later, when, as a member of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society’s Literary Committee, he would help to organise publicity for their first exhibition.

Another member of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society to write for the Manchester Guardian was Lewis Foreman Day (1845-1910), who was commissioned to write reviews of “arts and crafts and industrial arts” due to his specialist expertise in these areas.<sup>181</sup> Although Bone does not give exact dates, it is likely that Day reviewed some Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society shows for the Guardian, as he did for the Magazine of Art in 1888, and the Art Journal in 1893, 1896 and 1903. In his professional life he was a designer of two-dimensional patterns in many media for several companies, but it was through his involvement with the institutions relating to the decorative arts - societies, education, and publishing - that he also made an impact. A founder

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<sup>179</sup> “Obituary,” Art Journal (1897) 222.

<sup>180</sup> Alison Felsted, et al, compilers, “GT Robinson,” Directory of British Architects, 1834-1900. (London: Mansell Publishing Ltd, 1993) 778; Boase, Modern English Biography.

<sup>181</sup> Bone, 126.



member of ACES, Day was actively involved as a member of the Executive Committee (1888-1896, 1906, 1910), the Selecting Committee (1888, 1890, 1903, 1906) and the Literary Committee (1889, 1893) until his death in 1910.<sup>182</sup> As such, he was instrumental in the organisation of Arts & Crafts exhibitions, the selection and hanging of work, the catalogue and publicity.

Prior to his involvement with the ACES, Day had been a founder-member of the Art Workers' Guild, and Master in 1897; and member and later Vice-President of the Society of Arts, where he helped found the Applied Arts Section in 1886. In the realm of education he lectured on design and ornament, giving several courses of Cantor lectures at the Society of Arts, two courses at the Royal Institution, as well as an annual course to the National Scholars at South Kensington, all during the 1890s. In addition he was an examiner for years to the Board of Education, and a judge of the National Competition. As an author he wrote many books and articles on ornamental design.

Unfortunately secondary sources on the Manchester Guardian do not give any more information about the identity of art critics than this. Further research of an archival nature is necessary to ascertain exactly who was reviewing the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society.

### The Studio

The Studio came about by a happy coincidence in the autumn of 1892. Two men, of disparate talents, both had the desire to start a new art magazine. Charles Lewis Hind (1862-1928) had just completed a five-year apprenticeship as sub-editor with The Art Journal, and had actually created a dummy copy of his magazine.<sup>183</sup> Charles Holme (1848-1923) had recently retired at the age of 44 from a lucrative business career as an importer of textiles, metalware, pottery and other local goods from India, Japan, China and Turkistan, and also had dreams of starting an art magazine. The men had one thing in common: friendship with John Lane, who was just setting up

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<sup>182</sup> Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogues of Exhibitions, 1888-1910.

<sup>183</sup> Haldane MacFall, Aubrey Beardsley The Man and His Work (London: John Lane & The Bodley Head Ltd, 1928) 33.

a publishing house. Lane introduced the two men, and they reached an agreement within a week.<sup>184</sup>

Commencing an art magazine for students may have been a recent idea for Lewis Hind, but the idea of an art magazine promoting the decorative arts had been germinating for some time with Charles Holme. Charles Geoffrey Holme, Charles Holme's son and editor from 1921 until 1932, wrote that "men like my father, who had travelled in the Far East, [...] having seen its products, had their eyes opened to the wonders of design."<sup>185</sup> On the occasion of The Studio's fiftieth anniversary, Holme's grandson Bryan Holme noted that

it was during Charles Holme's trips abroad that the idea of an art magazine crystallised around his recurring observation that the chief barrier between countries was language, and his belief that the more the culture of one part of the world could be brought *visually* to the attention of another, the greater the chance of international understanding and peace.<sup>186</sup>

Illustrations, then, would become of utmost importance in the new publication. Holme also had very definite ideas about the types of articles he wanted in his magazine. His original notes on subjects for articles and contributors have been preserved in his personal papers. They included headings for The Fine Arts, The Applied Arts, and The Art Student. The prospectus for The Applied Arts reveals the breadth of Holme's ideas, which included:

Original articles by specialists on these various crafts, wherein the subject is discussed so as to interest those immediately concerned. [...] Critical notices of Exhibitions of Decorative Work, and of new productions in all classes of design. [...] all objects wherein decorative art is concerned will be included. [...] Short illustrated notices of eminent craftsmen and designers. Technical papers on design in its relation to manufacture, [...] suggestions for new fields that may be worked to the improvement of the manufactured article and profit of the artist. [...] Special designs of genuine merit - for craftsmen, [...] Gossip of interest to designers and manufacturers with notes of novelties from all parts of the world.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Charles Lewis Hind, Naphtali Being Influences and Advantages while Earning a Living by Writing (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co, 1926) 59.

<sup>185</sup> CG Holme, "Art History in the Making," The Studio CV:481 (April 1933) 208.

<sup>186</sup> Bryan Holme, "Introduction," in The Studio: A Bibliography. The First Fifty Years 1893-1943 (London: Sims & Reed Ltd, 1978) 1.

<sup>187</sup> "The Studio. Aims of the Magazine in Detail," Charles Holme Archive File 1. 4-5. AAD/2003/10 Archive of Art and Design, London. This Archive was purchased by the Victoria & Albert Museum in July 2003, having been in the Holme family since the death of Charles Holme in 1923. It contains information on the formation of The Studio, but the bulk of it deals with Holme's business papers, both for his own business during the 1870s and his partnership with Christopher Dresser in the 1880s.

In their correspondence leading up to the first issue, Hind and Holme discussed at some length the subtitle of The Studio, revealing their definition of 'artist.' In Hind's opinion,

Don't you think that "An Illustrated Monthly Magazine for Artists, Craftsmen, and Art Students" savours of tautology. You see an artist is a craftsman, and vice versa. It has occurred to me that the line should run "for Craftsmen, Painters & Art Students. A painter need not be a craftsman, and a painter is not necessarily an artist."<sup>188</sup>

However, in the midst of preparing for the first issue of The Studio, Hind received an offer to edit the Pall Mall Budget with a salary he couldn't refuse. He accepted the position, and suggested Gleeson White as editor in his stead, who was only too happy to accept.<sup>189</sup>

White (1851-1898) in turn had to relinquish his position as Art Director for the publishing house George Bell & Sons. In a letter to Holme dated 6 January 1893, White's enthusiasm for the new position is evident: "I am writing to America for materials concerning various art industries which deserve to be known - such as the La Farge Stained glass - Gorham & Whiting wrought silver the Yale locks &c &c."<sup>190</sup> Unfortunately White's editorial involvement was short-lived, for he found that although his contract said he was Editor and Manager, in actual fact, Holme retained editorial control and White was reduced to the status of Assistant Editor. By August of 1893, White's correspondence with Holme reveals his discontent: "I have twice mentioned resignation because I felt that the agreement was not remembered when you said my appointment was 'practically assistant Editor.' Such discretionary power as the term 'Editor' implies is all I ask for."<sup>191</sup> White

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<sup>188</sup> C. Lewis Hind to Charles Holme, (12 November 1892) File 1, Charles Holme Archive.

<sup>189</sup> MacFall, 35. MacFall does not speak complementarily of The Studio, however: "The Studio itself was no particular success, far less any article in it. Tom, Dick, and Harry did not understand it; were not interested greatly in the arts or crafts; and particularly were they bored by mediæval stiffness, dinginess, gloom, and solemn uncomfortable pomp. Even the photographers had not at that time 'gone into oak.' It was only in our little narrow artistic and literary world - and a very narrow inner circle at that - where The Studio caused any talk and Beardsley interested not very excitedly. We had grown rather *blasé* to mediævalism; had begun to find it out; and the Japanesque was a somewhat dented toy - we preferred the Japanese masterpieces of the Japanese even to the fine bastard Japanesques of Beardsley." (36-37)

<sup>190</sup> G. White to C. Holme, (6 January [1893]) File 1, Charles Holme Archive. White was familiar with American decorative arts, for he had spent a year editing The Art Amateur in New York. According to Clive Ashwin, The Art Amateur was "a large format magazine which published material on art, craft and interior design [...] a lively if rather vulgar publication, combining large chromolithographs with plenty of line and half-tone reproduction, brash layout and pithy writing." Clive Ashwin, "Gleeson White - Aesthete and Editor," Apollo 108 (October 1978) 258. Curiously, Ashwin makes no mention of the role of C. Lewis Hind in his discussion of The Studio.

<sup>191</sup> G. White to C. Holme, 17 August 1893. File 1, Charles Holme Archive.

finally resigned on 23 July 1894, giving Holme's meddling in his work, and the low salary (£200 per year) as the reasons for his action.<sup>192</sup> In effect, Holme was paying White the salary of an assistant editor, and only allowing him to perform that function, while reserving for himself the final say in all copy and illustrations. After White left, Charles Holme edited The Studio until 1921. White did not bear a grudge, and continued to contribute signed articles to The Studio until his death in 1898. He also edited several of The Studio's Special Issues, and wrote a monthly column entitled "The Lay Figure."<sup>193</sup>

According to Bryan Holme, the success of The Studio was the result of three things: its timing, its international content, and its illustrations, specifically "the newly perfected halftone reproduction process."<sup>194</sup> To these I would add its international distribution. The 1890s are described as 'design-conscious' and the reading public was ready for a periodical that spoke with equal reverence of furniture, household objects, photography, illustration, architecture and painting. Promoting these areas to an international audience proved advantageous in the extreme; several imitations of The Studio sprang up in France and Belgium in particular. The use of the latest techniques of reproducing illustrations, used by Holme and White to showcase the work of Aubrey Beardsley in their first issue, brought the new magazine immediately to the attention of existing art magazines: "The June number of The Studio is before us and the illustrations are so good and so numerous that we are left in the vulgar attitude of wonder at the financial side of the matter. How is it done for fourpence halfpenny?"<sup>195</sup> The mix of material on decorative art, industrial design, and fine art, with the inclusion of many new media and techniques such as photography, posters, and Japanese art, immediately popularised The Studio.<sup>196</sup>

The Studio's reviews of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society were usually published in four parts, each highlighting a different section of the exhibition. They were the longest and best

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<sup>192</sup> G.White to C.Holme, 23 July 1894. File 1, Charles Holme Archive.

<sup>193</sup> Ashwin, 259. Ashwin gives neither a source for this information nor dates when White wrote this column.

<sup>194</sup> Bryan Holme, 1.

<sup>195</sup> "Etching and Engraving," The Artist 14:163 (1 July 1893) 221.

<sup>196</sup> Diane Chalmers Johnson, "[The Studio] A Contribution to the '90s," Apollo 91:97 (March 1970) 198.

illustrated reviews of all the periodicals in my sample, revealing clearly Holme's mandate for the magazine of support for the decorative arts, and the work of students, and to use the latest methods of illustrating them. Longer reviews obviously meant more women were named in The Studio than anywhere else. The four anonymous 1903 ACES reviews name 42 women, including Georgina Gaskin. In 1916, despite reducing the size of its publication due to the First World War, four reviews by WT Whitley appeared, which included both my case studies, Phoebe Stabler and Grace Christie, among the 36 women named.

Named critics of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society include Horace Townsend (1893), Aymer Vallance (1893, 1899), and William Thomas Whitley (1916). Townsend (1859-1922) was a journalist from New York City, working as the London correspondent for the New York Herald from the 1890s. He also contributed articles to The Studio, Wheelwoman and Society Cycling and Fortnightly Review.<sup>197</sup> Townsend moved in literary circles, becoming a member of Ye Sette of Odd Volumes in 1895,<sup>198</sup> whose membership included Charles Holme and other well-known figures in the worlds of art and letters.

The Reverend William Howard Aymer Vallance, (1862-1943) MA, FSA, was received into the Church in 1889, and was a curate at St Bartholomew's, Dover, and later at the Church of the Annunciation, Brighton. He combined his clerical career with design and journalism, taking up a post as Director of the Church Decoration Department of the publishing house Burns and Oates in 1889. Similar to Lewis F Day, Vallance was an 'insider' critic of the ACES, being a member of the Society from 1891-1906, an exhibitor from 1889, and a critic of their exhibitions for The Studio in 1893 and the Magazine of Art in 1903. Vallance wrote on the decorative arts for the Art Journal, the Artist, Atalanta, the Magazine of Art, The Studio, Burlington Magazine, Archaeologia Cantiana, and Country Life. He also wrote many books including two about William Morris, Mural Painting Revived: A New Method Of Interior Decoration (London: Line 1908), Old Crosses and Lychgates

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<sup>197</sup> Entries for Horace Townsend in the Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals, Vol.5, 780; and the Waterloo Directory of Victorian Periodicals, Vol.18, 421 .

<sup>198</sup> This club was begun by the bookseller Bernard Quaritch in 1878, along with several friends involved in the publishing, printing and bookselling trades. A private club, the men met for dinner and lectures eight times a year, at times mounting exhibitions of drawings or books. Members also published essays, to which both Townsend and Holme contributed. Ralph Straus, An Odd Note on Ye Founding and Early History of Ye Sette of Odd Volumes London: Chiswick Press, 1935.

(London: Batsford, 1920), and English Church Screens; being Great Roods, Screenwork and Roodlofts of Parish Churches in England and Wales (London: Batsford, 1936).<sup>199</sup>

William Thomas Whitley (1858-1942) began his career as a painter, exhibiting oils in London and several provincial cities. He was never a member of the ACES, nor did he exhibit there. After 1902 he concentrated on art history, publishing several books on eighteenth century British art, and contributing articles to the Art Journal, Magazine of Art, Connoisseur, The Studio, Burlington Magazine, and a column entitled "Art and Artists" in the Morning Post. Whitley also co-wrote Art Collections of the Nation; Some Recent Acquisitions and The History of the National Gallery with Charles Geoffrey Holme, both of which were published by The Studio Publications.<sup>200</sup>

Despite the differences in their target audiences, The Builder, The Queen, The Manchester Guardian and The Studio have been discussed in some detail here due to the consistency with which they identified the women in my case studies. Clearly, the critics who reviewed the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society for these periodicals all 'had their finger on the pulse,' as they were united in their choices of the best work by a woman on display in different exhibitions, over a period of almost three decades, regardless of changes in staff and editors. While I have not been able to identify all of the critics who reviewed the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society for these papers, some of those editors and critics for whom I give brief biographies above had clear links to the ACES. This in itself would not make them predisposed to write more about women's work exhibited there, but these possibilities are what this thesis will explore.

For example, artist-critics who were members of the ACES and exhibited at the very shows they were reviewing, include Lewis F Day, Aymer Vallance, DS MacColl, and HH Statham. Their familiarity with the principles of good design and the techniques of the decorative arts would have

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<sup>199</sup> In the early 1890s Vallance was a member of Cenacle, a group of literary dandies whose members included Aubrey and Mabel Beardsley, Robert Ross, publisher John Lane, and artists Charles Ricketts and Charles Shannon. Vallance and Joseph Pennell are credited with encouraging Beardsley to quit his job as a bank clerk and to train as an artist. Vallance's association with Beardsley resulted in a book: Aubrey Vincent Beardsley. A Book of Fifty Drawings with an iconography by Aymer Vallance (1897, revised 1921). In 1920 Vallance purchased Stoneacre, in Otham, Maidstone, Kent, a 14<sup>th</sup> century half-timbered house, which he donated to the National Trust in 1928. In the mid-1930s Vallance moved to Eastbourne, where he died in 1943, aged 82.

aided their efforts in the new genre of art review necessitated by the dictates of the ACES. However, it was these same critics who were the most critical of the Society itself, and of women's work within it, as will become evident in the ensuing chapters. Literary critics, such as Claude Phillips, Horace Townsend, WT Whitley, Robert Alan Mowbray Stevenson, Laurence Housman, and James Bone were not members of the ACES, and wrote much less about women's work in the ACES exhibitions than their artist-critic colleagues.

All four publications had in common an interest in, and support for the decorative arts. The Builder wrote about them in their integral role in building and architecture; The Queen wrote about them as they related to women, as household advice, hobbies, and new careers; and The Studio wrote about them as a major part of their mandate to inform artists, designers, students, and art lovers about developments in the decorative arts. Under the joint auspices of the London editors and CP Scott's editorial policy of quality reporting of cultural news, reviews of the ACES appeared in the Manchester Guardian to inform a culturally-aware general audience.

Women formed part of the readership of all four papers, albeit to different degrees, thus content about women was found in all of them. The Queen's main readership was women of the middle and upper-classes, and it contained mainly items of interest to women. The Studio was read by housewives as well as female artists and art students, and accordingly carried articles about female artists. As a daily newspaper, the Manchester Guardian would have been read by the whole family, making reviews of women at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society a part of its liberal outlook on things cultural. The Builder counted women as a minority of its readers, however its articles on sanitation, housing, decoration and art reviews were definitely areas of interest to women at the time.

The final commonality these publications share is their waning appreciation for the work of women in reviews of ACES exhibitions after 1900. This trend is most marked in The Queen, whose reviews singled out fewer women with each passing ACES exhibition, yet whose target audience was women. Exactly why this happened is not immediately clear, but it is through an

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<sup>200</sup> Who Was Who, 1941-1950 (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1951) 1230; J Johnson and A Greutzner, compilers, The Dictionary of British Artists 1880-1940. (Woodbridge: Antique Collectors' Club, 1976) 544; National Art Library computer catalogue; The Times.

intensive examination of reviews of Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society exhibitions held in 1888, 1890, 1903 and 1916, that this thesis seeks to discover why such a phenomenon should have occurred.



CHAPTER 2  
1888, THE FIRST ARTS & CRAFTS EXHIBITION:  
THE CRITICS GRAPPLE WITH CRAFT AS ART, AND WOMEN AS DESIGNERS  
CASE STUDY: KATE FAULKNER

The exhibition mounted by the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society in the autumn of 1888 was completely unlike any other exhibition London had seen, whether in the fine arts or the industrial arts. In fact, it was a combination of the two types of exhibitions, with decorative art works displayed in a fine art setting. Some designers were invited personally to exhibit, others responded to newspaper ads, but a committee chose the work and set up the displays. The most notable innovation was the insistence that all designers and makers be identified, both in the exhibition and in the catalogue. These changes were integral to the process of professionalisation for designers, and would have important ramifications for women designers.

This chapter has five sections. Firstly I explain the setting and structure of this inaugural exhibition, highlighting the various innovations introduced by the Society through it. For the purposes of my project, the participation of women in the exhibition and the reception given to their work are of primary interest. The following sections deal with those concerns, commencing with the context in which the professional woman designer worked in the late 1880s. I then include a brief statistical analysis of women's work in the 1888 exhibition, followed by the press's comments on women's work in general, and end with a case study of Kate Faulkner (1841-1898), and her work on the gesso-decorated grand piano that attracted so much attention.

### A New Type of Exhibition

The first ACES Exhibition was held from 1 October until 1 December 1888 at the recently completed New Gallery, Regent Street, London. (Figure 2.1) This venue had been built to compete with the Grosvenor Gallery as the alternative gallery of choice, and the story of how this came

about is intricately tied in with the story of how the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society came to hold their exhibition there.



Figure 2.1 *The New Gallery. Front Entrance.* Drawing by T. Raffles Davison

The Grosvenor Gallery was opened in 1877 by Sir Coutts Lindsay (1824-1913), with the assistance of Charles Hallé and Joseph Comyns Carr.<sup>1</sup> The goal of the new exhibiting venue was “to promote artists who were not receiving attention or proper recognition elsewhere, such as the group of Pre-Raphaelites led by Edward Burne-Jones who became its special focus through

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<sup>1</sup> Carr had written a series of articles on the reform of the Royal Academy in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and when Lindsay and Hallé read them, they recognised a kindred spirit and hired Carr immediately. J.W. Comyns Carr, *Some Eminent Victorians. Personal Recollections in the World of Art and Letters* (London: Duckworth & Co., 1908) 146. See also [Centre for Whistler Studies](http://www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/whistler-studies/), The Correspondence, University of Glasgow. <[www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/correspondence/nameid.asp?nameid=Carr\\_JC](http://www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/correspondence/nameid.asp?nameid=Carr_JC)>.

1888.”<sup>2</sup> Other painters who exhibited there included Walter Crane, Albert Moore and George Frederic Watts.<sup>3</sup>

The Grosvenor Gallery was the only alternative space at that time, and its impact was immediately felt in the London art world. The Old and the New Watercolour Societies passed motions prohibiting their members from exhibiting there.<sup>4</sup> Lord Frederick Leighton, President of the Royal Academy, began visiting studios to encourage painters to exhibit at the Royal Academy. Having no desire to offend the Royal Academy, Sir Coutts Lindsay stipulated that work exhibited at the Grosvenor could not have been refused by the Royal Academy.<sup>5</sup> These reactions to the Grosvenor’s encroachment upon the territory of the traditional exhibiting spaces only served to increase its exclusivity and its cachet amongst artists, which is in part why the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society asked to hold their first exhibition there.

advertisements in the papers and billboards on the street front. Pyke’s ‘improvements’

In the spring of 1887, the fledgling Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society (ACES) had begun to organise its first exhibition. Their search for a suitable venue began in early March, before the name of the Society had even been finalised. On 5 March, several members of the General Committee “met and inspected certain galleries near Bond Street.”<sup>6</sup> They found that the Gallery of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Art Society was available for £25 a week during month of January 1888. It was not until 11 May 1887 that concrete steps were taken towards securing a venue, however. This was the date of the first meeting of the 25-member Provisional Committee of the Combined Arts, held at the Charing Cross Hotel, where it was agreed that the “circular [explaining the ACES’ aims] be revised and that the Chairman, Walter Crane, forward it to Sir Coutts Lindsay [with] the request

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<sup>2</sup> Susan P. Casteras & Colleen Denney eds, The Grosvenor Gallery. A Palace of Art in Victorian England (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1996) 1.

<sup>3</sup> Christopher Newall, The Grosvenor Gallery Exhibitions: Change and Continuity in the Victorian Art World (Cambridge University Press, 1995) 3.

<sup>4</sup> Newall, 32.

<sup>5</sup> Newall, 13.

<sup>6</sup> “Minutes of General Committee Meetings Held Prior to 9 May 1888” (5 March 1887) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers, AAD 1/40-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London. (in pencil March 9<sup>th</sup>)

that he should consider the possibility of granting the use of the Grosvenor Gallery to this Committee.”<sup>7</sup>

Unfortunately, the quiet, contemplative art gallery which Comyns Carr and Hallé had originally been managing had been subjected to several ‘improvements’ in order to increase revenues. During the summer and autumn of 1887, numerous painters wrote to the Grosvenor Gallery, expressing their dissatisfaction with the situation. Walter Crane was among the dissatisfied exhibitors of paintings at the Grosvenor Gallery. He wrote in his Reminiscences that from 1885,

Sir Coutts Lindsay [...] began to show me the cold shoulder, and from giving me prominent places in his Gallery gradually shelved my works. So marked did this at length become that ultimately I felt in self-defence compelled to withdraw a picture sent in 1887, which was placed behind a pillar in a corner of the corridor.<sup>8</sup>

Crane would have withdrawn his painting about the same time he sent the letter on behalf of the ACES to Sir Coutts Lindsay, for the Grosvenor’s major annual exhibition was in the summer. Thus it is perhaps not such a surprise that Crane received a negative reply to his request, “expressing sympathy with the proposed exhibition but saying that the Grosvenor Gallery was not available for the purpose.” During the summer of 1887, the Society also looked into the possibilities of using such venues as the “the Army & Navy Meat Market, Waterloo House, Cadogan Hall, & Messrs Jackson & Graham’s.”<sup>9</sup>

A letter from the Grosvenor’s star exhibitor Edward Burne-Jones, written in October 1887, proved to be the straw that broke the camel’s back. He wrote to Hallé, “The Gallery is losing caste: club rooms, concert rooms, and the rest, were not in the plan, and must and will degrade it.”<sup>10</sup> Hallé approached Coutts Lindsay about the situation, but the latter’s concern for finances prevented any reversal of the innovations to the Grosvenor. Burne-Jones then wrote to Coutts Lindsay directly to announce he would no longer exhibit at the Grosvenor. The following month,

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<sup>7</sup> “Minutes of General Committee Meetings Held Prior to 9 May 1888” (11 May 1887) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers, AAD 1/40-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London.

<sup>8</sup> Walter Crane, An Artist’s Reminiscences (London: Methuen & Co, 1907) 276.

<sup>9</sup> “Minutes of General Committee Meetings Held Prior to 9 May 1888” (12 July 1887) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers, AAD 1/40-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London.

<sup>10</sup> Newall, 36.

both Comyns Carr and Hallé resigned, making their intention public by sending a joint letter to The Times.<sup>11</sup>

Carr and Hallé decided to open a gallery to compete directly with the Grosvenor, but in order to stage their coup successfully, the gallery had to be ready for the following spring. The architect E.R. Robson was hired to design the building, and with men working two daily shifts, the New Gallery, as it came to be known, was built in three months.<sup>12</sup> The first exhibition was held in the spring of 1888 and included paintings by Walter Crane, Edward Burne-Jones, G.F. Watts, and Lawrence Alma Tadema - all artists who had left the Grosvenor.<sup>13</sup> Charles Hallé exhibited his own paintings, and his sister Elinor Hallé, who would later exhibit jewellery with the ACES, showed her sculptures.<sup>14</sup>

The Minutes of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society are silent about the choice of venue over the winter of 1887/1888, when the New Gallery was being built. Then at a meeting in March 1888, “a letter from Mr CE Hallé was read stating that the Directors of the New Gallery were now in a position definitely to make arrangements.”<sup>15</sup> Through the connections of Walter Crane and Edward Burne-Jones, both painters and members of the ACES, the first Arts & Crafts exhibition came to be held at the New Gallery. Their concurrence with Hallé and Carr’s views on how art should be exhibited caused them to support the two men in their venture, and in turn, the ACES was granted the privilege of mounting the second exhibition ever held in the New Gallery.

The choice of a purpose-built alternative exhibiting space in which the ACES would have its first exhibition was of utmost symbolic import, as the Society was creating a new set of conventions for the consideration of the decorative arts. Exhibitions of decorative arts have their roots in trade fairs, whose history extends as far back as 642, when the first recorded fair was held

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<sup>11</sup> “The Grosvenor Gallery,” The Times (2 November 1887) 9.

<sup>12</sup> Joseph Comyns Carr, Some Eminent Victorians. Personal Recollections in the World of Art and Letters (London: Duckworth & Co. 1908) 126.

<sup>13</sup> Eve Adam ed, Mrs J. Comyns Carr’s Reminiscences (London: Hutchinson & Co Ltd, [1926]) 157.

<sup>14</sup> Miss E[linor] Hallé: 337-*Dead Christ*, bronze low relief, 338: *Bust of Charles Hallé, Esq., LL.D.* Henry Blackburn ed, New Gallery Notes 1888. An Illustrated Catalogue, with Facsimiles of Sketches by the Artists (London: Chatto and Windus, May 1888).

<sup>15</sup> “Minutes of General Committee Meetings Held Prior to 9 May 1888” (5 March 1888) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers, AAD 1/40-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London.

in France by the monks of Saint-Denis. It served not only as a trader's market, but also helped to "cross-fertilize different cultures and artistic traditions both inside and outside Europe."<sup>16</sup> In the UK, the first major trade fair was the Great Exhibition of 1851. Since then, exhibitions of Industrial Arts had been held at regular intervals in England and across Europe. Exhibitions such as the International Exhibition (London, 1862), or the Glasgow Exhibition (1888), continued this tradition. They generally consisted of manufacturers setting up displays of their furniture, textiles and interior fittings as they would in their shops. The purpose of these exhibitions, or trade fairs, was commercial, rather than artistic. Their main goal was to advertise British goods to an international audience. As such, technical advances were emphasised, rather than good design.<sup>17</sup>

These exhibitions were extremely popular with the public. In 1882, over 1.5 million people visited a local Art and Industry Exhibition in London, which consisted mainly of items on loan from the South Kensington Museum.<sup>18</sup> The Glasgow Exhibition (1888) received 5,748,379 visitors during the six months that it was open and made a profit of £40,000.<sup>19</sup>

In contrast, the first exhibition of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society in the autumn of 1888 represented a radical departure. It was not an industrial exhibition, where companies displayed their wares in the manner of a shop window in order that they should sell; rather, the emphasis was on the people who designed the high-quality pieces on display, selected and exhibited in the manner of a fine art exhibition. The major innovations that the ACES brought to the exhibition of decorative arts were the mandatory naming of the designer and the producer of each object, how the work was chosen, how space was allocated to exhibitors within the gallery, and in the didactic intentions of the exhibition. (Figure 2.2: Interior New Gallery, c.1890) The exhibition was organised mainly by the Selecting Committee, which was composed of professional architects and designers: W.A.S. Benson, metalwork designer; Walter Crane, President of the ACES, textile and wallpaper designer, and illustrator; Lewis F. Day, also a textile

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<sup>16</sup> Elizabeth Gilmore Holt, The Expanding World of Art, 1874-1902. Vol. I: Universal Expositions and State-Sponsored Fine Arts Exhibitions (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1988) 1.

<sup>17</sup> Linda Parry, Textiles of the Arts and Crafts Movement (London: Thames and Hudson, 1997 (1988)) 13.

<sup>18</sup> 1,553,082 to be exact. "Notes on Current Events," The British Architect (10 August 1883) 62.

<sup>19</sup> "Notes on Current Events," The British Architect (16 November 1888) 346.

and wallpaper designer; Mervyn Macartney, architect and designer of furniture and textiles; William Morris, designer of textiles, wallpapers and carpets; Heywood Sumner, illustrator; and Stephen Webb, designer of furniture and intarsia. The Secretary of the Society, Ernest Radford, was the only one who was not an artist. Better suited to his position, he was an established poet and author.

The venue chosen, the Selecting Committee's next task was to invite exhibitors to participate in the exhibition. According to their Report,



Figure 2.2: Interior New Gallery, c.1890

A list of names of individual artists, including all the members of the Art Workers' Guild, as well as of certain Firms identified with decorative work was made, & a circular was drafted & printed inviting them & other workers in art to submit specimens of their work to the Committee. This circular was sent out accompanied with forms of application for space.<sup>20</sup>

This meant that the firms and individuals who were invited to exhibit were known, either personally or by reputation, to the various members of the Committee, and the likelihood that they shared their ideals was great. As detailed in Chapter 1, advertisements for the upcoming exhibition were then placed "in all the leading newspapers, at intervals, and the Architectural and Trade

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<sup>20</sup> "Report of the Selecting Committee," Minutes 9 May 1888-13 December 1892, Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers, AAD 1/42-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London.

Journals.”<sup>21</sup> The British Architect, for example, published an announcement for the exhibition on 1 June 1888; while the Journal of Decorative Art, a trade magazine for wallpaper, noted that “Intending exhibitors are therefore requested to supply particulars of their work not later than June 30<sup>th</sup>.”<sup>22</sup> Women’s periodicals were not neglected either; a paragraph announcing the upcoming first exhibition of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society appeared at the bottom of “The Work-Table” column in The Queen on June 9, 1888.<sup>23</sup>

In earlier exhibitions of industrial art, the company would purchase their exhibition space, and set up their own displays in whatever manner they saw fit. This meant that the exhibitors chose what was exhibited, and how it was displayed. Companies with more money bought more space, and therefore had larger displays.<sup>24</sup> The ACES broke with this tradition by inviting exhibitors and not charging fees. In almost all cases, a member of the Selecting Committee went round to the studio and looked at the work before accepting it, based on its artistic merit, rather than on the financial worth of the company. Thus, it was left to the discretion of members of this Committee whether or not work was of a standard to be included in the exhibition. According to their Report,

In arranging the galleries the principle was adopted, as far as practicable, of grouping the works of the same artist, in the same kind, together, & where this plan has not been followed the aim has been to [make] the most harmonious arrangement in decorative effect, & with a view to placing each work after its kind in positions which would best explain their purpose.<sup>25</sup>

The Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society made no secret of the fact that their exhibition would have an educational value, giving the viewing public and art workers examples of good design, fine workmanship, and good taste. To reinforce the objects on display, the catalogue included eleven essays on the different techniques used in the exhibition, an innovation at the time. (Figure 2.3)

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<sup>21</sup> “Report of the Literary Committee,” Minutes 9 May 1888-13 December 1892, Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers, AAD 1/42-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London.

<sup>22</sup> “Supplement,” Journal of Decorative Art 8 (July 1888) xxxv.

<sup>23</sup> “The Work-Table,” The Queen 83:2163 (9 June 1888) 743.

<sup>24</sup> “The Success of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition,” The British Architect 30 (30 Nov 1888) 380.

<sup>25</sup> “Report of the Selecting Committee,” Minutes 9 May 1888-13 Dec 1892, Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers, AAD 1/42-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London.



They included: ‘Textiles’, by William Morris; ‘Of Decorative Painting & Design’ and ‘Of Wall Papers’, by Walter Crane; ‘Fictiles’ by GT Robinson; ‘Metal Work’ by WAS Benson; ‘Stone and Wood Carving’, ‘Table Glass’, and ‘Stained Glass’ by Somers Clarke; ‘Furniture’ by Stephen Webb; ‘Printing’ by Emery Walker; and ‘Bookbinding’ by TJ Cobden-Sanderson. Reviews of the exhibition included comments on the catalogue; the Portfolio for example found that “the catalogue is enriched by short essays on decorative and industrial art by practised hands.”<sup>26</sup>



Figure 2.3: Cover of 1888 Catalogue, Designed by Walter Crane

Public lectures and demonstrations of techniques further reinforced both the catalogue essays and the items on display in the galleries. William Morris gave a demonstration lecture on ‘Tapestry and Carpet Weaving’, on 1 November 1888, during which he demonstrated weaving on a model loom.<sup>27</sup> This aspect of the Society’s work was also noted by the critics. Even where a review was extremely critical of the quality of design, positive comments were made about the lectures. For example, the Athenæum ran a separate article about the proposed scheme of lectures, saying

<sup>26</sup> [PG Hamerton?] “Art Chronicle,” Portfolio (November 1888) 223-224.

<sup>27</sup> Nicolas Salmon & Derek Baker, The William Morris Chronology (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1996) 207. See also “Lectures and Speeches. William Morris on Tapestry,” The Artist (1 December 1888) 362; Collected Letters of William Morris, ed Norman Kelvin, Vol. II (Princeton University Press, 1996) 830 n.3.

that it “promises well if worked by hands as competent at Messrs Crane and Morris.”<sup>28</sup> Women were informed about the lectures in The Queen.<sup>29</sup> The success of the lectures ensured that later exhibitions would also include lectures and demonstrations of techniques.<sup>30</sup>

But the most important innovation of the ACES, and one that I would like to explore further here, was the Society’s insistence on naming individual designers and makers. Previous exhibitions of decorative or industrial arts usually identified the company, but only rarely would designers of reputation be named in the press. The tradition of anonymity for both designers and makers was deeply entrenched, and as the Society’s catalogues and the reviews reveal, their request that all individuals be identified was not always honoured. Yet for the first time, designers and makers had an opportunity to receive the same recognition for their efforts as painters did in a fine art exhibition.

The mandatory naming of individual designers appeared quite radical to the larger decorating firms. The Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society’s Minute Book reveals that the response to the Committee’s initial invitation was scant.<sup>31</sup> At the time, decorative arts were seen as being inspired by mediæval guilds, where all workers were anonymous, and quite happily so. In conflating the mediæval guild system with the early Renaissance concept of the artist as an individual, the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society was challenging the accepted views of the late nineteenth century.

In an interview with the Pall Mall Gazette, published just before the exhibition opened to the public, Walter Crane admitted that it was possible that the actual designers and makers never saw the invitations to exhibit, because their employers did not concur with the concept of naming

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<sup>28</sup> [FG Stephens], “Fine Art Gossip,” Athenæum 3180 (6 October 1888) 455.

<sup>29</sup> “Lectures At The Arts And Crafts Exhibition,” The Queen 84:2184 (3 November 1888) 549. There were to be four more lectures given on Thursdays at 8.30pm, but they give information for only two of them: 8 Nov: George Simmonds, “Modelling and Sculpture;” 15 Nov: Emery Walker “Letterpress Printing.”

<sup>30</sup> Catalogues of ACES; Smith & Hyde, 117.

<sup>31</sup> The Report does not specify how many applications were sent out or how many were received. “Report of the Selecting Committee,” Minutes 9 May 1888-13 Dec 1892.

individual workers.<sup>32</sup> This fact was also mentioned in several reviews. The Standard, a London daily paper, explained it this way:

The Arts and Crafts Society has done what it could to lift the veil; but the process had been attended with difficulty, and the confessed absence of contributions from many firms most justly celebrated for excellence of production may in some cases, possibly be put down, not so much to unwillingness on their part to give honour where it is due, as to the difficulty in assigning to each interested person his proper share of reknown in the execution of various and complicated work.<sup>33</sup>

When asked by the Pall Mall Gazette reporter which companies were on his 'Black List' in this respect, Crane replied, "The chief are Gillow's, and Collinson and Lock."<sup>34</sup> This comment provoked a quick reaction. The following week, a letter from Crane appeared in the Pall Mall Gazette, stating that he had received a letter from Gillow's explaining that they had not, in fact, received any invitation to exhibit, and would have been pleased to exhibit their goods under the stipulations of the Committee.<sup>35</sup> While the firm of Collinson and Lock did not send any explanation for their lack of response, it is noteworthy that in future years they did exhibit at the Arts and Crafts, particularly in 1890 when the emphasis was on furniture and embroidery.<sup>36</sup>

It was not only large decorating firms that questioned the wisdom of the ACES's new ideas. Even though he was a member of the Selecting Committee, William Morris expressed doubts prior to the first exhibition. For Morris,

the point seemed a trivial one; it was not by printing lists of names in a catalogue that the status of the workman could be raised, or the system of capitalistic commerce altered in the slightest degree.<sup>37</sup>

At this stage, Morris was far more concerned with the problems posed by capitalism for the quality of design, than with improving the public profile of designers or makers. His socialist views fit much better with the concept of the anonymous guild worker than with the 'artist-as-genius'

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<sup>32</sup> "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition: What it is and What it is For. A Chat with Mr Walter Crane," Pall Mall Gazette 48:7344 (29 September 1888) 5.

<sup>33</sup> [Frederick Wedmore?], "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," Standard (4 October 1888) 2.

<sup>34</sup> "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition: What it is and What it is For. A Chat with Mr Walter Crane," Pall Mall Gazette 48:7344 (29 September 1888) 5.

<sup>35</sup> "Arts and Crafts," Pall Mall Gazette 48:7350 (6 October 1888).

<sup>36</sup> Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Third Exhibition, 1890.

<sup>37</sup> JW Mackail, The Life of William Morris (London: Oxford University Press, 1950 [1899]) 211.

construct, popularised during the Italian Renaissance. These views had been long-established within his own company, as the first line in the Morris, Marshall & Faulkner Minute Book, dated 10 December 1862, shows: “Agreed that the names of the designers of cartoons be withheld from the public.”<sup>38</sup> Despite his concern for improving the quality of design, and for his concern that workers enjoy their work, Morris felt that making their names public was not the way to achieve this.

The periodical press did recognise the importance of the ACES’s dictum, and the issue received generous press coverage. An editorial in the Artist hinted at the financial importance of being identified in print: “When a man is unknown the manufacturers are able to make their own terms with him; but when his name is known by the public, he occupies a very different position and can command a very different price.”<sup>39</sup>

The importance of making a name for oneself has been theorised by Michel Foucault, who stipulates that the ‘author name’ groups together the works produced by the author, (or designer) and distinguishes them from other works. A group of works by the same author name can then function as a discourse, which is controlled by its reception in the particular culture in which it circulates.<sup>40</sup> Thus when a designer’s name is printed in the periodical press, this helps to create the ‘author name,’ but the designer is at the mercy of the critic, who contributes to the discourse by discussing the works produced.

The importance of making an author name for one’s work in the decorative arts was in the possibility that this would lead to higher wages, more commissions, and in the process, improved social status. Yet from a class perspective, at a time when the middle classes were expanding in numbers, wealth, and political power, it is noteworthy that the more conservative papers, like The Times, did not want to accord such a privilege to a mere ‘handicraftsman.’ In their review of the 1888 exhibition, The Times was rather skeptical of the need for “drawing into the struggle for

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<sup>38</sup> Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. Minute Book. 10 December 1862 - 4 November 1874. Hammersmith & Fulham Archives. dd/235/1. It is interesting that the two men whose names were most in the public eye were the least supportive of a venture to put more designers in the public eye.

<sup>39</sup> [Charles Kains-Jackson?], “From Month to Month,” Artist (1 November 1888) 339.

<sup>40</sup> Michel Foucault, “What is an author?” Screen 20:1 (Spring 1979) 19.

notoriety handicraftsmen who, in mediæval times at least, were quite satisfied to sink their personal reputation in that of their guild.”<sup>41</sup> The Times questioned whether naming really would achieve the ends desired by the ACES. They seemed to agree that designers deserved some recognition, but were less certain that makers - or ‘handicraftsmen’ - deserved the same notoriety.

However, the majority of critics were happy to print the names of the designers and the makers. The architectural journal The Builder was an outspoken supporter of the idea: “One of the first things we come to [in the 1888 exhibition] is ‘Design for Paper-hanging, by Messrs Rigley and Rigley’ which is the old style of thing over again. A firm cannot design; it is an individual who designs.”<sup>42</sup> Comments of this nature figure frequently in reviews of the Arts & Crafts.

The Pall Mall Gazette was far more pragmatic in its review, in part due to its sympathy to the socialist cause:

The truth of the matter is that popularity and public recognition and appreciation mean higher wages; so that the care of employers in preventing the names and whereabouts of their golden egged geese from becoming known has much the appearance of a tacit trade combination. However that may be, the artist-designer is oppressed, being usually absolutely forbidden to exhibit his works in his own name on pain of dismissal, while the employer fattens upon the productions of his ‘ghost’.<sup>43</sup>

The financial aspect, then, was of major importance in the context of burgeoning capitalism of late-nineteenth century England. If a designer became known under his or her own name, the designs could then command higher prices, and employers had no interest in paying their salaried employees more money.

‘Aurora’, who wrote a Ladies’ Column which appeared in the Kensington and Hammersmith Reporter and other local papers, pointed out that in addition to the financial aspect, it would be impossible to maintain a mediæval guild system in the present day, due to the “pecuniary value” placed on *time* in a capitalist system. She wrote that “An attempt to revive the days when the workman was an artist, and the artist did not scorn to be a workman, may not be altogether successful, considering what are the habits of the age in which we live; but it is a gallant

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<sup>41</sup> [Thomas Humphrey Ward?], “The New Gallery,” The Times (29 September 1888) 6.

<sup>42</sup> “The Arts & Crafts Exhibition,” Builder 55:2383 (6 October 1888) 241.

<sup>43</sup> “The Arts and Crafts Exhibition: What it is and What it is For. A Chat with Mr Walter Crane,” Pall Mall Gazette 48:7344 (29 September 1888) 5.

effort.”<sup>44</sup> Aurora obviously understood that time is money in a capitalist society, yet was still able to perceive the romance of harkening back to a past time.

Thus the discussion in the periodical press around the naming of individual designers and executants centred on the financial and social aspects. Daily and weekly newspapers were inclined to comment on the financial repercussions for the designer of having one’s name in print. The art magazines, however, were more concerned with how this new Society related to the art world, as in the Art Journal: “The Exhibition in the New Gallery is of distinct interest, not only because of the quality of the work exhibited, but also because of the artistic principle expressed and illustrated.”<sup>45</sup>

By their insistence on naming individuals in an exhibition of decorative arts, the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society was responsible for a change in the style of art review necessary in order to adequately report their exhibitions. Whether the periodical agreed with naming executants and designers or not, the issue was mentioned in reviews from this time forward. Thus a precedent was established by reviews of the 1888 ACES exhibition which collectively served to inaugurate a new genre of art review.

#### The ‘Professional’ Woman Designer

The emphasis on naming everyone involved in the design and production of a piece was especially significant for women designers and makers at this first ACES exhibition. This was their ticket into art history. This new concept received a lot of attention in the press, and women’s names became known to the public via the reviews as well as the labels on their work in the exhibition. Mention of their names and comments about their work in reviews in the periodical press informs my discussion in particular, for this was how women’s author names were created. Without the insistence on naming, many of these women and their works would be lost to history.

Exhibiting in the inaugural ACES show also indicated that a woman’s work was of a professional standard. High standards were required to have work accepted, and the established professional reputations of the members of the Selecting Committee, who were all well-known in

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<sup>44</sup> Aurora, “Ladies’ Column,” Kensington & Hammersmith Reporter (6 October 1888) 6.

<sup>45</sup> [CL Hind? Wilfrid Meynell?], “Exhibitions,” Art Journal (December 1888) 381.

their fields of endeavour, underwrote this assumption. Exhibiting was also in keeping with professional practice in the art world of the day. The label of 'professional' artist in the late nineteenth century was in part self-designated, in part created by the fine art exhibition system, but designating a designer 'professional' was a new idea, for designing was a trade, or was done by an architect.<sup>46</sup>

There were several steps to becoming a professional artist. First of all, one had to have proper art education, such as that offered by the Royal Academy Schools. For men, this was not complicated; for women, however, it was. Despite the availability of art education for women at the Royal Female School of Art (RFSa) since the 1830s, drawing from the nude was not allowed until after the turn of the century. Lacking proper knowledge of the figure, and discouraged from circulating freely in public, interior scenes and still life dominated the subject matter of women's paintings.

Deborah Cherry has written about the difficulties for women who desired this elusive professional status, concluding that "The forging of a feminine professional identity was sustained against the pervasive dismissal of all (or at the least, most) women's art as amateur."<sup>47</sup> This phenomenon was perpetuated by the conflation of amateur and professional status at the art school. Drawing and watercolour painting were seen as routine accomplishments for young women of the middle classes, and many women studied at the RFSa to hone these skills in preparation for marriage. Others, either from desire or necessity, aspired to professional status, and studied in order to learn a trade to support themselves. But as the women's personal motives for studying there were not obvious to the public who viewed exhibitions of their art work, the Royal Female School of Art, in effect, helped reinforce the general public's 'horizon of expectation' that all women's art was amateur.

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<sup>46</sup> 'Designer' was one of many trades which professionalised during the nineteenth century. Architects had led the way in the 1830s, followed closely by civil engineers, a splinter group from architecture. The debate over what constituted a designer and an architect continued in the architectural press from the 1830s right up to the turn of the century. See for example, the series "Friends in Council. No. 74. The Relation of the Architect to the Decorator" in the *British Architect* (1883), and Peter Davey, "Profession or Art?" *Architectural Review* 186 (July 1989), 59-66.

<sup>47</sup> Cherry, 83.

Beyond art training, a professional artist had to exhibit. Membership in an exhibiting society indicated that one was a professional painter, and thus facilitated the process.<sup>48</sup> For a man this was already difficult enough; the competition for space in the Royal Academy's prestigious exhibition was fierce indeed, yet there was always the possibility of membership. For women there was no such possibility until 1922.<sup>49</sup> However, as discussed in Chapter 1, several fine art exhibiting societies were begun in defiance of the elitism of the Royal Academy. These secessionist societies allowed women to exhibit their work, but rarely to become members.

Shut out of the male-dominated fine art societies, several women's art societies sprang up throughout the Victorian period. They include the Society of Female Artists (1856), (renamed the Society of Lady Artists in 1872, and the Society of Women Artists in 1899), the Manchester Society of Women Painters (1879), and the Glasgow Society of Female Artists (1882). Yet these were not always seen to be helpful. In a 'Letter to Artists: Especially Women Artists' published in 1900, the painter Anna Lea Merritt (1844-1930) wrote that all-women societies would only do a disservice to women artists, by cloistering their work together and thus lowering the collective standard of their art. If they exhibited on the same footing with men, their art would be judged more fairly.<sup>50</sup> One of the stigmas of the women's exhibiting societies was that copies of other paintings were allowed to be exhibited. In order to combat the 'amateur' label, in 1861 the Society of Female Artists disallowed copies of other paintings in their exhibitions.<sup>51</sup>

Exhibiting was also a method of advertising that would bring one's art into the public sphere and hopefully catch the eye of the critics. Having one's pictures reviewed in the press was

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<sup>48</sup> Deborah Cherry, Painting Women: Victorian Women Artists (London and New York: Routledge, 1993) 78.

<sup>49</sup> Although two women, Angela Kauffmann and Mary Moser, were founder members of the Royal Academy, no further women were elected until 1922, when Annie Louisa Swynnerton (1844-1933) became the first woman Associate. She was never elected a full member. Mary Anne Stevens, The Edwardians and After. The Royal Academy 1900-1950 (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1988) 18, 161. The election of women members of the RA is not treated in the main text of Stevens' book. This information was found buried in the "List of Artists" at the back of the book.

<sup>50</sup> Paula Gillett, The Victorian Painters' World (Gloucester: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1990) 174. Merritt, an American, first exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1878, later becoming an associate of the Society of Women Artists in 1886, but only exhibited one painting there. In 1887 she was elected an associate of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers and Engravers, and continued to exhibit successfully in London throughout her career. "Merritt, Anna Lea" in J. Johnson and A. Greutzner, comps, Dictionary of British Artists 1880-1940 (Woodbridge: Antique Collectors Club, 1976).

<sup>51</sup> Nunn, 84.



the last and crucial step in the process of professionalisation. Once the first pictures sold, further commissions and sales could lead to the ultimate goal of financial independence.<sup>52</sup> In fact, as Wilfrid Meynell wrote in 1879, only when a woman artist began accepting commissions and selling her work could she call herself a professional.<sup>53</sup>

Thus a woman painter's professionalism was determined by her art education, membership in a professional exhibiting society, exhibition and sales of her paintings. It was not easy to achieve all these goals, for many of them had institutionalised barriers for women. Female watercolour painters, for example, did not receive professional recognition as elected members of the Royal Watercolour Society until 1890.<sup>54</sup>

For female decorative artists, 'professional' was more difficult to define. Although women who attended the Royal Female School of Art were ostensibly training to be designers for industry, many women who studied there became fine artists.<sup>55</sup> Although three women, Kate Faulkner, May Morris and Evelyn de Morgan, were elected members of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society in 1889, but it was not until 1903, when May Morris appears on the Selecting Committee, that women had anything to do with the actual running of the Society or the exhibitions.<sup>56</sup>

In the decorative arts, 'amateur' was the operative euphemism for 'women's work' throughout most of the nineteenth century. Women producing copies had been normalized through art education and in exhibitions of fine art, thus when they began exhibiting decorative arts in a gallery setting, women who "copied" - that is, who produced someone else's designs - received more positive press than those women who designed and made their own work. Complicating the issue was women's own implication in the maintenance of the normalisation of copying as acceptable for women. In the 1880s and 1890s, the quarterly magazine Home Art Work,

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<sup>52</sup> Cherry, 9.

<sup>53</sup> J. Oldcastle [Wilfrid Meynell], "Elizabeth Butler," Magazine of Art (1879) 260.

<sup>54</sup> Deborah Cherry, Beyond the Frame: Feminism and Visual Culture, Britain 1850-1900 (London and New York: Routledge, 2000) 150.

<sup>55</sup> See Chapter 3 for a discussion of the Royal Female School of Art.

<sup>56</sup> The announcement of new members appeared in "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society," The Cabinet Maker & Art Furnisher 9 (1 April 1889) 278. The list of members of the Selecting Committee, those who chose the works and designed the display of the exhibition, were listed in the catalogues.

edited by Blanche de Montmorency Conyers Morrell, published full-scale patterns in each issue, drawn by famous designers such as Walter Crane and George C Haité. The letterpress urged women to copy the designs, and to exhibit them in the early Arts & Crafts Exhibitions. An announcement for the third Arts & Crafts Exhibition ends with the following statement:

As it is not imperative for the works exhibited to be designed by the executant, we direct the attention of our subscribers to the excellent opportunity this exhibition offers to them of exhibiting skilfully executed copies of our designs by the various methods to which they are adaptable.<sup>57</sup>

Furthermore, since 1884 women had been exhibiting decorative arts at the annual Home Arts and Industries Association's exhibitions, which was purposely amateur in nature. Thus to be associated with the more professional Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society's exhibition was something to which a woman designer or maker could aspire, as a way of raising her professional profile.

Overcoming this amateur label involved greater hurdles for the woman who designed embroidery or ceramics, as these pursuits in particular had long been associated with both amateur work and women. A review of the embroidery at the inaugural Arts and Crafts exhibition in The Queen reveals that a proper art education was an imperative to producing professional work:

Going through the needlework exhibits in the 'Arts & Crafts,' however, one is immediately struck with the amount of amateur, or at least untrained work to be found there. Evidently an impression exists that in this branch of art technical education may be dispensed with, and that any woman who can use a needle can execute decorative needlework. There is no greater mistake.<sup>58</sup>

The word 'professional' is used several times to describe women's work in this review. I quote them all, in order to show the range of work that The Queen deemed professional.

Among the professional exhibitors the Decorative Needlework Society sent by far the largest group of embroideries. [...] Noticeable among the other professional work is a small panel on linen (no 33A) by Mrs Bateman, very harmonious and decorative, designed by R Bateman; [...] Purely professional and severe are also Miss Burden's three figure panels.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> "Arts Notes and Exhibitions," Home Art Work VII:33 (July 1890) 14.

<sup>58</sup>"Embroidery At The Arts & Crafts Exhibition," The Queen 84:2185 (10 November 1888) 607.

<sup>59</sup> "Embroidery At The Arts & Crafts Exhibition." The figures were Penelope, Hippolyte, and Helen of Troy. They were originally made for Jane & William Morris, but were not completed. After the 1888 ACES show, they were later mounted as a screen, and sold to George Howard, Earl of Carlisle, who donated them to the South Kensington Museum, where they were displayed in one of Morris & Co's first important public commissions, the Green Dining Room. Much of the interior decoration was designed by Philip Webb. Parry, 119. (Figure 2.11.)

It becomes clear that decorative artists were expected to follow a similar route to the fine artists in becoming a professional. An embroiderer must study her art at a school. Belonging to a society such as the Decorative Needlework Society, or the Leek Embroidery Society, also conveyed professional status as the women were paid for their work. The executor of the design could also be called a professional, as in the example of the Bateman couple, where the husband designed, and the wife produced the work. Elizabeth Burden was an instructor at the Royal School of Art Needlework,<sup>60</sup> thus her professionalism stems from designing, producing, and also from teaching embroidery - the fact she was paid for producing her designs.

An alternative route, taken by middle and working-class women, was to train as an apprentice in one of the decorative arts trades. The Society for Promoting the Employment of Women would often pay the fees for women to apprentice in some branch of the decorative arts. This scheme enabled Miss Seeley to train as a stained-glass designer in a shop setting. In December 1876, she was hired as forewoman at Mr Stacey's, Duke Street, Manchester Square, with a salary of £2 per week.<sup>61</sup>

Most important was the commitment of time necessary to be a professional. It is mentioned in the literature of both the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. Lewis F Day reminded his readers in 1887 that few women would, even if they could, spend the time necessary to become professional decorative artists:

It must be remembered that the signal success of certain lady artists is the result of a devotion to their art and a sacrifice to it that amateurs are scarcely prepared to offer. How many even of those ladies who really love art would be willing to shut themselves out from household pleasures and from household cares, and devote some six or eight hours daily to the study of it? How many of them, even though they might be willing, would feel themselves justified in so doing?<sup>62</sup>

Despite all these obstacles to their professional success, a great many women learned to design and produce decorative arts of high quality, as evidenced by their participation in the first Arts & Crafts exhibition.

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<sup>60</sup> See Chapter 3 for a discussion of the Royal School of Art Needlework.

<sup>61</sup> "Minute Books," Society for Promoting the Employment of Women, 22 December 1876.

<sup>62</sup> Lewis F Day, "The Woman's Part in Domestic Decoration," The Magazine of Art 4 (1880-1881) 458.

## Women's Participation in the 1888 ACES Exhibition

The catalogue of the first Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society show lists fifty-one women and 264 men as exhibitors, but these figures do not include everyone who designed or produced work on display. Confounding the true number of women participants was the fact that not all exhibitors acceded to the request of the Society to name all designers and makers. The Decorative Needlework Society and the Donegal Industrial Fund did not name individual makers, likely to protect the privacy of the 'distressed gentlewomen' involved rather than to oppose the ACES' request to name everyone, but nevertheless leaving out a potentially large group of women participants.<sup>63</sup> I also discovered inaccuracies from the reviews of the exhibition. In one instance, work by A Keidel, which I had taken for a man's, was discussed in The Queen as a woman's work.<sup>64</sup> In another case, work by Florence Whall was illustrated and discussed in a review in the British Architect but not listed in the catalogue. The reviewer wrote that her husband Christopher Whall's 'Experiment in Tinting Sculpture' was "quite one of the best exhibits," and then continued, "the embroidery and reed plaiting behind the crucifix by Mrs Whall are good work."<sup>65</sup> Raffles Davison illustrated the piece, captioned "A Wood Crucifix by Chris. Whall with reed plaiting by Mrs. Whall & embroidery." (Figure 2.4) In the catalogue entry for this piece, there is no reference to Mrs Whall having contributed to it whatsoever;<sup>66</sup> I can only surmise that the critic found this out by word of mouth. Mrs Whall, born Florence Chaplin (b.1850), had been a portrait painter before her marriage to the stained glass artist, Christopher Whall in 1884, but according to Whall's biographer, she did no artistic work after this date.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the First Exhibition, 1888 (London: Chiswick Press, 1988).

<sup>64</sup> In The Queen's third article, entitled 'Wood Carving and Gesso', (20 October 1888) I read the following: "On a screen in the centre of the gallery, Mrs Keidel contributes two specimens of wood-carving executed in boxwood. No 232, 'Bust of a Lady,' tastefully executed and beautifully finished. No 233, 'Kittens,' which, though remarkably clever, is ability wrongly applied." The catalogue entry reads as follows: "A. KEIDEL, 232. Bust of a Lady: in boxwood; 233. Kittens: in boxwood." As the catalogue entry did not include the title 'Mrs', I took the work to be of a man. The address in the Index of Exhibitors does not provide clues, either. It reads: "Keidel A., 45, Gerrard Street, Colebrook Row, Islington, N. 232, 233."

<sup>65</sup> "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition I," British Architect (16 November 1888) 344, 366.

<sup>66</sup> The catalogue reads: "CHRISTOPHER W WHALL. 247. Experiment in tinting sculpture: a crucifix." 140.

<sup>67</sup> Peter Cormack, "Introduction," in Christopher Whall, Stained Glass Work (Bristol: Morris & Juliet Venables, 1999). Dates for Florence Chaplin Whall do not appear in the Introduction either. Cormack claims Florence Whall did not do any artwork after her marriage, either on her own, or with her husband; but there

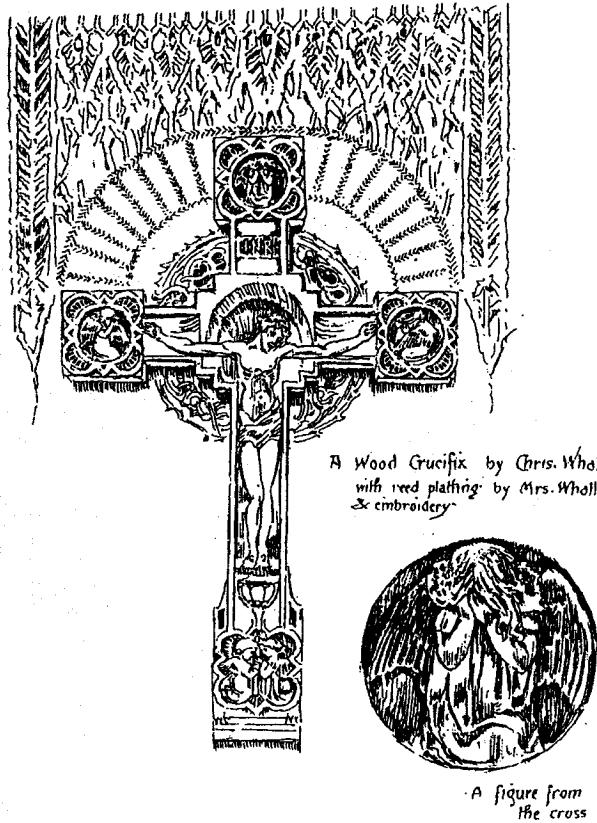


Figure 2.4: A Wood Crucifix by Christopher Whall  
with reed plaiting & embroidery by Florence Chaplin Whall.  
Illustrated in the British Architect (16 November 1888), 344, foll. 366.

These omissions were the combined result of the haste with which the catalogue was assembled, and exhibitors not providing accurate information. Neither scenario is surprising considering this was the first catalogue the ACES had attempted. Despite such inaccuracies, one may state with relative certainty that, including Mrs Keidel and Florence Whall, at least 52 women participated in the exhibition, exhibiting 100 of the 662 objects on display.<sup>68</sup>

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is a photo of them standing in front of a cottage with some reed plaiting decoration on it, which is possibly her work. Personal communication, 21.11.00, Peter Cormack, Deputy Keeper, William Morris Gallery. CW Whall also exhibited a rush-plaiting design applied to leather cases for bookbinding at the 1888 ACES, but his wife's name does not appear. The cases were covered by Stevenson & Co; blocks by Straker & Co.

<sup>68</sup> There were 517 numbered in the catalogue, plus 145 pieces which were identified with letters, as part of one of the numbers. In order to determine exactly how many pieces were designed by women, the number of lettered pieces were added on to the numbered pieces. For example No. 143 had two pieces: 143a, *Portière embroidered in silk*, and 143b, *Wall Panel*, both made by women of the Decorative Needlework Society, and designed by Mary Gemmell. Thus 143 actually counts as two pieces, rather than one.

A high proportion of women exhibitors - 37 out of 52, or 71% - were also designers. Only fifteen women executed the work of a male designer. As was to be the case in most years of Arts & Crafts Exhibitions, embroidery was the medium exhibited by most women, comprising 46% of women's contributions. Wallpaper and textile designs accounted for 10%, decorative painting 9% and ceramics 7%. Gesso, to figure prominently in this chapter, was used as a medium for only 3% of women's work. (See Appendix VI: Techniques Exhibited by Women, 1888-1916).

Reviews of this first exhibition were plentiful. Of the 40 periodicals I checked, 32 reviewed the exhibition, and 20 named individual women. Some reviewed the show in more than one article, thus the total number of reviews in the sample is 40. In total thirty-five women were named, of the fifty-two who participated (See Appendix I: Women Reviewed 1888). Again, I have deferred to the reviews and included Keidel and Whall in these figures. This means that 67% of the women who showed work had their name in the press, which is actually quite a high percentage, considering that women designed or made only 15% of the 662 objects in the exhibition.

Of particular note is the attention paid to women designers in the reviews - twenty-eight of the 35 women reviewed, or 82%, designed the work they exhibited. Only six women, or 18%, were makers, five of whom executed embroidery, which, according to the Queen, did not deter a woman from being considered a professional.

#### The General Reception of Women's Work in the 1888 Exhibition

Few reviews commented specifically on women's contributions as a group at this first Arts & Crafts Exhibition. The Court Circular and Court News commented positively on the quantity of women exhibitors, as well as on the quality of their work: "The number of female contributors to the show almost equals that of the men, and the class of work proves the immense strides that women have made of late years in decorative capacity."<sup>69</sup> As the figures in the previous section reveal, this was quite an exaggeration, but shows the critic's singular enthusiasm for women as practitioners of the decorative arts.

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<sup>69</sup> Celia, "Causerie," The Court Circular and Court News 61:1717 (13 October 1888) 339.

The women's press limited their general comments on women exhibitors to the medium of embroidery. The anonymous reviewer in The Lady wrote: "It is pleasing indeed to see how largely women are represented as designers and needleworkers in this exhibition."<sup>70</sup> 'Aurora', author of a Ladies' Column printed in several London papers, also made special mention of the "perfection" of the embroidery exhibited by women: "To ladies this exhibition ought to be above all interesting from the place awarded in it to women's work."<sup>71</sup> The Queen was somewhat less flattering, warning its readers that the inferior quality of much of the embroidery was due to a lack of education.<sup>72</sup>

Indeed, the educational benefit of the exhibition for a female audience was another theme in the women's press. The Queen pointed out that "if any educational advantage is to be derived from it, each branch must be studied separately."<sup>73</sup> Florence Fenwick Miller, author of the "Ladies' Column" in the Illustrated London News, particularly emphasised the educational nature of the show for women: "However, what I want to refer to specially" she wrote, "is the lesson which such evidence of painstaking on the part of successful and eminent men should convey to beginners in any art, and especially to women."<sup>74</sup> In other words, by observing the quality of the men's work on display, Fenwick Miller hoped that women would realize they too had the potential to produce

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<sup>70</sup> "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," The Lady (4 October 1888) 302.

<sup>71</sup> Aurora, "Ladies' Column," Kensington & Hammersmith Reporter (6 October 1888) 6.

<sup>72</sup> "Embroidery At The Arts & Crafts Exhibition," The Queen (10 November 1888) 607.

<sup>73</sup> "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition. Wood Carving and Gesso," The Queen (20 October 1888) 482.

<sup>74</sup> Florence Fenwick Miller, "The Ladies' Column," Illustrated London News (13 October 1888) 433. A feminist in all she did, Florence Fenwick Miller (1854-1935) was born in London, and commenced her career studying medicine at the University of Edinburgh, passing the preliminary examinations in October 1871. Women were not allowed to take degrees, so she enrolled in the Ladies' Medical College, London, graduating in 1873. She specialised in women's medicine, and ran a successful practice despite women doctors not being legally recognised. She began lecturing on suffrage in 1873, and became a well-known public speaker. In 1876 she was elected to the London School Board, Hackney Division, and was re-elected for two more terms. She also wrote several books on anatomy, physiology, and social economy, as well as a biography of Harriet Martineau. She contributed to many journals, beginning in 1872 with an article on women's health in the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*. She wrote a women's column for the *Illustrated London News* under her own name (1886-1918), another as "Filomina" in provincial weekly papers (1888-1890), edited the *Woman's Signal* (1895-99), as well as *Outward Bound*, a colonial magazine. When she married in Frederick A Ford in 1877, she shocked her contemporaries by keeping her maiden name. In 1902, Fenwick Miller was the first Treasurer of International Women's Suffrage Committee, and in 1915 President of English Women Writers Suffrage League. On Fenwick Miller see also Rosemary T. Van Arsdel, "Mrs. Florence Fenwick Miller and *The Woman's Signal*, 1895-1899," Victorian Periodicals Review 15:3 (1982) 107-118 and VanArsdel's more recent book, Florence Fenwick Miller. Victorian Feminist, Journalist, and Educator (Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2001).

such high-quality work. Fenwick Miller often used her column in the Illustrated London News to advocate women's rights in several areas, notably their acceptance into the Royal Academy. Although she criticised the methods used by the RA to elect members choose works for exhibition, she simultaneously valued their judgment.<sup>75</sup> It is interesting to note that while Fenwick Miller felt her female readers could learn more from the work of men, 'Aurora' encouraged her readers to look at the work of women.

The remaining two reviews that commented on women's work in a general way, were the Proceedings of the Society of Architects and the Art Journal. Taken together, they reveal the serious doubts these critics had about women's fitness to design decorative arts. The first of these reviews took the form of a speech given by William Woodward (1846-1927), at the Society of Architects. Woodward claimed to feel nothing but compassion for women who attempted to design:

It would be ungracious and ungraceful to individualize the work of the ladies in this exhibition - it is all, or nearly all, characterized by poverty in invention, weakness in design, and by painful evidence of slavish copyism of the followers and leaders of capricious fashion - Ladies can do well in the *execution* of the designs of men in textile art - but they had far better leave the *designs* to those so much more competent to do the work, and more especially do I speak of those ladies who have attempted design in joiners' work, and who have as might have been anticipated, miserably failed."<sup>76</sup> (Woodward's emphasis)

Woodward appears to subscribe to an idea from Ruskin's lecture "Of Queen's Garden's": "But the woman's power is for rule, not for battle - and her intellect is not for invention or creation, but for sweet ordering, arrangement, and decision."<sup>77</sup>

When Woodward's comments are read in context with the other reviews of the exhibition, it becomes clear that he was quite out of sympathy with the visual aesthetic of the exhibition, for he criticized the male designers' work with strident animosity. He described William Morris' Arras tapestry The Woodpecker (Figure 2.5) as "a large central stump relieved by a collection of red

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<sup>75</sup> Meaghan Clarke, "There is no sex in art': Florence Fenwick Miller: Art and Feminism 1885-1905." Sharp <<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/arthist/sharp/issues/0002/pHTML/pFlorenceFenwickMiller02.shtml>>.

<sup>76</sup> William Woodward, "The Arts and Crafts from an Architect's Point of View," Proceedings of the Society of Architects 1:3 (14 December 1888) 18. Rhoda and Agnes Garrett were the only women to exhibit "joiner's work" in 1888. They designed and exhibited 4 pieces of furniture.

<sup>77</sup> John Ruskin, "Of Queen's Gardens," in Sesame and Lilies (New York: AL Burt, [1871]) 84.



blotches and vulgar leaf ornament,” and ranted for an entire page about Burne-Jones’ work being “altogether outside [his] understanding of what constitutes art.”<sup>78</sup> That Woodward was out of step with the times becomes even clearer after reading through reviews of this exhibition in art journals and in the daily newspapers, where Burne-Jones’ work received the most praise.

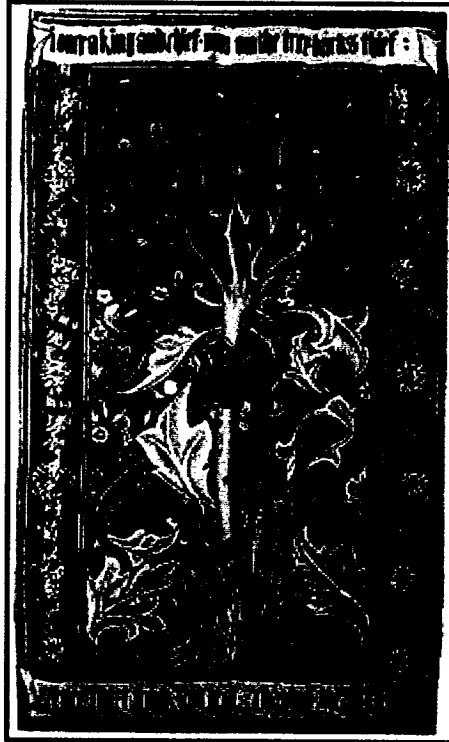


Figure 2.5: William Morris, Woodpecker tapestry

Woodward was an architect by profession, a Fellow of both the Royal Institute of British Architects and the Surveyors’ Institution, and one-time mayor of Hampstead. He gave papers occasionally at the RIBA, and at the Surveyor’s Institution, and contributed to Essays on the Street Re-alignment, Reconstruction, and Sanitation of Central London (1886). An obituary in the Journal of the RIBA noted that he worked on projects with Reginald Blomfield and Ernest Newton, was committed to preserving open spaces in the Metropolis, and that “he held strong views about

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<sup>78</sup> Ruskin, 17.

the proper preservation of ancient buildings”.<sup>79</sup> However, neither this nor several other biographical sources consulted revealed any sign of, or reason for, his vehemence toward the style of decorative arts which was exhibited at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society. Nevertheless, the Proceedings of the Society of Architects did not contain reviews of any other Arts & Crafts Exhibitions during the years of my study.

While the Art Journal did not make as overtly negative comments about the women exhibitors as Woodward did, they were not exactly encouraging:

In the first and third of these sections [textiles and mural decoration] there is a little too much evidence of the hand of the single gentlewoman with a mission: there are (that is) too many overgrown school-girl exercises -- designs for cretonnes and for curtains, designs for table-covers and for wall-papers, which are of small practical value, since they have not been, nor are ever likely to be, embodied in trade productions. It might have been well if designs which had not appeared in substantial dimensions, had been rigidly excluded.<sup>80</sup>

In a valiant attempt to cope with the challenges of writing about the decorative arts, the critic addresses the issue of whether the design alone is a finished work of art. In order to place these critic's comments in context, I checked the 1888 catalogue, and discovered that there were no textile designs by women which had not been commercially produced. In comparison, there were 67 textile and wallpaper designs by men, none of which came under the same scrutiny for not being made up into trade productions. It is difficult to believe that the quality of the women's designs was so inferior that a handful of them would have so impressed this critic, considering the glaring statistical inaccuracy of the Art Journal's critic.

To return to the women's work, there were two finished wallpapers, one designed by the interior design team of Agnes and Rhoda Garrett, and the other by Louise Aumonier. Both designs were produced by Woollams & Co. Eight wallpaper designs by women were 'not embodied in trade productions,' thus deemed by this critic to be the work of the 'single gentlewoman with a mission.' And yet a quick look at the careers of these women - Charlotte H Spiers, Annie Newbold, Dora Stewart and Janet Macgoun<sup>81</sup> - reveals a similar path, one which combined both fine and

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<sup>79</sup> Maurice B Adams, "The Late Mr William Woodward," Journal of the RIBA (10 December 1927) 81.

<sup>80</sup> [MB Huish?], "Exhibitions. The Arts and Crafts," Art Journal (December 1888) 381.

<sup>81</sup> Janet Ann Stuart Macgoun was born in 1857 in Edinburgh, but does not seem to have pursued an artistic career after exhibiting at ACES in 1888 and 1889. Pedigree Resource File, FamilySearch.com.

decorative art. Aumonier designed wallpaper for Woollams and Co., and Jeffrey and Co.; and embroidery for dresses; yet she was also a flower painter, exhibiting watercolours from 1880-1901 at venues including the Royal Academy, the Society of Women Artists, and the Fine Art Society.<sup>82</sup> Dora Stewart (b1863) exhibited watercolours at the Society of Women Artists and the Royal Society of British Artists from 1882 until 1886, and designs for wallpapers and textiles at ACES from 1888-1890. Charlotte H Spiers (b1845) was a watercolour painter, exhibiting widely from 1880 until 1914 at venues including the Royal Institute of Painters in Watercolours, the Royal Academy, and the Society of Women Artists, where she was elected an Associate in 1893. She described herself as 'Decoration Artist' in the 1881 Census, and showed designs at ACES in 1888 and 1889. Annie Newbold also exhibited designs at ACES in 1888 and 1889, as well as landscape paintings at the Royal Institute of Oil Painters from 1892-1894.<sup>83</sup> From this brief synopsis, then, it seems that these women were attempting to forge a new type of professional art careers, which combined fine and decorative arts, exhibiting paintings and designs and selling both.

The Art Journal's reaction to women's designs demonstrates how difficult it was for women who really wanted a career as a designer. Not only did women have to prove their abilities as designers, they also had to demonstrate a time commitment to their work by having it produced professionally, which was far more easily done without the demands of children and family. Popular perceptions of a woman's role continued to prioritise duty to husband and family above all else, despite the fact that women greatly outnumbered men in England and there simply were not enough husbands to go around in the final quarter of the nineteenth century. Anna Lea Merritt blamed the glut of 'amateur' fine artists - that is, women who painted, exhibited and possibly sold their work only until they married - on the overexpansion of the South Kensington system of art education, and the excessive number of educated single women whose families could not support them financially. She wrote that "of all businesses art is the most popular and fashionable"<sup>84</sup> and

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<sup>82</sup> "Fine Art Society, New Bond-Street," The Queen (3 November 1888) 565. Leader Scott, "Women at Work: Their Functions in Art" Magazine of Art 7 (1884) 99; Dictionary of British Artists 1880-1940, 33.

<sup>83</sup> Dictionary of British Artists 1880-1940, passim; FamilySearch.com; Catalogues of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, 1888-1916, passim.

<sup>84</sup> Anna Lea Merritt, "A Letter to Artists: Especially Women Artists," Lippincott's Magazine [Philadelphia], quoted in Gillett, 174-5.

warned women to be realistic about their chances of success in the slow art market. Her comments were directed toward women painters, and the examples cited above show that women were aware of this, and adapted to their situation by working in both the fine and decorative arts.

Despite its disparaging comments, the Art Journal's emphasis on exhibiting the completed work rather than the design gave an added importance to the role of the maker. This, in turn, opens up a space in which to discuss the executant of other people's designs - male and female - on an equal footing with the designer, since both were involved in what was essentially a collaborative work. It became obvious, in reading reviews of this first exhibition, that art critics were used to reviewing painting shows, where one person generally does the whole piece. Writing about decorative arts, where one person did the designing, and another the making, obviously posed a problem, since the tendency was to single out one person to be the 'artist genius.' The critics, then, were grappling with how to write about decorative arts - who do you name? who is more important - designer or maker? and what is more important: the design or the finished work? The reviews of the first exhibition of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, then, are exceedingly important documents for they reveal the beginnings of a new standard for reviewing this type of exhibition. The following case study will demonstrate how the critics handled these questions, with emphasis on the attention given to one woman in her relatively new role of professional woman designer. In future exhibits, women designers would not receive as much attention.

#### Case Study: Kate Faulkner

Of all the women who exhibited at the 1888 Arts & Crafts Exhibition, Kate Faulkner (1841-1898) was mentioned the most often in reviews. She designed and applied gesso decoration to a custom-built grand piano, owned and exhibited by Alexander A Ionides.<sup>85</sup> The piano was discussed at varying lengths in 15 of the 40 reviews in my selection. The degree of attention given to Kate Faulkner's work - the only piece she ever exhibited with the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society - warrants further investigation.

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<sup>85</sup> In addition to being an "amateur", that is, a collector of artwork, Alexander Ionides (1840-1898) was Greek Consul from 1884-1894, and ran a General Merchant business at 124-125 Gresham House, Old Broad Street, London. See Athena Leoussi, "The Ionides Circle and Art," MPhil, Courtauld Institute of Art, 1982.

In part, the prominence given to Faulkner was related to the medium of gesso in which she worked, for Walter Crane, the President of the Society, also exhibited several pieces of gesso, to some fanfare in the press. As was the case in reviews of the Royal Academy, the President of the exhibiting society's work was discussed first, and special attention accorded to his work. Crane's catalogue entry included the recipe for gesso, which was repeated in many reviews: "239. Frieze panel in gesso, tinted with lacquer, representing St. George and Dragon. (Gesso is composed of plaster of Paris, glue, and cotton wool.)"<sup>86</sup> (Figure 2.6)



Figure 2.6: Walter Crane, St. George & the Dragon, Frieze Panel in Gesso

In an article devoted to gesso and woodworking, the Queen clearly wanted to promote these crafts as suitable for women:

The gesso work is well worth careful study, as it is an art which, though largely practised for many ages in Italy, has not been much known in England until the work of Mr Walter Crane encouraged other artists to attempt it, and, to judge from the successful exhibits, it is likely to become popular.<sup>87</sup>

Become popular it did: following the 1888 exhibition, articles, books and exhibitions appeared to bolster what became a virtual revival of gesso decoration.<sup>88</sup> The Society of Arts

<sup>86</sup> Catalogue of the First Exhibition, 138-9.

<sup>87</sup> "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition. Wood Carving and Gesso," The Queen (20 October 1888) 482.

<sup>88</sup> Examples of articles include, GT Robinson, "Of Stucco and Gesso," in Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Second Exhibition (London: Chiswick Press, 1889) 39-47; Walter Crane "Gesso" The Studio (May 1893); Matthew Webb, "On Gesso, and Some Designs in a Competition for a Finger-Plate," The Studio 3 (1894) 153-159; Edward W. Gregory "Gesso," The Queen (23 September 1899) 505; K.M. Eadie, "Gesso Work," Art Workers Quarterly 3:9 (January 1904).

exhibition in June 1889 contained “specimens of Gesso painting, which some artists, led by Mr. Burne Jones, are beginning to take up warmly.”<sup>89</sup> Due to the difficulty in procuring the recipe for gesso, the Society of Arts had pre-mixed bottles of gesso for sale, and also offered classes in the technique. A critic in The Artist declared, “Decorative Gesso painting is, *on dit*, to be the fashionable work of the season.”<sup>90</sup> Indeed, a few months later, a reviewer of the 1889 Arts & Crafts Exhibition concurred: “The real feature of the exhibition is the gesso work by various artists,”<sup>91</sup> and lists the works of half a dozen men. By the time Matthew Webb published his book Gesso Work in 1901, however, subtle comments in the accumulated writing on the topic suggests that gesso was especially suited to amateurs and workers in the home: in both cases, a description of women. GT Robinson referred to gesso in his 1889 ACES Catalogue Essay as a technique suitable for the home. “I have sought to indicate a home-art means by which, at very moderate cost, [modellers] can bring their labours in useful form before the world, and at the same time learn and live.”<sup>92</sup> An article in The Queen advised its female audience, “There are very few books published on gesso which would be of much assistance to the amateur”<sup>93</sup> and recommended Robinson’s article. And in the section entitled ‘Design for Gesso’ in his book, Matthew Webb advised his readers to copy or adapt designs for use with gesso, rather than learning to design themselves.<sup>94</sup> I shall shortly discuss whether this implicit “gendering” of gesso work was present in the responses to Faulkner’s gesso decoration in the 1888 ACES exhibition, but prior to undertaking that investigation, it is worthwhile considering the artistic reputation Faulkner brought with her into the 1888 exhibition, which may help to account for her prominence in the press reviews.

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<sup>89</sup> [untitled] The Artist 10:115 (1 June 1889) 175.

<sup>90</sup> The Artist 10:115 (1 June 1889) 175.

<sup>91</sup> “The Second Arts & Crafts Exhibition” Art Journal (December 1889) 362. Only one woman exhibited gesso in 1889, Mrs Charlotte Wylie.

<sup>92</sup> GT Robinson, “Of Stucco and Gesso,” in Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Second Exhibition (London: Chiswick Press, 1889) 47. A high proportion of the students in Edouard Lanteri’s sculpture and modelling classes at South Kensington (later the Royal College of Art) were women. See Chapter 5.

<sup>93</sup> Edward W. Gregory “Gesso,” The Queen (23 September 1899) 505.

<sup>94</sup> Matthew Webb, Gesso Work Useful Arts and Handicrafts Series, H. Snowden Ward, FRPS ed, (London: Dawbarn & Ward, Limited, 1901) 232.

The known details of Kate Faulkner's early life and art education are few, as very little research has been done on her life or her work. She was born on 16 October 1841, in Birmingham, the sixth of seven children, and christened 15 November 1841, at St Thomas, Birmingham.<sup>95</sup> Her father Benjamin Faulkner was a maltster and brewer from Warwickshire, while her mother, Ann Wight, came from Great Barr, to the northwest of Birmingham. In 1851, the household also included one servant, Mary Armstrong, aged 25.<sup>96</sup>

Kate Faulkner enters the history of the Arts and Crafts Movement c.1860, when her brother Charles Joseph Faulkner (1833-1892), befriended William Morris at Oxford University. He later became one of the founder members of 'the Firm,' Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Co. in 1861. After his father's death, Charles moved with his mother, two sisters and a younger brother to 35 Queen Square, London.<sup>97</sup> He would often bring his two sisters, Kate and Lucy (1839-1910), to socialize with the Morrises, Burne-Joneses, and other members of their circle of friends.

During the Firm's first few years of business, Kate Faulkner was very busy. From 1861 she, her sister Lucy, Jane Morris and Elizabeth Burden helped embroider altar cloths that William Morris designed. After her family moved to Queen Square, she also designed and painted tiles, such as the *Hawthorn* enamelled tiles, designed c.1885.<sup>98</sup> (Figure 2.7)

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<sup>95</sup> FamilySearch.com; International Genealogical Index/British Isles.

<sup>96</sup> The 1851 Census lists the Faulkner family as follows:

Benjamin	head, age 53	married, maltster & brewer, employs 15 men
Ann	wife 44	
Benjamin W	son 18	assistant to father
Charles J	son 17	scholar
Hubert	son 15	
Anne	daughter 15	
Lucy J	daughter 11	
Kate	daughter 9	
Frank	son 7	
Mary Armstrong	25	servant

1851 Census Returns, Film 2052 folio 348, page 16. Family Records Centre, London.

<sup>97</sup> GB-J [Georgiana Burne-Jones], Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones Vol. I, 1833-1867 (London: Macmillan & Co, 1909) 249-250.

<sup>98</sup> Lewis F Day, "William Morris and His Art," Easter Art Annual 1899 (London: Art Journal, 1899) 27. The tiles are illustrated on page 19 of the article.

In the 1870s, Faulkner began to design fabric and carpets for Morris and Co. They include *Carnation*, registered 15 Oct 1875; *Peony*, registered 22 June 1877; and *Acanthus and Sunflower*, registered 13 Jan 1878. All three were used for block printed chintz; *Peony* and *Acanthus and Sunflower* were also used for tiles. *Vine and Pomegranate* was a design Faulkner produced c.1877 for three-ply carpeting and fabric, which was produced in seven colourways by Heckmondwike. The design is Morris and Co. pattern 5134, but was not formally registered.<sup>99</sup>

Early in 1881, William Morris wrote to his daughter May, "I have handed over some of the American carpets to K[ate] F[aulkner] to begin: we shall have to turn to all hands presently."<sup>100</sup> During this year, Faulkner worked on several carpet designs with William Morris. He designed the carpets, and Faulkner painted them onto squared paper, a procedure called pointing.<sup>101</sup> Morris' *Diary* for 1881 reveals that he would work on a design, then leave it with Faulkner for some days, then take it back. It is unclear whether Faulkner was also working on the design, or pointing only; Morris does mention in his *Diary* that he did the colouring for the carpets he left with Kate Faulkner.

Kate also designed wallpapers for Morris and Co. that were printed by Jeffrey and Co, and later for Jeffrey and Co. directly. It is likely that her friendship with William Morris and her subsequent work for Morris and Co. led to such contracts. Her designs for Morris and Co. include *Loop Trail* (1877), *Bramble* (1879), *Mallow* (1879), and *Blossom* (1885). (Figure 2.7) As late as 1993, these four designs were still being produced by Sanderson's, the company that bought Morris and Co.'s wood blocks when they closed in 1930s.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Myers, 111.

<sup>100</sup> William Morris to May Morris, 10 December 1881. Kelvin, II: Letter 760.

<sup>101</sup> William Morris *Diary* 1881, *Morris Papers: Vol. XVII* British Library, Add MS45407B. The entry for Thursday 21 April 1881 reads "called on K[ate]F[aulkner] took from her pointing for Volo border." Volo was a carpet design. After another exchange of the carpet design, Morris writes on May 10 - "Tues - to Grange. back & did Rabbit & coloured Volo."

<sup>102</sup> Sanderson & Co, *Catalogue Of Block-Printed Wallpapers* (1993) np.



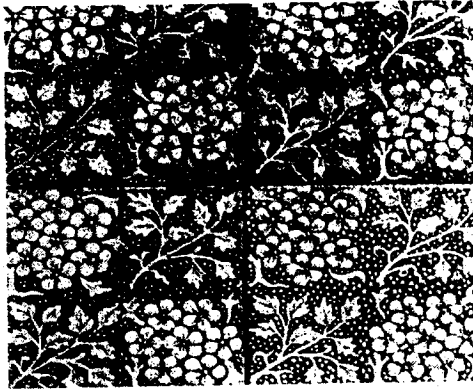


Figure 2.7: Above: Kate Faulkner, *Hawthorn* painted tile c.1885  
Below: Kate Faulkner, *Blossom* wallpaper (1885)

Faulkner's wallpaper design *The Flower Garden* was published in the British Architect some time prior to November 1888, and mentioned again in an article of that date.<sup>103</sup> In this way, the British Architect was helping to create her author name by publishing both her name, and illustrations of her work.

In 1880 Kate Faulkner also began working with Philip Webb, an architect and a partner in Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Co. She applied gesso decoration to a settle designed by Webb for Old Swan House, Chelsea.<sup>104</sup> This was the home of Wickham Flower, for whom Faulkner would

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<sup>103</sup> "A Grand Piano at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition," The British Architect 30 (23 November 1888) 362.

<sup>104</sup> Morris & Co., [Exhibition Catalogue] (London: Fine Art Society and Haslam & Whiteway Ltd., 1979) np.

later decorate a grand piano. Other pieces of gessoed furniture have been difficult to trace, but one proof that Faulkner did gesso decoration for the Firm as late as 1888 is Morris's letter to a Mrs. Hunt, in which he informs her :

I have never done any gesso work: but I will ask Miss Faulkner who does what we have shown what the composition is. You see it is a matter of nicety in the proportions, and I dont (sic) suppose it is a secret. As to employing Mrs Merrit's sister we do very little of such work & Miss Faulkner does what we do do.<sup>105</sup>

This is an example of where friendship is a deterrent to history, in that Morris's personal and business records were less complete due to his familiarity with Kate Faulkner. The Faulkner family and the Morris family both lived in Queen Square when Kate and her sister Lucy did the bulk of their work for the Firm. For the sake of propriety, the sisters worked in their own home. Morris would simply walk over to the Faulkner's house to discuss any work to be done, and to check on its progress.<sup>106</sup> This oral communication negated the need for written correspondence, thus obfuscating the record of Kate's projects. If she left any private papers or letters they have yet to be discovered.

From 1881, Kate Faulkner had the good fortune to work for Broadwood and Sons Ltd., the largest piano manufacturer in England at the time. The company was begun by Burkat Shudi in 1728, as a harpsichord workshop, and still exists today. Shudi's fame grew rapidly, encouraged greatly after he built a harpsichord for the Prince of Wales in 1740, and later for King George II. Since that time, the company has held the Royal Warrant for both building and tuning pianos.

While Shudi was perfecting his skills as a harpsichord maker, John Broadwood was training as a carpenter in his native Scotland. The 29-year-old arrived in London in 1761, found work in Shudi's shop, and in 1769, married Shudi's younger daughter Barbara. At his death four years later, Shudi bequeathed his shop to his son Burkat Shudi and John Broadwood. The business was successful, for Shudi and Broadwood led the technical developments in their field. They began a company tradition of hiring scientists to research the latest musical and technical developments, whose findings they then introduced into their pianos. John Broadwood, together with Robert Stodart and Americus Backers, designed the precursor to the grand piano around 1777 - piano

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<sup>105</sup> William Morris to Mrs.[Catherine Howland ?] Hunt, 18 Jan [1888], Kelvin, II, 736.

<sup>106</sup> William Morris Diary 1881, Add MS 45407B, passim. British Library, London.

strings inside a harpsichord case. Pianos became ever more popular with the public, and after 1793 the company ceased to produce harpsichords altogether. Broadwood's second son Thomas joined the firm in 1808, and the firm's production increased steadily over the years. In 1836, they were joined by James Broadwood's son, Henry Fowler Broadwood, who ran the company throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>107</sup>

The first 'designer' grand piano was made by Broadwood's in 1796, a gift for the Queen of Spain. The case was designed by Thomas Sheraton, and decorated with Wedgwood medallions.<sup>108</sup> In the early nineteenth century, satinwood pianos inlaid with brass became fashionable. In the 1860s, Richard D'Oyly Carte, the impresario of Gilbert and Sullivan's Savoy Operas, commissioned a grand piano which was designed by the Broadwood workshop in satinwood, inlaid 'in the style of Sheraton'.

However, by the third quarter of the nineteenth century, the shape of the grand piano was seen as an atrocity. Articles in both art and music magazines suggested ways that the shape or the decoration of the piano could be improved.<sup>109</sup> A design competition in *The Studio* offered prizes for the best design for the case of a cottage pianoforte.<sup>110</sup> Quite a few artists and architects published new designs for the grand piano, and the upright, or cottage piano.

One of these artists was Edward Burne-Jones, also a designer for Morris and Co from 1861. He had painted a picture on the first piano that he and his wife, a talented pianist, received as a wedding gift.<sup>111</sup> When the innards wore out, he cast about for a new piano, and ended up redesigning the shape of the grand pianoforte case - reverting from the current late nineteenth-century Broadwood grand, to the less curved shape used on the harpsichord a few

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<sup>107</sup> John Broadwood & Sons <<http://www.uk-piano.org/broadwood/history.html>>. See also David Wainwright's two books, The Piano Makers (London: Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., 1975) and Broadwood, by Appointment: A History (London: Quiller Press, 1982).

<sup>108</sup> This piano is in the Boston Museum of Fine Art.

<sup>109</sup> See, for example, "Art in Pianofortes," The Artist 4:46 (1 October 1883) 322-333; "A Treasure Chest of Tone: A Departure in the Shape of the Upright Pianoforte," The Artist 21 (Jan 1898) 65; Hugh B Philpott, "The Piano Aesthetically Considered," The Artist 32 (1901) 181-189; William Dale, "The Artistic Treatment of the Exterior of the Pianoforte," Journal of the Society of Arts 55 (15 February 1907) 365+.

<sup>110</sup> "Awards in Competitions. Pianoforte (Cottage) Case," The Studio II (1893-1894) 225.

<sup>111</sup> Martin Harrison & Bill Waters, Burne-Jones 2nd ed (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1989 (1973)) 129. By all accounts, Georgina Macdonald Burne-Jones was a talented pianist.

centuries earlier. Accordingly, in 1878, Burne-Jones ordered a green-stained grand piano from Broadwoods, with a case of his own design.

Shortly thereafter, Burne-Jones was asked by his patron, the noted collector William Graham, to decorate a piano for his daughter Frances as a wedding gift. This has been dubbed the Orpheus piano, since the sides are a series of roundels depicting the story of Orpheus and Euridice.<sup>112</sup> There is also painted decoration under the lid, depicting Mother Earth and all her children - good and bad. Most of the decoration was done by Burne-Jones's studio assistants.<sup>113</sup>

The Graham family was obviously impressed, for the following year, 1880, Burne-Jones received a request to decorate a piano from Frances' brother-in-law, Kenneth Muir Mackenzie (1845-1930), who was at the time Permanent Principal Secretary to the Lord Chancellor.

Burne-Jones asked Kate Faulkner to complete the decoration. In a letter to her, he detailed how he wanted to "reform pianos" and "commence a revived industry in painting and decorating them;" he felt that for two or three hundred pounds, the family piano could be made tolerably beautiful and fitting of its status as "the very altar of homes."<sup>114</sup> He continued:

So Mr. M[ackenzie]'s letter pretty closely says what I meant; he is ready to give £50 for ornament on his piano, and I thought no one could do it so well or better than you and told him so, and any help Morris or I could be to you, you know is most gladly yours. Of course for £50 you could not do much, but it is an experiment I think well worth making.<sup>115</sup>

Thus Burne-Jones graciously passed this commission to Kate Faulkner, although one certainly wonders if the paltry sum of £50 was a deterrent for his own involvement, as he figured a proper piano decoration should pay £200-£300. However, by completing this first commission,<sup>116</sup> Kate Faulkner's ability to design and produce gesso decoration became known to Broadwood and

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<sup>112</sup> Harrison & Waters, 84.

<sup>113</sup> Although unnamed in the source, Thomas Rooke had been Burne-Jones' assistant since 1874. G[eorgina] B[urne]-J[ones], Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones. Vol II, 1868-1898 (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1909) 46.

<sup>114</sup> Edward Burne-Jones to Kate Faulkner, quoted in GBJ, Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones II, (New York and London: Macmillan, 1904) 111.

<sup>115</sup> GBJ, 111.

<sup>116</sup> David Wainwright, Broadwood, by Appointment: A History (London: Quiller Press, 1982) 211. Amy Muir Mackenzie's daughter Dorothea inherited this piano, and it is now in the Birmingham City Museum & Art Gallery.

Son. Her nomination as decorator benefitted from being recommended by Burne-Jones, and by her association with Morris and Co.



Figure 2.8: Above: Kate Faulkner, Gesso Decoration on Settle  
Below: Gesso Decorated Piano  
Both for Wickham Flower, 1883. In situ, Old Swan House, London.

In 1883, Kate Faulkner decorated two more pianos for Broadwood and Sons, both commissions through Morris and Co. The first was for Wickham Flower, which she worked on from 28 March to 7 August. According to a published description, Flower's piano was gold and silver gesso decoration on a green-stained grand piano.<sup>117</sup> (Figure 2.8) The second was for

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<sup>117</sup> "Art in Pianofortes," *The Artist* 4:46 (1 October 1883) 322-323.

Alexander A. Ionides, delivered to her for decoration on 15 October 1883 and returned to Broadwood on 24 March 1884.<sup>118</sup> Both pianos were part of redecoration schemes by Morris and Co, indicating William Morris' role in her commission. Descriptions of this piano say it was "in silver on Celadon green,"<sup>119</sup> in a pattern of anemones. (Figure 2.9) The green stain of the Ionides piano was to be exactly the same as that of the Flower piano: Morris wrote to Broadwood's general manager, Alfred James Hipkins to advise him of this, adding that he would "be glad to help as to the tint."<sup>120</sup>

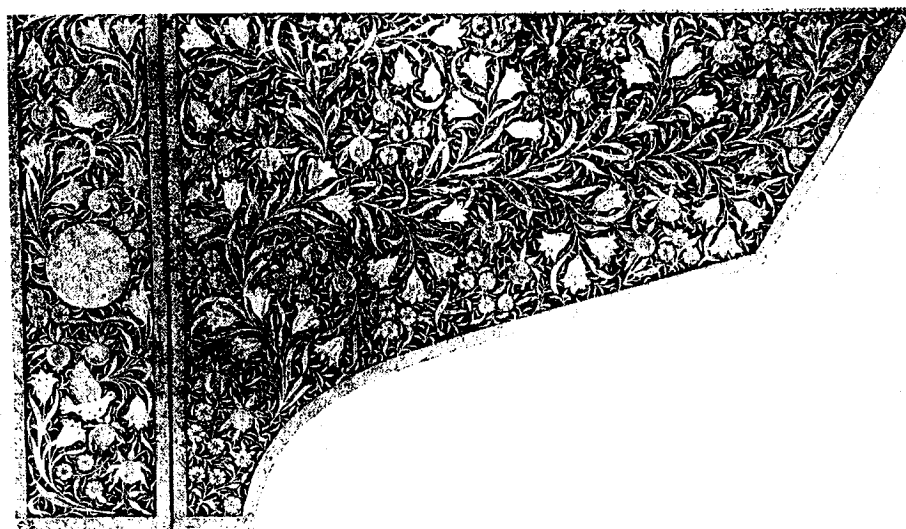


Figure 2.9 : Kate Faulkner, Ionides Piano  
Top View of Gesso Decoration

Morris's business relationship with the Ionides family grew out of his friendship with them. While studying painting in Paris, Alexander (Aleco) Ionides became friends with the painters James McNeil Whistler, George du Maurier and Tom Armstrong. Julia Ionides writes, "These three were part of the 'Paris Gang' whom Luke [Ionides] and Aleco had known some years

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<sup>118</sup> Day Book No. 133, 2185./JB. Broadwood & Sons Archive, Surrey History Centre, Woking.

<sup>119</sup>Wainwright, 212. When I went to see this piano in the Furniture Stores of the V&A, I was hard-pressed to find any green stain, so much has it faded, but there was some on the inside of the piano lid. Despite this and a slight tarnishing of the silver gilt gesso, the patterning and workmanship are exquisite.

<sup>120</sup> William Morris to Alfred James Hipkins, 17 March 1883. Letter 859, Kelvin II, 177. The original letter is in the Hipkins Papers Add MSS 41637, British Library, London.

before. They introduced Ned Burne-Jones, William Morris and Dante Gabriel Rossetti into the Anglo-Greek circle."<sup>121</sup> Morris soon became a regular and intimate correspondent with Alexander's sister Aglaia Ionides Coronio, and it is through her intervention that Aleco's redecoration comes about.<sup>122</sup> There are bills and invoices to Aleco but the letters discussing the redecoration are all to Aglaia. The eldest Ionides brother, Constantine, amassed a large collection of decorative art and paintings, which he later donated to the Victoria and Albert Museum.<sup>123</sup>

The Ionides piano was first exhibited at the first Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society show in 1888, and again in 1914, at the *Exposition d'Art Decoratif Anglais et Irlandais* in Paris. When World War I began, all the exhibits were stored in the Louvre for the duration of the war. Ionides later donated it to the Victoria and Albert Museum, where it has been on display almost continuously.<sup>124</sup> (Figure 2.10 The Green Dining Room) It received a lot of attention both in the art and music press, and it is primarily due to these articles that Kate Faulkner's name has survived at all.

Two months after she finished the Ionides piano, Broadwood's delivered another grand piano to Faulkner's studio. This was for William Graham, Kenneth Muir Mackenzie's father-in-law, and Edward Burne-Jones' most important patron. It may have been this commission that she was working on during the winter of 1884-85 when Philip Webb was in Italy for health reasons. Webb's letters to her, published in Lethaby's biography of him, indicate that she had commented on the progress of this gesso project to him.<sup>125</sup> It is difficult to know the entire story, as Kate Faulkner's letters to Webb have not survived. His interest in the project may indicate that Webb designed and

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<sup>121</sup> Julia Ionides, "Afterward," in Luke Ionides, *Memories* (Ludlow: Dog Rose Press, 1996) 72. Julia is Luke's granddaughter.

<sup>122</sup> On May 23, 1882 Morris wrote to Aglaia Coronio: "As to Aleco's room and your kind invitation of Friday, I find that Mr Wardle can't come that evening; I shall be happy to come, but can hardly be with you till about 8pm: so Wardle proposes to call there on Thursday morning: I shall see him on Thurs afternoon & shall be able to give you & Aleco some ideas of the results of our joint wisdom. Will this suit your convenience?" (Coll Letters WM, Vol. II ; MS Berger Coll)

<sup>123</sup> See *Catalogue of Constantine Alexander Ionides Collection* (Victoria & Albert Museum, 1904).

<sup>124</sup> Due to renovation of the British Galleries at the V&A, the piano was removed from the Green Dining Room in 1996 and put in the V&A's furniture stores in Blythe Road. During the summer of 2004 it was returned to the museum, and is now displayed with the Constantine Ionides Collection.

<sup>125</sup> Lethaby, 181.

Faulkner executed the work, but they mainly speak of his brotherly interest in her, for he also enquires after her health, recommends books, and discusses politics with her.



Figure 2.10: The Green Dining Room, South Kensington Museum  
Kate Faulkner's gesso decorated piano for A. Ionides in the foreground  
Bessie Burden's 3-panel embroidered screen in the background

Kate Faulkner collaborated with Philip Webb on the decoration of a Broadwood grand piano for William Knox D'Arcy (1850-1917) in the early 1890s, "with a pattern of vines and geometrical motifs."<sup>126</sup> A letter from Webb to May Morris in 1892 reveals that Faulkner was working on a piano for Morris and Co: "Kate is doing much good work on the piano for your father's client."<sup>127</sup> Lethaby reports, through the testimony of Webb's assistant, George Jack, that Philip Webb designed gesso decoration for another piano, which Faulkner executed, about ten years after Webb went to Italy (c1894-5), in a pattern of grapes and vines. Jack was well situated to comment on furniture: after working for Webb, he went on to become Morris and Co.'s principal furniture designer. Lethaby himself claimed to see the work "in progress about 1895."<sup>128</sup> Faulkner also decorated a piano for Abda al-Rahman Khan, Emir of Kabul from 1880-1901. This was a commission directly from Broadwood and Sons. The decoration was designed by Burne-Jones and

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<sup>126</sup> Wainwright, 212. This piano is now owned by Andrew Lloyd Webber, and was exhibited in Pre-Raphaelite and Other Masters. The Andrew Lloyd Webber Collection, at the Royal Academy, London, 20 September-12 December 2003.

<sup>127</sup> Philip Webb to May Morris, 6 April 1892. Morris Papers Vol.V. Add MS 45342, British Library, London.

<sup>128</sup> Lethaby, 188. Further research in the Broadwood archives may yet shed light on this mystery.



executed by Kate Faulkner in “a pattern of spring flowers in silver was worked on a ground of ‘granulated Rose du Barry’.”<sup>129</sup>

Other than letters written by Philip Webb that mention her, it is at this point that the paper trail of the work of Kate Faulkner ends. It is unclear whether or not she was professionally active after 1892. Faulkner had cared for her brother Charles in their home from the time of his stroke on 3 October 1888 until his death in February 1892. Despite the help of a nurse near the end, she was physically and emotionally exhausted from the strain of maintaining her decorative work and taking care of her brother.<sup>130</sup>

What is clear from this brief biography of Kate Faulkner’s career, is the importance of her personal and professional relationships to her various decorative commissions. All of her decorative work required the input of more than one person for its completion. As part of a pool of talent at Morris and Co., Kate Faulkner was called upon when gesso decoration was required, just as Philip Webb was for animal drawings, or Burne-Jones for figures. Each worked at what they did best, combining artistic skills with the social skills necessary to negotiate and maintain these relationships over a period of almost forty years. Faulkner’s career was varied and distinguished, and deserving of further academic attention.<sup>131</sup>

Kate Faulkner’s gesso work on pianos had been discussed amongst professionals in the piano and furniture trades and noted in the periodical press well before the advent of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society. As soon as she had completed her first commission for Broadwood’s in April 1881, the general manager wrote to Ford Madox Brown to invite him to look at it.<sup>132</sup> An article devoted solely to this piano appeared in The Artist of 1 October 1883, describing the grand

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<sup>129</sup> Wainwright, 212. The current location of this piano is unknown.

<sup>130</sup> From the time of Charles’ stroke, William Morris had concerns for Kate’s health, and wrote of these to his confidante Georgiana Burne-Jones. (See letter 1610, Collected Letters of William Morris, ed Norman Kelvin, Vol. III (Princeton University Press, 1996), 56.) Immediately after Charles’ death, Morris and Webb discussed which doctor to be best for Faulkner, and whether she was afflicted with hysteria. See Letters from Philip Webb to William Morris 1884-1896. MSL/1958/687, National Art Library, London. Webb also discussed Faulkner’s health in letters to Sydney C Cockerell, May Morris and George Boyce.

<sup>131</sup> Graham Gadd, a retired journalist, is researching the life of Kate Faulkner for his history of pianos, but has thus far not published. When I contacted him he wished me well but did not share any of his findings.

<sup>132</sup> AJ Hipkins to Ford Madox Brown, 7 April 1881. Ford Madox Brown Papers, MSL/1995/14/41/1, FMB Box 6. National Art Library, London. Brown was a painter, who also designed furniture for Morris & Co in the 1860s.

pianoforte that Kate Faulkner had decorated with gesso, as a commission for Wickham Flower. In the Contents of this issue, under the Art Trades heading, only the company names are listed; yet the article mentions Kate Faulkner's name, and discusses the decoration of the piano. I quote it at length to give an idea of how work of this type was discussed in a fine art journal, five years before the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society shows. The article begins: "A pianoforte of exceptional merit as a work of decorative art has just been completed at the hands of Messrs John Broadwood and Sons, in conjunction with Miss Kate Faulkner, who is responsible for the elaborate ornamentation of the instrument."<sup>133</sup> The decoration is then discussed in detail:

The chief merit lies in the application of raised ornament, after the manner of Italian gesso work, to the entire body of the case, with an effect at once rich, studiously quiet, and refined. *The top is boldly treated* with an interwoven pattern of lilies, pomegranates, and birds, with branches and leaves, all slightly raised above the surface of the wood, and lacquered in silver and gold. The casing of the front and keyboard is *prettily and daintily treated* in diaper ornament, and is almost more pleasing in its quiet beauty than the more elaborate top. The sides have a foliated design, encircled by wavy lines, in a repeating pattern. The *delicate tracery* and diaper, revealing a groundwork of stained green oak, the lights and shadows of the natural wood giving subtle (sic) effect to the intermingling of silver, green, and gold, serve to produce a rare harmony. It is, in fact, *an embodiment of painstaking thought and loving labour*, and stands out in severe contrast to the ostentatious and ambitious character of much modern work."<sup>134</sup> (emphasis added)

The decoration of the piano was considered in its own right, and not in comparison with any other objects. Of equal importance is that emphasis was placed on the object alone, whereas with reviews of the Arts and Crafts, the ideology behind the exhibition often takes over the discussion, particularly in the first exhibition. The most important thing to point out, of course, is that Kate Faulkner's name is mentioned in the article. In other articles on the same Art Trades pages, a sculptor - a fine artist - was named, but the designer of a stained glass window was not.

Her name may have been printed simply because she was female, however the tone of the article is not condescending or patronising but rather one of frank appreciation. The article begins by discussing the difference between this particular work and other decorated pianos, and refers to its design and execution, lauding Faulkner's ability to do both, and her obvious joy in doing so. The reviewer uses both the feminine terms, 'prettily and daintily' and the masculine phrase 'boldly

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<sup>133</sup> "Art in Pianofortes," *The Artist* 4:46 (1 October 1883) 322-323.

<sup>134</sup> "Art in Pianofortes," 322-323.

treated' to describe the work, according Faulkner both types of skills. This choice of language is revealing, for it is redolent of Christine Battersby's 'artistic genius,' which includes both masculine traits and the "the emotion, the moodiness and love that Jung associated with his inner femininity."<sup>135</sup>

By 1887, Faulkner had a considerable reputation as a designer of gesso decoration. This reputation was further enhanced by a comment made by Alfred James Hipkins, general manager of Broadwoods and music historian, in his Musical Instruments, Historic, Rare, and Unique. Hipkins wrote that the aesthetic future of the pianoforte was contingent on its successful decoration, and mentioned Kate Faulkner and several painters specifically in this regard. The following quote from Hipkins' book was repeated in a review in The Times, thus bringing Faulkner's name to a much wider audience:

If there is any hope of an awakening of the love for musical instruments that finds expression in their adornment, its promise lies in the beautiful designs that have been of late years so meritoriously carried out for pianos - the invention of Mr Alma-Tadema, Mr Burne Jones, Mr Fox, and Miss Kate Faulkner.<sup>136</sup>

Thus Kate Faulkner brought significant credentials to the 1888 Arts & Crafts Exhibition. As a practitioner of a number of design activities she was known by and had worked with several major players in the Arts & Crafts Movement; she had been working with the most prominent piano firm in London for several years on commissions for important members of London society; she had received notice in an important new book and in the press, where her work was effectively written about as fine art, and was herself treated as an artist eminently capable of designing and executing high quality work. What fate greeted her when she then exhibited the Broadwood grand piano she had decorated with gilt and silvered gesso duro, in a floral pattern of pomegranates, wild roses, and lilies for Alexander A. Ionides in 1883, an object which, as previously indicated, was mentioned in 15 of the 40 reviews in my sample?

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<sup>135</sup> Christine Battersby Gender and Genius: Towards a Feminist Aesthetics (London: The Women's Press Ltd, 1989) 7-8.

<sup>136</sup> "Musical Instruments," The Times (17 December 1887) 15. [rev of Musical Instruments, Historic, Rare, and Unique. The Selection, Introduction, & Descriptive Notes by AJ Hipkins. Illus by 50 plates in colours, drawn by William Gibb. (Edinburgh, A&C Black, 1887.)]

Broadly speaking, these reviews voiced six different opinions about the work. The largest category of opinion was none at all: of forty reviews, twenty-five did not review this work. The second type of opinion was praise for both the design and the craftsmanship; the third type I have called the negative-comparison method, seems at first to praise a woman's work, but in reality it is only setting it up to compare it to a much better piece - in each case, a man's work. The fourth type of opinion is rather vague, characterised by a lack of attention to detail and factual errors, which can have nasty repercussions if not read carefully by later scholars. The fifth type is the 'extraneous discussion' or gossipy social history approach, and the sixth is the pan, where the work is criticized only.

The most glowing praise came from the British Architect. In addition to several notices about the exhibition, an entire article was devoted to this piano, describing it in detail, and including a full-page drawing (Figure 2.11). It is highly significant that this piece was singled out, when there were 622 items in the show from which to choose. Furthermore, in all the reviews of the eleven ACES exhibitions spanning 1888 to 1916 that I have read, no other work has ever been singled out in this way. The article begins with two short paragraphs about the piano itself: noting first of all that it was loaned by Alexander Ionides, "an amateur belonging to the Greek

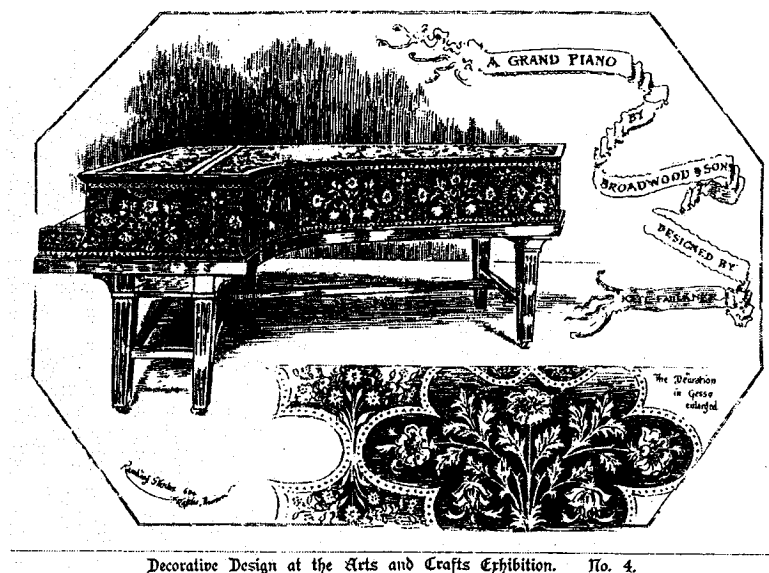


Figure 2.11: Kate Faulkner, gesso decoration on Broadwood piano for Alexander Ionides Sketch by T Raffles Davison, from British Architect, 23 November 1888.

community settled in London,”<sup>137</sup> that it was made in the workshops of Broadwood and Sons, and that the case was designed by Edward Burne-Jones. They are very clear about Faulkner’s contribution to the work:

The green stain used is also after Mr Burne-Jones’ piano, but for the rest - the beautiful decoration in gesso upon the case, front and cover of the instrument, the design and execution are entirely Miss Kate Faulkner’s, whose artistic invention and skill have not been limited to pianos.<sup>138</sup>

The anonymous critic goes on at some length to tell of the other pianos she had decorated in a similar fashion, of her wallpaper designs for Jeffrey and Co., and discusses her ability as a decorative artist as follows:

We have before illustrated Miss Faulkner’s skill in the design of wall fabrics for Jeffrey & Co., for whom she has done many. ‘The Flower Garden,’ which we published, is perhaps the most important. Miss Faulkner is undoubtedly one of the most *painstaking and conscientious* designers, and no better illustration of this could be afforded than the piano case we publish to-day, which in every part of its decoration bears evidence of *patient skilful* labour in the modelling of this beautiful gesso-ornamentation. We think the bank of decoration which enriches the sides of the piano-case is *admirable in design and execution*, and it is that portion which we have chiefly desired to call attention to in our illustration. In the executed work it is possible many would have preferred less decoration on the upper flat surface of the piano, but as to the good decorative effect of the sides there can hardly be a question. The anemone which has been chosen for the keynote of the decoration is shown to an enlarged scale in our plate, which has been done to give emphasis to this floral arrangement. Miss Faulkner was commissioned to decorate two similar instruments by Broadwood for the late Mr William Graham, and it needs, perhaps, hardly be said that the three were different in everything but the material employed, and resemble each other only as emanating from this original and well-endowed decorative artist.<sup>139</sup> (italics added)

This journal, edited at the time by Thomas Raffles Davison, is clearly very supportive of Kate Faulkner’s work, both as the designer and executant of the gesso decoration for the piano. The reviewer, furthermore, refers to her larger practice as a wallpaper designer and an “original and well-endowed decorative artist,” who is known for her “artistic invention and skill.” She is thereby granted more than a single performance: she has a career that extends outside of the exhibition, which includes work the journal had previously discussed. In other words, she had a reputation.

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<sup>137</sup> “A Grand Piano at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition,” *The British Architect* 30 (23 November 1888) 362.

<sup>138</sup> “A Grand Piano at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition,” 362.

<sup>139</sup> “A Grand Piano at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition,” 362.

Notwithstanding such glowing praise, The British Architect's reviewer uses language that should be looked at more closely, particularly when compared to language used to describe one of Walter Crane's gesso pieces in the same journal:

We illustrate, this week, a *vigorous design*, for a frieze panel in gesso, of S. George (sic) and the Dragon, by Walter Crane, in which the modelling has a *very crisp sparkling effect*: [...] some finger-plate designs in gesso; by Walter Crane [...], which are *excellently drawn and modelled* [...]<sup>140</sup> (italics added)

The contrast in vocabulary is striking. A woman's floral design in gesso is described in highly feminised terms -- painstaking, conscientious, patient, skilful - terms which also describe the attributes of femininity as defined at the time. And yet a man's figurative design in gesso requires a completely different set of words to describe it - vigorous, very crisp sparkling effect.' Were these early indications of a trend in decorative arts criticism to use separate vocabularies to describe women's and men's work? And more importantly, were these gendered terms linked with the sex of the artist, or the subject matter of the design?

Whatever assumptions relating to gender that may be carried by the British Architect's review of Faulkner's work, it must be observed that it was in fact the most positive coverage of the 1888 exhibition. Another architectural journal, The Architect also spoke glowingly and accurately of Kate Faulkner's contribution to the display of gessowork:

But, in one way, the piano by MESSRS. BROADWOOD, which is ornamented in gesso by Miss FAULKNER, is the most novel application of the material. The detail is fine and the general effect is rich. The question will arise whether the oak case could not be made to look as handsome without coating it with gesso. The piano is one of those things which could not come into existence without an organisation that has a close resemblance to division of labour. Miss FAULKNER designed and executed the decoration, but no less than ten names are given of men who were employed on the case and instrument.<sup>141</sup>

Again there is praise, but only the phrase "the detail is fine" might be construed as being included because the work is by a woman. The bold statement of her exact contribution to the work is unusual in my sample of reviews, however, for a significant number of reviews in fact either elided or clouded her contribution to the piano.

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<sup>140</sup> "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition - I," The British Architect 30:20 (16 November 1888) 344.

<sup>141</sup> "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," The Architect (9 November 1888) 259.

Among these are the seventeen periodicals which reviewed the 1888 ACES exhibition but not Kate Faulkner's work. They include all the art magazines in my sample: Artist, Art Journal, Home Art Work, Journal of Decorative Art, Magazine of Art, and Portfolio. The Portfolio named four women and the rest did not name women at all. This in itself is highly significant. The art critics writing in art magazines demonstrated a clear denial of women's presence in the show; regrettably this was a harbinger of things to come. Neither does Faulkner's name appear in the following publications: Pall Mall Budget, Pall Mall Gazette, Daily Telegraph, World, Glasgow Herald, Birmingham Daily Post, Saturday Review, Sunday Times, Women's Penny Paper, or the Cabinetmaker, which named several other women, and the Proceedings of the Society of Architects, which as explained above, named no women at all.

Critics of this first exhibition were well aware of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society's insistence on naming everyone involved in a piece, yet their reviews do not reflect this, possibly due to space restrictions or editorial predilections. Or perhaps such details were not thought important to the general readership of the paper. Those journals whose reviews of the 1888 ACES show obfuscated Faulkner's role in the gesso decoration of the Ionides piano demonstrate amply how challenging the task was for the art critic to situate a woman designer in a review about decorative arts.

A review which appeared in both The Times and The Artist may serve as a good example.<sup>142</sup> It begins with a discussion of the aims of the ACES, and the critic is not of the opinion that naming makers is a good idea:

in spite of many creditable efforts here exhibited, the handicraftsmen proper who have been for the first time drawn into publicity have not so far shown many signs of invention or individual genius. To find that quality one must go to the North Gallery, which is almost exclusively devoted to artists of reputation.<sup>143</sup>

Edward Burne Jones's stained glass designs is then discussed at great length, because "It is in such touches that the decorative feeling of a painter is shown." Figurative designs for stained glass by

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<sup>142</sup> "The New Gallery," The Times (29 September 1888) 6; and "Exhibitions. The New Gallery," The Artist (1 November 1888) 331. The version in The Artist omitted the first sentence of The Times article. It may have been written by Thomas Humphrey Ward (1845-1926), The Times's art critic from c.1881 through the 1890s, or by one of many art critics who contributed to The Artist, such as Gleeson White or Alfred Lys Baldry, who reviewed the ACES in 1889 and 1890 respectively.

<sup>143</sup> "The New Gallery," The Times (29 September 1888) 6.

Henry Holiday and Christopher Whall are also considered for the same reason. At the end of the article is a section on the sculptural work in the genius category, which includes Hamo Thornycroft, an artist who exhibited frequently at the Royal Academy, and Walter Crane's gesso panel *St George and the Dragon*. The final comment in the article is about the grand piano decorated by Kate Faulkner. Faulkner thus qualifies, perhaps unwittingly, as one of the geniuses exhibiting works in the North Gallery in addition to being the only woman and the only 'handicraftsman' in the discussion:

We finally mention in this room a splendid Broadwood grand piano adapted from a design by Mr Burne Jones in gesso by Miss Kate Faulkner. The design, on oak painted green, consists of pomegranates, wild roses, not very realistically executed, and lilies, the latter in silver. The general effect is good, without, however, being comparable to some ornamental pianos of recent date, much less to the splendid harpsichords and virginals shown at the South Kensington Loan Exhibition.<sup>144</sup>

Since the critic has deemed Burne Jones a genius and an artist of repute, the redesigning of the piano shape can only reinforce this laudatory opinion. It also necessitated some comment about the gesso decoration on the piano, which the rather confusing syntax implies was designed by Burne Jones and executed, "not very realistically," by Faulkner. Several things are going on within these short sentences. Firstly, it appears that Faulkner's contribution to the piano is mentioned in order to support the critic's claim that Burne Jones is a genius, not to point out her extraordinary talents. Secondly, it is unclear who exactly designed the gesso decoration; the critic only makes clear that the gesso decoration has not been carried out very well. And thirdly, the work is compared to what the critic knows, in this case decorated instruments from the South Kensington exhibition. This reveals a 'horizon of expectation' which includes nineteenth-century painters of reputation and eighteenth-century decorated furniture, but not women designers of gesso decoration. Not knowing how to write about her contribution to the piece, he uses the negative-comparison method of complimenting one thing, but using it as a springboard to compliment something else even more, in this case increasing both Burne Jones's reputation on the one hand, and decorated instruments of a previous century on the other. As will become evident throughout this thesis, women's work is frequently discussed this way, and usually

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<sup>144</sup> "The New Gallery," *The Times* (29 September 1888) 6.



juxtaposed with the so-called superior work of a man, or, as in this case, of an earlier historical style.

The “vague” method of reviewing women’s work, characterised by inaccuracies in attribution, also appears in the Athenæum; however with happier results this time:

Among the noble things here are the designs, variously applied, of Mr E Burne Jones, especially the lovely pianoforte of oak, stained green and polished, and enriched with scrolls in *gesso* gilded. The design of the instrument itself is somewhat affectedly commonplace, not to say void of grace, but its decorations are superb. It belongs to Mr Constantine Ionides.<sup>145</sup>

There were several factual errors in this anonymous review, which can do much harm to a decorative artist’s career, not to mention wound the pride of the owner of the object. Despite his aversion to reading reviews, Edward Burne-Jones saw this one, for the following week, he wrote to the Athenæum to correct this misinformation:

Mr E Burne Jones writes to correct an error into which the hurriedly prepared review of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition at the New Gallery led us. The pianoforte of oak, stained green, and polished and enriched with scrolls of *gesso* gilded, owes to him only the general design of the wood-work; the decorations are entirely due to Miss K Faulkner. Mr Walter Crane informs us that the instrument itself belongs to Mr Alexander Ionides, not to Mr Constantine Ionides as we were told.<sup>146</sup>

Burne-Jones was obviously concerned that Kate Faulkner receive credit in print for the design and the execution of the *gesso* decoration. With this one short epistle, Burne-Jones reveals his interest and concern with the career of Kate Faulkner, as a collaborator, and also as a friend. Was it self-interest or concern for Kate Faulkner’s ‘author name’ which spurred him to action? We shall never know; however, it is worth pointing out that this is the only instance of his correcting a critic’s assumption that he had designed Faulkner’s *gesso* decoration.

Another London daily newspaper, The Standard, wrote: “Mr Jones’ design, and Miss Kate Faulkner’s work, have been bestowed upon the case of a Broadwood grand piano, of which Mr A

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<sup>145</sup> [FG Stephens or Wilfrid Meynell], “Fine Arts. The Arts and Crafts Exhibition,” Athenæum 3180 (6 October 1888 ) 454.

<sup>146</sup> “Fine-Art Gossip,” Athenæum 3183 (13 October 1888 ) 489. Burne-Jones’ opinion of art criticism was neatly summarised in a letter he wrote in July 1873: “Haven’t read and shan’t read the Quarterly; never mean to read any reviews of anyone by anyone - anywhere or anyhow - may the devil get his own some day is the earnest prayer of your affec. E.B.J.” Georgiana Burne-Jones, Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones, Vol. II, 41.

Ionides is the fortunate possessor.”<sup>147</sup> It is another misleading phrase, for again the critic has assumed that Burne Jones designed the gesso decoration.

The problem with this type of reporting is that the vagueness can be transposed into errors in later sources. For example, the Penguin Dictionary of Design & Designers, published in 1984, has an entry for Kate Faulkner which notes that she “executed gesso decoration to Philip Webb’s design, notably on a Broadwood grand piano (1883) shown at the first Arts & Crafts Exhibition in 1888.”<sup>148</sup> They are indeed referring to the Ionides piano, exhibited in 1888, although the wording is similar to The Standard’s review, and leads one to assume that Philip Webb designed the gesso decoration, when in fact he did not. This particular error demonstrates all too clearly how important it is to double-check secondary sources by looking at the primary sources. It also is an example of how a woman’s contribution to design history is glossed over when the writer’s ‘horizon of expectation’ precludes the possibility that she was the designer. Perhaps this author also subscribed to the ‘Woodward School’ of design history writing, assuming women were only fit to execute the designs of men.

A good example of a fourth style of reviewing, characterised by some extraneous discussion, has its roots in the essay-like book review first used in the Edinburgh Review in the early nineteenth century. This technique uses the review as a platform to discuss ideas relating to the book, in which the focus shifts from the book being reviewed, to what the book suggests. It can also be a series of observations with occasional references to the text, but always there is a “movement in and out, away from the book and back to it.”<sup>149</sup> Vestiges of this style of writing appear in art reviews, and an example of how this manifested itself in early reviews of decorative art appears in The Builder’s comments on the Ionides piano:

The [North] gallery contains also a piano decorated by Miss Kate Faulkner in *gesso duro* foliage on the wood ground, gilt, and with some of the flowers silvered, which is rich and striking in effect, but there is a want of repose about it. ‘It may be art, but it would look horrid in a drawing-room!’ was the criticism we heard on it from a

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<sup>147</sup> [Frederick Wedmore] “The Arts & Crafts Exhibition” Standard (4 October 1888), 2.

<sup>148</sup> Allen Lane, Penguin Dictionary of Design & Designers (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1984) 178. They do not quote their primary source for this information.

<sup>149</sup> Walter Houghton, “Periodical Literature and the Articulate Classes,” in J Shattock & M Wolff, eds, The Victorian Periodical Press: Samplings & Soundings (Leicester University Press & University of Toronto Press, 1982) 5.

lady. That depends, of course, on what kind of drawing-room it was; the criticism is an essentially and characteristically Philistine one; a great many English ladies would think anything out of the ordinary run of fashionable furniture design would 'look horrid in a drawing-room'; but reticence and reserve counts for something in decoration, and we did think the example in question rather overdone; at all events, it would certainly require the whole apartment to be designed up to it.<sup>150</sup>

As it happened, the house was 'designed up to it'; the piano was part of a scheme of furnishings and alterations which the owner, Alexander Ionides, had commissioned from Morris & Company between 1880 and 1888. Bills and estimates indicate that his house was replete with Morris designs, in carpets, wallpaper, curtains, and tiles.<sup>151</sup> (Figure 2.12)



Figure 2.12: Kate Faulkner, Gesso Decoration on Grand Piano for Alexander Ionides in situ, Drawing Room, 1 Holland Park, London

The Builder's articles were anonymous at this time, but in the tradition of Godwin, much of the journal was written by the editor, Henry Heathcote Statham, who was himself an accomplished musician. This particular comment has the trademark ascerbic bite of Statham's

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<sup>150</sup> "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," The Builder (6 October 1888) 241.

<sup>151</sup> Ionides' house had four Morris wallpapers: *Iris*, *Larkspur*, *Bower*, *Trellis*; four Hammersmith carpets, over 200 yards of Axminster carpet for the stairs, silk curtains in the *St James* pattern originally used in St James Palace, and dark green tiles in the dining room. Morris & Co even restuffed the chairs they recovered. A bill dated 23 October 1888 for several patterns of wallpaper and two carpets indicates that some of this work was being done during the 1888 ACES exhibition, which may explain why Ionides loaned his piano for two months. "3 bills and 2 letters addressed to AA Ionides, esq, concerning furnishings & alterations at his house in Holland Park, now demolished" Morris & Company Ltd. Papers L.885-1954 Special Collection 86.KK.Box III (xiv). National Art Library, London.

criticism which, as explained in Chapter 1, offended people and eventually cost him his position. But the critic was commenting on women's taste in furniture, and on the owner's taste as well, leaving us with only a scant sentence about the gesso decoration on it, which inaccurately assigns Faulkner's role as 'decorator' rather than 'designer and executor.' The work of art in question becomes secondary to the critic's own opinions.

A fifth type of review is the pan, exemplified in the Manchester Guardian's comments.

This was the only periodical that I came across that completely dismissed Faulkner's work:

The centre of the room is occupied [...] and by a grand piano executed by Miss Kate Faulkner from the designs of Mr Burne Jones. In this pianoforte, which is lent by Mr Aleko Ionides, we see almost more clearly than in anything else of importance in the whole collection the limits of the new style so far as it has gone. The ornament has no unity, no pattern with a beginning and an end. Enough is used to cover the surface, and the superfluity cut off as if it were a piece of stuff. It is not created for the thing on which it appears and especially adapted to its shape and use. It would do just as well on a book cover, on a curtain, or almost any other flat surface.<sup>152</sup>

A close look at Figure 2.9 will reveal that the larger flowers were indeed designed to fit the space. More importantly, yet again the designer of the gesso decoration was misattributed. This time Burne-Jones did not write to correct this error.<sup>153</sup> The critic, likely Claude Phillips, did not like the work of Walter Crane either, and commented that "The English are not an artistic nation. Every good thing they have they take from France."<sup>154</sup> This makes his sympathies clear indeed; as noted in Chapter 1, Phillips's criticism usually betrayed a preference for French and other Continental art.

Faulkner definitely made an impact in the women's press, though. Four of the five women's papers discussed Faulkner's work - the one exception being the West London Observer "Ladies' Column." The Kensington and Hammersmith Reporter's 'Ladies' Column' began, "In the North Gallery lady visitors should particularly note an example of a lady artist's work in the case of a grand piano." She tells her readers about Princess Christian's embroidered velvet cover to disguise the shape of a grand piano, and then continues, "At the Arts and Crafts Exhibition can be

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<sup>152</sup> "Arts and Crafts at the New Gallery," Manchester Guardian 13:147 (1 October 1888) 5.

<sup>153</sup> I checked through the Manchester Guardian for several weeks following this date for a letter, or article similar to the one in the Athenæum, but did not see one.

<sup>154</sup> "Arts and Crafts at the New Gallery," Manchester Guardian 13:147 (1 October 1888) 5.

seen gessowork employed to ornament the woodwork of a piano.” She describes the technique and history of gesso in more detail than any other review, before commenting, “The piano case in question has a rich foliated design raised from the wooden ground and gilt. The effect is very rich and harmonious, and as a woman’s work very interesting to all lady artists.”<sup>155</sup> The language used is informative, complimentary, and not open to gender-specific interpretation. The Lady’s Pictorial, true to its title, included a sketch of the gesso decoration, described thus: “Our artist has also included in his sketches a portion of the magnificent decoration of a Broadwood piano, executed in “gesso” (a mixture of plaster, cotton wool, and glue), by Miss Kate Faulkner, and remarkable for its beauty and originality of design.” This can hardly be construed as a gendered description, either.

The reviews of Faulkner’s work in the women’s press reveal an absence of gendered language, and greater accuracy in the details of who did what, in itself a so-called feminine trait.<sup>156</sup> For example, the division of labour in the piano is described fully in The Lady: “the grand piano made by Broadwood from a design by Burne Jones, and decorated by Miss Kate Faulkner in gesso; the subject a study of gold and silver pomegranates.”<sup>157</sup> In this context, it seems evident that ‘decorated by’ means responsible for both design and execution of the decoration, but it was one of the words whose meaning seemed to be in flux in the vocabulary of decorative arts criticism.

Kate Faulkner’s only work in the 1888 Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society exhibition was the most reviewed of any work by a woman or a man. The fifteen reviews I have identified approached their task in different ways, reinforcing the oft-repeated twentieth century observation that there was no consensus of opinion during the Victorian period. However, the variety of critical opinions about her work encompass the range of human reactions to something new: not only were they

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<sup>155</sup> Aurora, “Ladies’ Column,” Kensington & Hammersmith Reporter (6 October 1888) 6.

<sup>156</sup> Florence Fenwick Miller tells her readers: “I do not think that careless finish and slap-dash haste and incompleteness are essentially part of the feminine nature. Quite on the contrary: when women have the conviction of its being their duty to be careful and thorough, they are surpassingly patient and painstaking, as so much old lace and old embroidery exist to prove.” “The Ladies’ Column,” Illustrated London News (13 October 1888) 433.

<sup>157</sup> “The Arts and Crafts Exhibition,” The Lady (4 October 1888) 303.

coping with how to write critically about the decorative arts, they were also grappling with the reality of the woman designer. What remains to be seen is whether the frequent inaccuracies regarding Faulkner's role in the creation of the piano are connected to the first of these challenges, or the second. The degree of difficulty which reviewers may have had in proposing full agency for women decorative artists is suggested through the examples offered here, but requires further exploration. The 1890 ACES exhibition reviews provide an excellent opportunity to further probe this question.

CHAPTER 3  
1890: EMBROIDERY: THE CRITICS SPEAK  
CASE STUDIES: MAY MORRIS AND UNA TAYLOR

At an Executive Committee meeting of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society held shortly after the close of the 1889 exhibition, William Morris proposed that the Society's next exhibition should be held the following year and that "a room should be set apart for the Special Exhibition of embroidery."<sup>1</sup> Seconded by Henry Longden and passed, the motion was directly responsible for the large number of embroidery exhibits in the 1890 exhibition.

Furniture was also showcased in the 1890 exhibition, but the reason for this was not explained in the Minutes. It may have had something to do with the results of a meeting held in July 1890, during which the question of how to encourage more architects to participate in the upcoming exhibition was raised. A ten-member committee was formed to discuss the issue, and copies of their Report were sent to the Secretary of the Royal Institute of British Architects and to the Chairman of the Arts Standing Committee of the RIBA, John Dando Sedding.<sup>2</sup> The content of

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<sup>1</sup> "Minutes Of The General Committee With Membership List For 1890, Rules And Letters," (17 December 1889) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers AAD1/43-1980, 53, Archive of Art and Design, London.

<sup>2</sup> "Minutes Of The General Committee," (9 & 29 July 1890). John Dando Sedding (1838-1891), was a member of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, and had been on the Executive Committee for the 1888 ACES exhibition. He trained with GE Street as an architect, and began designing embroidery, wallpaper and church metalwork under the influence of Ruskin. He was appointed Diocesan architect of Bath and Wells in 1880. Sedding's major work was Holy Trinity Church, Sloan Street, London, a collaborative Arts & Crafts showcase,

this Report is not given in the Minutes, but it is tempting to suggest that they recommended that furniture be highlighted, in order to encourage architects to exhibit.

Architects did participate in the 1890 exhibition in a special way. Ralph Nevill FSA, representing the Standing Committee for Art of the RIBA, sent a letter to the Executive Committee of the ACES which was read at the meeting of 10 October 1890. Nevill requested that RIBA members “be allowed to visit the exhibition upon some evening set aside for that purpose.”<sup>3</sup> His request was granted, and the visit took place on 11 November, when members of the RIBA had the gallery to themselves to view the exhibition and to hear John Dando Sedding give a talk about the exhibition. Ending his talk amongst the embroideries, the speaker admitted that he was “not equal to the task of describing the exquisite stitchery that adorns these walls,” and concluded his talk on a positive note:

We have seen elsewhere in this exhibition what man is doing to raise the standard of current art, and a glance round this room will convince you that, in her own special sphere of handicraft, woman too is winning triumphs.<sup>4</sup>

Yet Sedding was not so positive in his essay on ‘Design’ in the Embroidery section of the 1890 Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society catalogue. “Embroidery,” he declared flatly, “hangs fire. It fails in design.”<sup>5</sup> He explained that embroideries were generally copied or adapted from ‘old work’ rather than inspired directly from nature. This was a dig at the South Kensington system of art education, which emphasised drawing from casts and copying embroidery from examples of past times, as practised at the Royal School of Art Needlework. Sedding maintained that embroidery design would be vastly improved if untrained designers spent a few hours drawing in their gardens, or copying old herbals, whose drawings had been designed already. This, he averred, “will do more to revive the original instincts of a true designer than a month of sixpenny days at a stuffy museum.”<sup>6</sup>

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but he died in 1891 before its completion. Adrian J Tilbrook & Fischer Fine Art Ltd, Truth, Beauty and Design: Victorian, Edwardian and Later Decorative Art (London: Fischer Fine Art Ltd, 1986) 38.

<sup>3</sup> “Minutes Of The General Committee,” (10 October 1890) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers AAD1/43-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London.

<sup>4</sup> John Dando Sedding, “The Arts and Crafts Exhibition,” Architect (21 Nov 1890) 320.

<sup>5</sup> JD Sedding, “Design,” in Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Third Exhibition, 1890 (London: 1890) 124.

<sup>6</sup> Sedding, “Design,” 127.

He did not blame the women who stitched the embroideries; rather the system of education was to blame for poorly designed embroideries. The Daily Chronicle's critic agreed with Sedding's assessment of the situation, identifying the Royal School of Art Needlework as the major culprit:

In connection with other items from the Royal School, there is a striking confirmation of the remarks of Mr Shedding (sic) with reference to poverty of design and love of imitation. One is an "Ancient Italian design," a second 'adapted from old Chinese design,' a third 'copied from an old English design,' and a fourth 'a copy of Old English work.'<sup>7</sup>

Embroidery had long been a part of women's activities, and with the advent of the Arts & Crafts Exhibitions, women were designing, stitching and exhibiting embroideries in ever greater numbers. This chapter will focus on the critical reception of the embroidery in the 1890 exhibition, with special emphasis on what the critics had to say about women as designers of embroidery. I begin with background information, firstly a history of embroidery design in the nineteenth century, and secondly a section on women's art education for embroidery. This provides a context for a statistical discussion of women's embroidery design and production at the 1890 exhibition, and a summary of the general press reception of women's work, which is followed by two case studies of embroiderers, May Morris (1862-1938) and Una Ashworth Taylor (1858-1924).

### History Of Embroidery Designs

Historically, inspiration for embroidery designs has been found in nature, in printed materials, or in older embroidered work. Both the concept and the fact of women using other people's patterns as sources for embroidery is entwined in centuries of history. Designs were drawn by artists as far back as the thirteenth century.<sup>8</sup> In the Elizabethan period, English embroiderers drew their designs directly from nature, or copied them from illuminated books.<sup>9</sup> In fifteenth century France, the court embroiderer advised the gardener on which plants to grow, in

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<sup>7</sup> [Alice Meynell?], "Arts and Crafts at the New Gallery," Daily Chronicle and Clerkenwell News (4 October 1890) 7.

<sup>8</sup> Lanto Synge, Art of Embroidery. History of Style and Technique (London: The Royal School of Needlework and Woodbridge: Antique Collectors' Club, 2001) 17.

<sup>9</sup> Albert Frank Kendrick, English Needlework (London: A&C Black, 1933) 87.



order that they could be drawn by the embroiderers.<sup>10</sup> Embroidery motifs were also taken from sixteenth-century books of pictures of real and imaginary animals, birds, insects or emblems, and books of lace and open-work designs.<sup>11</sup>

Samplers were added to these pattern sources in the seventeenth century. The sampler functioned as a practical education for the embroiderer during its production and as a pattern book once it was completed. They were also kept as a family heirlooms, and passed down from mother to daughter, a habit which both preserved ancient examples of designs, and precluded the need for printed books of designs, or indeed, new designs at all. After 1644, samplers were signed and dated as a matter of course, just like an artwork.<sup>12</sup> However, the fact that the designs were copied from generation to generation meant the emphasis was placed on the skill in execution of the embroidery, as opposed to skill in the design, which reinforced the notion of women copying their designs.

By the eighteenth century, advances in printing meant large quantities of embroidery patterns were printed and easily available, sold singly or with magazines.<sup>13</sup> Women also began copying entire compositions from engravings of popular paintings, also freely available due to the wonders of the printing press. Embroidery now took many forms: the needlework picture, decorative needlework, and samplers. Notably, all three forms of embroidery were produced by copying the picture or design from another source.

The nineteenth century witnessed drastic changes in all areas of life, not the least of which occurred in embroidery. Sources for embroidery designs increased. In addition to the printed pattern books available from previous centuries, patterns were included in magazines, art history and how-to books included images, and exhibitions of ancient embroidery and the increasing textiles collection at the South Kensington Museum were available to visit. Embroideries were

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<sup>10</sup> Synge, 71.

<sup>11</sup> Kendrick, 95-114.

<sup>12</sup> Kendrick, 115.

<sup>13</sup> Margaret Jourdain, The History of English Secular Embroidery (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co. Ltd, 1910) 114; Cynthia White, Women's Magazines 1693-1968 (London: Michael Joseph, 1970) 31.

purchased for the museum from the time of the Great Exhibition of 1851.<sup>14</sup> William Morris was often consulted about purchases for the textile department, and has been credited with “revolutionising our taste in the design of textiles and wall papers, and of reviving the artistic employment of needlework and tapestry.”<sup>15</sup>

The increased availability of ready-made designs coincided with a rise in Berlin wool-work, which gradually replaced sampler-making as the most practiced form of embroidery. In 1803, A. Philipson, a Berlin engraver and landscape painter, published a pattern book wherein the patterns were printed on a chequered grid, with symbols to indicate the colours to be used. Philipson’s concept was taken up by Frau Wittich, also from Berlin, who marketed the designs with great success. The resulting pictures, worked entirely in cross stitch, were called Berlin woolwork.

In England, Berlin woolwork caught on quickly. A rapidly expanding middle class took it up as a quick way to enhance their homes with handmade pictures. Contemporary paintings such as Landseer’s animal paintings were freely adapted for Berlin woolwork canvases, and exported to England. “By 1840 some 14,000 designs were in use, printed and then hand-coloured by armies of women earning pin money in publishers’ warehouses.”<sup>16</sup> Patterns and “bright ‘Zephyr’ or Berlin wools”<sup>17</sup> were imported from Germany, and sold in London shops.

In addition to purchasing designs for Berlin woolwork at shops, women could turn to an increasing number of magazines, such as The Englishwoman’s Domestic Magazine, The Young Ladies’ Journal, The Ladies’ Treasury and Girls’ Own Annual for printed patterns.<sup>18</sup> With the huge number of designs ready made, there was no need for women to attempt to design their own pictures. As the colours were already painted on the canvas, there was no need to choose colours of yarn. The technical skills involved in sampler making also became obsolete as Berlin woolwork

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<sup>14</sup> The earliest museum number in Nevinson’s 1938 catalogue is 1372-1853, indicating the piece was purchased in 1853. The index shows few purchases of 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> century embroidery in the 1860s-1880s, with increasing acquisitions in the 1890s until the 1920s.

<sup>15</sup> “William Morris, Poet and Craftsman,” Edinburgh Review 185:374 (January 1897) 79.

<sup>16</sup> Synge, 262.

<sup>17</sup> Synge, 262-263.

<sup>18</sup> Synge, 265.

pictures required only cross stitch. The resulting deterioration in both quality of design and technical ability can thus be attributed largely to the increase of Berlin woolwork, which in turn was fuelled by capitalism: considerable financial gain was realised by those who sold the designs, supplies and magazines, and they were therefore in no hurry to encourage women to learn to design their own patterns.

Embroidery repositories, which sold embroidery supplies, understood the potential for financial gain in magazines, and began to print their own magazines with articles on embroidery techniques, printed patterns, and recommendations for the purchase of their own supplies.<sup>19</sup> From 1860 The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine included designs for Berlin beadwork,<sup>20</sup> procured by Isabella Beeton from Mrs Goubaud, who wrote for the Parisian women's magazine Le Moniteur de la Mode.<sup>21</sup>

In 1884, a quarterly magazine for amateur artists, called The Art Designer, (later Home Art Work), claimed to be the first periodical to include full-scale, fold-out patterns for embroidery and other work. According to one of the indexes occasionally issued with the magazine, designs suitable for needlework were provided by Ellen Welby, Marion Reid, May Bowley, Helena Maguire, A[my?] Bowley, Mrs Harold Nadin, Walter Crane, George C Haité, Aymer Vallance, Selwyn Image, Hamilton Jackson, Alexander Fisher and Heywood Sumner. Many designs were anonymous, often taken from the editor, Blanche de Montmorency Conyers Morrell's vast collection of antique embroideries.<sup>22</sup> This trend continued at an ever-increasing pace throughout the nineteenth century. The profusion of printed patterns available in book or magazine form enabled women to produce their own embroideries at home, and were in great measure responsible for the localization of embroidery in the home, and for its reputation as an amateur craft.

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<sup>19</sup> Rozsika Parker, The Subversive Stitch. Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine (New York: Routledge, 1989 (1984)) 170.

<sup>20</sup> Nancy Spain, Mrs Beeton and her Husband (London: Collins, 1948) 127.

<sup>21</sup> Mme Goubaud was vital to the success of the EDM, for she sent Isabella Beeton a monthly chronicle of Parisian fashion descriptions of the fashion plates for inclusion in the English paper. Mme Goubaud also wrote several books on "fashion, dressmaking, embroidery and knitting." Sarah Freeman, Isabella and Sam The Story of Mrs Beeton (New York: Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, Inc, 1978) 165-167.

<sup>22</sup> "Contents of Back Numbers Still on Sale at 1s. and at 6d each," Home Art Work and The Art Designer [insert] (January 1898) np.

Exhibitions of historical needlework were regular occurrences in London in the latter part of the nineteenth century. These exhibitions became another source of ideas and patterns for women to use. Although he claimed an inability to discuss the embroidery in front of architects at the 1890 Arts & Crafts Exhibition, John D. Sedding's comments to students at the Winchester School of Art on December 16, 1885 reveal his knowledge of current practices in embroidery design:

If your lady-friend wants to employ her nimble fingers on the pretty home art of stitching, she does not disturb the bees in the garden, nor the birds and rabbits in the copses, as her great grandmother did in search of *motifs*, but she will consult the pages of the Queen or the Decorators' Journal, or the local crewel shop, or go to town in response to that thrilling message about "Eastern art-needlework," and some "Extraordinary pieces of Italian, Spanish, Sicilian, and Portuguese work," such as 'Artists, students, and lovers of the beautiful [...] will be amply repaid by the inspection of.'<sup>23</sup>

Sedding was aware that women found designs in magazines, or looked to exhibitions of ancient embroideries for their inspiration, rather than drawing their own designs as women had done in previous centuries. However, as much as he condemns the practice of copying designs, he does not suggest that women should learn to design their own embroidery patterns.

Ready-made designs for embroidery were thus plentiful, and easy to procure by mid-century. Doubtless, many women did create their own designs for use within their homes, but documentary evidence of this is difficult to trace. One rare published example is Catherine Hutton's autobiography, published in 1897. Hutton itemised all the embroidery and needlework she had accomplished in her lifetime, making special mention of the fact that she designed the patterns herself: "I worked embroidery on muslin, satin, and canvas, and netted upwards of 100 wallet purses, in combined colours and in patterns of my own invention."<sup>24</sup>

Hutton was an exception. Far more common was the notion of a difference between the mental effort of design, and the manual effort of execution. Lady Marion Alford explains:

The individual genius of the artist works first in design, though his work is for the use of craftsman or artisan, his collaborator; for the two, head and hands, must work together, or else will render each other inoperative or ineffective. The artisan, by right of his title, claims a part in the art itself; the craftsman, by his name, points

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<sup>23</sup> JD Sedding, "English Schools of Art - Old and New," The British Architect 25 (8 January 1886) 23.

<sup>24</sup> Mrs Catherine Hutton Beale, Reminiscences of a Gentlewoman of the Last Century: Letters of Catherine Hutton (London: 1897) quoted in Parker, 169.

out that he, too, has to work out the craft, the mystery, the inner meaning, of the design or intention.<sup>25</sup>

That the same person could do both does not seem to enter into the picture. In her book on embroidery, May Morris takes this one step further, linking the subject matter of embroidery to the worker's professional status:

The more important and pictorial side is usually left in the hands of professional workers of experiences and skill, but the decorative and more popular work is quite within the scope of amateurs, and is indeed often more beautiful as mere ornament, though its intellectual value may not be so great.<sup>26</sup>

Morris illustrated her argument using two pieces of embroidery, both worked in chain-stitch. A figure from the Syon Cope, a well-known work of Opus Anglicanum, was deemed more intellectual than a seventeenth-century Indian floral bedspread made for the European market, because the former was a figurative design, and the latter was a pattern. As both were worked in the same stitch, it is the presence or absence of human figures in the design which gives it intellectual qualities.<sup>27</sup>

Morris' view of the intellectual superiority of the Syon Cope has its roots in the revival of medieval embroidery, part of the Catholic religious revival that began in the 1830s. The large number of Catholic churches built after 1829 created a consequent need for decoration, and embroidery, used in church decoration since the mediæval era, when the original 'opus anglicanum' was produced, was the obvious choice. A.W.N. Pugin, an influential Gothic Revival architect, stressed that embroidery to decorate churches should be as close to medieval examples as possible:

But we must most earnestly impress on the minds of all those who work in any way for the decoration of the altar, that the only hope of reviving the perfect style is by *strictly adhering to ancient authorities*; illuminated MSS., stained glass, and *especially brasses* (which can easily be copied by rubbing), will furnish excellent examples, and many of them easy of imitation.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Lady Marion Alford, Needlework as Art (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, and Rivington, 1886) 54-5.

<sup>26</sup> Morris, May. Decorative Needlework. (London: Joseph Hughes & Co., 1893) 11-12.

<sup>27</sup> Morris, 18.

<sup>28</sup> A.W.N. Pugin, The Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England (London: Charles Dolman, 1843) 83.

Once again, the copying of previous work for embroidery is encouraged - in Pugin's estimation brasses, stained glass and illuminated manuscripts were the best sources for authentic embroidery. It is notable that he does not mention the use of the ancient pattern books published for embroiderers.

In his book on the Gothic Revival, Charles Eastlake cited Aunt Elinor's Lectures on Architecture as proof of "the gradual extension of ecclesiastical sentiment in connection with the Revival."<sup>29</sup> This book, written for school girls c.1840, explained the history of the Pointed Styles, as well as the interior decoration and fittings of churches. The author, Miss M. Holmes, also explained to her female readers that their role in the church consisted of "employing their needles in the embroidery of altar-cloths, and by saving their pocket-money to pay for a fald-stool or lectern."<sup>30</sup>

Miss Holmes's words did not go unheeded. In 1848, the Ecclesiological Society published a series of designs for embroidery in the appropriate style. These were drawn by Agnes Blencowe, with the advice of Gothic Revival architect, George E Street. To keep up with the demand, Agnes Blencowe and Street's sister began the Ladies' Ecclesiastical Embroidery Society in 1854. This Society did not further women's participation in the design process; rather, they copied directly from ancient work, or worked "under the supervision of a competent architect."<sup>31</sup> In addition, the women who produced these embroideries were not paid and the churches were charged the cost of materials only.

The practice of an architect designing and supervising embroidery production for ecclesiastical commissions was common by the 1850s, blended with the heavy moralizing of Street with regard to the 'elevating' aspect of producing embroidery for the church. These concepts became entwined with nineteenth-century notions of femininity, epitomised by the selfless nature

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<sup>29</sup> Charles Eastlake, A History of the Gothic Revival (1872) 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. J Mordaunt Crook, ed & Introduction (Leicester University Press, 1978 (1970)) 219.

<sup>30</sup> Eastlake, 219.

<sup>31</sup> Barbara Morris, Victorian Embroidery (London: Herbert Jenkins, 1962) 87, quoted in Anthea Callen, Women Artists of the Arts and Crafts Movement, 1870-1914 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1979) 104.

of the 'angel of the house.'<sup>32</sup> Within the religious revival of embroidery, there was no place for women to learn how to design for embroidery, but plenty of opportunities for her to produce it - unpaid, of course.

The revival of mediaeval embroidery was not only religious. After articling with GE Street in 1856, William Morris was greatly influenced by Street's love of things mediæval.<sup>33</sup> Curious about embroidery technique, in the early 1860s Morris and his wife Jane Burden unpicked old examples of embroidery in order to relearn the ancient stitches, and quickly amalgamated them with the embroidery sold in his shop. Due to the high public profile of William Morris and his designs, his input into the embroidery revival is often overplayed; many other designers and businesses also contributed to the trend. By the late 1870s, books of colour patterns for this new type of embroidery also became available. The following quote demonstrates the mood of the yet-to-come Arts & Crafts Movement:

The first condition of an ideal work of art is that it should be conceived and carried out by one person; division of labour is fatal to distinction and individuality -- it is good for pins, but bad for works of art. From this we see the first defect of the Berlin-wool fancy-work; the pattern being drawn by one person, the colours, &c, selected by a second, the pattern worked by a third, and very often 'grounded' by a fourth; whereas in art needlework, that is really worthy of the name, the materials should be chosen, the dimensions fixed, the pattern designed, and the work executed by one and the same person.<sup>34</sup>

Despite the authors' emphasis on designing and making, this was not the case at Morris and Company. The fact that Jane Morris learned embroidery techniques from her husband is often mentioned in the literature; nowhere is it mentioned whether she and the half a dozen other women in the circle were encouraged to produce their own designs. However, their daughter May Morris would learn.

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<sup>32</sup> 'The Angel in the House' was a poem written in 1854 by Coventry Patmore (1823-1896) for his first wife, Emily Andrews (1824-1862). The poem explains Patmore's concept of the ideal wifely qualities, as exemplified by his own wife, who bore him six children and died at the age of 36. As the poem increased in popularity with the English middle classes, it also became the subject of derision by authors and artists. Possibly the most potent response to the poem is Virginia Wolfe's short story "Killing the Angel in the House," published in 1931.

<sup>33</sup> Morris began 21 January 1856, and by the end of this year Rossetti had persuaded him to give up architecture for painting. Nicholas Salmon & Derek Baker, William Morris Chronology (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1996) 14-19.

<sup>34</sup> MS Lockwood and E Glaister, Art Embroidery. A Treatise on the Revived Practice of Decorative Needlework (London: Marcus Ward & Co, 1878) 8.

## Women's Art Education For Embroidery

Opportunities for women's art education proliferated during the nineteenth century. However, theirs was a specialised art education. Middle and upper-class women were taught cultural accomplishments tailored to their femininity. They learned to sing, dance, play the piano, draw, paint in watercolours, speak foreign languages and embroider, either at home with a governess, or at a finishing school.

For less well-off girls, needlework was a vital part of their education in school throughout the century. In the 1850s, 75.8% of girls learned needlework in school.<sup>35</sup> As the century progressed, other domestic accomplishments were added to the curriculum because schools received grants to teach them. With a view to "transforming working class girls into thrifty and efficient housewives (and servants)," girls were taught "domestic economy from 1874, cookery from 1882, and laundry work from 1889."<sup>36</sup>

Formal art and design education was offered by government-run schools, albeit with a commercial rather than an educational goal: it was hoped that England could better compete with France in the European markets if its manufactured goods were better designed. The first Government School of Design was opened in London in 1837 to train men in design for manufacture, with the stated goal of improving the quality of British manufactures.<sup>37</sup> Schools were soon begun in the larger provincial manufacturing cities, beginning with the Birmingham Government School of Design in 1842.<sup>38</sup>

A year after the Government School of Design opened, its Director, William Dyce, went to Paris to inspect the *École Nationale de Dessin pour les Jeunes Filles*, which had been training

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<sup>35</sup> Meg Gomersall, Working Class Girls in Nineteenth Century England: Life, Work and Schooling (London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1997) 109.

<sup>36</sup> Gomersall, 108.

<sup>37</sup> F Graeme Chalmers, Women and the 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Art World: Schools of Art and Design for Women in London and Philadelphia (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1998) 14.

<sup>38</sup> John Swift, "Birmingham and its Art School," Journal of Art and Design Education 7:1 (1988).



women designers since 1802.<sup>39</sup> It was thought that English women also had the potential to be good designers, and thus could become “part of the official scheme to improve the standard of design in England.”<sup>40</sup> Dyce’s report was favourable, and resulted in the formation of the Female School of Design in London, which opened with its first class of 25 students in October 1842.<sup>41</sup>

Thus both men and women were to be trained as designers for industry, however the rules of entry into their respective schools differed slightly in their wording and reveal definite gender bias. The first rule of admission to the Female School said: “no-one who wishes to study drawing merely as an accomplishment can be admitted.”<sup>42</sup> By comparison, the entrance restriction for men had a different emphasis: “the male students were forbidden to enter the Schools with the intention of becoming artists, practitioners of Fine Art.”<sup>43</sup> As Yeldham so aptly points out, the same activity was constituted as ‘Fine Art’ for men and an ‘accomplishment’ for women.<sup>44</sup>

This was not the only difference between the two schools. Female students were charged fees, while men studied for free. Women’s courses were offered during the day, and men’s courses were offered at night. The class implications of this are clear: working men could attend their free classes after work, while the women attending their day courses were expected to be wealthy enough not to have to work, and too respectable to venture out alone in the evening. These restrictions did not facilitate matters in a school ostensibly set up to train women to work as designers in industry.

This ambivalence extended further, encompassing the curriculum of the Female School. According to the advertisement for a teacher for the Female School, they wanted “a Schoolmistress properly qualified to superintend the conduct of the students whilst at school, and to teach the

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<sup>39</sup> Tamar Garb, Sisters of the Brush. Women’s Artistic Culture in Late Nineteenth-Century Paris (Yale University Press, 2001) 76.

<sup>40</sup> Yeldham, 11.

<sup>41</sup> “Second Report on the Council of the School of Design, 1842-43,” 6, qtd in Charlotte Yeldham, Women Artists In Nineteenth-Century France And England. Their Art Education, Exhibition Opportunities And Membership Of Exhibiting Societies And Academies, With An Assessment Of The Subject Matter Of Their Work And Summary Biographies 2 vols (New York & London: Garland Publishing, Inc, 1984) 12.

<sup>42</sup> “Third Report of Council of Schools of Design, 1843-44,” 23, qtd in Yeldham, 12.

<sup>43</sup> Yeldham, 12. See also Quentin Bell, Schools of Design (London: 1963), 66, 71-72.

<sup>44</sup> Yeldham, 12.

rudiments of the art of Design, as applicable to manufacturers.”<sup>45</sup> It appears the students’ behaviour was of greater concern than their artistic training.

But rather than hiring a practicing designer, they chose Fanny McIan, an oil painter and member of the Royal Scottish Academy.<sup>46</sup> The choice of a fine artist to teach design for manufactured goods was destined to create problems. The curriculum of the Female School of Design was determined by the Council of the Board of Manufactures, and from 1843 until 1863 included drawing examples of ornament and casts from lithographs, copying geometric figures, flower painting, designing of patterns for lace and embroidery, and painting on porcelain.<sup>47</sup> Despite her best efforts, and the prizes offered to encourage students to perform well,<sup>48</sup> McIan wrote that in reality, the curriculum trained women to be “copyists, space fillers, or embellishers” rather than designers or, like herself, fine artists.<sup>49</sup> Chalmers agrees. Both the men’s and the women’s schools wanted to train designers, not fine artists, but women in particular had a specialised curriculum so in fact they did not receive adequate training to enable them to find paid work:

The Government Schools of Design, through the approved curriculum and admission criteria, functioned as agents of social control and the status quo. The governors did not want artists to emerge from such institutions. Women were not to enter the art world.<sup>50</sup>

After the Great Exhibition of 1851, the government set up a Department of Practical Art, whose purpose was to oversee industrial art education. Henry Cole, the new Superintendent of the

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<sup>45</sup> “Minutes of the Council of the Board of Trade, Dec 1836-April 1844,” 114, quoted in Chalmers, 15.

<sup>46</sup> Frances Matilda Whitaker (1814-1897) exhibited regularly at the Royal Academy, and at the Royal Scottish Academy from 1840-1853. She married firstly the Scottish painter, Robert Ranald McIan (1803-1856), and afterwards Mr Unwin who died shortly after their marriage. Chalmers, 14; CB de Laperriere, ed, The Royal Scottish Academy Exhibitors 1826-1990, Vol 3, (Calne, Wilts: Hilmarton Manor Press, 1991) 142-143.

<sup>47</sup> Yeldham, 13.

<sup>48</sup> The prizes were originally offered to students at both the Government School of Design, and the Female School, but when women took the majority of prizes, a separate set of prizes was quickly set up for women only. “4<sup>th</sup> Report of Council of School of Design 1844-45,” 16; “Report of Select Committee of Schools of Design,” 1849, 120; Yeldham, 13; Chalmers, 28.

<sup>49</sup> Chalmers, 26.

<sup>50</sup> Chalmers, 26.

Department of Practical Art, played a key role in the changes which then ensued.<sup>51</sup> Among the changes, the Management Committee of the Schools of Design was disbanded, and both the Government School of Design and the Female School were run by the Department from this time. According to Chalmers, “Henry Cole had complete control over appointments to all British Schools of Art, and he wanted people trained his way.”<sup>52</sup> To achieve this end, Cole was instrumental in setting up the National Art Training School, an teacher training college for men and women. Again, women studied during the day, while men had classes at night. Women also had the privilege of their own entrance, staircase, and washrooms, with a female attendant to oversee them.<sup>53</sup>

In 1852 the Female School of Design was renamed the Metropolitan School of Ornament for Females, a revealing change of nomenclature. Also that year, Fanny McIan’s assistant, her husband Robert McIan, resigned and was replaced by two former students of the school, Louisa Gann and Alice West.<sup>54</sup> Yet despite appearances of supporting women’s art education, Cole began to undermine it. In July 1852, Cole moved the Art Woodcarving class from the women’s school to the men’s school because there were already enough male wood engravers, and training women as well would take jobs away from men.<sup>55</sup> Cole also decided to change the rules on ‘accomplishment’ students, and allow wealthy women students who ‘dabbled’ in art to study at the school. This was done purely for financial reasons, for these women paid a slightly higher fee than the other students.<sup>56</sup> In effect, the women’s classes at the Department of Practical Art gradually developed a

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<sup>51</sup> Cole held a succession of posts within the department: “Henry Cole became ‘Superintendent of the Department of Practical Art (1852-53); Joint Secretary of Department of Science and Art (1853-55); Inspector-General (1855-57); and finally sole Secretary of the Department of Science and Art, then commonly referred to as ‘South Kensington,’ (1858-1873).” In addition to his work with art schools, Cole helped found the National Training Schools for both Cookery and Music. He was knighted for this work in 1875. Chalmers, 37-39.

<sup>52</sup> Chalmers, 39-40.

<sup>53</sup> Chalmers, 36.

<sup>54</sup> Chalmers, 32.

<sup>55</sup> Chalmers, 38.

<sup>56</sup> Bell, 250.

reputation as a sort of finishing school for ladies, which made it all the more difficult for serious women students who needed to find paid work as professional designers.

To make matters worse, Fanny McIan had been teaching her women students oil painting and life drawing in secret, holding classes in her home with nude models.<sup>57</sup> Despite warnings, she continued to supplement the government's curriculum as she saw fit until 1857, when the Female School was merged with the Central Art Training School at South Kensington and McIan was 'retired' with a pension of £100 per year. Cole achieved two goals in this manoeuvre: he got rid of the rebellious Fanny McIan, and saved the Department £200 a year.<sup>58</sup>

Henry Cole and the members of the Council of the Board of Trade were not alone in their ideas of what sort of art a women should learn. The conventional wisdom -- or 'horizon of expectation' -- did not change much over the century. In 1858, Richard Burchett, headmaster of the Central Art Training School and director of the Female School after McIan, wrote that drawing was a valuable skill for both men and women, but with different ends. Men needed to learn to draw both for employment and pleasure, but for women drawing was a skill for the home: "habits of order and precision will be acquired, and the girl who has been taught drawing in her school will have one element in her character towards forming a good housekeeper."<sup>59</sup> For Burchett, women's art education was not about job-hunting, but about preparing good housewives.

In December 1859, supported by Burchett, the government ceased all funding to the Female School. The reason given was that it was a municipal school, and therefore should not receive state funding; however in reality the state did not want to fund an art school that trained women in 'accomplishment' art, nor did they wish to see them become professional artists.<sup>60</sup> Fortunately there was sufficient interest in continuing the school. Funds were raised, and the Female School was re-opened in Queen Square in 1860, as an independent school affiliated with

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<sup>57</sup> Chalmers, 24-25.

<sup>58</sup> Cole may not have been banking on McIan's longevity, though; she drew her pension for 40 years. Her original salary was £300/year, a phenomenal amount for the time. Chalmers notes that male teachers made £100/year in the 1870s; and women teachers were still paid £100/year in 1910. Chalmers, 40.

<sup>59</sup> Richard Burchett, On the Central Art Training School (London: Chapman & Hall, 1858), 12-13, quoted in Chalmers, 8-9.

<sup>60</sup> Yeldham, 16.

the Science and Art Department of the Committee of the Council on Education. In 1862 it was renamed the Royal Female School of Art, with the continuing purpose of training women in design skills to enable them to earn a living. Women were also trained as teachers of art, which would become increasingly popular as the century progressed. The school continued in this vein until 1910, when it was incorporated with the London County Council (LCC) Central School of Art, in Southampton Row, London.<sup>61</sup> Although the Female School was ostensibly set up to train women as designers, the curriculum was not adequate to the task. Yeldham agrees with Chalmers's assessment, and also concludes that women never received the same education as men in the Schools of Design. These deficiencies, combined with the combination of serious and accomplishment students, caused Yeldham to conclude that the singular result of the Royal Female School was the institutionalisation of art as an accomplishment for women. Women did not learn to design there.<sup>62</sup> Theresa Gronberg concurs with this assessment of the early schools of design for women. She writes that both previous schools "suffered from over-bureaucratic administration and were to have little impact on contemporary design."<sup>63</sup>

Women had to wait until the 1890s before technical education was altered sufficiently to provide them with a style of instruction which allowed them to work as designers. These changes took place at the local government level. In 1892 the LCC established a Technical Education Board, "with instructions to provide 'as its first duty, considerable further facilities for practical and technical education in the poorer and manufacturing districts of London'."<sup>64</sup> To help them with their task, the Board appointed architect William Richard Lethaby and sculptor George Frampton as art inspectors, to advise the Board on matters relating to art teaching.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Yeldham, 19.

<sup>62</sup> Yeldham, 19.

<sup>63</sup> Theresa Gronberg, "William Richard Lethaby and the Central School of Arts and Crafts," in Sylvia Backemeyer & Theresa Gronberg eds, WR Lethaby 1857-1931 Architecture, Design and Education (London: Lund Humphries, 1984) 214.

<sup>64</sup> Technical Education for Women and Girls at Home and Abroad (London: Women's Industrial Council, 1905) 41. quoted in Gronberg, 15.

<sup>65</sup> Gronberg, 15.

Their recommendations were used by the Technical Education Board in the establishment of the Bolt Court Technical School in 1895. This school specialised in lithographic processes, and still functions as an art school today, part of the City Literary Institute. The success of Bolt Court became the pattern on which the Central School was based. Innovations included a primary emphasis on crafts, no exams, and the employment of part-time teachers who were practicing designers, and specialists in their field. Courses were given at night, as both students and teachers worked during the day.<sup>66</sup>

The LCC Central School of Art opened in Regent Street in 1896, with Lethaby as its principal. As Ruskin and Morris before him, Lethaby rejected the Dept of Science and Art's method of training designers by having them copy from historical ornament, as it tended to cripple creativity rather than stimulate it. For Lethaby, "an abstract and theoretical approach to art was like trying to learn to swim in a thousand lessons, but without water."<sup>67</sup> His philosophy of learning was to use tools in a workshop setting, basically transplanting the workshop apprenticeship system into a school.

Embroidery was introduced in the Central School's curriculum in 1897, the second year of the school's existence. Sources differ as to who was the instructor. Backemeyer and Gronberg note that Lethaby "employed Maggie Briggs to teach embroidery, Ellen Wright took over the teaching in 1899 directed by May Morris, a visitor to the School."<sup>68</sup> However, Jan Marsh says that May Morris taught from 1897, and was head of the embroidery department from 1899 until 1905, thereafter continuing her association with the Central School as Visitor until 1910.<sup>69</sup>

By 1901, the Central School had 732 evening students, 22 boys on a day course in silversmithing and 126 day students who were mainly women, taking "classes apparently especially created for women in subjects such as lacemaking, miniature painting and

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<sup>66</sup> Gronberg, 16.

<sup>67</sup> Gronberg, 17.

<sup>68</sup> "Notes From The Catalogue," in Backemeyer & Gronberg, 108.

<sup>69</sup> Jan Marsh, "May Morris: Ubiquitous, Invisible Arts and Crafts-woman," in Bridget Elliott & Janice Helland eds, Women Artists and the Decorative Arts 1880-1935 (Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2002) 42.

embroidery.”<sup>70</sup> As with previous schools, working (male) designers trained in the evening courses, and ‘amateurs’ took day classes.

By 1916, there were many art schools under the LCC umbrella that included embroidery in their curriculum. Ellen M Wright and her sister Fanny I Wright, both previously employed at Morris & Company, were embroidery instructors at the Central School; Ellen M Wright also taught at the Clapham School Of Art, aided by Miss F Pooley, while Eleanor R Harriss and Mrs L Frampton taught at the Hammersmith School Of Arts & Crafts.<sup>71</sup>

The only school devoted exclusively to embroidery was the Royal School of Art Needlework (RSAN), founded in 1872 for “the twofold purpose of supplying suitable employment for gentlewomen, and restoring ornamental needlework to the high place it once held among the decorative arts.”<sup>72</sup> (Figure 3. 1) ‘School’ is a bit misleading, for it was both a school and a workshop as well. The RSAN’s organising committee consisted of “distinguished and high-minded ladies”<sup>73</sup> including Lady Welby and Lady Marion Alford, and the Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein, one of Queen Victoria’s daughters, who “gave her name as President, and her active co-operation.”<sup>74</sup> Lady Alford edited the Handbook of Art Needlework used at the school from 1880, and did so much research into the various aspects of embroidery she was obliged to publish it as a separate book, Needlework as Art, in 1886. About the origins of the RSAN she wrote,

There was a public demand for something better than the worsted patterns in the trade, and the Royal School of Art Needlework rose and tried to respond to that call by stimulating original ideas and designs, and imitating old ones in conformity with modern requirements. The difficulties to be overcome were at first very great. The old stitches had all to be learned and then taught, and the best methods to be selected; the proper materials had to be studied and obtained - sometimes they had to be manufactured. Lastly, beautiful tints had to be dyed.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Gronberg, 20.

<sup>71</sup> “Introduction,” in Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Eleventh Exhibition, 1916 .

<sup>72</sup> “The Royal School of Art-Needlework,” Magazine of Art 5 (1882) 219.

<sup>73</sup> Synge, 276.

<sup>74</sup> Alford, 396.

<sup>75</sup> Alford, 396.

The school originally opened in the autumn of 1872 in rooms in Sloane Street, London, with a staff of twelve women overseen by Lady Welby and Mrs Dolby, an “authority in ecclesiastical work.”<sup>76</sup> While the course available in the government schools of design for women was theoretical only, the RSAN had the distinct advantage of a practical, hands-on technical training. The school grew rapidly, and by 1875 had moved into their third locale, conveniently located in Exhibition Road next to the South Kensington Museum. The collections of ancient embroidery in the Museum were studied in an effort to understand old work, and several loan exhibitions of embroideries were held on the School’s premises, the first being organised by Princess Christian.

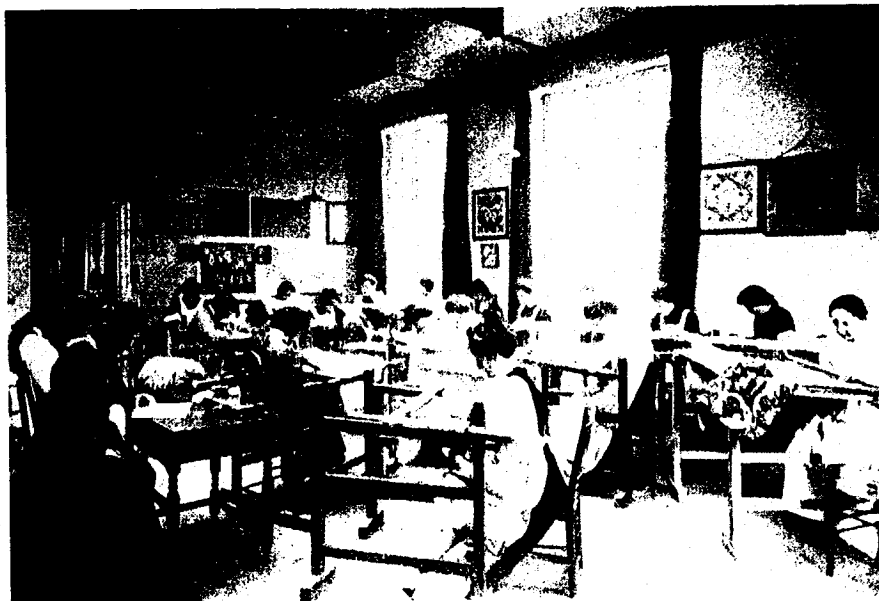


Figure 3.1: Royal School of Art Needlework  
Photo of Studio

Eligibility criteria for prospective students at the Royal School of Art Needlework included “poverty, gentle birth, and sufficient capacity to enable them to support themselves and be educated to teach others.”<sup>77</sup> Students first took a course to learn embroidery stitches, for which they paid £5. They were then employed in one of the school’s four departments. The large workroom comprised the first department, which handled all types of work including re-orders;

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<sup>76</sup> Alford, 396.

<sup>77</sup> Alford, 397.



the second department did appliqué and gold work; the third was the 'Artistic Room,' which was devoted specifically to the production of designs in crewels by leading designers such as William Morris, Walter Crane, Selwyn Image, and Edward Burne-Jones; and the fourth department, also the largest and the most lucrative, prepared work for women to produce in their own homes.<sup>78</sup> In 1875 a Higher School of Art was begun at the RSAN. The women employed there were "advised and instructed by prominent artists like Lord Leighton, Val Prinsep and the architect GF Bodley."<sup>79</sup>

Lady Alford's 1875 report on the progress of the RSAN indicates the School was quite busy, and doing well financially. In 1875 alone, 403 orders had been received in the executive department, 1,065 re-orders had been prepared in the main workroom, and £1,382 worth of embroidery had been sold. The staff had increased from 12 at the beginning of 1875 to 20 at the end of that year; with the employees also increasing from 88 to 110. Among the staff at the RSAN were Elizabeth Burden, who was chief technical instructor from 1880,<sup>80</sup> and designers Deborah Birnbaum (c1889) and Nellie Whichelo (c1890).<sup>81</sup> The women were paid from fourpence to tenpence an hour, depending on the skill of the worker. Anthea Callen noted that these wages were "aimed to maintain its workers in a style suited to their station," for they were far higher than the national average. An additional concession to the eyes of the workers was a seven-hour work day, considerably shorter than the average working-class day. The women also had access to a well-lit rest room where they could read books from the RSAN's library, or take a cup of tea.<sup>82</sup>

Despite the considerable efforts of Lady Welby and her associates toward their aim of relearning old work and introducing new designs, an announcement in The Times in March 1876, reveals that they deferred to men in matters of design and taste, for fear of being labelled amateurs:

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<sup>78</sup> Callen, 100.

<sup>79</sup> Callen, 100.

<sup>80</sup> Marianne Tidcombe, Women Bookbinders 1880 - 1920 (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press & London: The British Library, 1996) 80.

<sup>81</sup> Callen, 100, 101; ACES Catalogues 1888-1916.

<sup>82</sup> Callen, 100-101.

But to show how the Council have gone to work it will be sufficient to name the gentlemen to whom they have applied for advice and assistance, and who are now formally enrolled among them as a Committee of Taste. These are Mr Leighton, RA, Mr Prinsep, and Mr Bodley, and when to these are added the names of Mr Burne Jones, Mr Poynter, Mr William Morris, Mr Atcheson, Mr Pollen, Mr Walter Crane, and Mr Armstrong, the School may be held sufficiently protected from the danger of becoming a mere plaything of fashionable amateurs.<sup>83</sup>

The first group of men were the teachers in the 'Higher School of Art', and the second donated designs regularly to the school.

By 1882, the Magazine of Art could report on the success of the RSAN, exemplified by the women who were employed there:

some in embroidering, some designing patterns, some in drawing the patterns on material, and thus preparing work for amateurs; others in making up the finished work for sale at the school, others in selling the work and materials in the show-rooms, others as clerks, book-keepers, and so forth.<sup>84</sup>

Although several sources report women creating their own designs at the RSAN,<sup>85</sup> the exact nature of the design education they received there is unclear. Students may have been taught some rudimentary design skills in addition to stitching with their week-long course beginning in 1872; they also may have learned design from the professional designers in the Higher School of Art from 1875. In addition, professional female designers were also employed, who may have informally taught the stitchers by example, as the women worked together. Despite their access to famous designers' work (or perhaps because of it), the quality of design at the RSAN was criticised in the press. Both the Magazine of Art's 1882 article and reviews of the 1890 ACES exhibition emphasise the poor quality of designs, in particular the excessive use of floral patterning. By the turn of the century, there was pressure from the new Technical Education Board to employ professional design teachers at the RSAN, to which the RSAN gracefully succumbed when a grant of £150 per year was provided to employ teachers. Miss Parson and W. Paulson Townsend were both engaged to teach two evening classes a week. Callen claims that Townsend's recently published book, Embroidery, Or the Craft of the Needle (1899), gave him additional authority which justified his

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<sup>83</sup> "Art Needlework," The Times (23 March 1876) 4.

<sup>84</sup> "The Royal School of Art-Needlework," Magazine of Art 5 (1882) 219.

<sup>85</sup> "The Royal School of Art-Needlework," 219; Callen, 101.

being paid £1.1s (£1.05) per class, while Miss Paulson, with no publications, was paid 5s (25p) per class.<sup>86</sup>

Overall, the RSAN was successful in their aim to help impoverished gentlewomen, but less so in their goal of inspiring new embroidery designs. Their greatest success was in their maintenance of the status quo, as evidenced in the organising committee's deference to men of repute as teachers and designers, the refusal to teach women both design and stitching until forced to by the Board of Technical Education, and the difference in pay scales for male and female teachers.

### Statistical Discussion

Compared to the first Arts & Crafts Exhibition in 1888, three times as many women (157) participated in the 1890 exhibition. Women represented 26% of the 593 exhibitors, and showed 24% of the works on display. The majority of women (111 or 71%) showed embroidery, which was foregrounded that year, along with furniture, to which women contributed nothing. Their remaining contributions included lace, woodcarving, ceramics, glass, metalwork, gesso, and textile designs.

Of the 123 embroideries exhibited, women designed 57 and men designed 66. Women were also responsible for the execution of all the designs. The number of designs by each sex is not that different, showing clearly that the educational barriers described in the previous section had not prevented women from designing their own embroidery.

Eighty-two different women were named in the 33 reviews, culled from 39 periodicals. Embroidery represented 61% of women's work in the 1890 exhibition, making it easily the most visible form of women's participation. And yet, 75% of the women reviewed showed embroidery. Twenty (24%) of these women were embroidery designers while over twice as many, 42 (51%) were embroidery producers. (See Appendix II: Women Reviewed, 1890)

It may well be argued that these statistics are a reflection of the actual breakdown of women's embroidery work in the exhibition, considering that more women produced embroidery

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<sup>86</sup> Miss Parson did not receive a pay rise until 1908. Townsend's book was written with the assistance of Louisa Frances Pesel, and introduced by Walter Crane. Callen, 102.

than designed it. It is also clear that the periodical press did not emphasise women as designers of embroidery, a new area of accomplishment that was breaking with the more common practice of women copying from designs. This may reflect the critics' collective 'horizon of expectation' formed through previous experience;<sup>87</sup> after all, women copying had been institutionalised at the Female School of Art for decades. It is not surprising that critics were ambivalent about the woman designer of embroidery. A further possibility is that critics were aware that women were designing, yet did not find their designs worthy of particular comment. In any case, the following section on the critical reception of women's embroidery will explore these possibilities in greater detail.

#### General Press Reaction To Women and Embroidery

The 1890 Arts & Crafts Exhibition allowed women to exhibit their embroidery in a professional, fine-art setting, and most importantly, to label their own work as their own. General comments on the needlework were mixed; however the critics agreed that on the whole, the embroidery outshone the furniture. The only periodical that did not find the embroidery of better quality than the furniture was the London daily paper, the Standard:

We are not sure that the needlework provides very much that provokes remark. The motives for the designs appear, in some cases, somewhat stale - though, beyond doubt, the needlework as a whole is a vast improvement upon any which could have been gathered together twenty years ago.<sup>88</sup>

Although the percentage of women's designs for embroidery and needlework in general had increased since the first exhibition, the majority of the embroideries (54%) were still designed by men. Taken in this light, the 'staleness' could refer to the similarity of embroidery designs by men or women with those exhibited in previous years. It could also be simply evidence of the critic's preference for a different type of aesthetic. Frederick Wedmore (1844-1921) was the Standard's art critic from the 1878 until c1900. The Standard's art reviews during the years Wedmore wrote for

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<sup>87</sup> Hans Robert Jauss, Toward an Aesthetic of Reception (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982) xii-xiv.

<sup>88</sup> [Frederick Wedmore], "Arts and Crafts at the New Gallery," The Standard (4 October 1890) 3.

them reveal a marked preference for French art, both in painting and in decorative arts. Of the 1889 ACES exhibition, for example, he questions the show's Italian and Gothic influences:

It is almost always interesting; it is generally very good. But had the French no great century and no great men? - no Buhl, and Reisener, and Gouthière? Was there nothing that was splendid in Louis Quatorze, or graceful in Louis Quinze, or daintily precise in Louis Seize? Nothing to copy from?<sup>89</sup>

By 1893 the Standard's comments were even more impatient, and from the same pen:

In what we cannot but consider its refusal to recognise what fashion, at all events at this very moment, recognises fully - the excellence and suitability of the French Eighteenth Century *meuble de luxe* - it sets unnecessary limitations where variety and range are just what is wanted, and is to some extent sectarian and insular, instead of being eclectic and reasonably cosmopolitan.<sup>90</sup>

Following Jauss's theory, Wedmore's 'horizon of expectation' in art was represented by his experience of, and aesthetic preference for French art. It is easier to write about what one knows, thus Wedmore turns a review of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society into a discussion of why it isn't like French art.

The women's and textile-trade press simultaneously praised the embroidery exhibits in the West Gallery, and pointed out a decrease in the quality of the designs. The Queen, never one to be shy with its criticisms, thought that "Much of it is very good; nevertheless the total impression conveyed is that the resources of originality in this direction are pretty nearly exhausted. The Royal School of Art Needlework, to whose credit the modern renaissance is due, have done little latterly to add to their prestige."<sup>91</sup> Was this lack of originality evident in the women's designs, or the men's designs? The Queen did not specify.

The Irish Textile Journal's London correspondent gave a bit more information about the exhibition experience, saying that viewing the embroideries in the West Gallery was difficult due to overcrowding: "indeed, once or twice I was obliged to wait my turn to view certain very

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<sup>89</sup> [F Wedmore], "Arts and Crafts at the New Gallery," The Standard (5 October 1889) 3. Wedmore's choices for good work are not embroiderers: "Buhl" was actually André Charles Boulle (1642-1732), a French cabinetmaker; Jean-Henri Riesener (1734-1806), was also a French cabinetmaker; and Pierre Gouthière (1732-1813), was a French metalworker. (www.getty.edu)

<sup>90</sup> [F Wedmore], "Arts and Crafts at the New Gallery," The Standard (30 September 1893) 3.

<sup>91</sup> "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition," The Queen (11 October 1890) 516.

attractive specimens of work.”<sup>92</sup> Despite praising the execution, the reviewer writes in despair of the effect of modern conditions on the quality of the embroideries:

“Throughout the embroidery section the work can only be described as excellent. The most captious old maiden ladies - and scores of them were there - could hardly pick a flaw in the execution of the work. Still, how is it? It may be imagination with me, but our modern work, when placed beside the work of the olden school, is some way left in the shade. It lacks the finish - it has not got the refinement which our great-grand-aunts threw into their work. Can this be accounted for by the fact that they lived in a more leisurely age, and hence could devote more time and pains? [O]r have the modern materials anything to do with it? Possibly both might be taken as reasons. I was also struck with the number of exhibits described by the catalogue as taken from old designs. Is there nothing new under the sun? Can modern art not strike out into fresh fields? It is not for want of enthusiasm among the present-day women, for they are launching out in all directions without a trace of timidity. Originality seems to be an isolated gift, or else we want more reliance. Our early embroiderers did a great deal of their finest work in the open air. They were accustomed to draw their inspiration from nature. They sat in the fields and gardens, and made nature their model, and, though many of their first attempts were rude, they embodied the subject with after attempts upon the same plan perfected to a degree that modern work might well emulate. But the world has changed; the revolutionising effects of steam drive us at such a pace that in the race Art is threatened; the uncultured and equally unrefined mechanic is our would-be artist; the union between Art and manufactures, which once was close, is being widened, and nearly everything produced lacks the graceful inspiration which alone can be given to it by cultivated Art. On this account the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, with the many kindred institutions throughout the country, deserve every support in the splendid work which they are doing.”<sup>93</sup>

Again, the critic did not blame women for the deterioration in design quality, but rather accuses the fast pace of modern life of necessitating the copying of old work.

The first of two articles in the Lady's Pictorial agreed with the Queen and the Irish Textile Journal that the design quality has decreased. They wrote that the embroidery was “of considerable excellence. If, for the most part, there is no remarkable evidence of originality of treatment or fertility of invention, there is plenty of conscientious, patient work, and a fine sense of colour, which combine to make their exhibits very pleasing and satisfactory.”<sup>94</sup> The comments in the second notice were more conservative in tone: “Naturally, and very properly, the essentially womanly art of needlework is represented largely and by much dainty and artistic work.”<sup>95</sup> Taken

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<sup>92</sup> “Arts & Crafts Exhibition - Needlework,” Irish Textile Journal (15 December 1890) 172.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid*, 173.

<sup>94</sup> “At the ‘Arts and Crafts’,” Lady's Pictorial (11 October 1890) 569.

<sup>95</sup> “At the ‘Arts and Crafts’ Second Notice,” Lady's Pictorial (18 October 1890) 647.

together, these remarks seem to denote the presence of the amateur women embroiderer, who is adept at choosing colours and stitching but who is not overly concerned with design quality, in effect reinforcing these concepts as the status quo.

Most architectural journals did not even mention the embroideries, concentrating on the furniture in the exhibition. The British Architect noted the “absence of any very superlative or original quality of design” and dismissed the embroideries in the West Gallery en masse as “several beautiful examples of needlework.”<sup>96</sup> The anonymous critic also suggested that holding Arts & Crafts Exhibitions every two or three years instead of each year would be one way round the problem.

Another area of concern regarding the embroidery pertained to two samplers. Florence Fenwick-Miller’s Ladies’ Column in the Illustrated London News devotes quite a long paragraph to this topic:

But I see with extreme regret in the exhibition some specimens of regular old-fashioned ‘samplers,’ done by little girls. I did hope that no poor children were now set down to waste eye-sight and precious school-time over fine canvas and silk in the production of impossible animals, square-shaped trees destitute of perspective, and inscriptions of so mournful and inane an order as was always (not unjustly) considered appropriate to a sampler. One of these in the Arts & Crafts is laboriously inscribed with the sensible, lively, and childlike sentiment: ‘Rose-leaves smell when roses thrive; here’s my work when I’m alive. Rose-leaves smell when shrunk and shed; here’s my work when I am dead.’ The poor mite who had to spend her time on stitching in this doggrel (sic) adds that she is ‘aged thirteen-1890.’ The Society for the Protection of Children should look after this sad case!<sup>97</sup>

Fenwick-Miller’s strong opinions on the subject were formed during her three terms on the Hackney School Board, from 1876 to 1885, during which “[s]he was instrumental in obtaining a reduction of the time spent by girls in fine needlework.”<sup>98</sup> That the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society promoted the embroidery work of little girls did not please Fenwick-Miller at all, and she did not mention or review the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society again in her column.

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<sup>96</sup> “The Arts & Crafts Exhibition,” The British Architect (10 October 1890) 262-3.

<sup>97</sup> Florence Fenwick-Miller, “The Ladies’ Column,” The Illustrated London News (11 Oct 1890) 476.

<sup>98</sup> Frances Mays, Women of the Day, A Biographical Dictionary of Notable Contemporaries (London: Chatto & Windus, 1885). See also Rosemary VanArsdel, Florence Fenwick Miller: Victorian Feminist, Journalist, and Educator (Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2001).

Neither did the Illustrated London News' main review of the exhibition find the samplers appropriate: "Whether they come under the head of an Art or a Craft it is impossible to say; but surely neither of these specimens of little girls' cross-stitch deserves to be in galleries devoted to serious work."<sup>99</sup> Perhaps the Committee took heed of these comments, for samplers were sparse indeed in later exhibitions.<sup>100</sup>

#### Case Studies: May Morris and Una Ashworth Taylor

In the thirty-two reviews identified and used for this chapter, eighty-two women were named (see Appendix II: Women Reviewed 1890). Most of these women, forty-three to be precise, were named in only one periodical, which gives an idea of how varied the opinions of the press were regarding women's work. However, two women's names were mentioned significantly more often than the others: May Morris and Una Ashworth Taylor. I would like to juxtapose the reception of their work by the periodical press, in light of the fact that Morris is singled out as a designer, and Taylor as a maker.

#### Case Study 1: May Morris (1862-1938)

The woman who received the largest number of mentions in my sample of press reviews in 1890 was May Morris.<sup>101</sup> (Figure 3.2) As the daughter of William Morris, and head of the embroidery department of Morris & Co, May Morris's skills as a designer and embroiderer were well-known by 1890. Indeed, she had learned the rudiments of art and design at an early age in her own family circle, embroidering with her mother and sister, and drawing from nature with her father and DG Rossetti. She later attended Notting Hill High School for two years, and studied

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<sup>99</sup> "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," The Illustrated London News (11 October 1890) 454.

<sup>100</sup> A quick perusal through the catalogues of the ACES reveal no samplers shown in 1893, 1 in 1896, none in 1899, and 1 in 1903. In 1916 there were 39 samplers in the ACES exhibition, many by Grace Christie's students at the Royal College of Art. See Chapter 5.

<sup>101</sup> Since May Morris is well-known to scholars of the Arts and Crafts Movement, there is no need to provide an indepth biographical context for May as I have done for Kate Faulkner, and will be doing for the remaining case studies. This ground has been ably covered in three works by Jan Marsh. See "May Morris: Ubiquitous, Invisible Arts and Crafts-woman," in Bridget Elliott & Janice Helland eds, Women Artists and the Decorative Arts 1880-1935 (Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2002); Jane & May Morris. A Biographical Story 1839-1938 rev.ed. (Horsham: The Printed Word, 2000); "The Female Side of the Firm." Crafts 140 (May/June 1996), 43-44.



embroidery at the South Kensington School of Art from 1880-1883.<sup>102</sup> This relatively brief formal education was supplemented by many hours observing her father illuminating manuscripts or designing at home, and watching the production in Queen Square or at the printing and dyeing works at Merton Abbey.



Figure 3.2 Photo of May Morris, c.1890

May Morris took over as head of the Embroidery section of Morris & Company in 1885, when she was only 23 years of age. From this time, she was responsible for dealing with clients, designing embroideries, producing designs, and overseeing the team of embroiderers. The 'house style' of Morris & Co. was distinctive and extremely popular, making it difficult for May Morris to impose her own style, as the public wanted items that looked as though they were designed by William Morris. Confounding the matter was the fact that her father had taught his assistant, John Henry Dearle, to design in the same style as he did. Thus, there were three designers whose work was very similar. Many designs were at first attributed to William Morris, but recent scholarship

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<sup>102</sup> Marsh, (2002) 38.

has begun to make distinctions, with many designs being reattributed to their rightful designer. In a recent article, Jan Marsh agrees with Linda Parry's assertion that May's style is quite different to the Morris & Co. house style, particularly in her choice of brighter colours, and use of open space.<sup>103</sup>

As an artist, she exhibited embroidery and jewellery at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society from 1888 until 1924. A scholar and teacher of embroidery, Morris published historical articles and a technical book on embroidery, and taught in London and Birmingham. She also lectured widely on embroidery and on her father's writings, both in the UK and in America. But to many people, May Morris is best known as the editor and author of the "Introductions" to the twenty-four volumes of her father's Collected Works. These works have been consulted by historians throughout the twentieth century, and have served to keep May Morris's author name in current historical awareness. Arguably, written records have been valued more than embroidered ones, and more emphasis is placed upon them when the historian arrives on the scene many years later. Fortunately, written traces of May Morris refer both to her writing and to her embroidery, thus providing two major areas of information. The Arts and Crafts textile historian Linda Parry wrote of her: "Despite May's reputation nowadays pivoting around her famous father, during her own lifetime she was recognised as a significant artistic figure in her own right."<sup>104</sup>

In 'her own right' May Morris was prominent in the 1890 exhibition. She exhibited fifteen embroideries: ten of her own designs, which were worked by the professional embroiderers employed by Morris & Company, and five pieces designed by her father which she worked. These included work bags, sachets, a table cloth, a quilt, curtains, tea cloths, and cushion covers. The only piece which she designed and also embroidered was the *Fruit Tree*. May Morris also designed an embroidered bookcover, worked and exhibited by Mrs Walter Cave, and lettering for a case of T.J. Cobden-Sanderson's books.<sup>105</sup> (Figure 3.3) In addition, she contributed two essays to the catalogue, 'Of Colour,' and 'Of Materials,' which received press attention. Both are technical in

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<sup>103</sup> Marsh, (2002) 39.

<sup>104</sup> Linda Parry, "Review of *May Morris 1862-1938: An Exhibition at the William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow, 10 January - 11 March 1989*. Craft History 2 (April 1989) 83.

<sup>105</sup> Catalogue of the Third Exhibition, 1890.

nature. The former explains the colours produced by natural dyes, and how to use them in textiles and embroidery to good effect. The latter discusses the suitability of various fabrics and threads for embroidery. Her writing is clear, if somewhat opinionated, and peppered with literary quotes and advice about where to view good examples of what she describes.

An astute professional, Morris was aware of the importance of her 'author' name. In a paragraph about the Private View, the Glasgow Herald wrote: "Miss May Morris, who, though married some months ago, is still best known by her old name, looked picturesque in a grey dress and round green cloak with hood lined with pink shot silk."<sup>106</sup> Indeed, May Morris had married Henry Halliday Sparling on 14 June 1890.<sup>107</sup> She signed the guestbook at Kelmscott Manor with her married name, but continued to use her maiden name for her public and professional work as an author, artist, and exhibitor. She understood that having made her reputation using the author name 'May Morris,' this name needed to be maintained in the public eye.

May Morris's name or work was mentioned in eighteen of the thirty-two reviews in my sample. Allowing for some overlap, her design skills were discussed in 13 reviews, her stitching ability in four reviews, and her role as an author of catalogue essays in three reviews. Despite his aversion to the Arts & Crafts style, Fred Wedmore's review in the Standard was the only one that mentioned all three of her creative endeavours: "There are many good contributions of needlework from Miss Morris, who has made herself not a little of an authority on the subject, as writer, designer, and actual worker."<sup>108</sup>

May Morris's design skills as demonstrated in her *Fruit Tree* embroidery<sup>109</sup> received the most press attention of all her work. *Fruit Tree* was compared favourably in The Builder to one of

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<sup>106</sup> "Our London Correspondence," Glasgow Herald (6 October 1890) 7.

<sup>107</sup> Henry Halliday Sparling (1860-1924), socialist, disciple of William Morris, and supporter of Irish Home Rule, was assistant editor and later co-editor of Commonweal; secretary of the Kelmscott Press from 1888 to 1894; editor, Irish Minstrelsy: Being a selection of Irish Songs, Lyrics, and Ballads (London: Walter Scott 1888), with a cover designed by May Morris; and author of The Kelmscott Press and William Morris Master-Craftsman (London: Macmillan & Co, 1924). When his marriage to May Morris failed in June 1894, Sparling went to Paris. He later remarried and emigrated to America.

<sup>108</sup> [Fred Wedmore], "Arts And Crafts At The New Gallery," The Standard (4 October 1890) 3.

<sup>109</sup> According to Linda Parry at the V&A Museum, London, May Morris's embroideries, *The Orchard* and the *Fruit Garden* are the same design as the *Fruit Tree* of 1890. Interview held 5 November 2004.

her father's designs for an embroidered hanging. The anonymous critic [possibly HH Statham] wrote at some length about the two pieces:

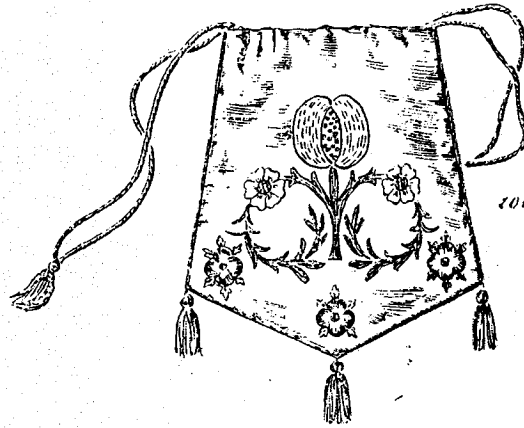


Figure 3.3:

Above: Embroidered work bag, Designed by May Morris, worked by Miss Dowie & Lily Yeats  
Below: Embroidered Book Cover, *A Study of Dante*, design: May Morris, work: Mrs Walter Cave

The textile exhibits in the West Gallery illustrate the divided feeling which exists at present between the partially realistic and the purely conventional and symmetrical treatment of foliage forms in embroidery. The gallery contains two very fine examples of these two apparently opposed systems. One is a curtain embroidered on blue linen (subject: "Fruit Tree") designed by Miss May Morris & executed by her in conjunction with Miss Yeates (sic) and Mrs Emery. This is a sumptuous rendering of a fruit tree with the flowers and fruit treated in irregular masses, with spaces between; a more conventional type of acanthus-like foliage worked in outline runs through the whole as if to bind it together. The more purely conventional method is shown in Mr W. Morris's design for wall hanging (151), coloured and darned by Miss (?) (sic) Catherine Holliday. This is a symmetrical flowing design in immense acanthus-like leaves which dispart from a centre and curl round either

way; it is a grand-looking design, though it may be just a question whether this scale of leaf is not rather too large and tends to dwarf the scale of a room of ordinary size.<sup>110</sup>

In a formal analysis of the two designs which is devoid of gendered language, the critic points out the contrast between May Morris's use of irregular masses and negative space, and the symmetrical design and large scale of her father's design. The comparison is apt, for it represents the direction in which two-dimensional design was heading, away from the overpowering symmetry of the first generation of Arts & Crafts designers, and toward the lighter asymmetrical designs which later characterised Art Nouveau. Jan Marsh also comments that these changes in design created a style close to that of Art Nouveau, and were common to May's generation in several countries across Europe.<sup>111</sup>

Another architectural magazine, the Building News, also complimented the design of the *Fruit Tree*: "The works exhibited by many lady artists, such as Miss May Morris's curtain, 'The Fruit Tree,' embroidered on blue linen, show a right appreciation of the art of arranging lines and masses on surfaces according to the purpose intended."<sup>112</sup> The language used by the critics in these two architectural magazines demonstrates how decorative arts criticism was evolving, and keeping pace with the changes in decorative arts. Neither used gendered language, and they were the only two to formally analyse May Morris's designs. It is worth pointing out that very few works in any medium were analysed in this fashion, whether created by women or men.

In contrast, The Queen began its discussion of May Morris's design skills by referring to Morris & Co, and the fertility of her father's design, before going on to add at the end of the paragraph, almost as an afterthought, that his daughter shared this talent:

But there is no doubt that among the firms the palm belongs to Messrs Morris and Co. Mr Morris is as fertile in design as if he had neither prose, poetry, nor politics to occupy his attention, and as he is able to see his ideas carried out under his own eye, or under the able superintendence of his daughter, the result is generally the best attainable. But, indeed, Miss May Morris is a remarkably good designer herself. The *charming* curtain, a blue linen with an apple tree depicted in all the glory of its pink

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<sup>110</sup> "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," The Builder 59:2488 (11 October 1890) 284.

<sup>111</sup> Marsh, (2002) 39-40.

<sup>112</sup> "Arts and Crafts Exhibition," The Building News (10 October 1890) 495.

blossoms, and numerous *pretty small articles*, such as cushions and tea-cloths, show her fine inventive powers.”<sup>113</sup> (italics added)

Talented as May Morris was, her father’s several skills were mentioned first and at great length, with her primary contribution to the family firm being her ‘able superintendence’ before passing mention is made of her ability as a designer. Her works are described in appropriate, feminine terms: a ‘charming’ curtain, and ‘numerous pretty small articles.’ Perhaps The Queen’s critic wished to imply that proper daughters do not upstage their fathers with their talents.

The *Fruit Tree* hanging was complimented for the originality and medieval character of its design in the Manchester Guardian’s lengthy review of this exhibition. However, its praise was tempered by querying the wisdom of using such a plain background as linen. The writer of this article [possibly Claude Phillips or Lewis F Day] felt that a richer fabric, such as silk or satin, would have been more appropriate to the richness of the coloured silk used in the design:

Notable among these embroideries is a magnificent ‘curtain embroidered on blue linen’ by Miss May Morris, characterised as ‘The Fruit Tree,’ and the mediæval character of which does not prevent its possessing a real originality of its own. It is surely, however, an anomaly and a mistake that so splendid a piece of decoration should be embroidered on a linen ground of flat line and unpleasant slaty blue hue, instead of on a silk or satin of tempered richness and lustre.<sup>114</sup>

This is somewhat surprising, as the use of linen as a background for art embroidery was becoming increasingly common. The Irish Textile Journal noticed this in their review: “Indeed, in a great many of the exhibits linen is employed in the groundwork.”<sup>115</sup> In fact, 35 of the embroideries exhibited the 1890 ACES were worked on linen.<sup>116</sup> It would appear that May Morris practiced what she preached, for she recommended linen highly in her catalogue essay. “For needlework for more ordinary uses,” she wrote, “linen is by far the most pleasing and enduring web. Unlike silk on the

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<sup>113</sup> “The Arts and Crafts Exhibition,” The Queen (11 October 1890) 516.

<sup>114</sup> “The Arts & Crafts Exhibition,” Manchester Guardian (7 October 1890) 8.

<sup>115</sup> “Arts & Crafts Exhibition. Needlework,” The Irish Textile Journal (15 December 1890) 172.

<sup>116</sup> Thirty-five of the embroideries whose materials were noted in the catalogue, that is. Catalogue of the Third Exhibition, 1890, passim.

one side, and wool on the other, it has scarcely any limitations in treatment, or in material suitable to be used on it.”<sup>117</sup>

Also noted for its originality of design was the *Noah's Ark Cot Quilt* designed by May Morris and embroidered by her mother, Jane Morris, with animals, birds and verses from William Blake's poem, *Tiger, Tiger Burning Bright*. Both Home Art Work and the Illustrated London News singled out this work as being Morris's best piece in the exhibition. The anonymous critic in Home Art Work wrote: “Miss Mary Morris's needlework attracted considerable attention, being both excellent in design and colouring, specially fascinating amongst the articles shown being a Noah's ark quilt and some very fine wall hangings.”<sup>118</sup> The Illustrated London News included mention of the embroidered verses:

In a glass case is arranged a cot-quilt, designed by Miss Morris and worked by Mrs Morris, with a goodly array of animals of the Noah's Ark order of feature, the whole bordered with lines from the “Tiger, Tiger Burning Bright” of William Blake. Perhaps of all the pieces contributed by the Morris family this is one of the best and most original.<sup>119</sup>

The Queen described this piece in great detail, but omitted to mention the poem:

But what will perhaps fascinate most people is the embroidered quilt for a cot, originated by Miss May Morris, and admirably worked by Mrs Morris. All the wild beasts of which children love to hear are congregated in quaint conventional fashion upon the linen groundwork. The lion and the panther associate with the tiger and the elephant; the porcupine alone enjoys a prickly solitude. The owl, flamingo, and other birds are grouped pleasantly together, and the ‘spread’ eagle surveys the scene from above. In the centre is a farmyard and its occupants encircled with a miniature ocean, which serves to acquaint the infant mind with all the queer creatures that do swim in it.<sup>120</sup>

The comments collectively reveal several of May Morris's innovations in embroidery design, such as her use of asymmetrical arrangements, a linen background and the inclusion of text.

Noteworthy as well is that when May Morris is singled out as the designer, the makers have usually been identified as well.

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<sup>117</sup> May Morris, “Of Materials,” in Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Arts and Crafts Essays (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1893), 370.

<sup>118</sup> “Art Notes and Exhibitions,” Home Art Work 8:35 (January 1891) 3-4.

<sup>119</sup> “The Arts and Crafts Exhibition,” Illustrated London News (11 October 1890) 454.

<sup>120</sup> “The Arts and Crafts Exhibition,” The Queen (11 October 1890) 516.

Two reviews in the women's press were the only ones to mention Morris's designs for book covers. The second notice in the Lady's Pictorial skipped over all her other embroideries, and praised the

exquisite embroidered book cover, 'A Study of Dante,' designed by Miss May Morris and executed by Mrs Cave, the flamboyant and very appropriate decorative design being deftly embroidered in shades of red upon dark blue linen, relieved with white roses, a vigorous and effective piece of work showing a commendable unconventionality of treatment as well as excellence of execution.<sup>121</sup>

A review in Woman was also laudatory: "[...] no one can leave this [South] room without lingering over a case containing several specimens of dainty bookbinding, furnished by Cobden-Sanderson, some from designs of his own, and others by Miss May Morris."<sup>122</sup> Perhaps a bit too laudatory, though, for May Morris designed but one book cover in the 1890 exhibition. She also designed some lettering for Cobden-Sanderson's exhibit, but this is not mentioned in any of the reviews.

May Morris's design skills were rarely described in special, femininised language that contained the condescending words often used to jointly describe both women and their work. Rather, the emphasis was placed on the originality of her designs. The comments about the colour, the background fabric and the formal qualities of the *Fruit Tree* indicate how different her work was from the rest; especially noteworthy is the Builder's emphasis on May Morris's stylistic difference from her father. Her role as a designer was clearly the more evident in the exhibition than as a maker, with only four comments about her talent in stitching.

The Saturday Review, one of the more critical and conservative of the periodicals, was the only review to emphasise May's stitching skills alone: "We must very cursorily refer to the beautiful, if rather naïve and rough, embroideries designed and executed by Mr William Morris and his daughter. Miss Morris is certainly a very skilful needlewoman."<sup>123</sup> This quote reads as though William Morris designed and May Morris executed these embroideries. By noticing only her skill at producing embroidery, this critic, likely Robert AM Stevenson, reveals that stitching embroidery, but not designing, is within his 'horizon of expectation' for women. Her forays into the male territories of design, exhibition, sales, writing and publishing are simply omitted. This

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<sup>121</sup> "At the 'Arts and Crafts.' Second Notice," Lady's Pictorial (18 October 1890) 647.

<sup>122</sup> Marjorie, "D'you Know?" Woman (9 October 1890) 8.

<sup>123</sup> "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," The Saturday Review 70:1824 (11 October 1890) 422.



also reinforces the normalcy of a woman producing embroideries, rather than designing them, or writing about their history.

The Daily Chronicle, a London daily newspaper, names May Morris twice. I give the entire citation to show the context of their remarks:

Quite a number of exhibits are sent from the Royal School of Art Needlework, including an antependium for pulpit (146), designed by Mr Selwyn Image, and worked by Miss M Smith; and a quilt designed by Mr W Morris (132). In connection with other items from the Royal School, there is a striking confirmation of the remarks of Mr Shedding (sic) with reference to poverty of design and love of imitation. One is an "Ancient Italian design" a second 'adapted from old Chinese design,' a third 'copied from an old English design,' and a fourth 'a copy of Old English work.' Among well-known names which figure in this department are those of Miss Thackeray Turner, Miss Clara Day, Miss MA Smith, Mrs Walter Crane, Miss Dorothea Palmer, Miss Frances Comyns-Carr, Miss May Morris, and others. The Guild and School of Handicraft (190) show a massive presidential chair in oak, upholstered with embossed leather, the handiwork of Messrs CR Ashbee, C V Adams, C Atkinson, and W Hardiman; and Messrs Morris and Co are represented among other things by a collection of embroideries (194-204), for which Mr, Mrs, and the Misses Morris are largely responsible as designers and executants.<sup>124</sup>

The critical comments about copyists at the Royal School of Art Needlework is confusingly followed by a list of women which at first glance appears to connect them with this practice. A second perusal of the article, in conjunction with a check in the catalogue, reveals that none of the 'well-known names' in fact exhibited on behalf of the RSAN at all. As a review in a daily paper, this one was likely written in haste, as daily columns generally were, without much care taken as to the order of their comments. This vagueness, and lack of attention to detail betrays an inexperienced critic, or one who was singularly unsuccessful in an attempt to meet the ACES's challenge of naming everyone involved in a work.

The Portfolio was the only fine art magazine in my sample to write about May Morris's combined skill in embroidery design and stitching. "There is a good deal of excellent imitation-work after Italian, Oriental, and Scandinavian patterns, but it is rare to find designer and executant under one heading. Among honourable exceptions to this rule are Mrs Thackeray

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<sup>124</sup> "Arts and Crafts at the New Gallery," Daily Chronicle (4 October 1890) 7.

Turner, May Morris, Ethel Martyn, and Edith Bloxam.”<sup>125</sup> In fact, she was not so rare as all that; just over fifty women designed and made their work in the 1890 exhibition.<sup>126</sup>

In contrast, the Art Journal referred to her work without mentioning her name at all: “Messrs Morris & Co. furnish some beautiful embroideries, among which a curtain, subject *Fruit Tree*, on blue linen, and another on yellow linen, an embroidered square of oriental design, are most noteworthy.”<sup>127</sup> By 1890, most periodicals were aware that the purpose of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society was to name both designer and maker, and to raise the level of ‘craft’ to that of fine art. By naming only the company, the Art Journal was doing exactly what the Society was trying to stamp out. More worryingly, the Art Journal’s track record of ACES reviews demonstrates a strong resistance to naming women artists at ACES shows. In their brief reviews of the 1888 and 1889 ACES exhibitions there is no mention of women at all, the 1890 review is only a marginal improvement in that five works by women are described, but none of the women are named.<sup>128</sup> They did not want to see craftworkers, especially women, treated as fine artists, and their lack of discussion of individual women makes this clear.

Neither did the Art Journal appreciate May Morris’s scholarly talents. Her knowledge of the history and technique of embroidery was an essential component of her success. Rather, it was the more conservative and literary periodicals which commented on her two essays, ‘Of Colour,’ and ‘Of Materials,’ published in the 1890 Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society catalogue.

Although the Standard, a London daily newspaper, did not have anything especially positive to say about the fourteen essays in the catalogue, they noted that “Mr. Sedding, Miss Morris, and Mr Selwyn Image contribute articles which were quite worth printing.”<sup>129</sup> Indeed, May

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<sup>125</sup> ‘Art Chronicle,’ The Portfolio (1 November, 1890) xxi. According to the catalogue, Edith Bloxam did not design any work in the 1890 exhibition; she and her sister Henrietta each worked one piece, both were designed by Reginald Hallward.

<sup>126</sup> Catalogue of the Third Exhibition, 1890, passim.

<sup>127</sup> “Arts and Crafts. The Third Exhibition,” The Art Journal (November 1890) 351.

<sup>128</sup> The 1890 review could have been written by the Consulting Editor (and poet) William Ernest Henley, or the sub-editor, Charles Lewis Hind; the editor at this time was Marcus B Huish, president of the Fine Art Society and a founder member of the Japan Society. Further research is necessary in order to identify who reviewed art exhibitions for the Art Journal. Charles Lewis Hind, Naphtali Being Influences and Advantages while Earning a Living by Writing (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co, 1926) 33.

<sup>129</sup> “Arts and Crafts at the New Gallery,” The Standard (4 October 1890) 3.

Morris' article in the 1889 catalogue had been singled out in the Standard as required reading in order to understand that exhibition: "But, to properly appreciate the technical differences in much of the work exhibited, the visitor must first coach himself by reading Miss May Morris's contribution to the Catalogue."<sup>130</sup>

The Saturday Review attributed Morris's writing skills to heredity, underscoring their previous opinion that her talents are not her own, but contingent upon her father:

Miss May Morris, the daughter of the poet, herself the exhibitor of several beautiful pieces of work, contributes two chapters on the materials and on the colours of embroidery, which show that she has inherited the gift of clear and picturesque language.<sup>131</sup>

In several of the reviews, the catalogue essays are discussed together. While Morris's name is not mentioned specifically in The Daily Graphic, her two essays are included among the "various well-known experts"<sup>132</sup> who wrote them. The Manchester Guardian's critic took umbrage at the tone of these essays:

It must suffice to say that in these [essays] some gentlemen and ladies discourse in authoritative, not to say aggressive, fashion on the subjects upon which it has fallen to their lot to enlighten an unregenerate and as yet imperfectly repentant public.<sup>133</sup>

While recognising the authority of the essays, this critic does not think the proselytising was absolutely necessary. In the last paragraph of their review, the British Architect referred to the essays as "a very admirable series of notes on furniture and embroidery" and listed all the authors.<sup>134</sup>

Reviews of May Morris' work at the Arts & Crafts Exhibitions reflect the varied nature of her involvement with embroidery. She is mentioned for her writing about embroidery, as well as her ability to design, and to execute her designs. One could say she was singled out as an exception; but not as the sort of exception beyond the pale of acceptable female activities. By working in the traditional and acceptable area of embroidery, Morris was able to incorporate non-traditional

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<sup>130</sup> [Fred Wedmore], "Arts and Crafts at the New Gallery," The Standard (5 October 1889) 3.

<sup>131</sup> "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," Saturday Review LXX:1824 (11 October 1890) 422.

<sup>132</sup> "Arts & Crafts Exhibition," Daily Graphic (6 October 1890) 4.

<sup>133</sup> Manchester Guardian (7 October 1890) 8.

<sup>134</sup> "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition," British Architect (10 October 1890) 263.

activities, such as designing, selling and exhibiting, into her sphere more easily. Morris ran the embroidery department of Morris & Co. from her own dining room in Hammersmith Terrace, down the road from her father's house. Her female staff was thus able to work 'at home', avoiding any loss of social status through paid labour.<sup>135</sup> It also helped that her father was William Morris, famous as a poet, politician, and designer. It is undeniable that her public image benefitted from his reputation. She is often referred to as the daughter of William Morris, just as many other women artists were identified, or quantified, by the men to whom they were related. Unlike her father, who skipped from one craft to another throughout his career, May Morris's study and practice of embroidery was a life-long passion. In this way, she made a reputation for herself, and continued to receive positive reaction in the press in her own right long after her father's death.

The lack of consensus usually found in Victorian periodicals does not hold true when it comes to discussing the work of May Morris; the range of reactions to her work seem to be narrower. When any of her work was written about, it was in a good light; otherwise it was not discussed at all. This allowed May Morris the agency to follow simultaneously both a traditional female path of producing embroideries, and a traditional male path, running a business, designing embroidery, and researching and writing scholarly articles about it. She conformed just enough to her day's acceptable tropes of femininity as an excellent needlewoman, that she was able to step outside of these confines with equal success. In so doing, she was able to take her place as an embroidery designer and scholar, and break the hegemony of male domination in these areas within the Arts & Crafts Movement.

#### Case Study 2: Una Mary Ashworth Taylor (1858-1922)

Una Taylor was an author, artist, musician and political activist, whose sole contribution to the 1890 exhibition was the stitching of the *Irish National Banner*. After her death, a brief obituary in The Times included the following assessment of her:

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<sup>135</sup> Lily Yeats is an example of this; her family needed money but her father only allowed her to work for Morris & Co. because she did her work in May Morris's home. See Joan Hardwick, The Yeats Sisters. A Biography of Susan and Elizabeth Yeats (London: Pandora, 1996) 63-64.

A lady of high accomplishment, as well as of rare social charm and independence of character, Miss Taylor was a frequent contributor of literary articles to the Edinburgh Review, [...] a learned and enthusiastic musician, while among art-embroiderers she had probably few, if any, equals in the country.”<sup>136</sup>

Unfortunately her prominence has since faded, thus some biographical background is necessary here to explain how this woman of the upper classes came to produce such a politically powerful work of art.

Una Ashworth Taylor was born in London in 1858, the youngest daughter of Henry Taylor (1800-1886) and Theodosia Alicia Ellen Frances Charlotte Spring Rice (1818-1891), known as Alice.<sup>137</sup> Taylor was the third son of a farmer, George Taylor of Bishop Middleham, Durham,<sup>138</sup> while Alice Spring Rice’s family was from Limerick, Ireland, and belonged to the peerage. Her father, Thomas Spring Rice (1790-1866), was made first Baron Monteagle of Brandon in 1839. Her mother was Lady Theodosia Pery (d.1839), whose father, Edmund Henry Pery (1758-1844), was the first Earl of Limerick.<sup>139</sup>

Thomas Spring Rice was a Liberal MP for Limerick from 1820-1832, and for Cambridge University in the 1830s and 1840s.<sup>140</sup> He held various offices in the government, the more important of which were Secretary for War and the Colonies in 1834-1835, Chancellor of the Exchequer 1835-1839,<sup>141</sup> and Controller General to 1839-1865.<sup>142</sup> However, his role as an Irish MP in England is interesting to reflect upon here, considering the intensely political nature of the Irish National Banner that his granddaughter stitched. As a politician, he “had an unblemished record on Catholic emancipation (allowing Catholics to become MPs) and Irish educational initiatives

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<sup>136</sup> A Correspondent, “A Link with Carlyle and Stevenson. Miss Una Taylor and her Friends,” The Times (24 June 1922) 7.

<sup>137</sup> 1881 British Census. <[http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/Search/frameset\\_search.asp](http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/Search/frameset_search.asp)>.

<sup>138</sup> Frederic Boase, Modern English Biography. Vol. III R to Z (London: Frank Cass & Co Ltd, 1965) 890.

<sup>139</sup> <<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/4017/Rice/d0000/g0000006.html#I010>>.

<sup>140</sup> Jennifer Ridden, “Irish Reform Between 1798 and the Great Famine,” in Arthur Burns & Joanna Innes, eds, Rethinking the Age of Reform, Britain 1780-1850. (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 282.

<sup>141</sup> <[http://73.1911encyclopedia.org/M/MO/MONTEAGLE\\_THOMAS\\_SPRING\\_RICE\\_1st\\_BARON.htm](http://73.1911encyclopedia.org/M/MO/MONTEAGLE_THOMAS_SPRING_RICE_1st_BARON.htm)>. Gladstone held this position from 1852-1855, 1859-1866, and whilst he was also Prime Minister, 1873-74, 1880-82. “Chancellor of the Exchequer,” Wikipedia the Free Encyclopedia <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chancellor\\_of\\_the\\_Exchequer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chancellor_of_the_Exchequer)>.

<sup>142</sup> Guide to the Collections. Spring Rice Collection <<http://rylibweb.man.ac.uk/data2/spcoll/rice/>>.

during the 1810s and the 1820s.”<sup>143</sup> At a time when control over Irish politics was a battle between the Protestant Ascendancy in power since the 1798 Rebellion, and the pro-Catholic platform of Daniel O’Connor, Spring Rice was the leader of a group of moderate Irish reformers, whose 1822 platform included

Catholic Emancipation, tithe reform, reform of the criminal code and establishment of a normal police force (to replace coercive legislation), cheap and fair legal procedures that were free of religious bias, the reduction of taxes, and a non-denominational state-funded education system.<sup>144</sup>

Also among this group of moderate politicians was Charles Parnell’s father, Henry Parnell, MP for Wicklow. Many of the aristocratic Irish families in Spring Rice’s camp were originally Catholic but had converted to Protestantism during the 18<sup>th</sup> century to retain their lands, and then converted back to Catholicism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>145</sup> Spring Rice’s family was one of these, and Una Taylor would be a devout Catholic, publishing poems in Wilfrid Meynell’s Catholic publication Merry England.<sup>146</sup>

Spring Rice was also interested in the arts. One of his achievements as Chancellor of the Exchequer was the introduction of the penny post in 1839, a project conducted by Henry Cole, one of the main organisers of the Great Exhibition of 1851. The two men became friends, and when Cole opened the Limerick School of Art and Ornamental Design in July 1852, Spring Rice, by then Lord Monteagle, chaired the meeting.<sup>147</sup> As Lord Monteagle, he was also involved in the Art Union of London, an

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<sup>143</sup> Gerald O’Carroll, “The Maritime Influence on Limerick History in the Eighteenth Century,” <<http://www.limerick.com/history/maritimeinfluence.html>>.

<sup>144</sup> O’Connell wanted basically the same things for Ireland that Spring Rice did with the single exception that O’Connell wanted a Catholic state (as the majority of Irish were Catholic, particularly those in business), whereas Spring Rice felt that religion had no place in politics. Ridden, 282.

<sup>145</sup> David Fitzpatrick, “Thomas Spring Rice and the Peopling of Australia,” Old Limerick Journal ‘Australian Edition’ (1988), 39-49, quoted in Ridden, 282.

<sup>146</sup> Una Ashworth Taylor, “White Butterflies,” Merry England 2 (November 1883 - April 1884) 91.

<sup>147</sup> “Limerick School of Art” If Walls Could Talk. The Limerick Athenaeum <<http://www.limerick.com/theroyal/thebook/artschool.html>>. Cole decided in 1854 that England would no longer fund Irish schools of design, which did not endear him to the artistic communities in Ireland; however money was raised by the citizens of Limerick and the School of Art continued as part of the Athenaeum. See also Mark Tierney, “Limerick School of Art and Design 1852-54,” Old Limerick Journal 33 (Winter 1996) 46-50. On Henry Cole see Elizabeth Bonython & Anthony Burton, The Great Exhibitor: The Life and Work of Henry Cole (London: V&A Publications, 2003).

institution of art patronage organized on the principle of joint association by which the revenue from small individual annual membership fees was spent (after operating costs) on contemporary art, which was then redistributed among the membership by lot.<sup>148</sup>

In 1844, the phenomenal success of the Art Union caused a consortium of print sellers and publishers to threaten “prosecution under an arcane Lottery Act which stipulated that any individual who participated in a lottery was liable to a £20 fine.”<sup>149</sup> Lord Monteagle came to the rescue of the beleaguered Art Union of London by tabling a bill in the House of Lords temporarily legalising such art unions. He later served as President of the AUL from 1852 until 1866.<sup>150</sup>

Alice Spring Rice met Henry Taylor in 1834, the year her father began his appointment as Secretary for War and the Colonies. He proposed in 1836, but she broke the engagement twice, on religious grounds, for her family was Catholic and Taylor was not. However, after successful negotiations with Alice’s father, the couple resolved their differences and finally married on 17 October 1839.<sup>151</sup>

Henry Taylor worked for the Colonial Office for forty-eight years, beginning as a junior clerk in 1824. In addition to Thomas Spring Rice his colleagues there included his friend William Ewart Gladstone, who was Secretary of State for the Colonies from December 1845. In the course of his career, Taylor refused both the governorship of Upper Canada in 1835 and the secretaryship of the Colonial Office in 1847, in order to have more time to write and to be with his family. He received a KCMG on 30 June 1869, becoming Sir Henry Taylor. He retired in 1872.<sup>152</sup>

The Taylor household was intensely literary. Henry Taylor wrote copiously. His first published work was “a short article upon Moore’s *Irish Melodies*”<sup>153</sup> which appeared in 1822,

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<sup>148</sup> Joy Sperling, “‘Art, Cheap and Good’: The Art Union in England and the United States, 1840–60.” Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide 1 :1 (Spring 2002) np, n.25. <[www.19thc-art-worldwide.org/spring\\_02/articles/sper.html](http://www.19thc-art-worldwide.org/spring_02/articles/sper.html)>.

<sup>149</sup> Sperling, np.

<sup>150</sup> Sperling, n.25.

<sup>151</sup> Sir Henry Taylor, Autobiography I:217, 220, 286.

<sup>152</sup> “Sir Henry Taylor” in Frederic Boase, Modern English Biography Vol. III R to Z. (Frank Cass & Co Ltd, 1965) 890.

<sup>153</sup> Sir Henry Taylor, Autobiography I:49.

confirming his interest in things Irish from an early date. His works include poetry, plays, essays, letters, and a two-volume autobiography, with his complete poetical works filling three volumes, and his prose works five. He evidently provided a role model for his daughters, all three of whom became authors. Una's two elder sisters, Eleanor Ethelda Emma Ashworth Taylor Towle (1847-1912), and Ida Alice Ashworth Taylor (1850-1929) were published authors, Eleanor writing novels and memoirs, and Ida publishing novels in the 1880s, articles for Blackwood's and Nineteenth Century during the 1890s, and several historical works from 1902-1920.<sup>154</sup>

Una Taylor's writing and publishing career began in the 1880s, with the appearance of her poetry in various magazines.<sup>155</sup> In 1886, the year her father died, Taylor published her first book, Wayfarers: a Novel. Her novels and short stories have been identified as aesthetic texts, "fantasy landscapes [told] in her own Paterian diction," and set in "mystical imaginary sites."<sup>156</sup> Upon reading her second novel, A City of Sarras, her father's friend Benjamin Jowett<sup>157</sup> wrote a long letter to Taylor, in which he advised her to write historical novels instead, because he could not imagine the world being described in the book.<sup>158</sup> Taylor disregarded his advice, and wrote nine books in all, including two of short stories, and a critical study of Maurice Maeterlinck.<sup>159</sup> According to Talia Schaffer's analysis, Taylor's fiction is neither feminist nor anti-feminist, but "retells the same story constantly: a woman's tragic desire for the wrong man causes her to fall ill

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<sup>154</sup> Virginia Blain, Patricia Clements, & Isobel Grundy, The Feminist Companion to Literature in English. Women Writers from the Middle Ages to the Present (London: BT Batsford Ltd, 1990) 1056.

<sup>155</sup> According to Sir Henry Taylor's will, his youngest daughter was named Una Mary Ashworth Taylor. Her early novels were published using the middle name Ashworth, but she exhibited in the 1906 Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society and she published 2 poems in The Windsor Magazine in 1908 as Una Artevelde Taylor, a reference to the subject of her father's play, *Philip van Artevelde* (1834).

<sup>156</sup> Talia Schaffer, The Forgotten Female Aesthetes. Literary Culture in Late-Victorian England (Charlottesville & London: University Press of Virginia, 2000) 53.

<sup>157</sup> Benjamin Jowett, Master of Balliol College, had been Una's brother Aubrey's tutor at Oxford, and also a good friend of Sir Henry Taylor. Jowett visited the Taylor residence regularly.

<sup>158</sup> Una Taylor, Guests and Memories. Annals of a Seaside Villa (London: Humphrey Milford Oxford University Press, 1924) 293.

<sup>159</sup> British Library computer catalogue.



and gradually decline.”<sup>160</sup> Her last book, Guests and Memories: Annals of a Seaside Villa, was a biography of her father and his friends, and was published posthumously in 1924.

Through his work and his literary endeavours, Sir Henry Taylor had a wide circle of friends, and the Taylor home in Bournemouth received constant visitors, particularly after 1870 when Bournemouth became a fashionable resort. His most trusted friends from the 1830s onward were Isabella Fenwick, Sir James Stephen, and William Gladstone.<sup>161</sup> Among other close friends were the poets William Wordsworth and Sir Aubrey de Vere, and Julia Margaret Cameron, whose photograph of him graces the front page of his autobiography. Robert Louis Stevenson and Sir Percy Shelley, son of the eighteenth-century poet, were both neighbours in Bournemouth, and Una Taylor visited and corresponded with them.<sup>162</sup> Una Taylor lived for most of her life in her father’s house, and would have met these people; of particular note in light of her later involvement with Irish Home Rule is her father’s longterm friendship with Gladstone, who continued to fight for Irish Home Rule throughout his four terms as Prime Minister.

Una Taylor was educated at home, partially under her father’s guidance. Henry Taylor worked from home, and took pains to spend some quality time each day with his children. In 1868 he wrote to a friend that he spent an hour each afternoon reading Shakespeare with Una, who was ten at the time.<sup>163</sup> Another correspondent reports Una reading Plato with her father in the 1870s.<sup>164</sup> Where Taylor learned her skills as an embroiderer is unclear, but most likely she was also

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<sup>160</sup> Schaffer, 53.

<sup>161</sup> Sir Henry Taylor, Autobiography of Henry Taylor, 1800-1875 2 vols (London: Longmans, Green & Co. 1885) I: 219.

<sup>162</sup> Taylor, Guests, 334.

<sup>163</sup> Taylor, Guests, 250.

<sup>164</sup> Taylor, Guests, 292.

taught at home.<sup>165</sup> She may have also learned to paint at home, as her mother was a painter, exhibiting with the Society of Women Artists in London from 1877-1882.<sup>166</sup>

Una Taylor's first known professional artistic activity was as a designer and teacher for the Donegal Industrial Fund (DIF), a philanthropic organization begun in 1883 by Alice Hart to aid women in the famine-stricken region of Donegal.<sup>167</sup> She was a paid designer and teacher, in charge of their Ecclesiastical and High Art embroidery.<sup>168</sup> Working at the DIF's London premises at 43 Wigmore Street, she trained Irish girls in a particular type of silk embroidery which she had invented. According to The Queen,

The peculiarity of this work consists in the artistic effect produced by the use of the blending of a variety of colours in composite strands of silk, and the intricate harmonies of tones with which the full surface of the embroidery is thus overlaid, giving a sort of rainbow iridescence.<sup>169</sup>

This new type of embroidery was also exhibited at the 1888 Irish Exhibition,<sup>170</sup> where The Queen referred to the exhibit as being "specially designed by Miss Amy Carpenter, the daughter of Dr Alfred Carpenter, of Croydon, or by the paid designers of the fund,"<sup>171</sup> thus implying that Carpenter was not remunerated for her designs, but that other designers working for the DIF were paid.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Sir Henry Taylor had a passion for embroidery from a young age, for according to a biography of his granddaughter Una Troubridge, "At the time of his marriage it was said that Henry Taylor possessed a collection of 32 embroidered waistcoats which had been presented to him by various female 'friends'!" Richard Ormrod, Una Troubridge: The Friend of Radclyffe Hall (London: Jonathan Cape, 1984) 6.

<sup>166</sup> Charles Baile de Laperrière ed, and Joanna Soderi, comp, The Society of Women Artists Exhibitors 1855-1996 Vol 4. (Calne, Wiltshire: Hilmarton Manor Press, 1996) 121.

<sup>167</sup> Paul Larmour, "The Donegal Industrial Fund," Irish Arts Review Yearbook (1990-1991) 128. For an interesting account of the political motivations of Alice Hart's philanthropic venture, see Janice Helland, "Working Bodies, Celtic Textiles and the Donegal Industrial Fund 1883-1890" Textile: The Journal of Cloth and Culture 2:2 (1 July 2004) 135-155.

<sup>168</sup> (From our Lady Contributor), "The Donegal Industrial Fund," The Irish Textile Journal (15 December 1888) 142.

<sup>169</sup> "The Donegal Industrial Fund," 142.

<sup>170</sup> "An Artistic Industry for Irish Girls," Lady's Pictorial (7 July 1888) 12.; The Queen (28 July 1888) 107.

<sup>171</sup> "The Exhibits of the Donegal Industrial Fund," The Queen (28 July 1888) 107.

<sup>172</sup> An article in the Art Journal a year later reinforces Carpenter's unpaid stance, when it refers to the adapted Celtic designs of "Miss Aimée Carpenter of Croydon, the amateur designer of the Donegal Industrial Fund." Walter Armstrong, "The Paris Exhibition 1889," The Art Journal (1889) 9.

Una Taylor was also a member of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society from 1888 to 1910, and exhibited her own embroidery designs during these years. In the 1888 Arts & Crafts Exhibition, her embroidery designs were worked by Irish women employed in London at the Donegal Industrial Fund. Taylor also worked embroidery for many designers who exhibited with the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, including EH Stephens, Elinor Hallé, Heywood Sumner, Philip Burne-Jones, WB Richmond, JD Batten, Henry Ford, and W Graham Robertson. (Figure 3.4)



Figure 3.4 : *Titania*, silk embroidery  
Designed by Heywood Sumner, worked by Una A Taylor

Her collaboration with these designers was facilitated by her residence in London from c.1899-1906 at 37 Montpelier Square, Knightsbridge, SW,<sup>173</sup> close to her brother Harry Taylor who lived at 23 Montpelier Square. Harry's daughter, Una Vincenzo Taylor, later Lady Troubridge, recalled that in

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<sup>173</sup> Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogues of Exhibitions, 1899, 1903, 1906.

the early 1890s, her family visited Rottingdean frequently, as “her parents’ friends included Sir Edward Burne-Jones, Sir Edward Poynter, Rudyard Kipling and Stanley Baldwin.”<sup>174</sup> It is possibly through this connection that Una Ashworth Taylor came to embroider designs for Philip Burne-Jones, who was also a frequent visitor at 23 Montpelier Square.

Taylor used her talents in both poetry and embroidery in her political activism. Undoubtedly linked to her family background, she was an ardent sympathiser of Irish Home Rule, and wrote poetry in support of this which was published in the Nation, United Ireland, and other Irish publications.<sup>175</sup> One biographical source wrote that Taylor was “fervently Irish in sentiment, and wrote many stirring poems for United Ireland, one of her best being a powerful elegiac tribute to Mr Parnell.”<sup>176</sup> After the death of Parnell, this poem was published in Nation.

Her involvement in Home Rule circles in England also led to her stitching the Irish National Banner for the 1890 Arts & Crafts Exhibition. The catalogue entry for the work embroidered by Una Taylor in the 1890 Arts & Crafts Exhibition read as follows:

Exhibitor: Charles Stewart Parnell  
Designer: Walter Crane  
Executant: Una A Taylor  
113. Irish national banner. Embroidered in silks on hand-worked ground. Subject: sunburst breaking into Celtic cross, enclosed by Irish harp, surrounded with the motto: ‘Children of the Gael shoulder to shoulder.’ The four quarters of the banner contain the shields of the four provinces. In the right-hand corner is the autograph signature of the Irish leader.<sup>177</sup>

The ‘Irish leader’ was Charles Stewart Parnell, MP (1846-1891). His had been the major voice for Irish Home Rule since his entry into politics in 1875.<sup>178</sup> While the Irish National Banner

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<sup>174</sup> Richard Ormrod, Una Troubridge: The Friend of Radclyffe Hall (London: Jonathan Cape, 1984) 11. Harry Taylor was the only non-family member to take a turn watching Edward Burne-Jones’s ashes, placed in the local church overnight before his funeral. Judith Flanders, A Circle of Sisters. Alice Kipling, Georgiana Burne-Jones, Agnes Poynter and Louisa Baldwin. (London: Penguin Books, 2002 (2001)) 288.

<sup>175</sup> “Una Ashworth Taylor,” in David James O’Donoghue, The Poets of Ireland. A Biographical and Bibliographical Dictionary of Irish Writers of English Verse (New York & London: Johnson Reprint Co., 1970 (1912)), 451.

<sup>176</sup> O’Donoghue, 451.

<sup>177</sup> Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Third Exhibition 1890.

<sup>178</sup> The most recent studies of Parnell include: Alan O’Day, The English Face of Irish Nationalism: Parnellite Involvement in British Politics (Adlershott: Gregg Revivals, 1994); Robert Kee, The Laurel and the Ivy: The Story of Charles Stewart Parnell and Irish Nationalism. (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1993); Frank Callanan, The Parnell Split 1890-91 (Cork University Press, 1992); and Noel Kissane, Parnell. A Documentary History (Dublin: National Library of Ireland, 1991).

was gracing the walls of the New Gallery, however, Parnell's fate as a politician was being determined in a divorce court. Captain O'Shea had filed a petition for divorce naming Parnell as co-respondent on 24 December 1889; his wife, Kathleen O'Shea had been Parnell's mistress since 1880 and the couple had lived together since 1886. Gladstone and the Liberals had been on the verge of supporting a bill for Home Rule at this time, but withdrew their support after Parnell appeared in court on the adultery charge on November 1890.<sup>179</sup> At the trial, held from 15-17 November 1890, Parnell did not defend himself and a verdict of *decree nisi* was granted to Captain O'Shea.<sup>180</sup> These personal details, however, were not mentioned in the reviews which appeared mainly at the beginning of October, when the exhibition opened.

The banner was designed by Walter Crane, who in addition to having a career as a designer and illustrator, was President of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, a member of both the Art Workers' Guild and the Fabian Society, a committed socialist, and a supporter of Irish Home Rule. In his Reminiscences he wrote:

The Irish Home Rulers and Nationalists certainly helped the Socialists at that time [1886-8], and the support was mutual. Both were engaged in a strife for freedom, and on both sides had seen the peoples rights trampled upon, and free speech endangered, and had suffered persecution and imprisonment for the sake of their cause, which they made common.<sup>181</sup>

Walter Crane also used his artistic skills to support political causes, designing banners, flyers, and magazine covers, and other printed ephemera.<sup>182</sup> The Irish National Banner was only one of his efforts in support of Irish Home Rule; Crane also designed a page in a commemorative album, presented to William Gladstone at the National Liberal Club on the occasion of his golden wedding anniversary, July 26, 1889.<sup>183</sup> (Figure 3.5) The album consisted of an illuminated address

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<sup>179</sup> "Charles Stewart Parnell," in Sydney Lee ed, The Dictionary of National Biography 43 (London: Smith, Elder & Co, 1895) 339.

<sup>180</sup> Alan O'Day, Irish Home Rule 1867-1921 (Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 1998) 142.

<sup>181</sup> Walter Crane, An Artist's Reminiscences (London: Methuen & Co, 1907) 272.

<sup>182</sup> Greg Smith & Sarah Hyde eds, Walter Crane 1845-1915: Artist, Designer and Socialist (London: Lund Humphries & Manchester: Whitworth Art Gallery, 1989) passim.

<sup>183</sup> Crane, 329. The artists who contributed were Marcus Stone, John MacWhirter, Alfred Parsons, Lewis F Day, Henry Holiday, Arthur Severn, and Walter Crane. Each designed a page of the album; Day also designed the lettering.

from the members of the National Liberal Association, thanking Gladstone for his contribution to their cause. The illuminations were exhibited in the 1889 Arts & Crafts Exhibition.<sup>184</sup>



Figure 3.5: Page from Gladstone Golden Wedding Album  
Designed by Walter Crane, 1889.

That same year, at the request of Henry Holiday,<sup>185</sup> Crane helped decorate St James' Hall on the occasion of a Home Rule demonstration at which Charles Parnell spoke. Regarding these decorations, Crane wrote, "we multiplied harps upon green banners and Home Rule mottoes and shamrocks at a great rate, assisted by a volunteer staff of ladies, at [Henry Holiday's] studio at Hampstead."<sup>186</sup> Crane drew two large maps of England and Ireland, illustrating before and after

<sup>184</sup> "Some Notes on the Arts & Crafts Exhibition," *The Furniture Gazette* (15 December 1889) 363.

<sup>185</sup> Henry Holiday (1839-1927), illustrator and stained glass artist, actively supported Irish Home Rule, by contributing graphic work and organising meetings. He was a personal friend of WE Gladstone. H Holiday, *Reminiscences of my Life* (1914); *The Dictionary of Art* 14 (London: Macmillan Publishers Ltd, 1996) 677; *Dictionary of National Biography, 1922-1930* (London: Humphrey Milford, & Oxford UP, 1937): 426-7.

<sup>186</sup> Crane, 331. Unfortunately, Crane does not give the names of the ladies; however it is quite possible that Una Taylor was included in their number.

Irish Home Rule. The “before” version depicted Ireland as “a revolting Hibernian” chained to England, and the “after” version showed Ireland as “a comely and contented colleen, wearing the Cap of Liberty, [...] and of course, no chain between them.”<sup>187</sup>

Of the Irish National Banner, Crane noted in his Reminiscences:

In this connection, also, I had designed a Nationalist banner, which was beautifully worked in silk by Miss Una Taylor, as a labour of love, and presented by her to the Nationalist Party in Ireland, in order that it might hang in the first Home Rule Parliament.<sup>188</sup>

Other than these comments, Crane does not say how he came to be involved in this project. He did mention that the images for the heraldry in the four corners of the banner, representing the four provinces of Ireland, were given to him by “Mr Thomas P. Gill, one of the Nationalist members in the House, to whom I was introduced by Miss Una Taylor.”<sup>189</sup> Apparently Gill sent the images to Crane in the post, with a letter explaining that he could not bring them personally, as he would have preferred to do, because there was a warrant out for his arrest, and he could not be seen in the streets.

The fact that Taylor introduced Crane to Gill, an MP, reveals that she had political connections to Irish Home Rule sympathisers; this may also indicate that the idea for the National Banner originated with Taylor. While it is clear that she had a larger role in the making of the Irish National Banner than simply its execution, correspondence or other records which would elucidate the situation have not been located. Furthermore, stitching the banner ‘as a labour of love’ indicates that she did not receive payment for her efforts. Given the political nature of the work, this is not surprising. We know the banner was in the possession of Charles Parnell in 1890, for he was the exhibitor; also Crane states that she gave the banner to the Nationalist Party in Ireland. However, its current location is unknown.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>187</sup> Crane, 331.

<sup>188</sup> Crane, 331.

<sup>189</sup> Crane, 332.

<sup>190</sup> Most of Walter Crane’s correspondence, sketches, and papers are at the Houghton Library, Harvard University. None of the scholars I emailed knew of the whereabouts of the Irish National Banner: Emily Walhout, Houghton Library, Harvard University; Christine Woods, Whitworth Gallery, Manchester; Anne Marie O’Connell, the National Gallery of Ireland; Irish historian Alan O’Day; Linda Parry, Victoria & Albert Museum, London; Paul Larmour, University of Dublin; Janice Helland, Queen’s University, Kingston.

As previously indicated, the Irish National Banner received a great deal of press coverage; the critics praised it, criticized it, or ignored it, yet with sixteen mentions, it was the second most talked-about piece in the exhibition after mentions of May Morris's work. The highly visible public profiles of both the designer, Walter Crane, and the exhibitor, Charles Parnell, were certainly contributing factors to the amount of press received by this one item. As President of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Crane's contributions to the Society's exhibitions were invariably reviewed; as noted above, Parnell was a controversial political leader involved in a juicy court case, with his name constantly in the press, albeit not in the art pages. Una Taylor's association with the piece caused her name to be printed in the papers as well, but not as often as Crane's or Parnell's.

Three periodicals made overt critical references to the banner's highly charged political message. The Court Chronicle's comment was by far the strongest reaction to the work:

Politics are a mistake in art galleries, and Mr Crane's banner for Mr Parnell in the Arts & Crafts Exhibition is an insult to every loyal man and woman who enters the place. It is simply, of course, the flag of rebellion, and it is very hard that those exhibitors who do not share the Parnellite and socialistic views of the promoters of the gallery should have such a disloyal emblem flaunted in their faces. This sort of thing is not likely to attract visitors to the New Gallery, the directors of which ought certainly to have the banner removed at once.<sup>191</sup>

The Queen did not mince words either:

The 'Irish National Banner,' the joint production of Mr Walter Crane's pencil and Miss Una Taylor's needle, is only an example that politics are apt to prove too many for art, as they have often done for literature. The subject is 'Sunburst into Celtic Cross,' but the sun is bursting with such vigour as to threaten to scatter the cross and the four provinces to all the quarters of the globe.<sup>192</sup>

The Queen combined wit and humour to soften their comments, but it is clear they were not convinced that art should service politics. Both the Court Chronicle and the Queen were conservative papers read primarily by women, and both reviewed the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society regularly. Neither devoted much space to politics, and it seems clear that the 'horizon of expectation' of both journals was that the subject matter of the Irish National Banner was not acceptable for their women readers. They do not mention whether they found it also unacceptable for a woman to produce such an article.

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<sup>191</sup> "Notes," The Court Circular and Court News 65:1819 (11 October 1890) 337.

<sup>192</sup> "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition," The Queen (11 October 1890) 516.



The banner also provoked a critical tirade from the conservative Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science, and Art, which devoted much space to reviews of political topics.

Their lengthy comments, possibly those of RAM Stevenson, reveal plainly their views:

We are not a little amused to find “the Uncrowned King of Ireland” an exhibitor at the New Gallery. Mr Charles Stewart Parnell contributes an enormous “Irish National Banner” (113), with his autograph embroidered on the right-hand lower corner. We hope that it is not political bias that makes us think this flag of the future one of the most grotesque and hideous objects we ever saw. There is but little of the emerald about it; but, as the Catalogue describes it, “Sunburst breaking into Celtic cross, enclosed by Irish harp,” is the central idea of the design. “Sunburst breaking into Celtic cross” is not a bad description of the present attitude of the party for whom this ugly banner is to wave towards that form of Christianity to which the Irish nation has been accustomed to pay respect, but this confused design, with its jangling emblems and discordant hues, is, from a merely æsthetic point of view, a poor exchange for the leopards of England.<sup>193</sup>

Again, it is difficult to tell whether the critic’s comments are directed at the concept of Irish Home Rule, Catholicism, or the artistic merits of the banner, for all are criticised. Another critic of the design of the Irish National Banner was the British Architect, which opined, “It is difficult to believe that the Irish national banner (113) emanates from Mr Crane; it has a dreadfully spotty and crude appearance.”<sup>194</sup> This journal was usually very supportive of Crane’s work, thus it is tempting to suggest that such negative press emanates from a disagreement with what the banner stood for, rather than its æsthetic qualities.

These severe criticisms seem all the more pointed when juxtaposed with the comments in the Irish Textile Journal. Published in Dublin, this journal was not afraid to praise the work; indeed, it was the only review that had something positive to say about the banner:

I can no better commence that by taking one of these - the Irish National Banner. This beautiful piece of work is designed by Mr Walter Crane, and executed by Miss Una Taylor. [gives catalogue description] As a work of art it is certainly beautiful, and I did not know which I should admire the most - the design or the execution. Very great skill was required to produce the harmonisation of colours, for it is charmingly free from that blatant colouring so much to be found in the national emblems of Hibernia.<sup>195</sup>

It is highly likely that the Irish Textile Journal supported Irish Home Rule, and not surprisingly, their critic found the banner beautiful.

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<sup>193</sup> “The Arts & Crafts Exhibition,” Saturday Review 70:1824 (11 October 1890) 423.

<sup>194</sup> “The Arts & Crafts Exhibition,” British Architect (10 October 1890) 263.

<sup>195</sup> “Arts & Crafts Exhibition - Needlework,” Irish Textile Journal (15 December 1890) 172.

Comments about Una Taylor's specific contribution to the Irish National Banner were few. She was named in ten reviews, while the banner was discussed in 16. Notable is a comment in Woman, which foregrounds the production of the piece over the design: "The "Irish National Banner" (No 113) has excited a good deal of interest, and is certainly very beautifully worked by Una Taylor, from a design by Walter Crane."<sup>196</sup> This ordering of female contribution before the male contribution was not unusual in this feminist journal.

Alfred Lys Baldry in The Artist saw fit to comment on Una Taylor's technical skill in embroidery in a rather back-handed way: "The 'Irish National Banner,' designed by Mr Walter Crane and executed by Miss Una Taylor is disappointing. It is particularly unpleasant in colour; but it deserves some attention as a specimen of patient work."<sup>197</sup> Elsewhere, Taylor's work was referred to as a "monument of patient stitchery"<sup>198</sup> The repeated mention of the word 'patient' implies an understanding of the length of time required to produce a large-scale embroidery, but as used by Baldry, implies time wasted. In his book on embroidery, WG Paulson Townsend emphasised the importance of understanding the difference between good and bad design, for "it is really deplorable to think so much time is wasted by clever needlewomen, because they know so little about the construction of the pattern they embroider."<sup>199</sup> This was not the issue in Taylor's case, for she knew how to design for embroidery. The patience required to entirely cover the banner is indicative of her strong belief in Irish Home Rule, rather than a woman needing to fill up her days.

Several reviews included mentions of the Irish National Banner which were quite neutral, for example a review in the Illustrated London News began: "Almost the first thing that strikes

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<sup>196</sup> Marjorie, "D'you Know?" Woman (9 October 1890) 8.

<sup>197</sup> A.L.B. [Alfred Lys Baldry], "Arts & Crafts Exhibition," The Artist 11:133 (1 December 1890) 362. Baldry (1858-1939), was a painter, writer, and stage manager. He was art critic of The Globe from 1893-1908, and London art critic for the Birmingham Post c1890s-1920s, in addition to contributing to The Artist, the Art Journal (c1899-1910) and other periodicals. In the 1890s he published several monographs on painters, including Albert Moore and Sir John Everett Millais, and wrote the preface to the *Catalogue of the First Exhibition of the Society of Animal Painters* (1914). A member of the Pastel Society from 1906, Baldry also exhibited pastels. Who Was Who 1929-40 III (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1967 (1941)) 56; Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals II: 826.

<sup>198</sup> "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition," The Daily Graphic (6 October 1890) 4.

<sup>199</sup> "Embroidery, or The Craft of the Needle," The Artist 26 (1899) 143-144.

one's eye on entering the Arts & Crafts Exhibition in the New Gallery is the Irish National Banner."<sup>200</sup> The piece was described in other reviews as "one of the most noteworthy exhibits"<sup>201</sup> and "the object that will perhaps command the most immediate attention."<sup>202</sup> These comments are rather nebulous; almost as though the critics felt they had to say something about the work because it was so large and so brightly coloured, but were at a loss to comment more specifically due to its politically-laden content.

In the provincial press, the Glasgow Herald commented on the colour and the signature: "The brilliantly-coloured Parnell banner, with the Nationalist leader's signature worked in the corner, was a centre of attraction."<sup>203</sup> In fact, Parnell's embroidered signature was another aspect of the design which generated press comment. It was mentioned in almost every review, and served to authenticate not only the design and execution of the banner, but also the concept of Irish Home Rule. The banner was singled out in the Daily Graphic, for example, as being "lent by Mr Parnell, whose signature appears in black on a square of white at the right hand corner."<sup>204</sup> The Illustrated London News wrote that the piece was "further enhanced by Mr Parnell's autograph,"<sup>205</sup> while the Portfolio noted that the

Irish National Banner, embroidered by Una Taylor, after the clever symbolic design of Walter Crane, is shown by Mr Parnell, who endorses the sentiments typified by a 'sunburst breaking into Celtic cross enclosed by Irish harp,' with the shields of the four provinces at the angles, by appending his signature.<sup>206</sup>

Mentioning the signature could also signal these few periodicals' covert support of Irish Home Rule. On a theoretical level, a signature can be "a highly mobile and dynamic yet regulatory borderline moving between the object and the author, authenticating the first as the product of the

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<sup>200</sup> "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," Illustrated London News (11 October 1890) 454.

<sup>201</sup> "Arts & Crafts Exhibition," Daily Graphic (6 October 1890) 4.

<sup>202</sup> "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," Pall Mall Gazette (4 October 1890) 2.

<sup>203</sup> "Our London Correspondence," Glasgow Herald (6 October 1890) 7.

<sup>204</sup> "Arts & Crafts Exhibition," Daily Graphic (6 October 1890) 4.

<sup>205</sup> "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," Illustrated London News (11 October 1890) 454.

<sup>206</sup> "Art Chronicle," The Portfolio (1 November 1890) xxi.

second. [...] it also acts as a promise and guarantee.”<sup>207</sup> In this case, the signature is neither the designer’s nor the maker’s. Rather, it authenticates the idea behind the object: by including the signature as a part of the design, Crane was using Parnell to authenticate the cause of Irish Home Rule. The promise and guarantee of the signature was also of vital political importance; Parnell’s goal of Irish Home Rule is promised and guaranteed by this embroidered version of his signature.

Exactly half of the thirty-two periodicals consulted for this chapter did not comment on the Irish National Banner. Included in this group are several daily papers, such as The Times, the Standard, the Manchester Guardian, and weeklies such as the Athenæum. In the art and architecture press, the Magazine of Art, the Art Journal the Architect, the Builder, and Home Art Work all ignored it. Neither was there mention of Una Taylor or the banner in the Ladies’ Columns of three local London papers, the Lady’s Column in the Illustrated London News, or the Lady’s Pictorial. While it is impossible to know for sure, omitting a large, prominently placed and brightly coloured piece is more than likely politically motivated, for both Crane’s and Taylor’s work was reviewed in many of these same publications in other years.

Unlike Kate Faulkner and May Morris, the critics of the 1890 Arts & Crafts Exhibition did not acknowledge Una Taylor’s professional career outside the exhibition. They discussed her stitching of the Irish National Banner in isolation, despite the fact she had been designing and stitching professionally for the Donegal Industrial Fund from c1886, and had exhibited at the two previous Arts & Crafts Exhibitions. By 1887, news of her embroidery had even reached across the Atlantic, aided by her literary connections.

When Robert Louis Stevenson moved to Bournemouth in 1885 for his health, he received an introduction to the Taylor family from Wilfrid Meynell.<sup>208</sup> Stevenson’s letters reveal that Una and her elder sister Ida would often visit him. With Ida he discussed literature, and with Una he discussed music and art. Within a year, Una had given the Stevensons an copy of a portrait of

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<sup>207</sup> Deborah Cherry, Beyond the Frame: Feminism and Visual Culture, Britain 1850-1900 (London and New York: Routledge, 2000) 118.

<sup>208</sup> Alice Taylor’s cousin, the Irish poet Aubrey de Vere, had corresponded with both Alice Thompson and Wilfrid Meynell separately regarding their poetry from before their marriage. De Vere introduced the Meynells to the Taylors, who became lifelong friends. Wilfrid Meynell reviewed Una Taylor’s Guests and Memories in the Observer in 1925. Viola Meynell, Francis Thompson and Wilfrid Meynell A Memoir (London: Hollis & Carter, 1952) 58-62.

Thomas Chatterton in oils, and a large piece of floral embroidery as a token of their friendship.<sup>209</sup> Stevenson hung both these works of art in his drawing room, and sent a sketch of their arrangement in a letter to Henry James in February 1886. An article published the following year in the New York literary magazine The Critic described Skerryvore, Stevenson's home, in minute detail, noting that on the drawing room wall "hangs a copy by Miss Una Taylor (a daughter of Sir Henry) of what purports to be an authentic portrait of Chatterton, with hard by it an imposing piece of flower-embroidery, framed and glazed, by the same accomplished lady."<sup>210</sup>

One would think that Una Taylor's connections to prominent literary, cultural and political figures would have prompted a more detailed press response in 1890. However, when the same 'accomplished lady' had exhibited embroidery of her own design at the first ACES show in 1888, it did not make a huge impression on the critics. Her name was mentioned in five of the 39 reviews in 1888, yet these few comments single out her stitching ability rather than her designs.<sup>211</sup> 'Aurora' in the "Ladies' Column" of the Kensington and Hammersmith Reporter gave the accepted view: "Embroidery is essentially feminine work, but it is rarely seen in such perfection as in the pieces wrought by Miss Una Taylor, who reproduces old examples with delicacy and appropriate skill."<sup>212</sup> The only article which gives some semblance of description of the work was in The Queen: "A revival of an old fashion is seen in Miss Una Taylor's frame of embroidery (5), showing a spray of flowers against a moonlit sky."<sup>213</sup> This piece was one which she both designed and worked, but the article does not specify this. The Illustrated London News's second notice of the 1888 ACES exhibition began with the textiles, by listing several embroiderers:

'Art in the House,' as it is often euphemistically called, has not unfrequently an irritating effect upon those who watch the laborious patience with which some ladies execute certain pyrotechnic patterns under the impression that they are achieving arabesques of the most correct design. Such patient Penelopes will learn

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<sup>209</sup> Robert Louis Stevenson to Lady Taylor, [1885] Letter 1506B, BA Booth & E Mehew, eds, The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson Vol 5 July 1884-August 1887 (Yale University Press, 1995) 167.

<sup>210</sup> William Archer, "Robert Louis Stevenson at 'Skerryvore'," New York Critic (5 November 1887) 226.

<sup>211</sup> The women with the most press attention in 1888 (after Kate Faulkner's gesso work) were mostly producers of embroidery rather than designers: In descending order they included Mary Frances Crane, 10; Mrs Aldam Heaton, 8; Catherine Holiday, 7. See Table I.

<sup>212</sup> 'Aurora,' "Ladies' Column," Kensington and Hammersmith Reporter 483 (6 October 1888) 6.

<sup>213</sup> "Embroidery At The Arts And Crafts Exhibition," The Queen (13 October 1888) 459.

much of the limits of needlework from Mrs Heaton's embroideries in 'tram' silk (11 and 16), Mrs Margaret Ashworth's Design for a Piano-Cover (26) in twilled linen, and Miss Una Taylor's (19) and Miss M Buckle's (21) panels in silk and satin respectively.<sup>214</sup>

Taylor's item 19, 'embroidered panel on silk,' was designed by EH Stephens but is included among the women's works given as good examples for other women to follow. That the designer's name is not mentioned is significant, foregrounding as it does the greater value placed on the stitching ability of these women.

A full column-length review in The Standard listed the work of a few women, without specifying which piece caught the critic's eye: "and the exhibits of Mrs Crane, Miss Spiers, Miss Una Taylor, Mrs Coronio, and the Miss Garretts are among the contributions by ladies which must certainly be liked."<sup>215</sup> Three embroiderers (Mary Frances Crane, Una Taylor, Aglaia Coronio), a wallpaper designer and decorative painter (Charlotte Spiers), and two furniture designers (Agnes and Rhoda Garrett) are all lumped together by virtue of their gender, without any discussion or consideration of their abilities as designers or makers or the type of work they did. The Court Circular's review also listed women of note in their discussion of the embroidery: "the class of work proves the immense stride that women have made of late years in decorative capacity. Amongst the names are those of Mdmes Crane, A Heaton, Holiday, Coronio[,] Garrett, Carr, Una Taylor, Ernest Hart, &c."<sup>216</sup> Again, this list does not make clear whether Taylor was singled out for her designs or for her stitching.

Thus four of five reviews of the 1888 exhibition included Una Taylor's name amongst a list of outstanding women's work but without any sort of analysis or discussion. Of her work exhibited in 1889, the ten reviews I have found made no mention at all. In 1890, her notices in the press included so many mentions of her as maker of Walter Crane's design that this served to cement her role as a producer of embroidery. Indeed, after the few works of her own design which she exhibited in 1888, Una Taylor did not exhibit her own designs until 1896, thereafter exhibiting her

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<sup>214</sup> "Arts and Crafts Exhibition Second Notice," The Illustrated London News (20 October 1888) 459.

<sup>215</sup> [Frederick Wedmore] "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition" The Standard (4 October 1888) 2.

<sup>216</sup> Celia, "Causerie," The Court Circular and Court News 61:1717 (13 October 1888) 339.

own designs at every ACES show until 1910. But her reputation as a maker had already been established by 1890, and this is how she is remembered, even in 1997. In her revised issue of Textiles of the Arts and Crafts Movement Linda Parry included a colour plate of ‘The Angel with the Tree,’ designed by W Graham Robertson and worked in silks on linen by Una Taylor,<sup>217</sup> and commented regarding the 1899 Arts & Crafts Exhibition,

The embroidery section was dominated by professional women who, with the confidence that past successes in the exhibitions had given, began to show work which they had designed as well as embroidered. May Morris, Mary Newill, Una Taylor and Phoebe Traquair were the most important, although Una Taylor’s most famous works today are those designed by others.<sup>218</sup>

By 1890, embroidery had long been deemed a feminine activity for women, but as the press reaction to the ‘embroideresses’ in that year’s Arts & Crafts Exhibition shows, the acceptance of women’s involvement in embroidery was in a state of flux. May Morris received the most press for her ability as a designer, while Una Taylor attracted attention for her skill in stitching. This demonstrates that critics were meeting the challenge of naming both designers and executants, yet the reaction of the press to the work they presented was very different. Morris was indeed ‘pushing the envelope’ of women’s sphere of activity yet received positive reviews of her designing and writing skills. Importantly, neither her actions nor the subject matter of her artwork offended the critics.

Una Taylor’s reception, on the other hand, did offend several critics with the controversial subject matter of the work she embroidered. The negative comments on the Irish National Banner reveal a lack of sympathy with the cause, and that in some circles, a woman should not be seen to be involved in politics, even when they were combined with the acceptable medium of embroidery. The quality of her stitching was consistently praised however; this aspect of her femininity remained intact.

What does this reveal about decorative arts criticism and women? It appears that when a woman remains within the confines of expected feminine behaviour, her artwork will be judged more favourably. When her reputation is made, as with May Morris, she can move outside

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<sup>217</sup> This piece was exhibited at the 1903 ACES exhibition, with a price tag of £20.

<sup>218</sup> Linda Parry, Textiles of the Arts and Crafts Movement (London: Thames and Hudson, 1997 (1988)) 76.

acceptable feminine behaviour without sanction as long as she is not too radical. Morris ran a business, published scholarly articles, and designed embroidery, all of which were fields in which few women participated, but this was accepted because she ran her business, and wrote about embroidery from her home. Una Taylor's transgression was her involvement in a volatile political cause, which divided the Liberal Party and the country. This was not a ladylike step beyond accepted feminine roles, it was a swan dive into deep political waters, from which some participants never returned.

CHAPTER 4  
1903: THE JEWELLERY EXHIBITION  
CASE STUDY: GEORGINA GASKIN

But there is one section which is so remarkable that it might give its name to this 7<sup>th</sup> exhibition. In the annals of the society it may be recorded as the Jewellery Exhibition.<sup>1</sup>

Jewellery first shone at the 1899 Arts & Crafts exhibition, comprising 24% of women's exhibits and 5.7% of all work on display.<sup>2</sup> The periodical press picked up on this change immediately. The Builder enthused, "There is a real effort now to put new life and interest into jewellery design, and if this gets sufficient encouragement from the sector of the public who chiefly purchase jewellery, the shop jewellery will be likely to lose its market presently."<sup>3</sup> Writing in the Artist, Mabel Cox concurred: "Altogether the days of such jewelry as depends upon its cost for its attraction are numbered."<sup>4</sup>

At the 1903 Arts & Crafts Exhibition, jewellery and enamels accounted for 129 works, or 30.5% of women's work exhibited, and 12% of work in the show. More women exhibited jewellery

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<sup>1</sup> "Art. The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," The Court Circular and Court News (17 January 1903) 97.

<sup>2</sup> Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Sixth Exhibition, 1899, passim.

<sup>3</sup> "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition" The Builder 77:2958 (14 October 1899) 336.

<sup>4</sup> Mabel Cox, "Arts and Crafts Exhibition," The Artist 26 (1899) 181.



than any other medium. The 'Jewellery Exhibition' stands out from the others precisely for this reason: in all other years of this study embroidery was women's preferred medium. (See Appendix VI: Techniques Exhibited by Women, 1888-1916)

This significant departure in the type of work exhibited by women at the Arts & Crafts merits further investigation, hence it is the major focus of this chapter. The sudden increase in women's jewellery production was not the only change occurring at this time. To set the context, I begin with the critics' assessment of the progress of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, and how this impacts on women who exhibited that year. This is followed by a statistical analysis of women's participation in the 1903 exhibition, a section on the possibilities for jewellery education for women at the time, and a synopsis of the factors which gave rise to Arts & Crafts jewellery. Finally I detail the general reception of women jewellers by the periodical press, and conclude the chapter with a case study of the reception of Georgina and Arthur Gaskin's jewellery.

#### General Comments On The Exhibition

In addition to a marked increase in the amount of jewellery by women on display, the 1903 Arts & Crafts Exhibition witnessed several innovations. For the first time, the Selection and Hanging Committee included a woman, May Morris, although according to the Minutes of the Society her participation was minimal.<sup>5</sup> The Executive Committee decided to cover the walls of the West Gallery with unbleached canvas, and the North Gallery was divided into thirteen recesses, in which the designers were free to choose and display their work as they saw fit. This broke with their own tradition of having all pieces in the show chosen and hung by the Selecting Committee. In retrospect, all these factors may be seen as evidence of the changes taking place in the design, production and exhibition of decorative arts, and a move toward modernism.

One innovation which pertains more directly to my project, however, was the critical analysis of the progress of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society and the ramifications of this on the women exhibitors. In the first of his two reviews of the 1903 ACES in the Magazine of Art, Aymer

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<sup>5</sup> May Morris's name is listed in the 1903 Catalogue as being on the Selection & Hanging Committee for the 1903 exhibition. Her name appears only once in the Minutes when she attended the General Committee meeting of 2 December 1902. "Minutes of the General Committee 1901-end 1909," Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers AAD 1/49-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London.

Vallance<sup>6</sup> penned a lengthy discussion of the progress of the Society, in which he questioned whether the Society had indeed fulfilled its role of raising the quality of design in the decorative arts. Although he admitted that the creation of LCC Schools of Art and Design were evidence that these aims had been partially met in the capital, Vallance was dubious about the effects produced in the country. To quote him at length:

As a consequence of the vogue of arts and crafts it is not unusual for well-disposed but injudicious persons of position in remote country districts, after having taken, while in London, a desultory course of lessons in wood-carving or repoussé, bent iron or poker work, to inaugurate and direct classes for the same industry in their own neighbourhood. They provide the funds for the requisite tools and materials, and they devote a deal of time to teaching their rustic pupils, but it often happens that, beyond the generous motive that prompted them, the undertaking scarcely merits any further recognition. And when, as is their wont, after a while they invite someone, whose name is well known in connection with arts and crafts, to come down and inspect the work produced, and to deliver an address in support of it, the unfortunate visitor is at his wits' end to discover how to tell the honest truth without inflicting pain, and without seeming to countenance what is pitifully bad from the artist's point of view, and is yet the outcome of the most excellent intentions. And so he cannot be blamed when the conviction is forced upon him that the cause he loves would fare better were it less patronised by benevolent dilettanti, and but for all sorts of incompetent people having found out that there is no surer way to attract the notice of the public than to label oneself a "craftsman," and one's wares 'decorative art.'<sup>7</sup>

Although he was a member of the ACES, Vallance even went so far as to suggest that the Society should formally disband, in order that it should not be held responsible for such monstrosities as were being perpetrated in the name of 'art.'<sup>8</sup> His rationale for this was that as long as the Society held public exhibitions, it would inspire "inferior imitators. And so the standard of art is liable to be lowered, rather than raised, throughout the country, and the whole movement brought into disrepute."<sup>9</sup> Since it was the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society which had begun the trend of exhibiting decorative arts as though they were fine art, this decline in quality would also be their responsibility. It is not the disbanding of the ACES which is worrisome, but rather the rationale for

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<sup>6</sup> Vallance's career is discussed in Chapter 1.

<sup>7</sup> Aymer Vallance, "British Arts and Crafts in 1903 I - Furniture and Decoration," *Magazine of Art* New Series (1903) 169-170.

<sup>8</sup> Vallance, "British Arts and Crafts in 1903 I," 169-70.

<sup>9</sup> Vallance, "British Arts and Crafts in 1903 I," 170.

it: that the decorative arts were being overrun by amateurs. What Vallance is careful not to say outright, is that many of these amateurs were women.

Vallance's account of arts and crafts philanthropic ventures is a rather accurate description of the *modus operandi* of the Home Arts and Industries Association (HAIA). Founded by Eglantine Jebb in 1884, the HAIA's aim was to provide worthwhile occupation and remunerative employment in craft production for people in rural districts, often to supplement their seasonal incomes. It did often transpire that upper class women took a course at the Albert Hall Studios of the HAIA in London, and then went home to teach their new skills to men and women of their home district. Although Vallance was offended, ostensibly, at the inferior quality of the work produced by groups such as the HAIA, what of the fact that so many women were teaching the courses, designing and producing the work, and also marketing and exhibiting it?<sup>10</sup>

But not everyone felt as Vallance did about the efforts of amateurs. A review of the HAIA's 1902 exhibition in Art Worker's Quarterly found that,

The artistic results of the work of the Home Arts and Industries Association compare very favourably with some other movements for the encouragement of Art and Craft, which are able to spend more money on professional teaching, and have greater advantages in many ways than these isolated little industries scattered far and wide over the British Islands.<sup>11</sup>

The readership of this quarterly journal was divided between amateurs and professional designers and workers in the decorative arts trades. Its writers were also professional designers, thus were well placed to discuss the various merits of design and craftsmanship.

These articles are examples of a long-running battle of words, more or less veiled, between ACES supporters and the trade. Thus, the comment that the work of HAIA 'compares very favourably' with other Arts and Crafts groups, may be construed simultaneously as a compliment to the HAIA and as an insult to the ACES. As a founder member of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition

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<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, in 1898 Vallance's design for a carved panel in wood was exhibited at the Home Arts & Industries Exhibition. Paul Larmour, The Arts & Crafts Movement in Ireland (Belfast: Friar's Bush Press, 1992) 35. This could have been worked from one of Vallance's designs which were published in Home Art Work. For example, his design "Wild Boars in a Thicket," was published in the May 1890 issue of Home Art Work, exhibited at the 1890 ACES as a platter in coloured metals, and sold for six and a half guineas. "Art Notes and Exhibitions," Home Art Work VIII:36 (April 1891) 12.

<sup>11</sup> "Home Arts and Industries at the Royal Albert Hall," Art Workers Quarterly 1:3 (July 1902) 113.

Society, Lewis F Day declared his allegiance to them in the opening lines of his review of the 1903 exhibition: "Only by exception does it happen that work more suited to the Home Arts and Industries at the Albert Hall has crept into the New Gallery."<sup>12</sup> Indeed, comparison with work exhibited at HAIA was an insult used more than once to denote inferior work at ACES exhibitions.

Although a few women exhibiting at ACES designed for the trades, reviews of ACES in trade magazines rarely mentioned women's work. Rather, the trade press supported the amateur efforts of HAIA to educate local craftspeople, for amateur women decorative artists would not be competing with them for jobs. The ACES was potentially more dangerous, due to its support of professional women designers, who represented competition.

Aymer Vallance was not the only critic to have serious reservations about the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society. Criticism of the 1903 exhibition in the daily newspapers, art magazines and in the women's press revealed that the quality of work was deteriorating. The Gentlewoman, whose opinion of the poor quality of the furniture was echoed in most of the reviews, stated flatly, "the furniture is ugly as a whole, and has not even the Mid-Victorian excuse of being comfortable."<sup>13</sup>

The educational value of the exhibition was nebulous, as far as the Lady's Pictorial was concerned. They found the exhibition to "be of immense use to the Arts and Crafts student, not only as showing what to do, but also what *not* to do."<sup>14</sup> The Birmingham Daily Post noted that the Society "seems, indeed, to be in some danger of going to pieces, because of its uncertainty as to what are the essential principles of applied art."<sup>15</sup> Joseph Pennell in the Daily Chronicle was equally blunt in his assessment. "After making due reservation and every excuse," he sighed, "there is no question that the collection as a whole has an air of fatigue, of exhaustion."<sup>16</sup> These sentiments were echoed across the Channel, where Gabriel Mourey what would become of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society:

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<sup>12</sup> Lewis F Day, "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," The Art Journal (March 1903) 87.

<sup>13</sup> Iris, "Art and Artists," The Gentlewoman (24 January 1903) 108.

<sup>14</sup> "Art Notes," Lady's Pictorial (7 February 1903) 249. Their italics.

<sup>15</sup> "Arts and Crafts Exhibition. First Notice," Birmingham Daily Post (19 January 1903) 5.

<sup>16</sup> [Joseph Pennell], "Arts and Crafts at the New Gallery," Daily Chronicle (16 January 1903) 3.

On est contraint de constater l'état actuel de stagnation de l'art décoratif anglais, l'absence dans sa production de symptômes de renouvellement et de progrès, et l'on se trouve en droit de se demander quel sera le mode de son devenir.<sup>17</sup>

Mourey would surely have agreed with the The Times's ascerbic comment, "We hardly take the Arts and Crafts so seriously in England."<sup>18</sup>

In addition, the ACES was alleged to be out of step with the trade. The Manchester Guardian was particularly vehement in their criticism in this regard, revealing the trade sympathies of this newspaper:

The defect in the exhibition is that it does not show the Society to be in touch with the industry of the country. The influence of what is shown there trickles down, [...] but its direct influence upon production is not great. [...] There are some among them (only too few) who work habitually for trade, but the balance of opinion is plainly on the side of work done in a more dilettante spirit.<sup>19</sup>

This review may have been penned by Lewis Foreman Day, a freelance designer who worked for the trade and also exhibited regularly with the ACES. He was hired as a specialist in decorative and industrial arts to write reviews for the Manchester Guardian, although as noted in Chapter 1, the precise dates which he did this are not yet known. Day did sign a review of the 1903 ACES exhibition for the Art Journal, in which he included mentions of his own designs for three different companies, "in justice to the manufacturers."<sup>20</sup> This inclusion shows that Day was working very hard to infuse Arts & Crafts quality designs into the trade, by designing them, exhibiting them, and then reviewing them in the press. But his efforts were the exception which proved the rule. Clearly, there were two things happening in design: what was exhibited at Arts & Crafts Exhibitions, and what was produced by the trade. These comments were a direct swipe at those who designed and sold for themselves, as artists, or as Morris & Co did, without regard for what the public wanted, and without going through regular trade channels.

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<sup>17</sup> Gabriel Mourey, "L'Exposition des Arts and Crafts," Art et Décoration 13 (1903) 90.

<sup>18</sup> "Arts and Crafts at the New Gallery," The Times (17 January 1903) 3.

<sup>19</sup> "Arts and Crafts in London," The Manchester Guardian (16 January 1903) 5.

<sup>20</sup> Lewis F Day, "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," The Art Journal (March 1903) 92.

While a few critics had assessed the progress of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society in 1899,<sup>21</sup> critics in 1903 were questioning and criticising the ACES to a far greater extent. Long after the 1903 Arts & Crafts Exhibition closed, they were still debating its merits. The most in-depth criticism came from the art critic Dugald Sutherland MacColl in two articles, one in the Architectural Review, and the other his regular column in the Saturday Review.

Mervyn Macartney had written a piece in the Architectural Review on the 1903 exhibition, as a member of the Selecting Committee of the ACES, saying that the roasting the Society received that year had been uncalled for: "it seems hardly fair to select some articles which are not of the first rank and use them as pegs for a diatribe."<sup>22</sup> As a riposte on behalf of the critics, MacColl pointed out that "the Society has been till now the spoiled child of criticism; what it has done has been taken at its own valuation, and the illustrated art reviews have vied with one another in reproducing what has been exhibited, and saying that it is all first-rate."<sup>23</sup> And he was right - until 1903, the reviews had been generally laudatory of the Society and its ideals. This was partly because of the unique nature of these exhibitions, and partly because the reviewers were distinctly partisan to their subject.

MacColl went on to explain that the low quality of the exhibits was due to the fact that the Selecting Committee had not chosen every item on display. In their condemnation of this, he and Macartney were in agreement. MacColl's suggestion, however, was that "as the first piece of sensible reform at the Arts and Crafts that the names of workmen should not be flourished in the catalogue, unless the workmanship is really exquisite, or requires in the workman himself some power of interpretation."<sup>24</sup> This flies in the face of the original aims of the Society completely, but MacColl's thinking becomes clearer when he explains the commercial context, an aspect rarely

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<sup>21</sup> See, for example, Aymer Vallance's 4 reviews of the 1899 Arts & Crafts Exhibition in The Studio (October, 1899 to January 1900).

<sup>22</sup> Mervyn Macartney, "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition. A Discussion," Architectural Review 13 (April 1903) 141.

<sup>23</sup> DS MacColl, "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," Architectural Review 13 (May 1903) 187. As noted in Chapter 1, several of the critics writing about ACES were also members of the Society, and contributors to the exhibitions, thus were not completely without bias. MacColl himself falls into this category, having exhibited bookcovers which he designed and his sister, Elizabeth Mathieson MacColl, executed from 1893 to 1903.

<sup>24</sup> MacColl, 187.

touched on in much of the writing about the Arts & Crafts Movement in art journals: “My view then of the present problem for the arts and crafts movement is that it is mainly a commercial problem.”<sup>25</sup> The opposition between ‘commercial manufacture’ and ‘Arts & Crafts manufacture’ he called “rubbish, and not very honest rubbish”<sup>26</sup> at that, since the singular success of the movement, Morris & Company, was run as any commercial enterprise with its sterling combination of excellent design, adequate capital, and good business sense. In addition, MacColl felt that Arts & Crafts Exhibitions were themselves simply group advertising gestures, and the guilds had the advantage of free advertising in articles written about them in the papers. MacColl was well aware of the commercial aspect of the art world, and noted in a review of the Royal Academy that it was the RA rather than the ACES which ran its exhibitions along trade principles: “... the Academy notoriously takes another line: gives the public exactly what the public likes in indiscriminate profusion, and competes with trading concerns on trading terms.”<sup>27</sup> He stops short of discussing how the socialist leanings of Walter Crane, William Morris and other members of the ACES did not jive with the capitalist aspect of selling one’s designs; yet he illuminates just enough of the commercial problem to make the opposition of the politics and the practice of the Society all too clear.

#### Statistics of 1903 Arts & Crafts Exhibition

Women’s participation in the 1903 Arts & Crafts Exhibition was higher in all respects than previous years. More women exhibited, more women designed their own work and more women’s work was reviewed in the press. In all, 173 women showed work at ACES. Of these, 132 (71%) designed and made their work, while a further fifteen women designed work that was made by others. Only 27 women produced work to someone else’s designs. Women’s work represented 28% of the objects exhibited. Of all the women who had work in the exhibition, 106 or 61% had their

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<sup>25</sup> MacColl, 189.

<sup>26</sup> MacColl, 188.

<sup>27</sup> DS MacColl, “73 Years Ago” Studio International 172:881 (September 1966) 116. [reprint]

names or their work mentioned in the thirty-nine reviews which comprise my press sample. (See Appendix III Women Reviewed 1903.)

As Appendix VI indicates, jewellery constituted the largest category of objects designed and/or made by women, with twenty-three women exhibiting 129 pieces of jewellery, 81 of which were both designed and produced by women. Georgina Gaskin and her husband Arthur J Gaskin together exhibited 47 pieces. In addition, women exhibited 30 pieces of metalwork, including enamelled pieces and silverwork.<sup>28</sup> Of the 106 women whose work received notice in the reviews, only twenty-six worked in jewellery, enamels, silver or metalwork.

Embroidery formed the second largest group of women's exhibits in 1903, comprising 87 objects. As in previous exhibitions, embroidery received a great deal of attention in the press, despite comprising less of women's contributions than jewellery. The critics' preference for women's embroidery is illustrated by the experience of Phoebe Traquair in 1903. She exhibited four large embroidered panels, and nineteen pieces of jewellery, but it was her embroidery which received notice in the press.<sup>29</sup> Georgina and Arthur Gaskin's jewellery was included in sixteen reviews, the most attention paid by the press to any jewellers. Their work will be discussed in greater detail below.

#### Possibilities for Women's Education in Jewellery

In his review of the 1903 exhibition in the Architectural Review, DS MacColl attributes the rise in numbers of jewellers to economic necessity:

There are objects which can be made rare and precious by design and work, and can also be made by one or by a few pair of hands and fetch a price that will pay on a small quantity. That is why jewellery has come to the front lately at the Arts and Crafts.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> The remaining piece was designed by G.A. Lonsdale Pritt, and made by Margaret J Awdry, a student at Birmingham Municipal School of Art, who also exhibited two other pieces of her own design. Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Seventh Exhibition, 1903, passim.

<sup>29</sup> Phoebe Anna Traquair (1852-1936) showed the large embroidered silk panels: "The Entrance," "The Stress," "The Despair" and "The Victory" (set of 4:£1000) and 19 pieces of jewellery and metalwork in the 1903 Arts & Crafts Exhibition. Traquair's embroidery was mentioned in 17 reviews, while her jewellery was mentioned only twice, in reviews which also mentioned her embroidery. As indicated in the Introduction, I did not use Traquair as a case study because it was her embroidery which was reviewed, not her jewellery.

<sup>30</sup> MacColl, 188-189.



MacColl recognised that turning time into profit was the key to success, and that the professional business of designing, making and selling jewellery was a particularly lucrative one. Despite MacColl's erudite comments, the prominence of jewellery at the 1903 Arts & Crafts Exhibition was not merely about economics. It was also a result increased educational opportunities for women, and the revivals in silver working, enamelling and ancient jewellery techniques.<sup>31</sup> A brief foray into these more pragmatic reasons for these increased display of jewellery at the 1903 Arts & Crafts exhibition will help elucidate this question.

Evidence of the difficulties that women had entering the jewellery trade earlier in the nineteenth century is revealed in the archives of the Society for the Promotion of the Employment of Women (SPEW), in the case of Miss Seeley. Miss Seeley (who was never otherwise identified) had obtained two certificates from the National Art Training School at South Kensington, and had worked as a jewellery designer for her father until his death in the early 1870s. After this time she was unable to find work in the jewellery trade. She took a job as a sewing machine operator, but preferring artistic work, she approached SPEW in May 1875 for help in finding a new post. The Society's archives document that they first showed her jewellery designs to Mr McInries, a jeweller on Davies Street, but this produced no results. Next they showed her designs to Miss Collingridge,<sup>32</sup> who offered to take on Miss Seeley as an apprentice for three months, to teach her the art of painting stained glass. This transpired, with her £20 fee being paid by the Society. By December of that year, "Miss Seeley had through Miss Collingridge's introduction obtained regular employment in tile painting at Messrs Trace's."<sup>33</sup> By December 1876, she had been made forewoman at Mr Stacey's, Duke Street, Manchester Square, with a salary of £2 per week.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Aymer Vallance, "Modern British Jewellery & Fans," in Charles Holme ed, Special Winter Number of The Studio 1901-1902: Modern Design in Jewellery and Fans (London: The Studio) 1.

<sup>32</sup> Miss Collingridge had trained at the Royal Academy, and according to a minute for 9 October 1874, "followed the profession of artist and art decorator [...] is employed by some of the best houses in designing and painting panels, cabinets, papers, &c. &c. And has more work than she can get through single-handed." "Minute Books," (10 December 1875) Preliminary Listing of the Papers of the Society for Promoting the Training of Women. Girton Archives, Cambridge.

<sup>33</sup> "Minute Books," 9 October 1874.

<sup>34</sup> "Minute Books," 22 December 1876. Although outside the scope of this thesis, this example shows how the networks of women's communal support in the area of art industries worked in the mid and late 19<sup>th</sup> century. See Ellen Jordan The Women's Movement and Women's Employment in Nineteenth-Century Britain (London: Routledge, 1999).

I have drawn attention to Miss Seeley's case because, despite her previous experience as a jewellery designer, without the support of her father as employer, she could not find work in the trade. Whether it was because of her gender or because of her perceived lack of technical training we shall never know. What is important, is that in the 1870s, this woman jeweller was unable to find work in the jewellery trade without the endorsement of a male relative.

Had Miss Seeley been born a few decades later, she may have been able to profit from changes to the education system, rather than depending upon an apprenticeship to learn to be a jeweller. Various revivals and new schools would facilitate this. During the summer of 1886, the Director for Art at South Kensington, Thomas Armstrong,<sup>35</sup> organized "a course of lectures and demonstrations on Enamelling, [which] were given at the Royal College of Art, South Kensington, by M. Dalpayrat, [and were] attended by 12 of the best qualified students from the schools."<sup>36</sup> One of these was Alexander Fisher(1864-1936), who had just finished two years of studies at South Kensington, and had won a travelling scholarship. He went to Paris and studied enamelling further, using a technique of layering translucent enamels which became "widely influential when they were exhibited in England."<sup>37</sup> Fisher began teaching enamelling at Finsbury Technical College in 1891, and was credited at the time with spearheading the enamelling revival: "Nearly all the enamellers in this country at the present day were pupils in Mr Fisher's enamel classes, either at Finsbury College or Regent Street Central School of Arts & Crafts, or received private instruction from him."<sup>38</sup> Fisher had been familiar with the medium all his life, as his father was an enameller on pottery.<sup>39</sup> In addition to his teaching, he wrote several articles, for The Magazine of Art, and

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<sup>35</sup> Thomas Armstrong (1832-1911), painter, was Director of the Art Division of the Department of Science and Art at the South Kensington Museum from 1881-1898. In this capacity, "He was responsible for the organization of art education throughout Britain, and also acquired original works of art and replicas for the museum collection." "Thomas Armstrong Biography," The Correspondence, Centre for Whistler Studies. <[www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/biog/Arms\\_T.htm](http://www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/biog/Arms_T.htm)>

<sup>36</sup> "Notes - Proposed Scheme for the Establishment of Studios and Workshops for the Advancement of the Arts of Enamelling and Metalwork," Art Workers Quarterly 2:6 (April 1903), 91.

<sup>37</sup> Charlotte Gere, American & European Jewelry 1830-1914. (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc, 1975) 178.

<sup>38</sup> "Notes - Proposed Scheme for the Establishment of Studios and Workshops for the Advancement of the Arts of Enamelling and Metalwork," Art Workers Quarterly 2:6 (April 1903), 91.

<sup>39</sup> Erika Speel, "Art-Enamelling and the Art of Alexander Fisher," Craft History 2 (April 1989), 63.

The Studio, and a book, The Art of Enamelling on Metal (1906), as well as the entries on enamels for several editions of the Encyclopaedia Britannica.<sup>40</sup>

There were also changes brewing in the Jewellery Quarter in Birmingham, an important and vital sector of the local economy. In 1887, some 20,000 people were employed in the jewellery trade in Birmingham,<sup>41</sup> yet the trade was experiencing a depression, due to several factors:

The suspension of the fashion of wearing jewellery; the selling of large quantities of bankrupt's stocks of jewellery; the system of 'appro' (sic) and very long credits, with no adequate means of ascertaining the status of buyers, and an absence of any organisation or trade paper to keep the members of the trade in touch with each other.<sup>42</sup>

Early in 1887, Mr J Jacobs organised a private meeting of several jewellery manufacturers at the Grand Hotel, Birmingham to address the first of these problems. Historically, royalty had supported the jewellery trade. In 1791 the Buckle-makers asked the Prince of Wales to help promote their trade, and in 1845, the jewellers had requested the same favour of the Prince Consort. In keeping with this tradition, the meeting decided to ask the Princess of Wales for her support in reviving the fashion of wearing jewellery. Mr Jacobs and Mr Councillor Charles Green were selected to show samples of Birmingham-made jewellery to her Royal Highness, some of which she selected.<sup>43</sup>

Encouraged by this success, a meeting of over 200 members of the trade was held on 3 August 1887, where it was resolved to form the Birmingham Jewellers' and Silversmiths' Association, with two main objects: "the better control of assets in all failures, and the art and technical training of the future craftsmen of the trade."<sup>44</sup> When the first General Meeting was held in November of that year, 73 members had already enrolled. The aims of the Association were then expanded to include:

To promote art and Technical Education;

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<sup>40</sup> Speel, 72.

<sup>41</sup> FH Sanders, Birmingham Jewellers' & Silversmith's Association. A Record of the Association's Work from its Commencement in 1887 to its Reorganization in 1919 [1919] 27.

<sup>42</sup> Sanders, 27.

<sup>43</sup> Sanders, 27.

<sup>44</sup> Sanders, 27.

To watch legislation affecting the trade;  
To secure uniformity of action in all cases of failure;  
To secure the detection and prosecution of thieves and receivers;  
To assist in the development of colonial and foreign trade; and  
To see through Parliament or other competent authority the removal of all  
restrictions upon, and the support of all measures for the development of trade.<sup>45</sup>

The following year, 1888 (significantly, the year of the first Arts & Crafts Exhibition), free classes in 'artistic design' for jewellers' apprentices were offered. The classes, a joint venture of the Birmingham Municipal School of Art, and the Birmingham Jewellers' and Silversmiths' Association, began in September with a class of forty apprentices.<sup>46</sup> The success of this venture paved the way for the opening of the Vittoria Street School for Jewellers and Silversmiths, in 1890. Vittoria Street was a trade school, run in conjunction with the Birmingham School of Art.<sup>47</sup> During the first decade of the School's existence, art and design were taught by the City, and technical aspects were taught by the Association. Classes were held in the evening, from 6.30 to 8.00pm, and students had to attend a minimum of three nights per week. The Birmingham Jewellers' and Silversmiths' Association paid half the fees of students whose employers were members. At first only boys were allowed, but female students were also accepted. They were taught in separate classes by women teachers.<sup>48</sup> Margaret Awdry, a jeweller who had studied painting and repoussé at the Birmingham School of Art, was hired in 1891 to teach drawing to the girls' class.<sup>49</sup> A 1902 photo of a night school class reveals one woman amongst many men and boys. (Figure 4.1)

The steps taken in Birmingham to improve the design of contemporary jewellery were seen as an excellent idea in the women's press. An 1890 article in Woman magazine reveals that women were painfully aware of what they were missing:

I read with pleasure the announcement that a branch school of art has been recently opened in Birmingham, for the purpose of improving the manufacture of jewellery. Working in metals and the making of jewels used to be an art long ago,

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<sup>45</sup> Sanders, 28-29.

<sup>46</sup> "Art Education for Jewellers" Apprentices at Birmingham," The British Architect (31 August 1888) 162.

<sup>47</sup> Alan Crawford ed, By Hammer and Hand. The Arts and Crafts Movement in Birmingham (Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1984) 98.

<sup>48</sup> Bob Miles, Explore the Birmingham Jewellery Quarter. Walk 12. Regent Street & Vittoria Street <<http://quarter.members.beeb.net/walk12.htm>.> 2004.

<sup>49</sup> Shelagh Wilson, Art Into Industry: The Attempt to Unify Art with Manufacturing in the Birmingham Jewellery Trade 1880-1914 MA thesis, RCA/V&A, 1991.

[...] But the art is dead. Yet we only have to go to South Kensington to see what lovely stones we neglect because they are not in fashion or look at some of the Etruscan, Greek, and Roman jewellery there, and in the British Museum or even some of the Danish, Norse, and Russian work of this century, to see what beautiful design and delicate, skilled workmanship can do; and then compare them with the owls, banjos, horseshoes, meaningless cables and bits of machine stamped gold, and all the costly rubbish that fills the jeweller's windows. I wish all prosperity to the Birmingham school in its efforts to revive this beautiful decorative art.<sup>50</sup>

Students beginning their training in London had to wait until 1896 for design and technical training to be taught at the same school - the Central School of Art and Crafts. This school was opened under headmaster WR Lethaby,

to provide instruction in those branches of design which directly bear on the more artistic trades, and with the special object of 'encouraging the industrial application of decorative design.' It makes no provision for the amateur, but aims directly at the improvement of the apprentice and those actually engaged in the various trades[...] The subjects include Architectural, Decorative, and Furniture Design; Cabinet Work, Wood Carving, and Stained-glass Work; Enamelling, Silversmiths' Work, Die Sinking, etc.; Embroidery, Bookbinding, Writing, Lithography, etc. etc.<sup>51</sup>



Figure 4.1: Night School Class , Vittoria Street School of Jewellery, 1902.  
There is one woman standing up at the back of the room.

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<sup>50</sup> Marjorie, "D'you Know?" Woman (2 October 1890) 7-8.

<sup>51</sup> J. Scarratt Rigby, "Central School of Arts and Crafts: Exhibition of Student's Work," Art Workers' Quarterly 1:3 (July 1902) 150-151.

The Central School was similar in concept to the Vittoria Street School, although with an expanded curriculum. The London County Council later opened Schools of Arts and Crafts in several boroughs. Comments on jewellery and enamels from a review of the students' show at the LCC Central School of Art in 1902 reveal that women were studying these subjects:

Enamel work is in favour just now, and there was much of interest shown. A silver biscuit box by Miss B[ertha] Goff, with dabs of enamel, is somewhat crude and lacking in finish, but shows good feeling for colour - the enameller's first essential. [...] A. Mannock, Miss H. Langley, Miss Bayes, and Miss Black showed enamelled work - articles of jewellery - delightful exercises, but still too coarse for jewels; not jewel-like, not *precious*. There is a face very cleverly done in enamel by Miss De La Warr; [...]<sup>52</sup>

Six months later, four of the five women mentioned in this review exhibited work at the 1903 Arts & Crafts Exhibition. Bertha and Blanche Goff showed a case of silverwork, Emmeline Bayes showed jewellery, and J Lindsay Black exhibited both jewellery and woodcarving.<sup>53</sup> In 1906, jewellery, enamelling and metalwork were popular courses on the curriculum of the LCC schools. Both the Central School of Arts & Crafts and Sir John Cass Institute employed five teachers for these subjects; LCC Camden had three, and Camberwell, two; all were men.<sup>54</sup> The Royal College of Art followed suit, hiring Harold Stabler to teach jewellery and enamelling from 1912, with the assistance of SG Wiseman.<sup>55</sup> By 1916, though a Miss Rimmington was teaching jewellery and enamelling at Camden School of Art.<sup>56</sup>

The Northampton Technical and Industrial Institute, London, offered classes from 1890 to apprentices and persons already engaged in the trades to enhance their design skills, under the auspices of the London School Board.<sup>57</sup> A 1902 exhibition review of Institute students' work commented on the high quality of "of silversmiths', goldsmiths', jewellers', and engravers' work."<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Rigby, 150-151.

<sup>53</sup> Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Eighth Arts & Crafts Exhibition, 1906. passim.

<sup>54</sup> Catalogue of the Eighth Arts & Crafts Exhibition, 1906, passim.

<sup>55</sup> Royal College of Art, Prospectus 1912-1913. (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1912) np.

<sup>56</sup> Catalogue of the Eleventh Arts & Crafts Exhibition, 1916.

<sup>57</sup> "The London School Board," The Times (14 February 1890) 13.

<sup>58</sup> "The Northampton Institute Exhibition of Students' Work in the Artistic Crafts Division," Art Workers' Quarterly 2:5 (1903) 31-32.

However, the prizewinners were all male, and no women's work was mentioned in the review, in contrast to the review cited above, from the Central School's exhibition, which named mostly women in its discussion of jewellery and enamelling. It would appear that women studied at the LCC schools, while men studied at trade schools. Thus women could learn both design and the technical aspects of jewellery-making in art schools in Birmingham from c.1892, or London from 1896, once jewellery was put into the curriculum.<sup>59</sup>

#### A Brief History Of Jewellery In The Nineteenth Century

By the time courses in jewellery design and making were available to women, they were preparing themselves for entry to a profession which catered to a wide range of aesthetic positions. There were several concurrent trends during the nineteenth century in jewellery. Some were revivals of previous styles, while others were influenced by the jewels of other countries, a side-effect of European colonial expansion. The 'archaeological' style was derived from ancient Egyptian, Greek and Roman jewellery unearthed by archæologists during the 1860s. Mediæval styles were popularized in France by Viollet-le-Duc, and in England by AWN Pugin, aided by the translation into French and English of Theophilus's 12th century craft manual, *De Diversis Artibus*.<sup>60</sup> Renaissance styles were popular in France, Italy and Germany from the 1840s, easily identifiable due to the historical accuracy with which they were designed and made.

Colonial expansion and world trade brought North African jewellery styles to France, and Indian trends to England. The arts and crafts of Japan also made an impression when they were shown in London at the Exhibition of 1862. In addition to these influences, much jewellery was

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<sup>59</sup> Shelagh Wilson details the complicated history of the introduction of Arts & Crafts principles --that is, teaching both art and technical skills in the same school-- at Birmingham in 1890, noting that the Birmingham jewellery school was the first art school where this took place, with other provincial art schools later adopting the same strategies to maximize the potential of their regional industries. She writes, "The final impetus was surely the Art Congress of 1890, which took place just one month after the new Vittoria Street School opened. Countless speakers, including some of the art school committee, denounced the existing system of education. The Congress finished by passing a unanimous resolution, attacking "the present centralised system of National Art Education, .. [which had] not been devised with reference to the varying industrial needs of manufacturing centres .. [and was] injurious to the object for which the Art Department was established", and recommending that "the system of education adopted in any locality be devised with special reference to the industrial needs of the locality .. and that the examiners consist of artists and experts in the particular industries". [National Association for the Advancement of Art and Its Application to Industry. Birmingham Meeting. 1890. London 1891. p xii.] Shelagh Wilson, *Art Into Industry*, Chapter 3.

<sup>60</sup> Philips, 142. Alexander Fisher also used Theophilus's treatise in his teaching. Bickerdike, 322.

made with naturalistic motifs - birds, flowers, and objects from everyday life. As travelling to the Continent became easier and cheaper, English women were able to add souvenir jewellery to their collections: coral and mosaic pieces from Italy, enamels from Switzerland, or carved ivory from Germany. Mourning jewellery was also a large part of the market, encouraged by Queen Victoria's example - by the 1860s, widows were expected to wear black clothes and unpolished jet jewellery for a year and a day.

Diamonds were discovered in South Africa in 1867, causing prices to drop and supplies to increase dramatically. New veins of silver (Nevada) and gold (South Africa, and Australia) were discovered from the 1850s to 1870s. In addition, mechanical and scientific advances throughout the century allowed jewellery to be mass-produced at cheaper cost, using the new techniques of electro-plating, die-sinking and the stamp and press.<sup>61</sup> Steam-powered machines were invented to make chains, and findings were patented. The outbreak of the Boer War in 1899 was also a significant event in jewellery history, as the Boers and the English were essentially fighting for control of the South African gold and diamond mines.

The combination of technical advances and new sources of metals and gems coincided with the public's desire for more jewellery, of all styles. A comment in the Watchmaker in 1902, indicates that this public pressure had an effect on the industry:

It is true that the great majority of those for whom we cater have no artistic tastes, and probably never will have. On the other hand there is now a considerable class of people, constantly growing in number, which possesses a cultivated taste, and that class must be catered for.<sup>62</sup>

In other words, give the people what they want. The worry behind this was that if the English did not cater to their own people, the Germans would; for German jewellery firms were finding a huge success by following the "ideas of the French artistic jewelers [...] and have produced well-designed and well-modeled goods at prices within the reach of all."<sup>63</sup> English worries over competition from German manufacturers begin to be a common theme in the press from this time.

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<sup>61</sup> Crawford, 97.

<sup>62</sup> "Birmingham Notes. The Jewelers' School," Watchmaker, Jeweler, Silversmith, and Optician (2 February 1903) 171.

<sup>63</sup> "Birmingham Notes. The Jewelers' School," 171.



The demand for art jewellery in particular was linked to the burgeoning middle class, and their increased buying power. "Indeed, the new century began with the Prince of Wales exhorting British business to 'wake up if she intends to maintain her old preeminence in her colonial trade'."<sup>64</sup> There was ample scope for such trade, as an article on the demand for art jewellery in the United States shows. Indeed, the majority of the 'Brummagem wares', the inexpensive jewellery produced in Birmingham, was exported to Australia and North America.<sup>65</sup> An American jeweller of forty years' experience was asked whether there was a market for art jewellery in the United States. He replied, "You ask me whether our cultured classes appreciate art jewelry. Indeed the most of them do; far better even than does the jeweler himself."<sup>66</sup> He explained that as Americans acquired wealth, they also acquired culture by using their new leisure time for self-improvement through education, travel, and going to art galleries and museums.

As a consequence they have learned the difference between arbitrary and intrinsic values, and have more and more encouraged the worker in precious stones and the goldsmith to give them the very best they possibly can[...] This is, indeed, very inspiring, and in no wise lessens the demand for manufactured jewelry, which finds an ever-growing market in the masses.<sup>67</sup>

It would appear that as a social class increases in wealth, it also increases in cultural awareness. Doubtless, England witnessed the same phenomenon around the turn of the century, which allowed one class of patrons to desire art jewellery, and another to desire the glitzy diamond jewellery found in the shops. But trade jewellers were first and foremost businessmen, more concerned with turning a profit than turning out beautiful objects.

At the end of the nineteenth century the main trends in European jewellery were the formal diamond jewellery worn at court, and the Art Nouveau styles preferred by progressive circles. In England, there was a reaction by designers of the Arts and Crafts Movement against

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<sup>64</sup> Donald Read, The Age of Urban Democracy: England 1868-1914, rev ed. (London: Longman, 1994) 385. Quoted in Rappaport, 149.

<sup>65</sup> John Foster Fraser, "Birmingham and Its Jewellery," Windsor Magazine 6:33 (September 1897) 465.

<sup>66</sup> "A Practical Jeweler on the Demand For Art Jewelry," The Watchmaker, Jeweler, Silversmith and Optician (1 January 1903) 71.

<sup>67</sup> "A Practical Jeweler on the Demand For Art Jewelry," 71.

both these styles, and also against the 'Brummagem' or the inferior design of contemporary English jewellery.

Charles Robert Ashbee was the first to react to the situation, designing the first examples of Arts & Crafts jewellery in 1890 at his Guild of Handicraft in London's East End. Looking to Renaissance Italy for inspiration, Ashbee used the goldsmith Benvenuto Cellini's *Trattato Della Oreficeria* as a guide to techniques. He also contributed to the literature on the subject by publishing several articles on jewellery in the *Art Journal* in 1893 and 1894, and by translating, editing, and publishing Benvenuto Cellini's treatises on goldsmithing in 1898. Ashbee's first article, "How to Wear Jewellery. As Illustrated by the *Trattato Della Oreficeria* of Cellini", begins boldly with the following comment:

Our modern ladies have little or no understanding of how jewellery should be worn, or what relation it should have to the person or to costume. Their jewellery is vulgar or tawdry, showy or mean, and is usually treated as a fashionable adjunct rather than as the final point up to which the whole costume should lead; it is almost always a commercial article and scarcely ever a work of art.<sup>68</sup>

In a clearly argued article, Ashbee offers his readers a solution. "The characteristics of cinquecento jewellery were its *prominence*, its *grace*, its *colour*, and, above all, the *treatment of it as an art* on a footing with other arts."<sup>69</sup> The last point in particular is in keeping with the ideals of the Arts & Crafts Movement. As regards colour, this is where Ashbee's jewellery differed from that of his day. He explains,

We use certain conventional stones, diamonds, rubies, sapphires, white pearls, the stones that are in the market, and we set them uniformly in gold as the most expensive of metals; the rest are 'fancy stones,' and don't concern us. To the Cinquecento jeweller no stones were fancy stones,<sup>70</sup>

rather they were used for their intrinsic beauty in shape and in colour, rather than for their commercial worth.

A year later, Ashbee published an article explaining the techniques used by Cellini, illustrated with jewellery from the national collections at South Kensington. Notably, Cellini's

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<sup>68</sup> CR Ashbee, "How to Wear Jewellery. As Illustrated by the *Trattato Della Oreficeria* of Cellini" *Art Journal* (1893) 247.

<sup>69</sup> Ashbee, (1893), 247.

<sup>70</sup> Ashbee, (1893), 247.

workshop practice encompassed all eight areas of goldsmithing, a point Ashbee makes at the same time as he condemns the current practice of division of labour in the jewellery trade.<sup>71</sup> The readership of the Art Journal was as broad as its coverage of all areas of the fine and decorative arts, so it is entirely possible that Ashbee's comments on jewellery were noticed by practitioners of gold, silver and jewellery and by women who wore the more advanced, 'arty' fashions. How much influence his words had on potential purchasers of jewellery is difficult to estimate; however according to Alan Crawford, Ashbee definitely influenced practitioners: "Ashbee was more or less first in the field; and he was also influential; not many Arts and Crafts jewellers adopted his style but many adopted his taste and principles."<sup>72</sup>

Despite the mobilization of both educational and business forces toward reform in jewellery design in Birmingham, London and points between, by 1899 Georgina Evelyn Cave France and her husband Arthur Joseph Gaskin still felt that there was room for improvement. They set about designing their own jewellery, despite having no technical skills. The design was by far the more important aspect of the finished work, in their opinion; technical skill could always be learned later.<sup>73</sup>

The Gaskins' attitude toward jewellery was described in a special section on jewellery in the Art Workers' Quarterly's 1903 ACES review, written by Alexander Fisher. He reminds the reader that the jewellery in the Arts & Crafts Exhibition is made as an object of art, that "each piece has had as its fundamental inception the attainment of an expression of the beautiful, irrespective of the commercial value of its component materials."<sup>74</sup> He compared these works of art to the jewellery sold in shops in Regent Street, where "the chief aim is to emphasise the commercial value of the materials [...] without any regard to art motive whatsoever."<sup>75</sup> This is the crux of the debate

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<sup>71</sup> CR Ashbee, "Cinque-Cento Jewelry. As Illustrated by the 'Trattati' of Benvenuto Cellini," Art Journal (1894), 153.

<sup>72</sup> Alan Crawford, CR Ashbee Architect, Designer & Romantic Socialist (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985) 359.

<sup>73</sup> Aymer Vallance, "British Arts and Crafts in 1903 II. Embroidery, Glass, Ceramics, and Metal-work," Magazine of Art 1 New Series (1903) 221.

<sup>74</sup> Alexander Fisher, "Jewellery at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition," " Art Workers' Quarterly 2 (1903) 54.

<sup>75</sup> Fisher, 54.

in the press between the Arts & Crafts style of jewellery, and the commercial style of jewellery, found in the shops.

Alan Crawford has compiled the following 'standard description' of jewellery made at Vittoria Street School c.1900-1907, from illustrations and catalogue entries, which explains the visual aesthetic of Arts & Crafts jewellery rather well. I quote it in its entirety:

They used semi-precious stones cut *en cabochon*, that is, rounded so that they hold the light rather than reflecting it brilliantly. Most popular were pearls, moonstones, and opals, as tones of pale and milky quality, veined with hints of other colours; opals particularly sometimes have fierce and delicate mixtures of pink and blue, like a sunset by Ruskin. For more stable colours, they chose turquoises, amethysts or enamel. The choice of stones was typical of most A&C jewellery; the settings were more distinctively Birmingham - filigree wirework, the tiny wires shaped either into natural forms, twigs and finely chased leaves, or into decorative patterns whorls and interlacings. There are broad but unmistakable allusions to early jewellery, such as that of the Anglo-Saxons and to peasant jewellery of a more recent date; and the general air is one of refined and earnest naturalness.<sup>76</sup>

However, it was only when Robert Catterson-Smith became Headmaster in 1901 that the Vittoria Street School began to follow Arts & Crafts ideals and aesthetics, partly in a battle against the evils of Art Nouveau. Catterson-Smith "had large prints of Burne-Jones's *The Golden Stairs* and *King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid* hung in the School" to inspire them in what he felt was the right direction.<sup>77</sup>

In addition to introducing Arts & Crafts ideals into the educational system, WR Lethaby published the Artistic Crafts series of books. These were geared towards students, and copiously illustrated with step-by-step instructions in all facets of the craft. Henry Wilson (1864-1934) wrote *Silverwork and Jewellery* (1902) for this series. The Introduction contains a long section in which Wilson explains the difference between ancient jewellery and modern work, summing up as follows:

The old workman took the rough crystal of sapphire, or ruby, or emerald, and polished it, keeping the stone as large as possible, displaying to the utmost its native beauty. The modern workman splits and cuts his gems into regular, many-faceted, geometrical forms of infinite ingenuity and intolerable hideousness."<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Crawford (1984), 105.

<sup>77</sup> Crawford (1984), 97.

<sup>78</sup> Henry Wilson, *Silverwork and Jewellery. A Text-Book for Students and Workers in Metal* Second Edition. (London: Pitman Publishing. 1912 (1902), 28.

Although producing a more even colour in the stone, “the glitter takes away that mysterious magical quality, that inner lustre of liquid light, which for the artist is its chiefest beauty.”<sup>79</sup> He added that the machine cutting of the stones had impacted negatively on the setting and workmanship of jewellery, as well. The chapter on ‘Settings’ begins as follows:

In choosing stones to set, avoid those that are cut into facets. Select those that are rounded or cabochon cut; if you can do so, use stones that are cut by Eastern lapidaries. The Oriental has an eye for colour and form, and has no foolish fears of so-called flaws. The stones rejected by the jeweller are almost always well worth the attention of the artist.<sup>80</sup>

Of note here are the specific mention of the cabochon cut stones, a feature of Arts & Crafts jewellery which makes it easily identifiable, and the differentiating of the jeweller and the artist. After all, the students reading this manual would be aspiring jewellers but training in an art school, thus it was to their artistic sensibilities that Wilson directed his remarks. This was obviously not a trade manual. Wilson was also careful to note that the comments on technique were the result of his own experience. He had taught silverwork and jewellery at the Royal College of Art from 1900, and had exhibited jewellery and silver at ACES in both 1899 and 1903, but his training and profession was that of an architect.

It was for this reason that Wilson’s book was panned in a 1903 review in The Watchmaker, Jeweler, Silversmith, and Optician entitled: “How Not to Do It.” The anonymous author of the review claimed that Henry Wilson, as an architect, did not have proper training in any of the jewellery trades to enable him to write with authority about jewellery or silverwork; and proceeded to illustrate his argument with examples from the book where actual trade practices differed from the methods espoused by Wilson. The review also shows clearly the antipathy between the trades and the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society on the issue of education.

A further example of this antagonism can be seen in an article the February 1903 issue of the Watchmaker, Jeweler, Silversmith, and Optician, which appeared in response to Henry Wilson’s examination report of students’ work at the Vittoria Street School. After noting

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<sup>79</sup> Wilson, 28.

<sup>80</sup> Wilson, 97.

sarcastically that the report “epitomises and shows at a glance the excellent work which Mr Catterson-Smith has organised in Birmingham,”<sup>81</sup> the anonymous writer of the short article then pointed out that the Birmingham school was producing “Jacks of all trades”<sup>82</sup> ie, masters of none. It was not the fact that the head-master’s son had taken five first prizes and two seconds for different skills which concerned them, but rather the fact that he was learning too many skills all at once. Writing from the trade’s point of view, an education along Arts & Crafts lines, where students learned all facets of the jewellery trade, would not aid an aspiring jeweller in finding work in the trade, because the trade would expect a much higher degree of ability in one particular area. Their recommendation was that students ought to learn one branch of the trade to perfection before attempting another, which was completely antithetical to the method of teaching at Vittoria Street.

Arts & Crafts style jewellery had a select market, and still has its acolytes today, but trade jewellery has always enjoyed a far greater share of the jewellery market. A comment in The Builder’s review of the 1916 Arts & Crafts Exhibition shows that the jewellery trade never did reconcile itself to the Arts & Crafts style of jewellery: “We fear that commercial jewellers are among the most difficult men to influence, but they would possibly become more amenable if in examples of æsthetic design the stones chosen were those which are more frequently in demand.”<sup>83</sup>

#### General Comments About Jewellery and Women Designers

The marked increase in the amount of jewellery exhibited in 1903 ensured that all the reviews would comment in some way about it. Below I give the critical reaction to the jewellery, and follow this with comments about women as jewellery designers, where they appear. The responses give some indication of how the critics were coping when faced with the challenge of

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<sup>81</sup> “Birmingham Jewelers’ School,” The Watchmaker, Jeweler, Silversmith, and Optician (2 February 1903) 161.

<sup>82</sup> “Birmingham Jewelers’ School,” 161.

<sup>83</sup> “The Arts & Crafts Exhibition at Burlington House,” The Builder (13 October 1916) 224.

writing about the many techniques and materials involved in jewellery, as well as the type of language they were using in their discussions of women jewellers.

Of the daily newspapers, The Times thought that “Probably the best, certainly the most numerous, of the things displayed today are the books, the bookbindings, the jewels, and the enamels.”<sup>84</sup> However Joseph Pennell in the Daily Chronicle was not impressed with the exhibition in general, and took a jab at the increase in women designing jewellery: “But, on the other hand, many appear to be posing as jewellers simply because it is the fashion.”<sup>85</sup> Pennell’s assessment was harsh indeed; from the exhibition and the catalogue alone it would have been difficult for him to know how many of the women exhibiting jewellery with ACES actually had intentions of pursuing a career as a jeweller.

In her column ‘Art and Artists’ in The Gentlewoman, ‘Iris’ at least acknowledged the existence of jewellery in the exhibition, even though she did not like it much. “Truth to tell,” she wrote,

a ‘nose-flattening’ expedition along the routes occupied by our chief shop windows will make us acquainted with examples as good, if not better, than most of the ‘jewellery’ here. I do not, of course, speak of valuable gems and their setting - this would be too mundane - but of enamels hung on chains, and of that curious mongrel ornamentation in which certain forms of the Renaissance and l’Art Nouveau struggle for supremacy.<sup>86</sup>

Her obvious distaste for some styles of Arts & Crafts jewellery is palpable. Iris’s preference was for the jewellery in the shops which, according to The Builder, was “where one still sees only commonplaces or worse.”<sup>87</sup> These two critics have completely opposite views of shop jewellery - and here it is the women’s press that prefers it.

The only other journal to come close to this sort of reaction to the style of the jewellery, was the Parisian publication, Art et décoration. Gabriel Mourey stated categorically that although French

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<sup>84</sup> “Arts and Crafts at the New Gallery,” The Times (17 January 1903) 3.

<sup>85</sup> [Joseph Pennell], “Arts and Crafts at the New Gallery,” The Daily Chronicle (16 January 1903) 3.

<sup>86</sup> Iris, “Art and Artists,” The Gentlewoman (24 January 1903) 108.

<sup>87</sup> “The Arts & Crafts Exhibition - III,” The Builder (14 February 1903) 156.

jewellery was greatly admired in England, he found no evidence of this in the New Gallery.<sup>88</sup> He was generous enough to allow it artistic merit, for Arts & Crafts jewellery was

complètement différente de la nôtre, mieux vaudrait dire absolument opposée à la nôtre. Ils se plaisent à des combinaisons de métaux précieux et de pierres, d'émaux, qui pourraient paraître un peu[...] barbares, tout au moins un peu primitives, aux clientes de M. Lalique, mais qui n'en sont pas moins intéressantes au point de vue artistique.<sup>89</sup>

The critics in both The Gentlewoman and Art et décoration were both a bit perplexed by the new concept of 'beauty' in the jewellery of the Arts & Crafts. For them, the beauty of jewellery had nothing to do with the Renaissance, or with enamels. A full page (A3 size) advertisement for The Parisian Diamond Company illustrates what was popular at the time: little brooches made of imitation diamonds and pearls, in the shapes of hearts, bows, insects, animals and abstracted flowers. This illustration gives an idea of what the Arts and Crafts designers were up against when they decided to improve upon popular jewellery design. (Figure 4.2) Around the edges of the advertisement are 'puffs' from twenty-six different periodicals, which were written to encourage women to buy this type of jewellery.<sup>90</sup> The trades advertised their wares in the periodical press, whereas Arts & Crafts jewellers advertised through exhibitions, thus reaching different markets.

The women's press did not uniformly reinforce women as jewellers either. The Lady, probably the most conservative of all the women's magazines, reviewed only the needlework at the 1903 exhibition. This selective type of review, which I have labelled "the Ostrich," simply leaves out what it does not want its audience to know. One would never know that women worked in other media, such as jewellery, by reading this review. Using the pseudonym 'Doris', the writer commented that "the collection [of embroidery] is by no means a large one."<sup>91</sup> In fact, embroidery

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<sup>88</sup> Gabriel Mourey (1865-1943) was a French writer, poet and art critic. He wrote for Le Figaro using the pseudonym Gil Blas. Mourey ran the Paris office of The Studio from c.1898 and edited the magazine Les Arts de la vie, (1904-1905). He has been credited with introducing the art and poetry of the Prerafaelites to France. His 113 books include *Gainsborough* (1906), *Rossetti et les préraphaélites anglais* (1910), *Passé le détroit: la vie et l'art à Londres* (1895), and as translator, Algernon C Swinburne, *Chants d'avant l'aube* (1909). Charles Holme *Archive* AAD/2003/10. Archive of Art and Design, London; Catalogue Bn-Opale plus, Bibliothèque Nationale de France. <<http://catalogue.bnf.fr>>

<sup>89</sup> Gabriel Mourey, "L'exposition des 'Arts and Crafts'," Art et Décoration 13 (Juillet 1903) 96.

<sup>90</sup> "The Parisian Diamond Company," The Queen (14 October 1899) np.

<sup>91</sup> Doris, "Artistic Needlework," The Lady (12 February 1903) 248.



and needlework accounted for only one fifth of women's work that year; but since it was the most accepted medium for a woman to be producing, it was the topic of the entire review. This is a good example of how an art review works to maintain the status quo in gender norms. By only writing about the embroidery, The Lady is reinforcing needlework as an acceptable activity for women.

## The Parisian Diamond Company.

Mrs Arla.

"Happily we live in the time of the Parisian Diamond Company, when the setting of the imitation stone is studied with so much care that the least valuable becomes charming to the eye of the beholder, and the more vulgar desire to wear something of supreme worth may yield place to sincere appreciation of the beautiful."

The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News.

"To me it is a wonderful reflection how the public taste has been educated to this jewellery, which is not an imitation, strictly speaking, but artistic and refined reproductions of gems in less expensive fashions than our prodigal Mother Nature can so far yield them to us."

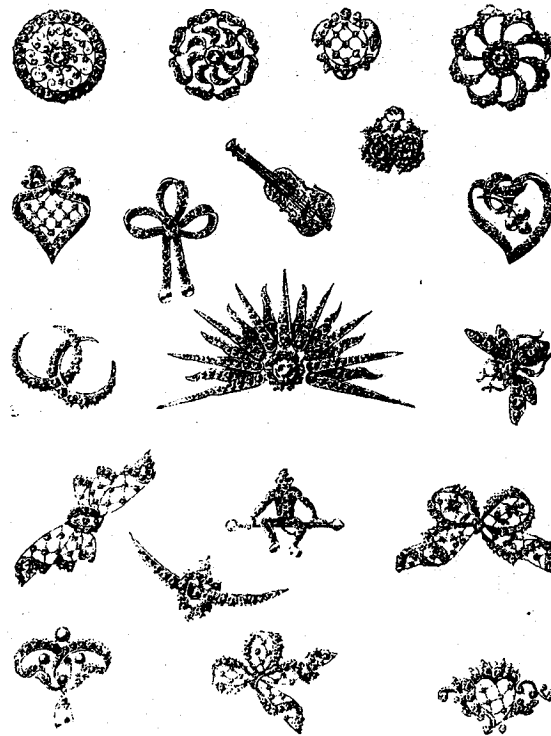


Figure 4. 2 : Advertisement, The Parisian Diamond Company. The Queen 14 Oct 1899.

More importantly, by *not* writing about the even larger number of women producing jewellery, The Lady denies knowledge of this alternative activity to the women reading the magazine.

The Lady's Pictorial took a more encouraging view of women jewellery designers in 1903: in a long paragraph on jewellery and enamels, its anonymous critic praised the work of nine jewellers, six women and three men, including Mr and Mrs Gaskin:

The west gallery is rich in enamels and precious metal work. Miss Hallé shows a case of enamelled jewellery in which the colour and 'glow' is of a kind only to be described as gem-like. She continues to base her best designs on dolphins and Mercury-like wings; and they are very hard to beat in effectiveness and beauty of line. Mrs Bethune also shows some beautiful enamelled jewellery, and there is much to admire in the case of work by Mr and Mrs Gaskin, Mrs Carr, Miss Louis Meingartner, for all know how to obtain brilliancy in their enamels, and their designs are good. Mr Alexander Fisher's work yet again gains immediate attention, his colour being strangely rich and his designs always happy. He shows many jewels, and in executing these he has had the aid of his assistants, who have also helped him in his silver and metal work. A case of jewellery exhibited by Mr Ashbee and the Guild of handicraft contains some of the finest work in the collection, many of the designs being quaint and lovely.<sup>92</sup>

The Queen noticed greater variety in the types of work on display, and commented on every type of craft exhibited. Regarding the jewellery, it noted that "the cases of glass and jewellery give evidence of the high training and artistic sense of both the designers and executants."<sup>93</sup> Their rather nebulous comments are divided between the work of CR Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft, and a silver casket by Constance EF Lawrence, being neither gushing with praise, nor overly critical of anything.

The British Architect was far more direct in its commentary, and declared that the progress made in jewellery and decorative metalwork since the last ACES exhibition was indicative of the vitality of the Society. However, no designers or makers are singled out for discussion in the British Architect, either in its preliminary review,<sup>94</sup> or in any of the three other articles about the exhibition. This was usual for this publication, which made no secret of the fact that its content was geared to its readership, who were mainly professional architects: "The examples of architecture complete in the exhibition are not numerous, and they are chiefly of domestic work; but [...] they will have a special interest for our readers."<sup>95</sup> The readers of the journal were carefully

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<sup>92</sup> "Art Notes," Lady's Pictorial (7 February 1903) 249.

<sup>93</sup> "Arts and Crafts Exhibition," The Queen (24 January 1903) 141.

<sup>94</sup> "Arts & Crafts Exhibition," The British Architect 59:3 (16 January 1903) 37.

<sup>95</sup> "Arts & Crafts Exhibition II" The British Architect 59:5 (30 January 1903) 73.

informed where to look for items of interest, and women's work in needlework and jewellery were not among them.

The practise of writing for a particular audience was common in nineteenth-century periodicals, and when the designated readership was predominantly male, topics deemed of interest to women only were not included. Laurel Brake explains in Subjugated Knowledges that this was due to the male idea of what women were supposed to be able to understand. Brake's observations stem from her research into journals of opinion such as Contemporary Review and the Nineteenth Century, which both wrote for a male audience and purposely did not carry articles of interest to women.<sup>96</sup>

The monthly art magazines also wrote for their specialised audiences. Monthlies contained the longest and most detailed reviews of the 1903 ACES shows, ranging from seven pages in the Art Journal, to four articles totalling thirty-nine pages in The Studio. The increased length available in the monthlies allowed the critics to discourse about the progress of the Society, and of each craft, as well as to include illustrations.

Women and jewellery were linked by an anonymous critic in the Studio, who mentioned some excellent silver buttons - examples of a branch of craft which enamellers and silversmiths might develop to great advantage. It is surprising that so little has been done, especially by women, to beautify these common accessories of dress, while the less essential ornaments, such as brooches, are becoming tiresome by prolixity."<sup>97</sup>

The comment that women should be creating decorated buttons or other accessories of dress, rather than adding to the overstock of brooches, places women's contribution to jewellery and enamelled metalwork squarely in the realm of the stereotypically feminine: accessories of dress.

Lewis F Day commented on jewellery in general in the Art Journal, saying that it was quite impossible here to mention all those who show good work in jewellery: the names of Edgar Simpson and J[ohn] W Moore, E[dith] M Worthington, L[indsay] Black, L[illian] Peskett, are only a few of those whose dainty productions are

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<sup>96</sup> Laurel Brake, Subjugated Knowledges. Journalism, Gender and Literature in the Nineteenth Century (Houndmills: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1994) 56.

<sup>97</sup> "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition at the New Gallery. Fourth Notice," The Studio 29:123 (June 1903) 33. Mrs EM Linnell had among her pieces of jewellery, in case 115F.4, a 'Set of 3 buttons, silver with turquoise' which were the only silver buttons by women identified in the catalogue.

worth picking out from their surroundings; but there are others perhaps yet more deserving of attention. Of those exhibiting in separate cases, Mr and Mrs Gaskin and Mr Ashbee and his guild, show to great advantage, and Mr Fisher has a display to himself which fully deserves the prominence given to it.”<sup>98</sup>

Here Day is using the negative-comparison method to discuss the jewellery: the few men and women he first named are noticeable, yet mediocre, jewellers. Faint praise for their work emphasises the better quality work, also in greater quantity, shown in individual cases by the ‘big name’ jewellers: the Gaskins, CR Ashbee and Alexander Fisher.

These “average” women jewellers were listed by their initials only, and given the tendency to emphasise the marital status of the other women in the review - including ‘Mrs Gaskin’ - the listing of them in this fashion raises questions about the critic’s motives. It could have been an issue of space, or an attempt at gender-neutrality. However, other sections of the review suggest that it was otherwise.

Further on in the review, Day writes about the experiments in glass done by Powell and Sons, and how their exhibits help to publicise these technical advances. He concludes the discussion with the following comment: “It is interesting to compare the productions of Messrs Powell and Sons and of Miss Casella, admirable both in their ways; but the advantage is certainly not all on the side of the amateur.”<sup>99</sup> A back-handed compliment, indeed, for Nelia Casella was a professional artist, exhibiting enamelled glass, embroidery and embossed leatherwork at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society since 1890, as well as wax sculptures at the New Gallery and the Royal Academy. She was also an accomplished watercolour painter.<sup>100</sup> Casella was the only woman exhibiting table glass at ACES; of the four pieces of enamelled glass she showed in 1903, three were purchased during the exhibition.<sup>101</sup> Her status is decried as ‘amateur’ because she was a

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<sup>98</sup> Lewis F Day, “The Arts & Crafts Exhibition,” *Art Journal* (March 1903) 87.

<sup>99</sup> Day, (March 1903) 90.

<sup>100</sup> Henry Blackburn ed, *New Gallery Notes. An Illustrated Catalogue, with Facsimiles of Sketches by the Artists* No. 1 1888 (London: Chatto and Windus, 1888); *Dictionary of British Artists; Whistler’s Correspondence* Centre for Whistler Studies, University of Glasgow. <[www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk](http://www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk)>.

<sup>101</sup> CM St John Hornby bought 2 pieces, a Enamelled Glass Coubonnière for £1.10s, and an enamelled glass for £4.4s; C Heringham bought one piece for £3.3s. *Catalogue of the Seventh Arts & Crafts Exhibition, 1903*.

woman, regardless of her artistic, technical and financial success, all of which attest to her professional status. Had a male designer been working independently, as Casella was, it is highly unlikely that his experiments in glass would be categorised 'amateur' and his work unfavourably compared to that of a large company such as Powell's. Day's comments in this regard do not support Casella's efforts to be an innovative glass designer; rather, they attempt to suppress her innovations and push her back into the category of amateur.

In his discussion of the needlework at the 1903 exhibition, Day allows the women a measure of designing skill, but not too much: "Mrs Traquair [...] goes *near enough to success* in her endeavour to justify the place of honour allotted to her [...] Miss Una Taylor's embroidery [...] *is not always happy* in her design"<sup>102</sup> (emphasis added). The women who wisely produce men's designs fare much better. Mrs Robert A Dawson's patchwork appliqué piano cover, designed by her husband, is "gorgeous in colour" and Mrs Southall's cut-work, designed by her son Joseph, "is perfect in its way."<sup>103</sup> A careful reading again demonstrates that Day has more praise for a woman who produces someone else's design skilfully than for a woman who designs and produces her own work. It becomes clear, in a discussion of these three different media used by women, that in embroidery there is some allowance for women who attempt to design. As for designs in the newer media used by women, such as glass or jewellery, Day is not so sure. Rather, he opts to check their progress with derogatory press, as with Casella, or simply to dismiss them, as with the women jewellers who are listed in the first page of the review.

An anonymous critic in the Art Worker's Quarterly used another tactic, naming and describing the jewellery of five male designers in some detail,<sup>104</sup> before listing seven female jewellery designers in the same sentence: "Other jewellery by Mrs Phoebe O Traquair, Mrs P Hemsley, Blanche and Bertha Goff, Margaret J Audrey, Edith A Dick, and Edith M Worthington

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This information was noted in the margins of the 1903 Catalogue marked 'Sales,' likely used by the secretary. AAD 1/100-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London.

<sup>102</sup> Day, (March 1903) 91.

<sup>103</sup> Day, 91.

<sup>104</sup> "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition at the New Gallery," 54. The male jewellers were William H Pick, Edgar Simpson, John W Moore, Benjamin & William J Nelson.

are notable for their inventive qualities and personal expression.”<sup>105</sup> Now, if the women’s work was so inventive and notable, why was it not elaborated upon? The men’s jewellery was described separately and in detail, with the metals and stones identified. The finished work, which ranged considerably in quality, was described using adjectives ranging from “delicate and tasteful” and “beautiful” to “large and extravagant,” and “very coarse.”<sup>106</sup> In contrast, the same two adjectives - inventiveness and personal expression - are sufficient to describe the jewellery of all seven women. As such, their work is not taken seriously. Their efforts are neither critiqued nor described, their design and production skills not even mentioned. Their efforts were not reinforced at all.

There are two possible explanations for this treatment. By 1903, it was becoming more acceptable for women to design jewellery; indeed, some critics had concluded that women were well suited for this type of work. Thus these seven women jewellery designers may have been mentioned by the Art Worker’s Quarterly’s critic merely because they conformed to an emerging ‘horizon of expectation.’ But it is far more likely that this trade critic was not happy to see so many women exhibiting jewellery, and did not want to encourage them. Resistance to women’s attendance in trade schools had taken a long time to overcome. In either case, to be added to this dismissal are Vallance’s remarks of how the ACES was becoming overrun with amateurs from the country, DS MacColl’s comments about how making jewellery was only a passing fancy for women, and the fact that The Lady only discussed women’s embroidery at the 1903 exhibition, despite the

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<sup>105</sup> Several of the female jewellers went on to have successful careers. Phoebe Traquair I have mentioned previously. Margaret J Audrey, which should be Margaret J Awdry, studied painting and repoussé at the Birmingham School of Art, and began teaching drawing to the girl’s class at Vittoria Street School in 1891. She exhibited jewellery at every ACES exhibition from 1903 to 1916, including a necklace made in collaboration with fellow student William Morris in 1906. This piece was mentioned in The Studio, giving rise to a rumour that Awdry had worked the only piece of jewellery ever designed by ‘the’ William Morris, but this has since been refuted (See Alan Crawford, By Hammer and Hand and Shelagh Wilson’s MA thesis.) Awdry also showed 9 works (presumably jewellery) at the Ghent International Exhibition, 1913. Bertha L Goff (b1877) studied at Holloway School of Art, and won a silver medal for her jewellery designs in the 1902 National Competition. Her younger sister Blanche C Goff (b1875) studied at LCC Central School of Art, and exhibited an enamelled silver biscuit box in the 1902 Exhibition of Student’s Work there. Both sisters’ accomplishments were noticed in the Art Worker’s Quarterly. They exhibited a case of jewellery jointly at the 1903 ACES, and 2 cases of jewellery in 1906. In 1906 ACES catalogue a N.Goff is listed as teaching jewellery at LCC Camden School of Art. Bertha exhibited an enamelled panel at ACES 1910. Neither sister exhibited under their maiden name after that. Mrs P[hilip] Hemsley exhibited a case of 12 pieces of jewellery in 1903 ACES. Edith A Dick exhibited one piece of jewellery in 1903 and one piece in 1916. In 1903, Edith M Worthington showed one necklace, designed by her, made by J. Wainwright, and exhibited by Montague Fordham, who ran a shop which sold Arts & Crafts work, including that of May Morris.

<sup>106</sup> “The Arts and Crafts Exhibition at the New Gallery,” Art Workers’ Quarterly 2 (1903) 54.

fact that more women exhibited jewellery than anything else. Decidedly, there was resistance to the woman jeweller.

When women began exhibiting oils and watercolours in noticeable numbers with mixed exhibiting societies, reviews of their contributions were frequently of this type - the Afterthought. The men's paintings would be described in some detail, and the women's paintings were listed in one sentence at the end of the review. Their paintings, as the jewellery in this exhibition, were not described; possibly the titles or subjects might be given, but in general there was no way of gauging what their paintings looked like, or how they compared to other works in the show. Reviews of Royal Academy shows, or of the Watercolour Societies in newspapers such as the Glasgow Herald adopted this approach, which gave the impression that women were included in the review but failed to assess their participation with the same attention as men's paintings.

This phenomenon also occurred in the women's press, albeit using the hierarchy of paintings and decorative arts rather than men and women. A review of the 1903 Women's International Art Club exhibition in the Lady's Pictorial devotes a sentence to each of many women painters, including the full name of the painter and the title of her painting, and a brief description of its content. The last, and very brief, paragraph includes all the other media in the show:

Some gesso work by Mrs Cayley Robinson should be noted and the coloured leather work of Madame Fritz Thaulow. Enamels are contributed by Miss Edith Hayter, Miss Ethel Kirkpatrick, and Miss EC Woodward. Miss Esther M Moore, Miss Rope, and Miss Williams are amongst the sculptors, and Mdlle Marguerite Rosset, Miss MS Simpson and Miss Julia Crowhurst amongst the miniaturists.<sup>107</sup>

Although the women are named as having exhibited something, their contributions did not warrant any further elaboration, certainly not the amount of space devoted to the painters. The Lady's Pictorial's art critic (as yet unidentified) seemed to privilege women painters over the other decorative artists. The privileging of men's work over women's, or fine arts over decorative arts, seems to be an often-used strategy for writing about women's work in the decorative arts, perhaps unwittingly revealing the critic's 'horizon of expectation' regarding the importance of the female decorative artist.

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<sup>107</sup> "Art Notes," Lady's Pictorial (24 January 1903) 140.

The Builder, with its wider, middle class audience of architects and those engaged in the building trades, included women in their readership and therefore had more variety in their articles. Although architecture was still their priority, their third and last article on the 1903 Arts & Crafts Exhibition was devoted to the silverwork, jewellery and bookbinding. The article begins:

Jewellery and decorative work in metal, silver more especially, has shown a good deal of new life in this country during the last few years, though none of this vitalising influence has as yet penetrated to the fashionable jewellers' shops, where one still sees only commonplaces or worse; [...] but the Arts and Crafts Exhibition affords the best opportunity for its display on a large scale.<sup>108</sup>

They note that some of the jewellery was “rather more curious than beautiful, [while] in articles of [...] silverwork, use seems to be sometimes overlooked in the desire for an unusual form.”<sup>109</sup> This review shows an awareness of the beginnings of new forms through the description of objects that are not of utilitarian use, and the use of new vocabulary, specifically the emphasis on colour and form.<sup>110</sup>

The Builder's discussion of jewellery filled one of the three columns of the single-page review. The anonymous critic noted with approval that necklaces were ubiquitous, as was the use of enamel. A few items were criticised for being too naturalistic in their imitation of insects or flowers, but the designers were not identified. The discretion here is unusual, as the Builder had been since the first exhibition one of the strongest advocates of the ACES dictum that all designers and makers be identified. In fact, the only designers of jewellery singled out were the Gaskins: “Some of the best and most refined work is to be found in Case 169, exhibited by Mr and Mrs Arthur Gaskin; the necklaces lettered *n* and *p*, and the enamel pendant *ii*, are especially worth notice.”<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> “The Arts & Crafts Exhibition-III,” The Builder (14 February 1903) 156.

<sup>109</sup> “The Arts & Crafts Exhibition-III,” 156.

<sup>110</sup> Clive Bell's Art, in which he expounds on the concept of ‘significant form’ in art, was published in 1914. See also Nikolaus Pevsner, Pioneers of the Modern Movement from WM to Walter Gropius (London: Faber and Faber, 1936); Paul Greenhalgh ed, Modernism in Design (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 1990), and for a more feminist perspective, Lisa Tickner, Modern Life and Modern Subjects: British Art in the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2000).

<sup>111</sup> “The Arts & Crafts Exhibition-III,” The Builder (14 February 1903) 156.





Figure 4.3 : Top: Georgina Evelyn Cave France Gaskin (1868-1934)  
Bottom: Arthur Joseph Gaskin (1862-1928), with their younger daughter Margaret.  
Photo taken c.1910-1913.

## Case Study: Georgina Gaskin

In the preceding chapters, the case studies have been unmarried women who worked in the decorative arts. In this exhibition the jewellery designed and made by a couple, Georgina and Arthur Gaskin, attracted the most attention in my sample of 39 reviews. (Figure 4.3) In 1903, Georgina Evelyn Cave France Gaskin (1868-1934) and Arthur Joseph Gaskin (1862-1928) had been making jewellery together for only four years, bringing it to it their fine art education and their collective experience as artists and illustrators.

Georgina Gaskin's life before she began studying at the College of Art remains largely undocumented. According to the 1881 British Census, she was born in Shrewsbury, the elder daughter of William France, a retired farmer, and his wife Emily. At the time the family were living in Kings Norton, Worcester, just south of present-day Birmingham. The household included three other children, and one domestic servant.<sup>112</sup> The few details given by Breeze and Wild<sup>113</sup> indicate a middle-class education including music, art, and European travel. As a teenager, Georgie lived in Germany for a time and later retained a German governess for her own daughters. Also an accomplished musician, Georgie played the spinet. Apparently her family was not pleased that she married an artist, considering him beneath her class, but Georgie was not estranged from them, for she visited relatives in Ireland regularly, before and after her marriage.

Far more has been written about Arthur Gaskin, by his wife and colleagues in particular.<sup>114</sup> Arthur Joseph Gaskin was born in Birmingham in 1862, the middle son of Henry Gaskin and his

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<sup>112</sup> The children include a son, Goldie, age 15, Georgie, 14; daughter Wilmer, 13; and son Geoffrey, 10. [FamilySearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/Search/census/household_record.asp?HOUSEHOLD_CODE=>). <[http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/Search/census/household\\_record.asp?HOUSEHOLD\\_CODE=>](http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/Search/census/household_record.asp?HOUSEHOLD_CODE=>)>. Her younger sister Wilmer graduated from Cambridge in 1892 and emigrated to the United States, where she completed her PhD in Chicago in 1895 and taught Greek for over thirty years at Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania, one of the earliest women's colleges in the United States.

<sup>113</sup> George Breeze & Glennys Wild, *Arthur & Georgie Gaskin* (Birmingham: Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery, 1981) 5. This catalogue has conflicting information to that given in the 1881 British Census online with regard to birthplaces and names of parents of both Georgina France and Arthur Gaskin; I have used the Census data where there is a discrepancy.

<sup>114</sup> Georgie wrote a memoir of her husband's life and work which Joseph Southall, Gaskin's closest friend, used to write the catalogue essay for Arthur Gaskin's memorial exhibition. In the self-effacing manner of many Victorian women, she did not include much information about herself in this memoir. Joseph E Southall, ARWS, Foreword, *Memorial Exhibition. Arthur Joseph Gaskin, ARE (1862-1928)* (City of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery 1929)

second wife Emily.<sup>115</sup> Henry Gaskin was a painter who turned to the more lucrative trade of inlaid and Japanned furniture to support his family. He encouraged his son to draw from a very young age, setting him drawing assignments of increasing difficulty.<sup>116</sup> As a result, Arthur Gaskin was an excellent draughtsman when he began studying at the Birmingham College of Art in 1883. He had been studying art formally before then, for the 1881 Census of England and Wales gives his occupation as 'art student.' By September 1885 he was invited to teach, and remained on the staff until August 1903.<sup>117</sup> He taught illustration during the 1890s, when Georgina France was among his students. They married on 24 March 1894.

Metalworking and enamelling techniques were taught at the College of Art from 1890 and 1893 respectively, and Arthur tried his hand at both of these. His skill in drawing the figure and in portrait heads in particular was easily transferred to the delicate enamel pieces he produced after 1899.<sup>118</sup> In 1892 Gaskin travelled to Italy with Laurence Hodson, where he developed a reverence for Giotto that caused him to change his style upon his return to Birmingham. After this time, Gaskin was an "ardent disciple"<sup>119</sup> of the Arts & Crafts Movement.<sup>120</sup>

Judging from the prize lists, Georgina began studying at the Birmingham College of Art about 1888. Both she and Arthur were talented and ambitious students, and won prizes regularly at the Birmingham College of Art and the National Competition at South Kensington. Arthur won school prizes in 1883 and 1884, and medals in the National Competitions of 1884 and 1886,

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<sup>115</sup> Breeze & Wild, 5. The 1881 Census gives Henry's wife as Harriett Gaskin, 8 years Henry's senior.

<sup>116</sup> Breeze & Wild, 5.

<sup>117</sup> Breeze & Wild, 5-6.

<sup>118</sup> Crawford, 1984, 103.

<sup>119</sup> Southall, 4.

<sup>120</sup> Although nowhere stated specifically, it is highly possible that he met Edward Burne-Jones during the latter's visit to the Birmingham College of Art in 1885; he certainly would have seen Burne-Jones's paintings which were exhibited in the Corporation Art Galleries in 1885, 1888, and 1891. Burne-Jones, a native of Birmingham, was elected President of the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists in 1885, visiting the city twice that year in connection with his Presidency. Bill Waters, "Book Illustration: Vision with Design," in Alan Crawford ed, By Hammer and Hand. The Arts and Crafts Movement in Birmingham (Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1984) 86. William Morris also greatly influenced the teaching of art at Birmingham, and lectured there on several occasions, on topics such as the "Collection of Paintings of the English Pre-Raphaelite School" at the Corporation Galleries in Birmingham 2 October 1891, and "The Woodcuts of Gothic Books" to the students of the College in February 1894. Nicholas Salmon with Derek Baker, The William Morris Chronology (London: Thoemmes Press, 1996) 242, 260.

mainly for figure drawing and portraits. Georgie's list of prizes is much longer, winning medals and Book Prizes in the National Competition every year from 1888-1893, and School Prizes from 1890-1894, including Free Studentships for three years in a row, 1892-1894.<sup>121</sup> Her prizes in the National Competition were for designs in a variety of media, including needlework, ceramic decoration, book illustration, fans, wall paper, and greeting cards.<sup>122</sup> According to Lewis F Day, her work influenced the other students: "Miss GE France made a success with a panel of gurnets, characteristically designed and cleverly modelled in low relief. Since then she has repeated her success, and year by year others have emulated it."<sup>123</sup> (Figure 4.4) She consistently won prizes for metalwork and jewellery designs, including National Book Prizes for a model for jewellery in 1888, a design for a frieze in niello work in 1890, and a modelled design for silver clasps in 1893.<sup>124</sup>



Figure 4.4: Georgie Cave France. Carved Plaster Panel, *Gurnets*, 1891.

Likewise, some of Georgie's earliest works exhibited at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society in London were jewellery and silverwork. With the astuteness of a professional, Georgina appears to have shown several pieces more than once. In 1889, the first year she exhibited at ACES, she showed a model in plaster for a rosewater dish and bottle, to be executed in silver repoussé, and a modelled design for necklace pendant.<sup>125</sup> It is quite feasible, for example, that the "model for jewellery" for which she received a National Book Prize in 1888 was the "modelled design for

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<sup>121</sup> Breeze & Wild, 7. This information was taken from the records of the Birmingham College of Art, which are incomplete before 1900. Reports and Minute Books were missing for the years 1885, 1887, and 1889.

<sup>122</sup> Breeze & Wild, 7.

<sup>123</sup> Lewis F Day, "Looking Back Upon South Kensington," *Art Journal* (October 1896) 316.

<sup>124</sup> Breeze & Wild, 7.

<sup>125</sup> Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, *Catalogue of the Second Exhibition, 1889* Items 114, 469.

necklace pendant” exhibited at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition in 1889. The “Rose Water dish and bottle,” first exhibited at the 1889 ACES and again at the 1890 Armourers and Brasiers’ Exhibition, was also illustrated in a review in Furniture and Decoration.<sup>126</sup> (Figure 4.5) In the 1890 ACES exhibition, she showed a “Design for fan, painted with water-colours on silk”<sup>127</sup> and in 1891 she won a National Book Prize at the National Competition, also for a design for a fan, “actually painted on ribbed silk.”<sup>128</sup>

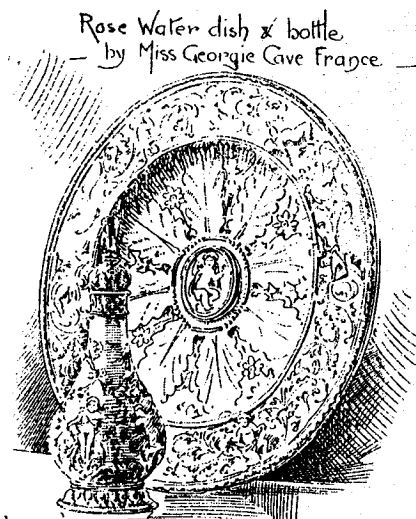


Figure 4.5: Georgie Cave France. *Rose Water Dish & Bottle* Illustrated in Furniture and Decoration, 1 July 1890

In her essay on Camille Claudel and Auguste Rodin, Anne Higonnet writes that Claudel did not succeed in the male art world because, believing that her merit would be recognised without her own promotion of it, “she could not gauge how fully, in practice, any artistic career depended on institutions, social connections, financial self-promotion, and a strategically chosen stylistic position.”<sup>129</sup> Georgina Gaskin did not suffer from such delusions. She was well aware of how such systems worked, and used them to her advantage from her days at college. Described as

<sup>126</sup> “Sketches at the Armourers and Brasiers’ Exhibition,” Furniture and Decoration (1 July 1890) Plate 20.

<sup>127</sup> Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Third Exhibition, 1890 Item 599.

<sup>128</sup> Aymer Vallance, “The National Competition in 1891,” The Art Journal (November 1891) 335.

<sup>129</sup> Anne Higonnet, “Camille Claudel & Auguste Rodin,” in Whitney Chadwick & Isabelle de Courtivron eds, Significant Others: Creativity & Intimate Partnership (London: Thames and Hudson, 1993) 19.

“very much the stronger character when it came to getting things done,” she organised the promotion and sales of the couple’s jewellery, and also took care of the family’s finances.<sup>130</sup> As a result of her astute understanding of the importance of self-promotion, and the systems of exhibition and competition she was able to build a reputation for herself and help keep her family’s finances afloat.

The renewed interest in book illustration in Arts & Crafts circles was particularly strong in Birmingham during the 1890s, keeping both Georgina and Arthur extremely busy. Arthur Gaskin taught classes in book illustration, supplemented with occasional lectures by William Morris, and examples of hand-printed Kelmscott Press books, which Morris loaned to the College in 1895.<sup>131</sup> Gaskin also published a number of illustrated books together with his students. A Book of Pictured Carols. Designed under the Direction of Arthur J Gaskin (1893) included drawings by Georgie Cave France. She wrote and illustrated several books between 1895 and 1905, including ABC an Alphabet, (1895), The Travellers and Other Stories (1898), Little Girls and Little Boys (1898), and A Tale of Six Little Travellers (1905). From 1894-1896 Georgina also contributed drawings to The Quest, an illustrated magazine published by the Birmingham Guild of Handicraft.<sup>132</sup>

In addition to his book and magazine illustrations, Arthur Gaskin worked in gesso, and was an accomplished tempera painter. He drew and painted friends and family members, for pleasure and as commissions, in pencil, tempera, and in caricatures, throughout his life. He exhibited at the Royal Academy from 1889, and was a member of several societies, including the Royal Birmingham Society of Arts (1898-1928), the Art Workers Guild (as a jeweller) (1917-1922), and the Royal Society of Painters Etchers and Engravers (1927-1928).<sup>133</sup>

During the summer of 1899, the Gaskins began designing and making jewellery. Years later, Georgina Gaskin explained in a letter to her friend Kains Smith, “In the jewellery I did all the designing and he [Arthur] did all the enamel, and we both executed the work with our

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<sup>130</sup> Breeze & Wild, 10. The catalogue does not cite where they obtained this information.

<sup>131</sup> Waters, 86. Morris lectured in 1891, 1894 and 1895.

<sup>132</sup> Marsh & Nunn, 127.

<sup>133</sup> Birmingham Gold & Silver, 1773-1973 (Birmingham: City Museum and Art Gallery, 1973) Item H105; Breeze & Wild, 12.

assistants.”<sup>134</sup> As they had plenty of design experience but no practical experience in making jewellery, their assistants were very important from the beginning. These included the goldsmith William T Blackband and enamellers Effie Ward, Lily Dale, A Edward Jones, and James Morris.

The origins of their venture were variously described in periodicals of the day. An anonymous author in *The Studio* explained in 1899 why they began making jewellery:

While the technique of the commercial article is flawless, it is lamentably deficient in artistic quality of design. It occurred, therefore, to Mr Gaskin and his wife to try and counteract the evil at its source by starting, in the same place, the production of jewellery on the best artistic lines.<sup>135</sup>

The Gaskins’ desire “to provide an antidote to the prevailing degradation” in jewellery design as the reason for their beginning the craft was repeated by Aymer Vallance in *The Studio*’s Special Winter Number for 1901-1902, Modern Design in Jewellery and Fans:

And the reason why the vast mass of the trade jewellery manufactured in Birmingham is bad is that in style and outline it is utterly devoid of artistic inspiration, while at the same time it is perfect as concerns mere technique. The pity of it is that such excellent workmanship should be wasted on such contemptible design. Mr Gaskin, therefore, saw no alternative but to start afresh, reversing the accepted order of things. His plan is to give the foremost care to the design, and only secondly to regard technique; [...] Mr Gaskin came to the conclusion that it was of little benefit for a draughtsman to make drawings on paper to be carried out by someone else; studio and workshop must be one, designer identical with craftsman. It is not very many years since Mr Gaskin, ably seconded by his wife, started with humble, nay, almost rudimentary apparatus, to make jewellery with his own hands.<sup>136</sup>

In this text, Vallance credits Arthur Gaskin solely with the idea for the couple’s joint jewellery venture, adding “[h]is plan is to give the foremost care to the design.” Despite the emphasis on design, Georgina’s role as designer is not even mentioned. Rather, Vallance states merely that Arthur had been “ably seconded by his wife.” Vallance’s later comments on their jewellery would reveal a similar downplaying of Georgina’s contribution to their jewellery.

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<sup>134</sup> Georgie CF Gaskin to Kains Smith [15 February 1929], Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery File, quoted in Breeze & Wild, 62.

<sup>135</sup> “British Decorative Art in 1899 and the Arts and Crafts Exhibition. Part III,” *The Studio* 18:81 (December 1899) 193-194.

<sup>136</sup> Vallance, “Modern British Jewellery & Fans,” 4-5. It is highly likely that Vallance also wrote the 1899 review of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society for *The Studio*, as the tone is the same; however I am unable to substantiate this claim as of yet.

The philosophy of designer and craftsman as the same person had been institutionalised in the courses and teaching at the Birmingham School of Art since 1890, thus it is not surprising that the Gaskins would adopt this philosophy for their own practice. However, there was also a far more pragmatic reason for making jewellery, one which confirms MacColl's suspicions about the increase in jewellers in the 1903 ACES show: money. Both Joseph Southall and Laurence Hodson, lifelong friends of Gaskin's, have written that he turned to jewellery and enamelling because illustration did not pay well enough. Gaskin had known Hodson since they were schoolboys together in Wolverhampton, and he met Southall during his first term at Birmingham College of Art in 1883.<sup>137</sup> Hodson later claimed that a shortage of money prevented Arthur Gaskin from realising his true potential as an artist, intimating that metalwork, jewellery and teaching were all done solely for the money, and that Gaskin was happiest in his drawing and painting. Interestingly, neither Southall nor Hodson seem to have factored in Georgina's obvious talent and initiative in their consideration of Arthur Gaskin's decision to produce jewellery. As with Vallance's assessment noted above, they do not appear to have considered that Georgina herself could have had some input in the decision to produce jewellery.

Yet Georgina Gaskin took a proactive role, not only in design, but in the marketing of their work. She embarked on an ambitious exhibition schedule quickly after starting their new venture. Their jewellery was exhibited at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society in London from October 1899 until the 1920s, from 1900 at the New Gallery Summer Exhibitions, London, and at many local and international exhibitions, ranging from the Fifth Exhibition of the Bristol and Clifton Arts and Crafts Society in October 1902, to the Glasgow International Exhibition in 1901, and many others. The couple were the only jeweller members of the Birmingham-based Bromsgrove Guild. They exhibited their jewellery and enamelled silver pieces with the Guild from its inception in 1898, and Arthur contributed the metalwork and enamelled chalices in church commissions undertaken by them. In addition, Arthur Gaskin continued to produce and exhibit paintings and drawings, which kept his name continually in the public sphere.

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<sup>137</sup> Breeze & Wild, 11. See Laurence Hodson, "The Birmingham Group: Arthur J Gaskin and Joseph Southall," *The Studio* 79 (1920) 4; and Joseph E Southall ARWS, Foreword, *Memorial Exhibition Arthur Joseph Gaskin, ARE (1862-1928)* (City of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery 1929).



The year 1903 was definitely a year of milestones for the Gaskins. On 3 March 1903, they registered a punch in the Birmingham Assay Office, trading as 'Arthur and Georgie Gaskin.' This indicates the seriousness of their endeavour, as well as professional status, and a lucrative jewellery business. On 1 September 1903, Arthur Gaskin was appointed Headmaster of the Vittoria School of Jewellery and Silversmithing. Several other prominent designers were also competing for the post, but it seems that a kind word from WR Lethaby tipped the scales in Gaskin's favour.<sup>138</sup> The timing was opportune, for Georgina had just given birth to their first child, Joscelyne Verney, on 29 May 1903, and Arthur's brother Henry also lived with them. With a yearly salary of £500, the post was vital for his family's financial stability.<sup>139</sup> The appointment was celebrated with an exhibition of Arthur Gaskin's work at the Vittoria Street School, where he taught for over two decades, until his retirement in September 1924.

When Georgina and Arthur Gaskin first exhibited jewellery in the 1899 Arts & Crafts Exhibition, it was praised for its originality and design quality. Two years later, though, Lewis F Day's praise for Georgina's exhibit at the 1901 Glasgow Exhibition was still tempered by her lack of technical skill:

There was need indeed for the protest of modern craftsmen and craftswomen against trade jewellery; but it is a pity that many of them have yet so much to learn from the trade workman they look down on, who, for his part, is not so entirely without reason when he looks down on them. The fact is, artistic taste and craftsmanlike accomplishment have yet as a rule to be reconciled. All the more satisfactory is it to record the success of artists like Mrs Arthur Gaskin, whose pins and pendants, if not pretending to anything very consummate in the matter of technique, are well enough made to satisfy lovers of art attracted by the grace and delicacy of their design.<sup>140</sup>

Georgie Gaskin's design skills had been praised in all the media she had touched, from illustration to plaster modelling, and were easily transferred to her jewellery design. Having her design skill also sanctioned by critics such as Day, it is not surprising that the jewellery on which she and her husband collaborated received more press coverage than any other jewellers in the 1903 Arts & Crafts Exhibition. Their names were mentioned in sixteen out of the thirty-nine

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<sup>138</sup> Breeze & Wild, 12.

<sup>139</sup> Breeze & Wild, 11.

<sup>140</sup> The review makes no mention of Arthur Gaskin. Lewis F Day, "Decorative and Industrial Art at the Glasgow Exhibition. Fifth Notice" *Art Journal* (November 1901) 328.

reviews in my sample, and were fairly evenly spread across the different types of periodicals.

However, it becomes clear in the reviews that their 47 exhibits -including 19 necklaces, 11 pendants, six lace pins, two rings, two hat-pins, one brooch, one enamelled mirror, one enamelled morse, one silver spoon, one set of cloak clasps, and the Sir Galahad Cup<sup>141</sup> - did not receive uniform

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<sup>141</sup> The Gaskins exhibited 47 works in 2 cases, 168 and 169. All items were described in the catalogue as designed, executed, and exhibited by "Mr and Mrs Arthur Gaskin." Effie A Ward did the enamelling on three items, as noted:

- 168.a. Gold necklace, set with opals: "Greta"
- 168.b. Gold necklace, set with pearls and turquoise: "Daphne"
- 168.c. Gold Pendant and chain, set with pearls, almandines & cabochon emerald "Cecilia"
- 168.d. Gold Necklace, set with opals & rubies "Daphne"
- 168.e. Silver Necklace, set with turquoises & chrysoprase: "Briar rose"
- 168.f. Turquoises & silver necklace: "Greta Blue"
- 168.g. Gold pendant & chain, set with rubies, pearls & opals: "Prudence"
- 168.h. Silver necklace, set with turquoises: "Persian Rose"
- 168.i. Silver necklace, set with pearls, turquoises, & chrysoprases: "Pamela"
- 168.j. Gold pendant & chain, set with opals & rubies "Gesa"
- 168.k. Gold necklace, set with opals, pearls & chrysoprases: "Yolande"
- 168.l. Enamel pendant, set with gold, jade, and pearls: "Spring" Effie A Ward, enamelling
- 168.m. Silver necklace, set with crystals: "Silver peacock"
- 168.n. Silver Brooch, set with green paste
- 168.o. Pair of silver lace-pins: "Joan"
- 168.p. Gold pendant and chain, set with pearls, opals & rubies: "Jocelyne"
- 168.q. Gold bracelet, set with coral.
- 168.r. Gold pendant & chain, set with sapphires, rubies & chrysoprases: "Love-in-a-mist"
- 169.l. Sir Galahad Cup, silver, enamelled & chased, & set with lapis.
- 169.m. Silver necklace, set with turquoises, pearls almandines & paste:"Francesca"
- 169.n. Gold necklace, set with pearls: "Margaret"
- 169.o. Gold necklace, set with clouded emeralds, amethysts, pearls, sapphires & ruby:"Lords & Ladies"
- 169.p. Silver necklace, set with paste and opals: "Christabel"
- 169.q. Silver necklace, set with moonstones and paste: "Briar rose"
- 169.r. Hat-pin, set with carbuncle in silver, steel shaft.
- 169.s. Hat-pin, set with opal in silvr, steel shaft.
- 169.t. Carved pendant, enamel, set pearls, opals & emeralds in gold.
- 169.u. Silver necklace, set with paste: "Daisy Chain"
- 169.v. Gold lace-pin, set with turquoises and pearls.
- 169.w. Silver lace-pin, set with pearls, turquoises, & chrysoprases.
- 169.x. Enamel mirror, copper gilt, set with turquoises. Effie Ward-enamelling
- 169.y. Gold lace-pin, set with turquoise.
- 169.z. Gold lace-pin, set with pearls and turquoises: "Elinor"
- 169.ff. Gold lace-pin, set with pearls & turquoises.
- 169.hh. Enamel pendant, set with pearls, opals & emeralds in gold:"Puck"
- 169.ii. Enamel pendant, set with gold & pearls:"Daphnis & Chloe" Effie A Ward, enamel
- 169.kk. Gold ring set with pearls & ruby carved.
- 169.ll. Gold ring, set with chrysoprases
- 169.mm. Silver necklace, set with crystals: "May blossom"
- 169.nn. Silver pendant, set with almandines & paste:"Clury"
- 169.oo. Silver Necklace, set with green paste: "Antonia"
- 169.pp. Silver cloak-clasps, set with carbuncles & green paste.
- 169.qq. Silver necklace, set with turquoises & emeralds:"Campaspe"
- 169.rr. Gold necklace, set with turquoises: "Cairo"
- 169.ss. Morse, copper-gilt, enamelled, set with stones.
- 169.tt. Silver spoon, chased, set with coral.
- 169.zz. Enamel pendant, set in gold.

attention from the critics, and that the respective roles of Georgina and Arthur Gaskin are not described in detail.

Of the four reviews in the architectural press, two mentioned the Gaskins' jewellery, and two did not. The two that discussed jewellery, the Builder and the Building News, also had the broadest readership and hence the widest range of contents. Both left the jewellery to the end of their reviews, though. In the Builder's third and final review, the Gaskins' were the last jewellers discussed: "Some of the best and most refined work is to be found in Case 169, exhibited by Mr and Mrs Arthur Gaskin; the necklaces lettered *n* and *p*, and the enamel pendant *ii*, are especially worth notice."<sup>142</sup> In the Building News, their work is listed with several others at the end of the paragraph about jewellery which is mainly about CR Ashbee, the only architect amongst the jewellers:

Several other cases of jewelry, displaying delicate designs, in which workmanship rather than costly stones is the main characteristic, are exhibited by J. Paul Cooper, Mr and Mrs Arthur Gaskin, the Birmingham Guild of Handicrafts, Elizabeth Newton, and others.<sup>143</sup>

As noted earlier, the women's press was conspicuously silent on the subject of art jewellery, with only two of five women's papers mentioning the Gaskins. The Lady's Pictorial praised the work of several women jewellers together with that of the Gaskins, writing that the case included "much to admire [...] for all know how to obtain brilliancy in their enamels, and their designs are good."<sup>144</sup> Despite specific mention of the design quality the reviewer maintained at the end of the paragraph that the case of work by CR Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft "contains some of the finest work in the collection."<sup>145</sup> Again we see the negative comparison method, with the male architect's jewellery preferred to that of either women working alone or with partners.

The Ladies' Field described and illustrated the 'Sir Galahad Cup,' listed in the catalogue as by Mr and Mrs Arthur Gaskin, mentioning their jewellery only in passing:

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<sup>142</sup> "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition - III," The Builder (14 February 1903) 156. According to the 1903 catalogue: 169.n: Gold necklace, set with pearls: "Margaret" price £16.16s; 169.p: Gold pendant and chain, set with pearls, opals & rubies: "Joscelyne" price £10.10s; 169.ii: Enamel pendant, set with gold & pearls: "Daphnis & Chloe," enamel worked by Effie A Ward, price £9 9s. Margaret and Joscelyne were the names of the Gaskin daughters.

<sup>143</sup> "Arts and Crafts Exhibition," The Building News 84:2507 (23 January 1903) 111.

<sup>144</sup> "Art Notes," Lady's Pictorial (7 February 1903) 249.

<sup>145</sup> "Art Notes," 249. These were Elinor Hallé, Mrs [Evelyn] Bethune, Mrs [Geraldine] Carr, and Miss Louis Meingartner.

Another fine cup in this gallery, of which an illustration is given, is the work of Mr and Mrs Arthur Gaskin, whose quaint and attractive jewellery fills the cases Nos. 168 and 169. The 'Sir Galahad cup' shown in the illustration is in case 169, is of silver, enamelled and chased, and set with lapis lazuli. The adventures of Sir Galahad in search of the Holy Grail are depicted on the cup in a series of pictures in enamel.<sup>146</sup>

Of six reviews in daily newspapers, three in provincial papers were distinctly more supportive of the Gaskins than the London papers. The Birmingham Daily Post begins with five lines about Alexander Fisher's enamels, which deserved "the highest praise," continues with three lines about CR Ashbee's jewellery, but then devotes far more space to the Gaskins, the local artists:

[...] and a similar case, for which Mr and Mrs Arthur Gaskin are responsible, is not less memorable. In this case there is a "Sir Galahad" cup, in silver, enamelled and chased, which is in its dignity of style and judicious understanding of the application of materials surpassed by scarcely anything in the gallery. It is notably free from any touch of extravagance, and yet it is by no means a mere imitation of older work. The jewellery of these artists, and of some others equally accomplished, can be commended for its elegance of form and for its cleverness in adapting to ornamental purpose precious stones, the beauty of which entitle them to mere attention than they receive from the ordinary commercial jeweller. In this direction the supporters of the arts and crafts movement have done good service, which claims unhesitating recognition.<sup>147</sup>

It would appear that this Birmingham critic's sympathies are with the Arts & Crafts Movement's concept of jewellery rather than with the trade's. The Manchester Guardian's critic also found that art jewellery was beginning to permeate trade jewellery, one of the few instances where styles of work seen at ACES exhibitions had done so:

The precious trinkets of Mr Fisher and Mrs Traquair, the work of Mr Ashbee and his guild, the unpretending but choice and tasteful jewellery of Mr and Mrs Gaskin and many others are no longer merely protests in design but illustrations of method also which the trade is beginning to take to heart.<sup>148</sup>

The Glasgow Herald singled out the same few jewellers but again the only work identified is the Gaskins's *Sir Galahad Cup*: "The really noteworthy examples of silver work, enamel jewellery, and the like include specimens by Mr Alexander Fisher, Mr and Mrs Dawson, Mr Benjamin Nelson, Mr

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<sup>146</sup> 'Monochrome,' "Arts and Crafts at the New Gallery," The Ladies' Field (7 February 1903) 360.

<sup>147</sup> "Arts & Crafts Exhibition. Second Notice," The Birmingham Daily Post (26 January 1903) 5.

<sup>148</sup> "Arts and Crafts in London," The Manchester Guardian (16 January 1903) 5.

and Mrs Arthur Gaskin - the Sir Galahad Cup of silver, enamelled and chased and set with lapis, is one of the best things in the exhibition."<sup>149</sup>

In the London papers, The Times listed their work in the same breath as Ashbee's, again emphasising the *Sir Galahad Cup*: "The last-named, [Mr CR Ashbee] with his guild of handicraft, (sic) is well seen in a case of jewels in the West Gallery, where also are some beautiful works of Mr and Mrs Arthur Gaskin (who send a fine silver and enamelled cup)."<sup>150</sup> The Standard described their work in a rather nebulous fashion, as "delicate and tasteful." As in previous years, the critic (likely Fred Wedmore) made it clear that he preferred French decorative art, saying the Arts & Crafts jewellery was no match for the works of Lalique.<sup>151</sup>

Only two reviews made any attempt to describe the Gaskins' jewellery. A.M. (possibly Alice Meynell), in the Pall Mall Gazette noted their use of "silver and moonstones and silver and opals."<sup>152</sup> The only society paper in my sample, The Court Circular and Court News began its review with the jewellery, and contained the most detailed comments about the Gaskin's exhibits:

The jewellery expresses the very poetry of ornament in the exquisite combinations of material and colour, with the true value of silver as a groundwork. Look at the graceful necklaces in case 168, by Mr and Mrs Arthur Gaskin, with the fanciful yet suggestive names attached to each --'the persian rose,' a silver necklace set with turquoises; 'silver peacock' necklace, silver and crystals; 'lords and ladies,' a gold necklace set with clouded emeralds, amethysts, pearls, sapphires, and ruby.<sup>153</sup>

The inclusion of the titles of the pieces reinforces their existence as individual works of art in the eyes of this critic, who was quite obviously in sympathy with the style of jewellery in the exhibition.

The reviews in the five art magazines were the longest, and all named Georgina and Arthur Gaskin. As they were written by regular reviewers of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, I have dwelt longer on their comments than on some of the other reviews, where the commentary was limited. Although he held reservations about the Arts & Crafts style of

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<sup>149</sup> "The Arts and Crafts Society," Glasgow Herald (15 January 1903) 7.

<sup>150</sup> "Arts and Crafts at the New Gallery," The Times (17 January 1903) 3.

<sup>151</sup> "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition. The New Gallery," The Standard (15 January 1903) 3.

<sup>152</sup> A.M. [Alice Meynell?] "Arts And Crafts," Pall Mall Gazette 76:11,793 (20 January 1903) 3.

<sup>153</sup> "Art. The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," The Court Circular and Court News (17 January 1903) 97.

jewellery in general, Gabriel Mourey was able, in Art et Décoration, to credit the work of “M. et Mme. Arthur Gaskin,” and other major jewellers with being artistically interesting, and with having the added benefit of being more easily wearable, more practical and less seductive than French jewellery.<sup>154</sup>

The Gaskins' jewellery merited slight mention at the end of The Studio's first of four articles: “Jewellery and enamel-work form too large a section to be fully entered upon in a preliminary article, but an interesting little group of necklets and pendants by Mr and Mrs Arthur J Gaskin may be briefly noted here as among the most sound and conscientious examples of their kind.”<sup>155</sup> Although it was not until the last page of the final article on the exhibition that the jewellery was discussed again, they had nothing but praise. “The jewellery work of Mr and Mrs Arthur Gaskin is always marked by originality of treatment, sound workmanship, and excellent taste.”<sup>156</sup>

Aymer Vallance wrote two articles about the 1903 Arts & Crafts Exhibition in the Magazine of Art. As noted earlier in this chapter, he made it clear in his first article that amateurs had no place in the ACES. In his second article, he also made it clear that he did not deem women designers worthy of discussion. Of only five women named in both reviews, four produced the work of others, while illustrations of two of these pieces are captioned with the title of the work and the designer's name only. The one exception was the Gaskins' jewellery, the penultimate topic of the second article. Although there is almost a page of text about the Gaskins, only a few sentences concern Georgina's role as designer. Vallance writes,

The early promise of their work has, in the interval between the last and the present exhibition, been abundantly fulfilled; and the demand is such that strenuous effort is needed for Mrs Gaskin, who has a *gift for divining* the individual wants of her clients, to maintain in every case that *touch of personality* which contributes no little to the *attractiveness* of her work. I have always thought that jewellery, requiring as it does *dainty taste* in the designing and *delicate manipulation* in execution, is an industry specially suited to lady artists, and it is surprising how few comparatively appear to give it a thought. Mrs Gaskin's achievements ought to show what can be done by anyone possessed of the above qualifications.<sup>157</sup> (italics added)

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<sup>154</sup> Gabriel Mourey, “L'Exposition des Arts and Crafts,” Art et Décoration 13 (1903) 96.

<sup>155</sup> “The Arts & Crafts Exhibition at the New Gallery. First Notice,” The Studio 29:119 (February 1903) 40.

<sup>156</sup> “The Arts & Crafts Exhibition at the New Gallery. Fourth Notice” The Studio 29:123 (June 1903) 33.

<sup>157</sup> Vallance, “British Arts and Crafts in 1903 II,” The Magazine of Art 1 ns (1903) 221-222.

He considers jewellery design and execution an appropriate skill for women, and accordingly, Georgina Gaskin's productions are praised using the special vocabulary (highlighted with italics) so often reserved for discussions of feminine artistic productions. Despite the fact that it required a 'strenuous effort' for her to produce good designs, Vallance is quick to point out that Georgina's talents are special, but then ambivalence creeps in, and he adds the comment that anyone who has these qualities can achieve what Mrs Gaskin has achieved. Anyone who is a woman, that is, for Vallance attributes her success in design not to her artistic skill, but to her feminine qualities: her intuition, personality, '*dainty taste*' and '*delicate manipulation*' in execution. This sort of language is not used to describe her husband's work, or indeed, any of the other male jewellers in the show, nor are groups of men deemed to have the same qualities.

In the paragraphs which immediately follow the quote cited above, Vallance states his opinion in the hierarchy of the crafts, and in his description of Arthur Gaskin's main work in the 1903 exhibition gives further insight into his gendered 'horizon of expectation.' I quote Vallance at length to underscore the difference in his treatment of their work:

Of the two examples of necklaces here reproduced, the lower one is of silver, set with paste; the other is gold, with opal, pearls and rubies. (Figure 4.6) The stones, however, are to be regarded as mere accessories to the metal-work -- embellishments useful for imparting a note of colour or variety on occasions. The real value of any specimen of this jewellery consists in the design, and its artistic effect as a whole, quite apart from the actual market price of the stones.

From this point of view enamelling, on account of its wide scope of decorative possibilities, ranks above jewel-setting. In the former art Mr Gaskin has recently attained to some beautiful results. His first attempt took the shape of a cope morse, with an enamelled vesica of Christ in majesty, surrounded by discs of the evangelistic symbols; another, executed in conjunction with Mrs Gaskin, is a pendant or neck ornament in the form of a mermaid with dolphins. But the artist's most important work, that whereon he has been engaged since April last, is a large standing trophy cup of silver with enamel decoration in parts. (Figure 4.7) Intended as a challenge cup, to be awarded year by year to the best-behaved house in a public school, the subject chosen is the life of Sir Galahad, type of chivalrous virtue and singleness of heart. The cover, which, like the foot, is chased and engraved with a conventional interlaced and floral pattern, is surmounted by a statuette of Sir Galahad, cast from the figure modelled by Mr Gaskin. The knight's shield is enamelled, as is also that of the school arms upon the stem below the knop. [...] The richest part of the decoration is that surrounding the cylindrical bowl. It consists of a series of six champlévé enamelled plates, all engraved by the artist's own hand, representing scenes from the legend of Sir Galahad: [the six scenes are given] Altogether this is a splendid work, and, notwithstanding its experimental nature, is one so full of imagination and sustained style as to merit comparison with the best

work of the kind produced in the Middle Ages. There is no call to despair of English design and craftsmanship so long as we can produce such a master as Mr Gaskin.<sup>158</sup>

The difference between discussions of Georgina's work and talent, and her husband's -- in tone, in language used, and in the sheer volume of words -- provides clear evidence of Aymer Vallance's gendered style of reviewing. Although attributed to both Georgina and Arthur Gaskin in the catalogue, Vallance's discussion of the Sir Galahad Cup gives no evidence of her participation in the piece. Arthur Gaskin's work in enamelling is of a higher order, warranting detailed discussion and description of the subject matter, the technique, the dexterity and the creativity required in its design and execution. The reason that enamelling ranks above jewel-setting is due to its possibility for pictorial representation, in this case, the life of Sir Galahad. May Morris espouses a similar concept in her book Decorative Needlework, where she classifies figurative and pictorial embroideries as intellectual, requiring professional skills to complete, and floral or patterned embroidery, which can be achieved by any amateur embroiderer, as non-intellectual.<sup>159</sup>

While Morris's ranking system pertains to women only, Vallance's hierarchy may also be viewed from a gender perspective. Creating pictures with enamels is akin to water-colour painting, albeit technically far more difficult due to the fact that the different colours must be fired at different temperatures.<sup>160</sup> The successful enameller must possess the combination of creative genius necessary to design the picture, in addition to the technical expertise required to produce the enamel without ruining the colours in the kiln. For Vallance, designing and producing jewellery, on the other hand, requires only the skill of assembling wires, chains, and jewels together in a pleasing arrangement. From a gender perspective, Vallance's hierarchy of craft places men squarely in the realm of the craft which requires intellectual input, and women neatly in the technical end of design.

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<sup>158</sup> Vallance, "British Arts and Crafts in 1903 II," 222-223. Two necklaces fitting this description were exhibited at 1903 ACES exhibition, 169.mm, *May Blossom* and 168.m, *Silver Peacock*.

<sup>159</sup> May Morris, Decorative Needlework (London: Joseph Hughes & Co., 1893) 11-18. See Chapter 3.

<sup>160</sup> EBS, "A Chat with Mr and Mrs Nelson Dawson on Enamelling," The Studio 6:33 (December 1895) 175.





159 (cat. no. G4)

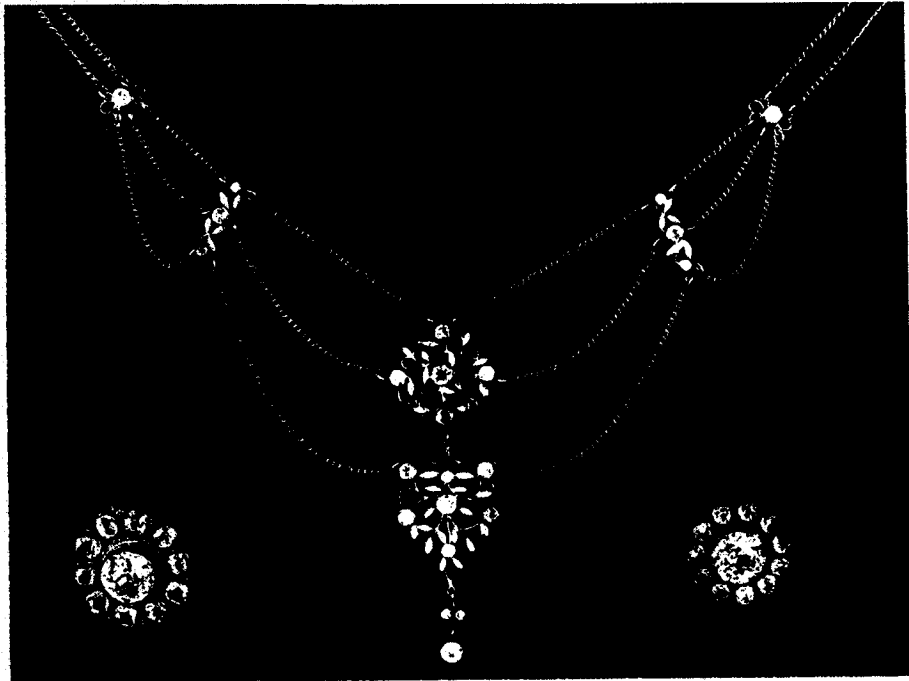


Figure 4.6: Georgie Gaskin. Top: *Briar Rose*, 1902-3. [1903 ACES exhibition, Item 168e]  
Bottom: Silver and crystal, 1902-3 [Arthur and Georgie Gaskin, 78.]

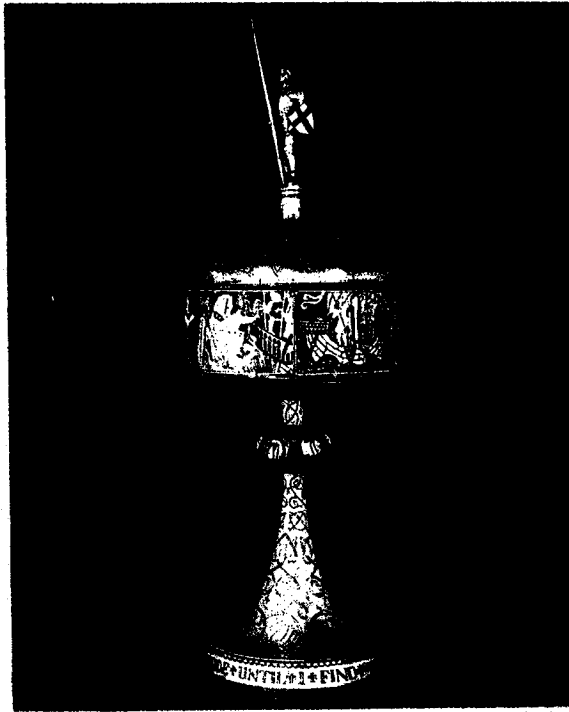


Figure 4.7: Arthur & Georgina Gaskin, Sir Galahad Cup, 1902-3. Silver, enamelled & chased, & set with lapis lazuli.

The Art Workers' Quarterly included several articles about the 1903 exhibition, written by different critics, all specialists in their various crafts. Alexander Fisher's article on jewellery discusses Arts & Crafts jewellery in general terms only, because unlike his fellow exhibitor and critic Lewis F Day, he thought that "[i]t would be invidious for the present writer - who is also an exhibitor - to select any particular work for special blame or praise."<sup>161</sup> A critique of the jewellery is found in an unsigned introductory article, in which the first of two paragraphs about jewellery begins by stating that "the works by Mr and Mrs Arthur Gaskin claim attention for their grace and elegance of form, qualities which all finely designed jewellery should never be without."<sup>162</sup> The fact the Gaskins are mentioned first may relate to the perceived quality of their work, which appears to

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<sup>161</sup> Alexander Fisher, "Jewellery at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition," Art Workers' Quarterly 2 (1903) 55-56. Day's comment justifying the inclusion of his own works in his review was published in the March 1903 edition of the Art Journal; it would be interesting to know if Fisher had seen it before writing his article.

<sup>162</sup> "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition at the New Gallery," Art Workers' Quarterly 2 (1903) 54.

set the standard. It could also have been the sheer quantity of work, for they showed 47 pieces of jewellery in several display cases, far more than any other exhibitor.

Overall, the press reception of the Gaskins' jewellery cannot be said to be comprehensive. Their names were mentioned in the press more than any other jewellers, but the comments about their jewellery were not substantial. Even when their respective careers are mentioned, it is as an aside. Only twice were the stones and metals used in their jewellery identified by critics. Of all the Gaskins' work, only the *Sir Galahad Cup* - not a piece of jewellery at all - was discussed with any depth of analysis, due to the pictorial nature of the enamel work.

In contrast, the originator of the style of Arts & Crafts jewellery, CR Ashbee and his Guild of Handicraft, had been producing jewellery long enough to be accused by The Studio's critic in 1903 of having fallen into the "mannerism of what has been aptly called the 'wire and pip' style of design,"<sup>163</sup> indicating a consideration of style and technique over time. Aymer Vallance's consideration of the Gaskins' style and technique over time in his 1903 ACES review noted merely that the effort to design had been 'strenuous' for Georgina Gaskin. He made no mention of the division of labour despite his knowledge of Georgina's role as designer and Arthur's role as enameller.

The lack of precise detail about the work also demonstrates the continued challenge for the critics presented by the ACES exhibitions. Even though jewellery had been popular in 1899, critics in 1903 were still unclear how to write about it. It is hard to tell whether they had more difficulty writing about the women producing it, or about the work itself. Perhaps it was the concept of describing jewellery as they would a painting which defeated them; this would also explain why the figurative nature of the enamels on the *Sir Galahad Cup* were described more than small pieces of rounded stones hanging from silver chains. Additionally, many critics would not have been familiar with the complicated processes used to make jewellery, and thus took the easy way out by avoiding the issue altogether.

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<sup>163</sup> "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition at the New Gallery. Fourth Notice," The Studio 29:123 (June 1903), 33.

Another reason for their popularity with the press was their couple status, and their use of conventional modes of naming themselves in public. Despite registering the trade name 'Arthur and Georgie Gaskin,' the Gaskins did not seek individual attribution for their jewellery. They are consistently referred to as 'Mr and Mrs Arthur Gaskin' in the catalogue, on the labels in the show and in the press. They may have been trying to revitalise jewellery design but they were not endeavouring to change social conventions. They were not upstarts like the Dawsons, who exhibited their joint work in enamels and jewellery as by 'Nelson and Edith Dawson' without the usual quantifiers, 'Mr' and 'Mrs'.

Jewellery was a newly developing field of endeavour, potentially very lucrative, and the Gaskins were dependent on the income it provided for them. They numbered amongst their clients several wealthy, conservative families in the Birmingham area, such as the Cadburys, and Arthur's childhood friend, Lawrence Hodson. Eschewing social norms might upset such clients, and Georgina's good business sense made sure this did not happen.

In doing so, Georgina Gaskin relinquished her own identity as a jeweler. Her professional title was 'Mrs Arthur Gaskin,' one half of the team of jewellers made up of her husband and herself. Just as Arthur Gaskin was credited with designing jewellery which he didn't actually design, his wife's reputation was increased by having her name connected with his. As a couple their work was more recognized, perhaps because they were conforming to expected tropes of both femininity and masculinity for their time. In a sense, by working with her husband, and borrowing his authority, Georgina Gaskin was naturalising jewellery design for women by what may be described as sneaking in the back door. Had Georgina Gaskin worked alone, it is unlikely she would have received as much attention in the press. Her work would probably have been listed at the end of an article, as many other women jewellers were, or simply overlooked.

Overall, the critics agreed that the smaller items in the 1903 Arts & Crafts Exhibition, specifically the jewellery and silverwork, were by far the best. They also agreed that the quality of jewellery design had improved greatly in the recent past. Lewis F Day found its advance had occurred over the past six years, while the Manchester Guardian felt the change had been taking

place for the past 15 years.<sup>164</sup> More women were participating, and designing their own work: according to the 1903 catalogue of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, 76% of women designed and made their own work that year, quite an increase compared with 36% in 1890, and 51% in 1888. What the critics did not say was that the number of women designing jewellery had also increased substantially during that time, due to the increased opportunities for education, exhibition and sales in London and the provinces. And they certainly did not put two and two together, and infer that perhaps the quality of jewellery design was on the rise precisely because of the influx of women into the field.

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<sup>164</sup> Lewis F Day, "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," The Art Journal (March 1903) 87; "Arts and Crafts in London," The Manchester Guardian (16 January 1903) 5.

CHAPTER 5  
1916: NOW YOU SEE THEM, NOW YOU DON'T  
CASE STUDIES: GRACE CHRISTIE AND PHOEBE STABLER  
"What a glorious opportunity for women!"<sup>1</sup>

This was the concluding statement in an editorial in the Gentlewoman about the upcoming 1916 Arts & Crafts Exhibition, to be held in Burlington House, the home of the Royal Academy, from 9 October to 2 December. Women had "astonished the world" since the beginning of the war with their skills and abilities in business, industry, and anywhere their help had been needed, and this exhibition would allow women a further chance to demonstrate their talents in the production of "products which used to come from the enemy."<sup>2</sup> Women did play an enormous role in the eleventh Arts & Crafts Exhibition, but as will become evident, it certainly was not accurately reflected in the press coverage.

The 1916 Arts & Crafts Exhibition, arguably the 'last hurrah' for the ACES, differs from previous displays in its location in the galleries of the Royal Academy. I begin this chapter with a description of the considerable transformation of those galleries, an emphasis which filled the reviews of the exhibition. However, unlike the reviews, my description will highlight the significant contribution made by women, which in turn will set the context for a statistical analysis of women's work in the show, and the press reaction to it. I then discuss how the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society's publicity strategy was implicated in the inclusion or exclusion of women's work in the reviews. Of women's work on display, that of Grace Christie and Phoebe Stabler received the most press attention, thus I have included case studies of their reception. What emerges from this analysis is that in 1916, women decorative artists received nowhere near the amount of press that they had in the previous years of this study. The last section of the chapter outlines the critics' concerns in their reviews: the transformation of the galleries at Burlington House, the mural decoration, and the exhibit of the Design and Industries Association, in an attempt to explain why women had been overlooked to this extent.

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<sup>1</sup> "The Gentlewoman's Opinion. Woman as Regenerator," The Gentlewoman (23 September 1916) 304.

<sup>2</sup> "The Gentlewoman's Opinion. Woman as Regenerator," 304.

The eleventh Arts & Crafts Exhibition was held halfway through World War I, in the autumn of 1916, in the galleries of the Royal Academy at Burlington House. The timing and the location of the exhibition were significant factors in both the production and the reception of the exhibition. The Society had finally achieved what Walter Crane had desired, an exhibition of decorative art on a par with that of fine art, in Burlington House. It was a pity he did not live to see it.

In his introduction to the exhibition catalogue, the Society's new president Henry Wilson stated the many aims of the 1916 Arts & Crafts Exhibition clearly:

The Exhibition is intended as a series of demonstrations and a series of appeals. Demonstrations, first, of the limitless creative powers of the British craftsman and the British student, then, appeals for the right use of those powers by our authorities. [...] We invite the official world, the world of education, the world of trade, merchants, manufacturers, the heads of universities, colleges, schools, and technical institutes to flock to Burlington House [...] for pleasure and profit and patriotism. [...] Further, the Exhibition is an appeal to Public Authorities, to Municipalities, to Boards, and Vestries, for more encouragement to local production. [...] The Exhibition is a demonstration of the capacities of our schools and students when given the opportunity of working under the inspiration of natural conditions[...] Finally the Exhibition is an appeal to architects, painters, sculptors to work in closer cooperation to plan, scheme, and produce together.<sup>3</sup>

The idea for the exhibition was first discussed at a meeting of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society on 12 November 1915. Henry Wilson told the General Committee that he had met with Sir Edward Poynter, the President of the Royal Academy, who had proposed that an Arts & Crafts Exhibition be held at Burlington House in the autumn of the following year.<sup>4</sup> The suggestion at

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<sup>3</sup> Henry Wilson, "Introduction," in Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Eleventh Exhibition, 1916 18-24.

<sup>4</sup> Sir Edward Poynter's career encapsulated Arts & Crafts thinking in its range of decorative and fine arts, facilitating his role in the ACES's use of Burlington House. His professional career had begun in 1860 with decorative arts commissions for painted furniture, stained glass, mosaics and interiors which included murals. A successful painter and teacher, he was elected Associate of the Royal Academy in 1869 and full member in 1876; was Slade Professor at University College, London, 1871-1876; Director and Principal of the National Art Training Schools, South Kensington, 1875-1881; Director of the National Gallery, London 1894-1904; and President of the Royal Academy, 1896-1918. On a personal level, Sir Edward Burne-Jones was Poynter's brother-in-law (their wives were sisters Georgiana and Agnes Macdonald), and Walter Crane had been a friend and neighbour. Sir Edward J. Poynter Bt PRA (1836-1919) <[www.speel.demon.co.uk/artists/poynter.htm](http://www.speel.demon.co.uk/artists/poynter.htm)>; Judith Flanders, A Circle of Sisters. Alice Kipling, Georgiana Burne-Jones, Agnes Poynter and Louisa Baldwin (London: Penguin Books, 2002) passim.

that time was to organise a Civic Art Memorial exhibition, which was agreed after some discussion.<sup>5</sup>

One of the reasons Henry Wilson had been chosen to succeed Walter Crane in the presidency of ACES was the excellent job he had done of organising and designing large exhibitions. Wilson's 'career' as an exhibition designer began with his involvement in the International Exhibition at Ghent in 1913, where he had designed a "scenic architectural setting" for the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society's exhibit, organised by Walter Crane. The following year the Board of Trade asked Wilson to mount an exhibition of English Decorative Arts in the British Pavillion of the *Exposition des Arts Décoratifs de Grande-Bretagne et d'Irlande* in Paris.<sup>6</sup> These Continental experiences influenced his exhibition design for the 1916 ACES exhibition, as he used similar techniques. Wilson revealed his idea for the arrangement of the exhibition at the meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> February 1916, complete with diagrams. This was

to divide the Exhibition up into different main sections representing The Civic Arts, Ecclesiastical Art, Municipal, The University and [...] the main fact of the Exhibition, the Domestic & Allied Crafts. He said that the origin of this idea was a wonderfully arranged Exhibition of German Decorative Art held in Munich in 1908.<sup>7</sup>

The changes wrought to the physical layout of the rooms, and the decoration of the rooms, were extensive, and unprecedented in London exhibitions. Londoners had not had the privilege of seeing their familiar Royal Academy transmogrified in such a way. The closest thing to making an art exhibition into an 'artistic whole' had been James McNeill Whistler's exhibitions in which he coordinated the colour and the interior of the gallery to fit with his paintings.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> "Minute Books - General 1915-1917," (12 November 1915) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers AAD 1/51-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London.

<sup>6</sup> Julian Browning, "Arts and Crafts Loyalist," Country Life 156 (12 September 1974) 701.

<sup>7</sup> "Minute Books - General 1915-1917," (9 February 1916) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers AAD 1/51-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London.

<sup>8</sup> N.N. [Elizabeth Pennell], "The Arts and Crafts at the Royal Academy," The Nation 103:2683 (30 November 1916), 524. See also ER & J Pennell, The Life of James McNeill Whistler 2 vols. (Philadelphia: JB Lippincott Co and London: William Heinemann, 1908) 2:62-65; and Deanna Marohn Bendix, Diabolical Designs: Paintings, Interiors, and Exhibitions of James McNeill Whistler (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995).



Of the ten rooms plus vestibule used by the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, only the Retrospective Room did not have structural changes. The walls of this gallery were simply covered with white fabric, similar to the method used by Walter Crane in the 1903 exhibition. (Figure 5.1)

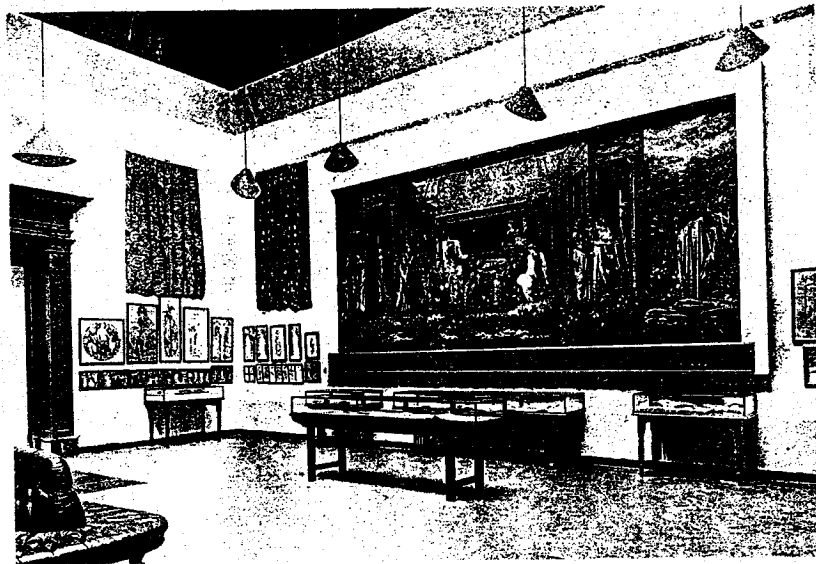


Figure 5.1: View of Retrospective Room  
[‘Arts and Crafts at the Royal Academy. Second Article’ *Studio* 69:285 (December 1916), 121.]

White fabric was also used in several of the rooms to cover the velarium, on the ceiling. WT Whitley commented that while Whistler’s use of white fabric to decorate the walls of the International Society’s shows in summer was a happy idea, using it in winter in Burlington House was not, as it quickly became very dirty, and prevented an adequate amount of natural light from entering the galleries.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to stencilled, carved and painted decorations, there were mural paintings in most of the galleries. In the Hall of Heroes, normally the Third Gallery, there were four large bays built into each side of the room, each with mural decoration by a different painter. Four smaller sized mural paintings, by members and associates of the Royal Academy, were cloistered in the Lecture Room, renamed the Municipal Hall. In the Textile Room there were four murals and a

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<sup>9</sup> WT Whitley, “Arts & Crafts at the Royal Academy,” *Studio International* 61:241 (March 1917) 18.

frieze decoration. The two largest murals were in the University Room, or the Sixth Gallery; while smaller paintings and decorations were placed in the sections of Domus I and II.

The Minutes of the Society reveal clearly that Wilson's enthusiasm and optimism for the project remained unabated despite the many obstacles to be overcome. Organisation of the exhibition went ahead apace, in order that the exhibition be ready for its projected opening in October 1916. Funding was obtained from guarantors<sup>10</sup> and the Exhibitions Branch of the Board of Trade, while the Education Committee of the London County Council allowed the Society to use their workshops and studios.<sup>11</sup> When the guarantee fund reached £1500, construction work began on the new galleries.<sup>12</sup>

The task undertaken by the General Committee was to solicit work for the exhibition. They first asked the 132 craftsmen members of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society to submit work for exhibition.<sup>13</sup> The Minutes reveal that Committee members went round to the studios to personally view as much of this work as possible. On 20<sup>th</sup> April, Henry Wilson announced to the General Committee that his appeal for artists' work and help had been successful. However, the space available to them at the Royal Academy was huge - there were ten rooms plus the vestibule to fill - and the work submitted thus far by 36 female and 96 male members of the Society was not sufficient to fill the space.

This is not surprising, for by 1916 a great many young men were involved in World War I. Architects formed a significant proportion of exhibitors at both the ACES and the Royal Academy; but nearly three thousand architects were among the King's forces.<sup>14</sup> A review of the architecture room at the 1916 Royal Academy exhibition states the case plaintively:

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<sup>10</sup> "Minute Books - General 1915-1917," (24 March 1916) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers AAD 1/51-1980. Archive of Art and Design, London.

<sup>11</sup> "Our London Letter," The Journal of Decorative Art 36 :431 (November 1916) 306.

<sup>12</sup> "Minute Books - General 1915-1917," (12 July 1916) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers AAD 1/51-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London.

<sup>13</sup> Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the 11<sup>th</sup> Exhibition, 1916, passim. For the first time, the membership has two categories. There were 132 craftsmen members, and 18 lay members.

<sup>14</sup> [Lawrence Weaver], "What Architects Have Done in the War," Country Life XLI:1044 (6 January 1917) 19-21.

Some idea of the havoc wrought by the war in the practice of English architecture may be gleaned from some simple figures. In 1914 there were 219 subjects in the Architectural Room of the RA; in 1915, 190; and this year only 145. [...] And if the quantity is less, the quality is worse; save for a few outstanding items it is as lifeless a show as can be imagined. Doubtless this is due partly to the absence on more strenuous business of 3 or 4 of the brilliant young watercolourists, who are accustomed to deck out the designs of their elder brethren with elusive effects of atmosphere and gay splashes of colour in sky and foreground.<sup>15</sup>

It is virtually impossible to estimate how many male artists went to war in all. Their absence was noted in the Journal of the Royal Society of Arts, with the comment that “not only are many of the artists and craftsmen turned for the nonce into soldiers and sailors, but the difficulties of labour are almost insuperable.”<sup>16</sup>

In order to recruit more exhibitors, “It was proposed that we ask the Masters of the principal Craft Schools to send us names of students who might exhibit and possibly because of numbers, ask the Women’s Guild and the [Junior] Art Workers Guild.”<sup>17</sup> Allowing students to exhibit was not new; students from the Keswick School of Art and the Royal School of Art Needlework had exhibited work at the Arts & Crafts Exhibitions since 1889.<sup>18</sup> Asking the Women’s Guild of Arts to exhibit was a new departure, though it is surprising that these professional women designers had not been invited to exhibit previously.

The Women’s Guild of Arts had been founded in 1907 by May Morris, to provide a much-needed forum for professional interaction amongst women designers. It was the female counterpart to the all-male Art Workers’ Guild, which from its inception in 1884 had been the most important place for social interaction amongst designers, artists and architects but which rigidly excluded women from membership. Mary Watts<sup>19</sup> was the first Honorary President, with

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<sup>15</sup> “Architecture & Sculpture at the Royal Academy” Country Life XL (3 June 1916), 3\*-8\*.

<sup>16</sup> “Arts and Crafts,” Journal of the Royal Society of Arts LXIV:3335 (20 October 1916) 819.

<sup>17</sup> “Minute Books - General 1915-1917,” (11 May 1916) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers AAD 1/51-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London.

<sup>18</sup> Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Second Exhibition (London, 1889) passim.

<sup>19</sup> Mary Seton Watts, (1849-1938), taught clay modelling from 1884 for the Home Arts & Industries Association. Watts’s class grew into the Potters Art Guild, and later moved to Compton, becoming the Compton Pottery. A second pottery, Aldourie Pottery in Invernesshire, was run by Watts from c.1900-1907. She is best remembered for the interior decoration of the Compton Chapel, a collaborative work done with members of the Compton Pottery under Watts’ direction. Elizabeth Cumming, “Patterns of Life: The Art and Design of Phoebe Anna Traquair and Mary Seton Watts,” in Bridget Elliott & Janice Helland eds, Women Artists and the Decorative Arts 1880-1935 (Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2002: 15-34). See also

May Morris as Honorary Secretary. Morris was involved with the Women's Guild for thirty years, many of them as president. Jan Marsh writes that members included embroiderers Mary Newill and Mary Powell Turner, bookbinder Katherine Adams, and watercolorist Mary A Sloane. Unfortunately, no records of the Women's Guild of Arts have been located, so their activities are not well known.<sup>20</sup>

The Women's Guild responded enthusiastically to the call for entries in 1916, and contributed a furnished bedroom. This was a joint venture, described in the catalogue as:

Domus II. 459. Room (No.3) Furnished by the Women's Guild of Arts. A Lady's Bedroom has been furnished by the Women's Guild of Arts, in which elaboration and luxury have been purposely avoided. It is claimed that the two prominent features, the richly painted crucifix and the gaily embroidered bed-furniture, give what is needed of emphasis to the arrangement; individual details are not introduced, as the Unseen Lady's personality alone could supply these. Her wardrobe, it is true, has a touch of her, but no more than a touch. The bedstead, chest, chair, and footstool come from the Sapperton workshops. Mr Spooner kindly supplied the priedieu and dressing-table. The wardrobe was made at the Hampshire House workshops from Mr Gimson's design. The rest of the furnishing of the room is the work of members of the Guild, except that, for the painting of the bed and the embroidery of the hangings, some students of the Birmingham School of Art and others gave their help.<sup>21</sup>

Although individual women were not named in the overall description of the room, according to the catalogue, over forty women contributed 53 items numbered "459" to furnish the entire room, including embroidered cushions, bedcovers, hangings and clothes, leather work, watercolours, lace, book illustrations, a decorated mirror, and brass candlesticks.

As for the students, Henry Wilson obtained permission from the Education Office of the London County Council for students "to carry out under our superintendence the schemes of decoration for the Exhibition."<sup>22</sup> The majority of the students employed were women studying at the Central School of Arts and Crafts, the Westminster Technical Institute, the Camberwell School

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Veronica Franklin Gould, The Watts Chapel: An Arts and Crafts Memorial (Compton: The Watts Gallery, n.d.); VF Gould, Mary Seton Watts (1849-1938): Unsung Heroine of the Art Nouveau (Compton: The Watts Gallery, 1998); and Melanie Unwin, A Woman's Work? Gender and Authorship: The Watts' Chapel and Home Arts and Industries Association Unpublished MA thesis, London: Royal College of Art, 1997.

<sup>20</sup> Jan Marsh, "May Morris: Ubiquitous, Invisible Arts and Crafts-woman," in Bridget Elliott & Janice Helland eds, Women Artists and the Decorative Arts 1880-1935 (Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2002) 43-44.

<sup>21</sup> Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Eleventh Exhibition, 1916 214-215: 459.

<sup>22</sup> Wilson, 25-26.

of Arts, the Royal Academy schools, and the Slade School of Art. Female students and members of the Women's Guild of Arts served to swell the ranks of the exhibitors in order to fill the space allowed to the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society.

#### Women's Contribution to Construction of Galleries and Setup of Show

Women were involved in many aspects of the decoration and setting up of the exhibition. May Morris, the only woman on the General Committee of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, was responsible for hanging the embroidery and lace section. She received help in arranging and hanging from Louise Powell and Grace Christie, both of whom were also exhibitors, and Audrey Trevelyan.<sup>23</sup> Comments in the reviews attest to the participation of women in setting up the smaller exhibition rooms, and the hand-loom which were on display in the Textile Room.

Women artists contributed to the decorative paintings which transformed Burlington House. In the Textile Room were four large murals, three of which were designed and painted by women: Constance Lane's "Hand Weaving," Elsie McNaught's "Sheep Shearing" and Mary McDowell's "Textile Shop." Florence Asher, Margaret Brown, Rosalie Elmslie, Ivon Hitchens, and Veronica Martindale, all students at the Royal Academy Schools,<sup>24</sup> assisted with the murals in the Municipal Hall, which were designed by Maurice Greiffenhagen ARA, Charles Sims RA, R Anning Bell ARA, and George Clausen RA.<sup>25</sup>

Women also contributed to the decorations in the Hall of Heroes. Anna Elizabeth Southall assisted her husband Joseph Southall, on "The Return of Peace," a large tempera painting on canvas. Veronica Whall and her father Christopher W Whall are both listed as designers and makers for the altar-piece "Our Lady of the Time of War" in their Apsidal Chapel. The painting in the semi-dome representing "Humanity" with St George and Joan of Arc, also in the Hall of Heroes, was designed by Henry Wilson, and painted by Joan Fulleylove, Margaret Haythorne,

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<sup>23</sup> "Minute Books - General 1915-1917," (8 October 1916) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers AAD 1/51-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London. According to the 1916 ACES catalogue, Audrey Trevelyan ran the London outlet for the East Devon Lace Industry at 19 Eaton Place, London, SW.

<sup>24</sup> "Current Art Notes," Connoisseur 47:185 (January 1917) 57.

<sup>25</sup> "A Metamorphosed Academy," Glasgow Herald (7 October 1916) 9.

assisted by Lawrence H Christie. The decorations below it were also designed by Wilson; these were executed by Edgar Wood, Margaret Calkin, Vivien Gribble, Honor Howard-Mercer, Pauline Moll and Doris Prince. Ruby Bailey, E Levick, and Edith Davey assisted Gilbert Bayes with the modelling of relief sculptures of Hercules, Theseus, Perseus and Jason in the third bay of the Hall of Heroes.

In the smaller rooms, Louise Powell designed and painted a series of twelve panels in egg tempera, converting Room No. 4. into 'an English copsewood in May.' She was assisted in painting them by her husband Alfred H Powell, and Ernest W Gimson. Miss R Marshall, Miss Parker, Miss J Hindley, and Miss D Hulton painted the seven panels of fairy tales depicting "Jack the Giant Killer," "Dick Whittington" and "Beauty and the Beast," adapted from designs by R. Anning Bell ARA, in J Paul Cooper's Nursery. Joyce Smitt of LCC Central School assisted Claude Shepperson with his "Decorations to Frieze."

Women were involved in all aspects of the exhibition's decoration and display, working up to and past the opening day. Comments in the press (of which more later) indicate that the women helping with the decoration and hanging of the show were conspicuous in their presence during the first few days of the exhibition. It is well that they should have been mentioned in the press, for otherwise their efforts may have gone unrecognised. In his Introduction to the catalogue, Wilson thanked the mainly female students as a group, but extended personalised thank-you on the next page to a large group of men:

As for the Students generally, they have been beyond praise. Wherever possible their names have been placed under the works they helped to produce. No words could describe or worthily celebrate the spirit of enthusiasm with which they all threw themselves into the work, nor can we ever thank them sufficiently for all they have done. [...] The sincerest thanks are also due to all the artists who have given their time and labour, and sacrificed much needed holidays, in the execution of the schemes of decoration. To Messrs. R. Anning Bell, ARA, Walter and Gilbert Bayes, G. Clausen, RA, Louis Davis, RWS, CM Gere, Maurice Greiffenhagen, R. Hallward, FL Jackson, Sidney Lee, Gerald Moira, H. Payne, Noel Rooke, Harold Speed, J Southall, Claude Shepperson, Christopher Whall, and Edgar Wood, not the society only, but all London owes a debt of gratitude.<sup>26</sup>

Wilson's words indicate that, as far as the production was concerned, the students - both women and men - did their part in the various decorative schemes extremely well. The scant reception of

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<sup>26</sup> Wilson, 26-27.

those same schemes, reveals the prophetic nature of Wilson's phrase 'no words could describe or worthily celebrate'.

#### Statistics - Women's Work on Display

Due to the vastly increased space available at the Royal Academy, the 1916 Arts & Crafts Exhibition displayed more than twice as many exhibits as the New Gallery shows, with over 2225 works on view. The week before the exhibition opened, an article in The Times remarked, "Necessarily, under present conditions the productions of women workers will form the larger part of the display."<sup>27</sup> Their prediction was almost correct. According to the catalogue, 413 women and 428 men participated in the exhibition, with women responsible for 954 pieces, or 43% of the work in the show. Although The Times did not speculate as to the nature of women's participation, the woman designer was very much in evidence. Of the women who exhibited, fully 78% designed and made their work. In relation to the number of exhibits, work designed by women represented 37% of the entire exhibition, and 87% of the women's work on display.<sup>28</sup>

Women exhibited an incredible variety of items. As in previous exhibitions, embroidery was the most popular medium, comprising 26% of women's work on display. Jewellery and enamelling accounted for 16.5% , and ceramics 11%. These three media represented over half of the women's exhibits. The remaining work, in descending order of occurrence, included decorative painting/murals, handwoven textiles, illustration, 2D design, illumination, bookbinding, sculpture, stained glass, woodcarving, metalwork, toys, beadwork, lace, printmaking, clothing, leatherwork, furniture, 3D design, glass, and gesso. Compared with previous shows, there was a marked increase in ceramics, mural painting, handwoven textiles, sculpture and stained glass, with toys appearing for the first time.(See Appendix VI Techniques Exhibited by Women)

#### Reception of Women's Work

Although women's participation in both design and production had been increasing continually since the first exhibition in 1888, the reception of their work in the press was more

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<sup>27</sup> "Arts and Crafts in War Time," The Times (4 October 1916) 11.

<sup>28</sup> Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Catalogue of the 11<sup>th</sup> Exhibition, 1916, passim.

erratic. In 1916, despite the fact that the number of women and men exhibiting was almost equal, the press reaction to women's work took a considerable nosedive. Whereas in 1903, well over half the women (61%) were able to clip notices from the newspaper or from magazines with their names in print, in 1916 only 76 of the 413 women - a scant 18% - had their work reviewed in my sample of 28 periodicals.

The majority of periodicals which regularly reviewed the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society carried reduced coverage of women in 1916. Even the ACES's staunch supporters named fewer women than usual. This first group includes: the Manchester Guardian, the Studio, the Builder, and almost all the women's papers in my sample: the Queen, the Ladies Field, The Lady and the Lady's Pictorial. A second group, which had previously devoted some attention to women's work reduced their coverage to none: the Building News, The Times, and the Daily Telegraph. Thirdly were the periodicals which did not review the Arts and Crafts at all in 1916, although they had in previous years. In this category we can include the Illustrated London News, the Birmingham Daily Post, the Pall Mall Gazette, and the Standard. Finally, there were a few periodicals which named more women in 1916 than in previous years. This group includes the Connoisseur, the Gentlewoman, the Journal of the Royal Society of Arts, and the Sunday Times, although their collective increase in attention to women's work did not balance out the dearth of representation in the other periodicals. (Appendix VII: Women & Case Studies Reviewed, 1888-1916)

But according to the critics, there were good reasons for not mentioning many names in their reviews. Of the above-noted periodicals which named no women, the latter three all made an issue of the fact that on the Press Day, 6 October 1916, many exhibits were not labelled and catalogues were not available. This posed a problem, for not having the exhibitors' names available precluded their fair assessment of the exhibition. The Glasgow Herald commented:

As dozens of even the important exhibits are not yet in place - telegrams are being sent to artists in remote places soliciting their aid - it would be premature to attempt anything in the nature of a comprehensive survey. That must await the approximate completion of the exhibition and the printing of a catalogue.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> A Metamorphosed Academy. Arts And Crafts In The Making. Glasgow Herald OCT 7, 1916), 9.



The Journal of the Royal Society of Arts concurred: "The catalogue has not yet appeared, so that it is only possible at present to notice the exhibition in its main outlines."<sup>30</sup> CH Collins Baker in the Saturday Review states his case plainly: "The merits of individual exhibitors I make no attempt to distinguish, because catalogues were not available."<sup>31</sup> Claude Phillips in the Daily Telegraph added, "We must reserve to ourselves to return to the subject when a catalogue has been provided."<sup>32</sup> Unfortunately, many critics who attended the Press Day did not return to the exhibition when the catalogue was ready; even those who did visit the exhibition later were disappointed in this regard. Elizabeth Pennell's review in The Nation, dated 20<sup>th</sup> October but published on 30<sup>th</sup> November, indicates this: "The Arts and Crafts Society have not succeeded in having their catalogue ready even at the end of two weeks and, without it, I have not found it easy to understand what [Augustus] John was seeking to express."<sup>33</sup> Indeed, the exhibition had been opened for more than two weeks before catalogues were available, for C Lewis Hind, reviewing the ACES exhibition for the Daily Chronicle, waited until the catalogue became available to write his review: "It was quite an exciting moment when the first batch of catalogues were brought in, for people did want to know who were the designers and makers of the things they admired."<sup>34</sup> Evidently, the labels on the work were not sufficient to enable the critics to assign a name to the work on view.

Whether the tardiness of publication of the catalogue was the fault of the Society or the publisher, in my attempt to understand the lack of publicity for women's work in 1916, it is clear that the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society must take some responsibility. The lack of a catalogue may have been in part responsible for fewer women being named in journals which reviewed the exhibition when it opened, but it did not prevent others from naming a fair proportion of men. The decrease in attention to women's work was far greater by 1916 than the decrease in attention to men's work, especially when compared to the 1903 ACES exhibition. In 1903, 61% of women and

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<sup>30</sup> "Arts and Crafts," Journal of the Royal Society of Arts LXIV:3335 (20 October 1916) 819.

<sup>31</sup> CH Collins Baker, "The Arts And Crafts," The Saturday Review Of Politics, Literature, Science, And Art 122 :3184 (4 November 1916) 433.

<sup>32</sup> Sir Claude Phillips, "Royal Academy. Arts & Crafts Exhibition," The Daily Telegraph (7 October 1916) 11.

<sup>33</sup> NN [Elizabeth Pennell], "The Arts and Crafts at the Royal Academy," The Nation (30 November 1916) 525.

<sup>34</sup> C. Lewis Hind, "Reconstruction. Utility, Beauty, Simplicity," The Daily Chronicle, (31 October 1916) 6.

45% of men were named in my review sample; yet in 1916, 18% of women and 30% of men were named in the papers.<sup>35</sup>

The ACES was definitely concerned with their image as depicted by the periodical press, and was careful to send out advance information about their exhibitions. The press policy needs some investigation in 1916, for there was a direct correlation between the information contained in the advance publicity about the 1916 exhibition, and the content of the reviews, neither of which contained much information about women's involvement in the show.

At a meeting on 24 September 1915, a year before the 1916 show opened, the following motion was passed: "That with regard to the Press all Propaganda should be composed and agreed upon within the Society by members themselves."<sup>36</sup> A Committee was formed for this purpose, and immediately wrote a press release about the new president, Henry Wilson, and the work of the Society. The press release was accepted at the 8 October 1915 meeting, when it was also decided which newspapers and periodicals to send their article for insertion. May Morris wrote to Arthur Clutton-Brock, the art critic at The Times, and also to "WM" at the Daily Mail, with a request that these two London dailies insert their article.<sup>37</sup>

The next mention of publicity was in the minutes of 11 May 1916, when

It was suggested that an interview should be obtained with the Editor of The Times with a view to getting an announcement. The Editor of the Manchester Guardian [Charles Prestwich Scott] had already promised to publish anything the President might send him."<sup>38</sup>

It is clear then, that the timing and the content of some of the information contained in these daily newspapers about the ACES were the ideas of the Society itself. It is not surprising that The Times

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<sup>35</sup> In 1903 a total of 564 men participated, 253 of whom were named in my reviews sample. In 1916, 430 men participated, and 124 were mentioned in my sample.

<sup>36</sup> "Minute Books - General, 1915-1917," (24 September 1915) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers AAD 1/51-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London.

<sup>37</sup> The Press Committee consisted of Graily Hewitt, Halsey Ricardo and Christopher Whall. "WM" was not further identified in the Minutes. "Minute Books - General, 1915-1917," (8 October 1915) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers AAD 1/51-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London.

<sup>38</sup> "Minute Books - General, 1915-1917," (11 May 1916) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers AAD 1/51-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London.

and the Manchester Guardian were chosen, for these newspapers had routinely reviewed their exhibitions over the years.

After announcing the exhibition publicly, the Committee sent the Prospectus to individual artists, explaining the purpose of the 1916 exhibition, and inviting their involvement. The Prospectus emphasised trade possibilities after the war, as the maintenance of England's status in markets for manufactured goods was constantly in the press during the war years. It appears they wanted to take advantage of the current anti-German sentiment during the war to encourage English designers to do their part toward helping English trade and reconstruction when the hostilities were over, using the Arts & Crafts Exhibition as a platform for public recognition. They cited the example of the Deutsche Werkbund, an Arts & Crafts-style consortium formed in 1907 by Herman Muthesius "with the object of capturing the markets of the world for German art manufactures"<sup>39</sup> as the epitome of financial and artistic success to which English art manufacturers should aspire.

Elected in June 1916,<sup>40</sup> the Finance Committee for the 1916 ACES show were responsible for advertising, and in July 1916 appointed a Publicity Sub-Committee which sent advance notices about the upcoming exhibition to various periodicals.<sup>41</sup> These notices detail specifically the structural changes that the ACES would be making to the rooms of Burlington House. Brief articles appeared in The Times on 20 July, and in the Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects on 29 July. As they have exactly the same wording, they are very likely the press release as written by the Committee. I quote it in its entirety:

The Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society are organizing an exhibition to be opened in the first week of October at Burlington House. A guarantee fund of £1,500 is being formed for the preliminary work, under a finance committee of which Mr W Lee Matthews is chairman and Mr CH St John Hornby, hon. treasurer. The President and Council of the Royal Academy have granted the free use of their galleries. In each room will be constructed temporary interiors, which will be decorated and furnished by different artists. Within these interiors will be arranged individual

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<sup>39</sup> WT Whitley, "Arts and Crafts at the Royal Academy. Third Article," The Studio. 69:286 (January 1917) 189.

<sup>40</sup> Members of the Finance Committee were: W. Lee Matthews [chair], Sydney Morse, Martin de Selincourt, Henry Wilson, CH St John Hornby, and Emery Walker. "Minute Books - General, 1915-1917," (1 June 1916) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers AAD 1/51-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London.

<sup>41</sup> This Sub-Committee consisted of Selwyn Image, St John Hornby, Emery Walker and Graily Hewitt. The document prepared was not included in the Minutes. "Minute Books - General, 1915-1917," (5 July 1916) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers AAD 1/51-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London.

works selected for their fitness to the scheme of decoration adopted. There will be a large municipal hall, the sides divided into bays, each decorated in harmony with an agreed scheme. Another gallery will be fitted up as an ideal Council Chamber. The central octagon will be divided into a series of apsidal chapels, decorated by individual artists or groups of artists. In the entrance gallery will be constructed a panoramic suggestion for the reconstruction of Trafalgar Square. Mr ES Prior, ARA, 1 Hare-court, Temple, is Hon. Secretary of the Exhibition Society.<sup>42</sup>

Two points of significance may be noted. Firstly there is no mention whatsoever of the Domestic and Allied Crafts, the so-called “main fact of the exhibition” as mentioned by Henry Wilson in the Minutes of 9 February 1916. This lacunae would affect reviews of the exhibition, as will be shown. The second point is the emphasis on the guarantee fund being raised, which can be linked to the critical press responses to the financial failure of their previous exhibition (November 1912 to January 1913). During that exhibition, the Society’s Minutes record that “The Press seem to be doing their best to disparage what we as a Society have attempted, because in England it has not been made a National Concern, as it has become in other countries.”<sup>43</sup> The Finance and Press Committees were evidently determined that this sort of press would not recur in the 1916 show, and included evidence of their financial stability in the first press release about the exhibition.

Slightly longer and more detailed versions of this press release appeared in the Journal of the Royal Society of Arts on 7 July 1916, and in The Architect on 28 July 1916. The Journal of the RSA’s article was geared toward potential exhibitors, for it includes the following: “The exhibition will be open to all craftsmen, whether members of the Society or not, and works will be received and exhibited under conditions similar to those of the summer exhibitions at the Royal Academy.”<sup>44</sup> Both these periodicals added a sentence about the purpose of the exhibition, which was not present in the previous announcements: “Based on the successful experiments in Ghent in 1913 and in Paris in 1914, the exhibition will take the form of a constructive demonstration of the creative possibilities of British folk.”<sup>45</sup> The rest of the article is the same as that printed in The

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<sup>42</sup> Prior was also a Fellow of the RIBA. “Arts and Crafts: Scheme for a Great Exhibition,” Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects (29 July 1916) 295; and “Arts and Crafts. Scheme for a Great Exhibition,” The Times (20 July 1916) 5.

<sup>43</sup> Minutes 13 December 1912. Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers Quoted in Powers, 23.

<sup>44</sup> “General Note. Arts and Crafts Exhibition,” Journal of the Royal Society of Arts 64:3320 (7 July 1916) 606.

<sup>45</sup> “General Note. Arts and Crafts Exhibition,” 606.

Times, with the importance exception that it did not mention the guarantee fund. Even less information appeared in the dailies, according to the Journal of the Royal Society of Arts:

According to the shorter announcement appearing in the daily papers, it is to be simply an exhibition of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society held in the galleries of the Royal Academy. The notice which appeared in the *Journal [of the Royal Society of Arts]* last week, comparing the forth-coming exhibition with those held at Ghent and Paris in 1913 and 1914 does, however, suggest a somewhat broader basis.<sup>46</sup>

The more detailed version of the structural changes was perhaps thought to be of more interest to architects than to the general public. A short paragraph about the upcoming ACES exhibition in the September 1916 issue of The Athenæum, for example, makes no mention of the alteration of the galleries whatsoever. Rather, it focuses on the efforts of the artists, and the purpose of the exhibition:

A plan has been initiated to utilize to the utmost the vast wealth of creative and inventive power latent in England. ... [the exhibition] is intended to be fully representative of British resources, and expressive of the determination, by the sheer superiority of British workmanship, to replace enemy products.<sup>47</sup>

As they appeared in print, the Society's pre-exhibition press releases emphasised the remarkable changes about to take place in the rooms of the Royal Academy, with only a few selected periodicals also printing that the exhibition had the higher purpose of representing the capabilities of British craftworkers. The press release took the form of an editorial in The Gentlewoman, from which I quoted at the beginning of this chapter. Published on 23 September 1916, this editorial was the only pre-exhibition publicity to discuss women's potential to support their country in the war effort by designing or making decorative arts.

Another press announcement was sent out just before the exhibition opened, appearing, for example, in The Times on 4 October and the Lady's Pictorial on 7 October 1916. Similar to the July press release, the emphasis in this publicity piece was again on the reconstruction of the interior of the galleries, but with considerably more detail, including the names of those men who designed the murals in the four main reconstructed rooms. Despite The Times's prediction that more women than men would be involved in the 1916 exhibition, only three periodicals made

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<sup>46</sup> "Arts and Crafts," Journal of the Royal Society of Arts 64:3321 (14 July 1916) 618.

<sup>47</sup> "Notes and News," The Athenæum 1609 (September 1916) 402.

reference to the participation of women in all this advance press, and the only one woman was named.<sup>48</sup> She was Veronica Whall, who designed and painted a mural with her father, Christopher Whall, who just happened to be on the Press Committee. Reference was not made to the contribution, painted or otherwise, made by the several hundred women who exhibited at the 1916 Arts & Crafts Exhibition, an ominous harbinger of their fate in the reviews.

As in previous years, reviewers of the 1916 Arts & Crafts Exhibition were invited to a Press View a few days before the exhibition opened to the general public. Unfortunately, the exhibition was not ready: works were still being hung, murals were being finished and, as discussed, the catalogue had not yet been printed. The critics' initial reaction to the show was not a good one, and comments on women's work in particular were not profuse. The word 'chaos' was used often in the descriptions of the galleries on the Press Day, as the exhibition was nowhere near completion. The most indignant and outspoken of the critics was Sir Claude Phillips in the Daily Telegraph:

The critics were summoned to-day (Friday) to consider and estimate the results achieved; but they were, alas! met not by æsthetic harmony, or that quietude which is a condition precedent to artistic appreciation, but by chaos, by a terrific combination of sinister noises suggestive of modern warfare at its worst. Everywhere were there high scaffoldings obscuring the vaster mural decorations; nowhere was order, or anything approaching definitive arrangement. Worst of all, nowhere was to be found the least vestige of a catalogue. Courteous, long-suffering officials devoted themselves, with infinite patience, to the answering of questions, and with soft answers sought to turn away wrath. Still, it is impossible, without a higher degree of self-possession than we can pretend to possess, to give, under these conditions, a fair account of a show so elaborate and extensive, and in some respects so novel, as this is. It is not so much the momentary hurt to feelings and tempers as the injury to the exhibition itself that we deplore.<sup>49</sup>

There were several reasons for the chaos. The amount of work to be done in order to rebuild three quarters of Burlington House was far more than could realistically be completed in the weeks between the RA summer show and the opening of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition.<sup>50</sup> There was the dearth of 'manpower' with which to do this construction, and also, due to the war, a restriction on working hours to daylight hours.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> "Arts and Crafts at Burlington House," Lady's Pictorial (7 October 1916) 458.

<sup>49</sup> Sir Claude Phillips, "Royal Academy. Arts & Crafts Exhibition," The Daily Telegraph (7 October 1916) 11.

<sup>50</sup> The Royal Academy's summer exhibition was held from 1<sup>st</sup> May 1916 for three months.

<sup>51</sup> WT Whitley, "Arts & Crafts at the Royal Academy. First Article," The Studio 69:284 (November 1916) 77.

Several critics made mention of women's exertions towards finishing the decoration and set-up of the show during the first few days it was open. JB in Burlington Magazine described the scene: "Extensive pattern decorations, screening and pasting and all sorts of hard work have been done, largely by young craftswomen, who work as devotedly and probably get more fun out of these operations than their mothers did in the throes of bazaars."<sup>52</sup> The significance of women art students performing both artistic and manual labour in the setting up of an art exhibition was not lost on this critic, for it was a far cry from what their mothers had done, organizing charity bazaars a generation earlier.

The Lady's vivid description of the chaotic scene at Burlington House at the private view, also attests to the participation of women:

I wondered if all could possibly be completed and ready by the real opening day, for there were ladders, ropes, and glue-pots everywhere, and harassed ladies in all kinds of artistic garments were perched on scaffoldings hanging friezes, tapestries, and other works of art, while others were setting up hand-loom and arranging stalls.<sup>53</sup>

The Gentlewoman added that

woman has borne an immense part in the enthusiastic work which [the exhibition] represents. The early visitor was astonished to see girls perilously perched upon scaffolds decorating the walls and painting in the big decorative pictures, and everywhere, from end to end, one finds admirable contributions by women artists thickly scattered.<sup>54</sup>

The Glasgow Herald's observation was similar: "Here a well-known painter in working smock put the finishing touches onto a decorative panel 15ft. above the floor level; there girls in blue overalls were busy painting this or that part of an improvised chapel, hall, or dwelling room."<sup>55</sup>

Commenting on whether the expenditure on art schools and art teaching had been producing results, LC [Lionel Cust] in Burlington Magazine came to the conclusion that they had: "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition has answered this question to some extent by showing that there are

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<sup>52</sup> JB, "A Monthly Chronicle - The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," Burlington Magazine 29:164 (November 1916) 341.

<sup>53</sup> "The Lady in Society," The Lady (19 October 1916), 447.

<sup>54</sup> "Women's Work at the Arts & Crafts. Second Notice," The Gentlewoman (25 November 1916) 578.

<sup>55</sup> "A Metamorphosed Academy. Arts And Crafts In The Making," Glasgow Herald (7 October 1916) 9.

in existence a quite sufficient number of working artists of both sexes capable of regular employment.”<sup>56</sup> Despite this promising opinion of the quality of the work, comments about women’s exhibits were scattered across the range of reviews in my sample.

Female students of Royal College of Art and the Birmingham School of Art exhibited together in the same room, inviting comparisons from reviewers. The Journal of the Society of Arts was not complimentary to the latter school:

The little room in which are shown the work of the students of the embroidery class at the Royal College of Art if not very remarkable, houses a pleasing and homogeneous little collection of work, but the exhibit of the Birmingham School hardly seems to justify its existence. There is some good student metalwork and some embroidery which is creditable as the work of girls of 15 or 16, but there seems no particular reason for showing it at an exhibition at Burlington House.<sup>57</sup>

This critic was equally dismissive of the women jewellers: “Mr and Mrs Gaskin have sent some good jewellery, and Miss Kirkman, Miss Ramsay and a number of other women are adequately represented.”<sup>58</sup> The number of ‘other women’ who exhibited jewellery that year was 33, including two “Miss Ramsays,” Violet and Frances; Miss Kirkman does not appear in the catalogue at all.

The Lady’s review appeared in “The Lady’ in Society” column, sandwiched in between the movements of the Queen, and some gossip from Florence. Accordingly, they drew attention to outfits rather than artworks:

Lady Lytton and her little girl were admiring the artistic jewellery, and I thought how lovely her own necklace of several rows of barbaric pearls was. She had on a dark blue cloth frock, with a loose sash tied at the side, and a little crimson cap. Lady Eileen Orde, who was married so very recently, was with a girl friend, both dressed in navy blue [...]<sup>59</sup>

When the columnist did name women, they worked embroidery:

Another department which interested me very much was the worked pictures. There was a whole room devoted to samplers, and Mrs Martin Pirrie’s silk pictures were quite exquisite: such soft colouring that they looked like pastels. [...] There

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<sup>56</sup> L.C. [Lionel Cust?] “A Monthly Chronicle. Arts and Crafts at the Royal Academy,” Burlington Magazine 29:165 (December 1916), 388.

<sup>57</sup> “Arts and Crafts Exhibition at Burlington House (Second Notice),” Journal of the Royal Society of Arts 64:3338 (10 November 1916) 853.

<sup>58</sup> “Arts and Crafts Exhibition at Burlington House (Second Notice),” 853. In fact, 36 women designed jewellery in 1916, most from the Birmingham School of Art.

<sup>59</sup> “The Lady’ in Society,” The Lady (19 October 1916) 447.



were also some very clever snow scenes in wool by Tony Cyriax, who managed to give the effect of woods of fir-trees in deep snow by a just a few woollen stitches.<sup>60</sup>

Privileging embroidery over all other types of work was not new in The Lady's reviews of ACES. The same approach was taken in 1903, when they ignored women's new work in jewellery in favour of the embroidery.

In contrast, the Queen's art critic found the exhibition to be "a revelation as to the wealth of resource" available in the handicrafts.<sup>61</sup> British craftworkers were "a reserve force which, when the days of reconstruction come, [...] should, if fully realised, prove a national asset of the highest value educationally and commercially."<sup>62</sup> That being said, they went on to discuss the Retrospective room, the embroideries and hand-loom weaving in the Textile room, the furniture and the pottery - all things that had made the reputation of the Arts and Crafts in the 1890s. The only 'new' aspect of the exhibition they highlighted was the toy industry, thought to have great possibilities in reconstruction after the War. This reporting method, a combination of admiration for traditional ways and excitement for new ideas, was by now standard practice in The Queen, enabling them to cater to a wider age bracket within their target audience.

The Gentlewoman had a similar readership, but included the most coverage of women's work in this exhibition. Indeed, they named no men at all in 1916.<sup>63</sup> In addition to the editorial column referred to at the beginning of this chapter, there were five illustrated reviews between late November 1916 and January 1917. The editorial states, "At last we are going to have a society here working with the object of doing precisely the same thing [as the German Werkbund] for England, and it is a work in which women will play a highly important part."<sup>64</sup> Here again there is evidence of appealing to both camps, showing the anonymous critic looking forward to new types of work in the future, and yet still glorifying the more traditional spheres of women's work.

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<sup>60</sup> "The Lady' in Society," The Lady (19 October 1916) 447.

<sup>61</sup> "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition," The Queen (11 November 1916) 664.

<sup>62</sup> "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition," 664.

<sup>63</sup> Previous reviews of ACES exhibitions, in The Gentlewoman both written by 'Iris,' contained few mentions of women, indicating a change of critic or editor: 1890- 2 women, 8 men; and 1903- 8 women, 8 men.

<sup>64</sup> "The Gentlewoman's Opinion - Woman as Regenerator," The Gentlewoman (23 September 1916) 304.

The Gentlewoman's five reviews demonstrated this combination of traditional skills and new skills. Each review had a theme, the method used by weeklies such as the Saturday Review or the Athenaeum to cover the Royal Academy.<sup>65</sup> The second review showcased two new techniques, painted tapestry, described as "irregular" in that it imitated woven tapestry, and decorated boxes. Decorating boxes was not new, but the materials used, such as vellum, stitched together with leather, were new.

The third notice concentrated on jewellery, "one of the most ancient and deeply-rooted passions amongst women, [...] so it is exceedingly fitting that women should devise and make the adornments which they love and understand so well."<sup>66</sup> Their comments echo those of Aymer Vallance in his review of jewellery in the 1903 Arts & Crafts Exhibition.<sup>67</sup> Jewellery was the second most popular medium worked by women in this exhibition, yet despite being designed and produced by women since the late 1890s, it was still written about as a new medium for women's artistic abilities. Ecclesiastical art, the most traditional style of decorative work, was the theme of the fourth review, in which Jessie Bayes' altar was praised for its combination of traditional Christian symbolism and modern techniques of flat carving and incised work, in a colour scheme of blue and gold. Further evidence that women were new to this style of work comes from a comment by LC [Lionel Cust] in Burlington Magazine: "Both courage and reticence seem equally wanting in the designs for ecclesiastical use, and reveal the ever-encroaching advance of feminist influence in the Church."<sup>68</sup>

The fifth and final notice in The Gentlewoman showed photographs of sculptures by Phoebe Stabler and Florence Hedges, both noted for their originality, and Ethel Lyne's embroidery mounted under glass, for use as a tray. Lyne was congratulated for her clever idea of simultaneously using and protecting her embroidery. The comments regarding women's efforts in

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<sup>65</sup> Helene E Roberts, "Exhibition And Review: The Periodical Press and The Victorian Art Exhibition System," in Joanne Shattock & Michael Wolff eds, The Victorian Periodical Press: Samplings & Soundings (Leicester University Press and University of Toronto Press, 1982), 84.

<sup>66</sup> "Women's Work at the Arts & Crafts. Third Notice," The Gentlewoman (2 December 1916) 602.

<sup>67</sup> Aymer Vallance, "British Arts and Crafts in 1903. II- Embroidery Glass Ceramics and Metalwork," Magazine of Art. (New Series 1903) 222.

this exhibition are confident and strong in this final article. The critic points out that two lessons have been learned in this show. The first is that the “artistic trades which form so large a part of our commerce demand craftsmanship and design by which to live, and in these gifts the British are second to none.”<sup>69</sup> The second lesson was

that woman’s part is a large and fine one in this Renaissance. [...] even in our small summaries it must have been evident to our readers that there is abundant vitality and originality of craftsmanship of the highest order already practised by our women artists.<sup>70</sup>

Both the Queen and the Gentlewoman stand out amongst reviews of this exhibition firstly due to their lengthy discussions of women’s work in the 1916 ACES show, and secondly for emphasising women’s adaptability to change, and their ability to combine tradition and innovation in their work, whether in ideas, techniques, or forms. The simultaneous promotion of new ideas alongside more familiar ones helped women at the time to adapt to the new situation presented by the war, and to increase their confidence in their new, broadened range of activities. In doing this, these periodicals were also helping themselves. Appealing both to women who embraced these changes as well as those who did not, is both good politics and good business, and allowed these periodicals to carry on selling magazines, maintain their market position and survive in times of rapid change.

The final area where women’s work was rather glossed over by the press were the three murals in the Textile Room. Described in the catalogue as Decoration to Frieze, they included Constance Lane’s Hand Weaving with borders by GI Hobart Hampden, Elsie McNaught’s Sheep Shearing, and Mary McDowall’s Textile Shop. Randolph Schwabe decorated the fourth wall with two smaller pictures, Weaving and The Three Fates.<sup>71</sup> All were ex-students of the Slade School,

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<sup>68</sup> L.C. [Lionel Cust?] “A Monthly Chronicle. Arts and Crafts at the Royal Academy,” Burlington Magazine 29:165 (December 1916) 388. Cust is possibly referring to a recent decision by the Church of England to allow women to be speakers in the Church. “Notes and News,” The Athenæum 4608 (August 1916) 361.

<sup>69</sup> “Women’s Work at the Arts & Crafts. Final Notice,” The Gentlewoman (6 January 1917) 11.

<sup>70</sup> “Women’s Work at the Arts & Crafts. Final Notice,” 11.

<sup>71</sup> Randolph Schwabe, (1885-1948), studied at the Royal College of Art, the Slade School from 1900-1906, and the Academie Julien in Paris, winning a Slade Scholarship and touring the Continent in 1905. An official war artist during the First World War, Schwabe afterward taught in London, and in 1930 was appointed Slade Professor of University College, London, and Principal of the Slade School, positions he maintained until this death in 1948. An active exhibitor, Schwabe was member of the London Group (1915), ARWS 1938; RWS 1942 and the New English Art Club (1917 onwards), where he exhibited over 150 canvases during his lifetime.

continuing their careers as painters.<sup>72</sup> McDowall was a painter and printmaker, exhibiting paintings, lino and woodcut prints from 1916-1939 at private London galleries, the International Society, New English Art Club, and the Royal Academy.<sup>73</sup> Both Lane and McNaught were landscape and mural painters. Lane had worked with Dora Carrington on fresco panels at Ashridge, Hertfordshire, in 1912-1913,<sup>74</sup> and exhibited landscape paintings from 1919-1940, mainly at the Beaux Arts Gallery, but also at the Royal Academy, and the New English Art Club.<sup>75</sup> Elsie McNaught exhibited exclusively at the New English Art Club from 1910-1920.<sup>76</sup> A few months before the ACES show, she had won a £5 second prize for her Design for Mural Painting for a Boys' Club, at the Civic Arts Association Exhibition in July 1916.<sup>77</sup>

The murals were illustrated in two periodicals, mentioned in passing in two others, and discussed in artistically critical terms in three more reviews. The illustration was the professional photograph of the Textile Room taken by Messrs Henry Dixon & Son at the request of the ACES, which happened to show Lane's and McNaught's murals. This photograph appeared in the Architect and the Studio. (Figure 5.2) The Studio's comments directed its readers to the exhibits in the room rather than the murals on the walls: "The Second Gallery, also remodelled and decorated with wall paintings, is chiefly a room of textiles."<sup>78</sup> The Architect printed six photographic views of

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LG Wickham Legg & E T Williams eds, The Dictionary of National Biography, 1941-1950 (Oxford University Press, 1959) 762-763; Thomas Deans & Co Historical Fine Art, Randolph Schwabe <<http://www.tdeansco.com/historical/schwabe/essay.html>>; Johnson & Greutzner, 450.

<sup>72</sup> "The Lady in Society," The Lady (19 October 1916) 447.

<sup>73</sup> J. Johnson & A. Greutzner, comps. The Dictionary of British Artists, 1880-1940. Woodbridge, UK: Antique Collectors' Club, 1976.

<sup>74</sup> Alan Powers, "Murals of the Arts and Crafts Movement at the 1916 Exhibition," Craft History One (1988) 29. See also Alan Powers, "The Fresco Revival in the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century," Journal of the Decorative Arts Society 12.

<sup>75</sup> Johnson & Greutzner, 299.

<sup>76</sup> Johnson & Greutzner, 334.

<sup>77</sup> "The Civic Arts Association's Exhibition," Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects XXIII:17 3<sup>rd</sup> series (29 July 1916) 295.

<sup>78</sup> WT Whitley, "Arts and Crafts at the Royal Academy-First Article," The Studio 69:284 (November 1916) 74.

the exhibition, but discussed only the rooms which had been redesigned, the Municipal Hall and the Hall of Heroes.<sup>79</sup>



Figure 5.2: View of Textile Room.  
[*The Studio* (December 1916), 129.]

Like the *Studio*, the *Gentlewoman* and the *Lady* included only short phrases about the room's murals, which did not include the names of the painters. The *Gentlewoman* prefaced its comments on the embroidery with mention of the Textile Room's "working looms and poster-like frieze,"<sup>80</sup> while the *Lady* noted that "above them is a great frieze designed and executed by 3 young artists from the Slade School."<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> The illustration of the Textile Room appears in the issue of 24 November 1916 on page 317, the final illustration in the series. Two reviews were published in the two preceding weeks. "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," *The Architect* (10 November 1916) 279-280; "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition - II," *The Architect* (17 November 1916) 293-294.

<sup>80</sup> "Women's Work at the Arts & Crafts," *The Gentlewoman* (18 November 1916) 550.

<sup>81</sup> "The Lady in Society," *The Lady* (19 October 1916) 448.

Although Mary McDowall's name does not appear in any reviews in my selection, Elsie McNaught, Constance Lane, and Randolph Schwabe were each named in three periodicals. A review in Burlington Magazine, one of only a handful of art magazines in England at the time, did not find the women's paintings problematic in the least: "Miss Lane has a painting of women weaving that shows real promise, and Miss McNaught a sheep-shearing scene which has a rhythmic quality uniting the figures and the landscape."<sup>82</sup> Both comments were complimentary, but McNaught's work was discussed using more technical language than the benign comments about Lane's work.

Elsie McNaught was listed among the men who had contributed "to the noble primary function of civic art in a series of huge wall pieces"<sup>83</sup> in the preliminary article on the ACES exhibition in the Manchester Guardian. Later that week, the same paper described McNaught's mural more specifically as "remarkable for its large handling and sustained pictorial force."<sup>84</sup> Again, her painting is described with a masculine artistic vocabulary.

Comments about the Textile Room in the Journal of Decorative Art and British Decorator, a wallpaper trade journal published in Manchester, contained opposing views of the McNaught's mural. The more conservative nature of this journal's critics is evident:

In the weaving room [...] Miss Constance Lane and Miss Elsie McNaught, with Mr Randolph Schwabe, have succeeded very well in carrying out the scheme decided upon; and the room has a note of harmony which is lacking in the other room (sic). Miss Lane shows in her bright treatment women weaving. She has wrought a real work of art by her fine representation, so full of insight; [...] Miss McNaught is also sure of her subject, a representation of men engaged in sheep-shearing; but there is lacking the charm of harmonious colouring, the varying greens being too striking against the massed woods in the background. It is more pictorial than decorative.<sup>85</sup>

As in the Burlington Magazine, Lane's mural receives somewhat nebulous praise. McNaught's work is for the third time discussed in terms of its technique and plastic qualities, but this time it lacks the 'charm of harmonious colouring,' its colour is 'too striking' and its overall design 'more pictorial than decorative.' It is tempting to suggest that these mild criticisms were

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<sup>82</sup> "A Monthly Chronicle. The Arts & Crafts Exhibition," Burlington Magazine 29:164 (November 1916) 341.

<sup>83</sup> "Our London Correspondence," Manchester Guardian (9 October 1916).

<sup>84</sup> "The Arrival of the Arts and Crafts," Manchester Guardian (11 October 1916) 6.

<sup>85</sup> "Our London Letter," The Journal of Decorative Art and British Decorator 36:431 (November 1916) 307.

due to her stepping outside of conventional feminine painting styles by not using low-key colours and decorative designs.

In the second review, the final comment in a paragraph headed ‘Textiles and Wallpaper’ was again about McNaught’s mural: “We do not profess to understand Miss McNaught’s panel, ‘Sheep Shearing.’ Our knowledge of pre-vorticism, post-cubism, and the other isms, which put forward bad drawing under big names, is nil.”<sup>86</sup> When compared with the seriousness of the previous three reviewers, the flippancy of these comments render them unworthy of serious consideration. The criticisms are likely directed as much at these new trends as at McNaught’s work, as a painter or as a woman, for this critic also makes sarcastic comments about the work of the Omega Workshops and Roger Fry.<sup>87</sup>

Critics displayed ambivalence and confusion in their attempts to review of women’s mural paintings. Lane’s work is accepted without critique; neither her subject matter nor her technique offended the reviewers. McNaught’s mural caused more problems for the reviewers. Burlington Magazine and Manchester Guardian thought her subject matter and her technique acceptable and even good, but both critics in the Journal of Decorative Art had problems with her technique. This is not surprising, for the art magazine and provincial daily newspaper had professional art critics covering such exhibitions, who would doubtless be more familiar with women painting murals in up-to-date styles than the trade journal. The lack of attention to and/or the fallacious critique of women doing new things by the Journal of Decorative Art follows the trend of the reception of this entire exhibition.

#### Case Study 1: Grace Christie

Of the 76 women whose work was written about in my review sample, Grace Christie was named ten times. Her work was described without actually naming her in an additional three

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<sup>86</sup> “The Arts & Crafts Exhibition,” The Journal of Decorative Art and British Decorator 36:432 (December 1916) 335.

<sup>87</sup> Fry had championed the Post-Impressionists with two exhibitions, in 1912 and 1913; he and a group of painter friends whose painting style typified Vorticism, had opened the Omega Workshops in 1913. Vorticism was also the style of decoration used on fabrics and ceramics at the Omega Workshops. I would hazard a guess, then, that while the critic here did have some problems with McNaught’s painting style, he is also using her work as a foil to take jabs at Roger Fry’s ideas.

reviews, which ranks her second after Phoebe Stabler in statistical prominence. Christie's greatest attention in the press was for the joint work she did with her husband, Archibald Haswell Christie, and Francis W Troup, while her solo contribution to the 1916 exhibition as a designer, maker, and exhibitor of embroidery, as well as a member of the Hanging Committee, was barely indicated in the press.

Anna Grace Ida Chadburn (1872-1938) was born in Poplar, London, the second of four children. Her father, James Chadburn, was an independent minister from Blackburn, and her mother, Grace Tetley, was from Bradford, Yorkshire. After their marriage on 30 May 1867, the Chadburns removed to Trinity Parsonage, Poplar, in London's East End, where by 1881 their household included a cook and a housemaid.<sup>88</sup> When she was nine years old, Grace Chadburn was attending Hatton Hall Broad Green,<sup>89</sup> a ladies' boarding school in Wellingborough, Northampton run by her great-aunt Catherine Tetley.<sup>90</sup> There were 61 students and five teachers at Haddon Hall, including Jeanna Nuilder, a Teacher of Languages from Brussels, Belgium, and Anna Butz, a Teacher of Music from Kirchberge, Germany.<sup>91</sup> Grace Chadburn certainly learned to read both French and German, as she used sources in these languages for the several publications on *Opus Anglicanum* she later wrote in Burlington Magazine. In this type of school, it is extremely likely that she would also have learned embroidery.

Although exact details of Grace Chadburn's further art education have yet to be ascertained, it seems plausible that she studied at the LCC Central School of Arts and Crafts in the late 1890's, as her personal and professional life from 1899 has links to this School. In 1899, she first exhibited work at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition in 1899, an embroidered glove-box, and an

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<sup>88</sup> Free Births, Marriages, Deaths. <[http://freebmd.rootsweb.com/cgi/districts.pl?r=24092375&d=bmd\\_1082123659](http://freebmd.rootsweb.com/cgi/districts.pl?r=24092375&d=bmd_1082123659)>, 1881 British Census. <[www.familysearch.com](http://www.familysearch.com)>.

<sup>89</sup> Hatton Hall Broad Green was run as a private girls' school until 1913, when a Mrs Harrison donated it to the Children's Society, along with £500 for the necessary renovations. It was then run as the Hatton Home for Boys until 1944. <[www.hiddenlives.org.uk/homes/WELL/01.html](http://www.hiddenlives.org.uk/homes/WELL/01.html)>.

<sup>90</sup> 1881 British Census. Catherine Tetley was the second wife of Samuel Tetley, a brother of Grace Tetley's father George Greenwood Tetley. Richard Tetley, "Tetleys Tetlows & Variants," The Tetley Genealogy Page (2 January 2004) <<http://homepage.ntlworld.com/richard.tetley/dat2.html#5>>.

<sup>91</sup> 1881 British Census. <[http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/Search/Census/household\\_record.asp?HOUSEHOLD\\_...>](http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/Search/Census/household_record.asp?HOUSEHOLD_...)



embroidered bag.<sup>92</sup> Their acceptance indicates that she had acquired a high level of design and technical expertise by that time. In June 1900 she married Archibald Haswell Christie, who taught architectural drawing and cabinet work design at the LCC Central School from 1896.<sup>93</sup> Through her husband she also knew William Richard Lethaby, principal of the Central School from 1896-1911. Lethaby was appointed head of the School of Design at the reorganised Royal College of Art, and hired Grace Christie to teach Embroidery and Tapestry Weaving in 1901, the only woman in the team of teachers he chose for his department.<sup>94</sup>

Grace Christie taught embroidery and tapestry weaving at the Royal College of Art from 1901 to 1921. By 1911, the training of women as embroidery teachers was seen as an important career, and a description of Christie's class was included in the 1911 Every Woman's Encyclopedia, under the heading, 'Where to Study Art':

The Embroidery Class, which takes place on Thursday afternoons, under the direction of Mrs Archibald H Christie, and which is attended by almost every woman student in the school, for the demands for design and embroidery go together in almost every woman teacher's post, and girls double their chances of success if they are skilled in the intricacies of embroidery. There is a constant demand for teachers of embroidery and design from the training schools, for which the salaries offered range from £130 to £150 a year.<sup>95</sup>

In addition to teaching, her professional career involved designing, producing and exhibiting embroideries, and writing both historical and technical books on embroidery. After her marriage, she exhibited as either 'Grace Christie' or 'Mrs AH Christie' in every Arts & Crafts Exhibition from 1903 to 1916, becoming a member of the Society in 1906.<sup>96</sup> Although Tanya

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<sup>92</sup> Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Sixth Exhibition, 1899.

<sup>93</sup> "LCC Central School of Art," The Times (7 November 1896).

<sup>94</sup> Board of Education, Prospectus of the Royal College of Art, London 1901-1902 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1900 4. Special Collection, National Art Library, London. Christopher Frayling, The Royal College of Art. One Hundred & Fifty Years of Art & Design (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1987) 66-67.

<sup>95</sup> quoted in Frayling, 74.

<sup>96</sup> In 1903 she exhibited embroidery and tapestry as 'Mrs Grace Christie.' In 1906, she exhibited the illustrations to her book "Handbook of Embroidery" under the designer name 'Grace Christie' and the exhibitor 'Mrs AH Christie.' She continued to exhibit as 'Grace Christie' in 1910 and 1912, but in 1916 she reverted back to using 'Mrs AH Christie' for all her work, her own embroidery designs or her joint projects with students or her husband. It appears that she was trying to differentiate between the author name 'Grace Christie' for her professional work, and her proper name, 'Mrs AH Christie'. Her books and articles were also published under the author-name 'Mrs AH Christie.' In Michel Foucault's conception of the author, the

Harrod suggests that Christie was influenced by the floral designs of May Morris,<sup>97</sup> her exhibited work at the ACES also indicates an interest in and knowledge of mediæval embroidery and *Opus Anglicanum*. Her involvement in exhibitions was not limited to exhibiting, however. In 1913 Grace Christie was one of the thirty-member Advisory Committee for the Ghent International Exhibition, along with Audrey Trevelyan and May Morris.<sup>98</sup>

Grace Christie was also a serious scholar of the history and technique of embroidery, publishing several books and articles. These include, Embroidery and Tapestry Weaving: A Practical Textbook of Design and Workmanship with Drawings by the Author and Other Illustrations Artistic Crafts Series Of Technical Handbooks, ed WR Lethaby (London, J Hogg, 1906; reissued London: Pitman, 1979); Embroidery; a collection of articles on subjects connected with the study of fine needlework, including stitches, materials, methods of work, and designing, and history (London, Pearsall, 1909); Samplers and Stitches; A Handbook of the Embroiderer's Art, with many Designs and other Illustrations by the Author (London, BT Batsford Ltd, [1921], 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, 1929, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed, 1934) (Figure 5.3 ); and English Medieval Embroidery (Oxford, 1938). She also published many articles on historical embroidery in Burlington Magazine such as "St Cuthbert's Stole and Maniple at Durham" in 1913, and "The Uppsala Cope" in 1924.

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'author name' is linked to the works produced by the person, whereas the 'proper name' is linked to the person's civil status. But for some unknown reason, she stopped using the author name 'Grace Christie' for her embroidery after 1912, using 'Mrs AH Christie' from 1916 onwards for all her professional work.

<sup>97</sup> Tanya Harrod, The Crafts in Britain in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999) 54.

<sup>98</sup> May Morris also contributed an essay, "Embroidery," to the catalogue. Henry Wilson was on the Committee, which was chaired by Sir Cecil Harcourt Smith LL.D. Walter Crane served as Vice-chairman. Catalogue of the British Arts and Crafts Section, Ghent International Exhibition. Board of Trade Exhibitions Branch: London, 1913.

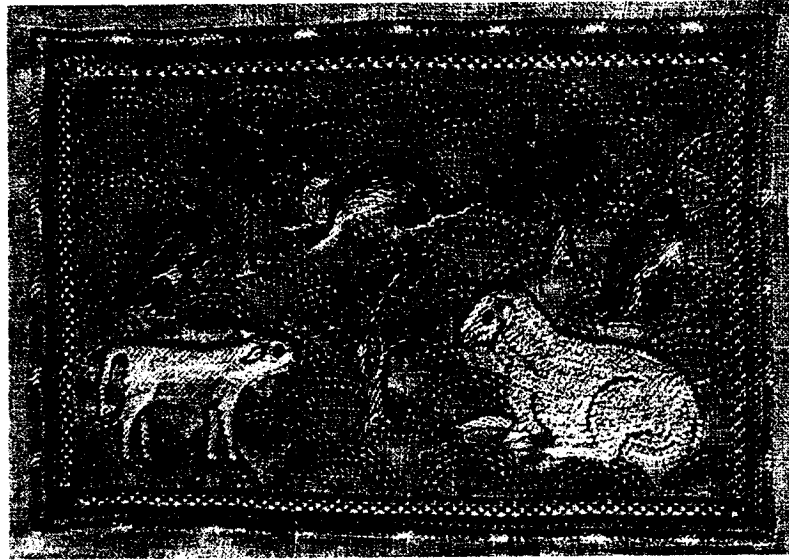


Figure 5.3: Grace Christie, *The Meadow* embroidery designed for Samplers and Stitches. Illustrated in Beck, Thomasina The Embroiderer's Story Needlework from the Renaissance to the Present Day [Victoria and Albert Museum, London]

Thus by 1916, Grace Christie had absorbed completely the Arts & Crafts philosophy of understanding the history and the techniques of the medium in which one designed, and put her knowledge into practice through her teaching, exhibiting, and writing. The work she exhibited in the 1916 ACES exhibition reveals this strong historical base; for example some of her drawings for embroidery designs and stitches were taken from medieval and 16<sup>th</sup> century manuals.<sup>99</sup> Yet in reviews of the 1916 Arts & Crafts Exhibition this does not come through at all.

The majority of Grace Christie's embroideries at the 1916 ACES show were exhibited along with her students' work in a room shared with the Birmingham School of Art.<sup>100</sup> The catalogue entry, "189. Work of the Embroidery Class under direction of Mrs. Archibald H. Christie," listed 74 works, of which Grace Christie designed and made 22 embroideries, designs for embroidery, and brooches.<sup>101</sup> In addition, she designed four embroideries which were stitched by her students.

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<sup>99</sup> Among Christie's exhibits were 189 cc, 189dd, Drawings from a 16th Century Pattern book; 89.m) Drawing from Jacobean curtain; 189.n) drawing from English mediaeval embroidery. Catalogue of the 11<sup>th</sup> Exhibition 1916, passim.

<sup>100</sup> Catalogue of the 11<sup>th</sup> Exhibition 1916, passim. CFA Voysey was the sole male designer of a sampler, No. 246, Flower Sampler, worked by A Reynolds Stephens.

<sup>101</sup> Under 189, Grace Christie designed and made the following:

b) Design for Sampler (see (e) in case).

d) Group of Canvas Stitches. From drawings by Mrs. AH Christie.

Of the 25 samplers in the RCA display, three were designed and made by Grace Christie. There were fourteen more samplers in the rest of the exhibition, including seven designed and made by students at Northlands School and exhibited in 323, the country bedroom exhibited by Grace Christie, her husband and FW Troup. The number of samplers provoked some commentary from William Thomas Whitley in the Studio. It is in this context that the only mention of Grace Christie connected with embroidery appears in the reviews in my sample.

In the room occupied by the Royal College of Art the work of the embroidery class alone was represented, and among the many articles shown by Mrs A H Christie's clever pupils the sampler was very much in evidence, as it was, too, in other parts of the exhibition. Apparently there is a revival of the fashion for the sampler, in executing which the modern girls show themselves to be as skilful as their forebears of bygone centuries.<sup>102</sup>

If there was a revival of the making of embroidery samplers, it was due to the teaching of Grace Christie. She was greatly influenced an exhibition of historical samplers at the Fine Art

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- h) Interlacing Stitch diagrams.(her own dwgs)
  - l) Virgin & Child, from English mediaeval Emb.
  - m) Dwg from Jacobean curtain.
  - n) dwg from English mediaeval emb.
  - r) Dwgs for Emb.
  - bb) Strapwork panel in applied work.
  - cc) Dwgs from a 16th C. Pattern book
  - dd) Dwgs from a 16th C. Pattern book.
  - pp) Blackberry sampler.
  - qq) Dwgs for Emb.
  - rr) Dwg from Indian Emb.
  - ss) Dwg from 16th C. Emb.
  - uu) Dwg for Emb.
  - vv) Dwg from English mediaeval mb.
  - ww) Leaf Sampler.
  - eee) Flower dwgs.
  - hhh) Dwgs from emb.
  - iii) Frieze: Prose and Verse about Emb.
  - A).Desert d'oyleys.
  - C) Sampler

Exhibits numbered 189 that were designed by Grace Christie, and worked by her students, or with the assistance of her students, include:

- e) sampler worked by Miss Longbottom
  - x) Group of Stitches worked on a thread foundation. From dwgs by Mrs. AH Christie, worked by Miss Longbottom
  - B). Brooches. Assisted by Miss J. Braddock.
  - D) Curtain. Italian cross stitch assisted by Miss K. Cocksedge
  - E) Note books, containing diagrams of stitches, assisted by Miss GE Halls & Miss K. Cocksedge
- In addition, Grace Christie designed 2 pieces, 230.g) Handkerchief sachet, and 230.m) Baby's bonnet., which were made by A. Reynolds Stephens and exhibited by the Birmingham Municipal School of Art. Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Eleventh Exhibition, 1916 (London: 1916) passim.

<sup>102</sup> WT Whitley "Arts and Crafts at the Royal Academy. Second Article" The Studio 69:285 (December 1916), 122.

Society in 1900, taking particular inspiration from the Stuart embroidery.<sup>103</sup> She saw that students could improve their design skills by working directly with thread and needle, and letting the type of stitch direct the design, rather than drawing out the designs on paper.

Yet Whitley mentions specifically the women's skill in the production of the samplers rather than their abilities as designers; indeed, the issue of design is neatly sidestepped. Whitley reveals to the reader that his own 'horizon of expectation' for women's work is limited to the skilful execution of designs, despite the overwhelming evidence of the women students' capability in designing for embroidery.

Elsewhere, the Glasgow Herald listed "the embroidery section of the Royal College of Art," among the "transfigured" rooms in the South Gallery,<sup>104</sup> and the Lady skipped over the RCA exhibit to discuss other work: "There was a whole room devoted to samplers, and Mrs Marin Pirrie's silk pictures were quite exquisite [...]"<sup>105</sup> The samplers were simply not an issue.

Taken together, these three reviews of the RCA's embroidery exhibit place no importance on the issue of design, nor on the role of the teacher. Teaching and designing embroidery was actually what Grace Christie did for a living, thus for both aspects to be completely overlooked by the critics is significant, for it reinforces the notion that even in 1916, women are better suited to execute embroidery.

The work for which Grace Christie did receive press attention was found in Room 7, 'Bedroom for Small Country House,' a collaborative effort with her husband and FW Troup. Archibald Haswell Christie (1871-1945) was born in London, the younger son of Robert Christie (1831-1924), a Scottish cabinetmaker and furniture dealer, whose shop was in George Street near Portman Square. Robert Christie was described as "eccentric, and probably illiterate"<sup>106</sup> by the architectural historian Andrew Saint, yet was a trusted contractor for furniture and decoration to the architect Richard Norman Shaw from the mid-1880s until c1906.

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<sup>103</sup> Thomasina Beck, The Embroiderer's Story Needlework from the Renaissance to the Present Day (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1995) 132.

<sup>104</sup> "A Metamorphosed Academy. Arts and Crafts in the Making," Glasgow Herald (7 October 1916) 9.

<sup>105</sup> "The Lady in Society," The Lady (19 October 1916) 448.

<sup>106</sup> Andrew Saint, Richard Norman Shaw (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1976) 256.

Archibald Christie's early education is as yet undiscovered, however through his father he was taken on as an apprentice in Shaw's office. According to Godfrey Rubens, Christie trained there under WR Lethaby, who had been Shaw's chief assistant from 1879 to 1889, and then worked three days a week until February 1891.<sup>107</sup> However, Andrew Saint dates Christie's apprenticeship to the mid-1890s.<sup>108</sup> Christie also may have studied at the Royal Academy schools, for Shaw was "a great supporter of the Royal Academy and its Architectural Schools, [and] expected his clerks to do their stint."<sup>109</sup> Archibald Christie was also a painter, and a member of the Royal Society of British Artists. He exhibited figure and still-life paintings with the RBA and the Royal Academy from 1888-1898.<sup>110</sup>

Although he trained as an architect, Archibald Christie's further career was as a teacher, and writer, and like his wife, has connections with WR Lethaby in several respects. Doubtless Christie and Lethaby had met in Shaw's offices. When the LCC Central School of Art first opened in 1896, Christie was appointed by the school's directors WR Lethaby and George Frampton to teach "drawing, colour, and decoration and design for cabinet-making and metal-working,"<sup>111</sup> along with William Margetson and R Catterson Smith. In 1902 Christie was appointed LCC Art Inspector to Technical Education, and worked alongside WR Lethaby, who was the LCC's Art Advisor, to revolutionise art education.<sup>112</sup> In 1916 was teaching at the Westminster School of Art.<sup>113</sup> Christie was elected a member of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society in 1906, the same year as his

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<sup>107</sup> Rubens, 210. It was during Lethaby's term in Shaw's office that, together with his colleagues and friends, formed the St George's Society (1883) from which would spring the Art Workers' Guild (1884), and later the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society. Christie's name does figure amongst discussions of these Societies in Rubens's book, pointing to the 1890s as possibly more accurate.

<sup>108</sup> Saint, 438.

<sup>109</sup> Godfrey Rubens, William Richard Lethaby His Life and Work 1857-1931 (London: The Architectural Press, 1986) 66.

<sup>110</sup> Christopher Wood, Dictionary of British Artists Volume IV: Victorian Painters I. The Text. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed, (Woodbridge, UK: Antique Collector's Club, 1995) 99.

<sup>111</sup> Rubens, 187.

<sup>112</sup> As Art Advisor, Lethaby inspected art classes and advised Christie of potential improvements. In 1904 the LCC took over art education for the whole of London, giving the two men opportunity to instigate radical changes, which were outlined in Report written by Christie and Lethaby, entitled Art Instruction in Schools. Rubens, 194-195. Many of Lethaby's ideas, such as drawing from nature, and combining design and workshop practice, are still used in UK art schools today.

<sup>113</sup> "Introduction," Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Eighth Exhibition, 1906.

wife, however he resigned from the ACES before the 1910 exhibition. On Troup's proposal, seconded by the President, Henry Wilson, he was re-elected a member of the ACES on 20 April 1916.<sup>114</sup>

As an author, Christie wrote Traditional Methods Of Pattern Designing; An Introduction To The Study Of The Decorative Art (1910, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed 1929), and contributed articles on ornament to the Burlington Magazine and a book, The Legacy of Islam; and on church decoration in Country Life.<sup>115</sup> He also edited the Artistic Crafts Series of Technical Handbooks, along with WR Lethaby.<sup>116</sup>

The third collaborator in the country bedroom was the architect Francis W Troup (1859-1941). Born in Aberdeen, Troup articulated as an architect in Edinburgh. He moved to London in 1884, and studied at the Royal Academy schools until 1886, during which time he won a silver medal for his architectural drawings. After passing his qualifying exam in 1888, Troup was quickly elected ARIBA the following year. He began his own practice in 1891, and was elected FRIBA in 1899. His special interest was decorative lead work, and he published articles on this subject in the Journal of the RIBA. Together with the plumber William Dodds, Troup also taught decorative leadwork and functional plumbing at the newly-opened LCC Central School of Art from 1896.<sup>117</sup> He would have known Archibald Christie from this time, as both were appointed to teach from the outset of the Central School.

In addition to a long list of architectural achievements, Troup was involved in several arts organisations. A member of the Art Workers' Guild, he redesigned the Guild's meeting hall, was Secretary from 1907-1917, and Master in 1923. Troup was also a Fellow of the Society of Arts, the Society of Antiquaries from 1926 and an Executive Committee member of the Society for the

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<sup>114</sup> "Minute Books - General 1915-1917," (20 April 1916) Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Papers AAD 1/51-1980, Archive of Art and Design, London. According to the ACES catalogues, Archibald H Christie was a member in 1906; but did not renew his membership for the 1910 or 1912 exhibitions.

<sup>115</sup> Traditional methods of pattern designing; an introduction to the study of the decorative art (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910); AH Christie, "Decoration of Chapel of St Andrews," Country Life 39 (8 January 1916) 2\*,4\*,6\*.

<sup>116</sup> Rubens, 304.

<sup>117</sup> Gronberg, 21.

Protection of Ancient Buildings, becoming Honorary Secretary in 1940.<sup>118</sup> A member of ACES from 1903, Troup was on the General Committee in 1916, and had built the Hall of Heroes to designs of Henry Wilson as well as collaborating with Archibald and Grace Christie on the country bedroom. He had arguably the most visible public profile, but all three collaborators had successful professional careers, were members of the ACES, and had taught and published in their area of expertise.

The catalogue entry for their joint work was short: “323. Room no.7. Bedroom for small country House, inlaid Oak furniture, painted chairs and bedstead, white embroidered hangings. Designed & arranged by Mr & Mrs AH Christie & FW Troup.”<sup>119</sup> Further gleanings from the catalogue reveal that Mrs. Christie had designed and painted the decoration on the Iron Bedstead (323a), as well as designing the white embroidered hangings and bed furniture (323x), and another embroidered panel (323u). The other items exhibited in the room, also numbered 323, include seven samplers from Northlands School, mentioned previously, two embroidered panels designed and made by students at the Royal College of Art, and candlesticks made by Margery Jack, the daughter of longtime Morris & Co furniture designer George Jack. The catalogue’s description is rather wanting where the rest of the furniture is concerned; fortunately this information is provided in the reviews.

While the Burlington Magazine did not mention Grace Christie or FW Troup, their first of two reviews gives a good description of the furniture:

In a really charming bedroom for a country house all the furniture is excellent and appropriate. A small chest of drawers and a small wardrobe in oak, designed by CH Christie [sic; should be AH] and made by R[obert] Christie, are particularly desirable things. They have clean lines without sharpness, a pattern border that enriches without ostentation, and there is no denying ‘tactile values’ to their surface, for everyone wants to touch them. They are pieces with beautiful manners.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> “Francis William Troup,” in Antonia Brodie et al. Directory of British Architects 1834-1914 2 vols Updated & Expanded ed, (London & New York: Continuum, 2001) 837. See also Neil Jackson, FW Troup, Architect 1859-1941 (London: The Building Centre Trust, 1985).

<sup>119</sup> Catalogue of the 11<sup>th</sup> Exhibition, 1916.

<sup>120</sup> JB, “A Monthly Chronicle - The Arts and Crafts Exhibition,” Burlington Magazine 29:164 (November 1916) 341.



We also learn that Robert Christie made the furniture. The review in The Furniture Record, despite being in a journal devoted to the furniture trade, does not provide much description: “Another exhibit that will interest the furnisher is a bedroom for a small country house, designed by Mr and Mrs AH Christie and Mr FW Troup. The furniture is in oak, inlaid on novel lines, and the scheme is a very pleasing one.”<sup>121</sup> The embroidery was not mentioned at all. From some brief sentences in the Studio, we learn that the bedstead was of iron, and that there was a window in the room with white curtains.<sup>122</sup> The Queen’s review gives a few more descriptive details, which enable a reader to visualise the room better.

More restful is the suggestion for a bedroom in a small country house, [...] with its delicate iron bedstead of the four poster persuasion, charmingly painted with flowers on a dark blue ground, its simple, purposeful oak furniture, and fresh, white hangings.<sup>123</sup>

To this the Architects’ & Builders Journal adds,

In the first-named [bedroom] are a painted iron bedstead with slender twisted posts supporting a white embroidered canopy, some oak wardrobes as free from mouldings as a modern hospital door, and some painted chairs.<sup>124</sup>

Charles Lewis Hind’s description of the “Bedroom for a Small Country House,” in the Daily Chronicle was redolent of his pleasure, and includes information lifted straight from the catalogue: “the bed a lyric, the large oak Wardrobe, one of the simplest and noblest pieces of modern furniture that I have seen. This delightful bedroom was designed and arranged by Mr and Mrs Archibald Christie and Mr FW Troup.”<sup>125</sup> Frank Rutter<sup>126</sup> in the Sunday Times was more

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<sup>121</sup> “Arts and Crafts Second Notice,” The Furniture Record, The Furnisher & Hire Trade Review (27 October 1916) 390.

<sup>122</sup> WT Whitley, “The Arts & Crafts Exhibition Second Notice,” The Studio 69:285 (December 1916) 126.

<sup>123</sup> “The Arts & Crafts Exhibition,” The Queen (11 November 1916) 664.

<sup>124</sup> Ubique, “Here and There,” The Architects’ & Builders’ Journal (18 October 1916) 178.

<sup>125</sup> C. Lewis Hind, “Reconstruction. Utility, Beauty, Simplicity,” The Daily Chronicle (31 October 1916) 6.

<sup>126</sup> Frank Vane Phipson Rutter (1876-1937) studied at Cambridge before embarking on a career as an art writer. He was art critic for the Sunday Times from 1903-1934, and also wrote on art for the Christian Science Monitor in the 1930s. He published his own short stories in Art and Letters which he edited from 1917 to 1920. His many books on art include both historical and contemporary themes: Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Painter and Man of Letters, James McNeill Whistler (1911), Joshua Reynolds, 1723-1792. (1923), El Greco (1541-1614) (1930), The Old Masters (1925), Evolution in Modern Art. A study of modern painting (1926, 1932), Modern Masterpieces. An Outline of Modern Art. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed 1942) The Path to Paris, and The Poetry of Architecture, Some Contemporary Artists (1922), The British Empire Panels Designed for the House of Lords by Frank

concise in his description of the room, but was also the only one to directly and implicitly downgrade Grace Christie's contribution from 'designer' to 'decorator':

As an example of these delightful ensembles may be cited 'A lady's bedroom for a small country house.' The iron bedstead with elegantly twisted posts, designed by AH Christie, is charmingly decorated by Mrs Christie and has white muslin hangings and bedspread. The white walls are decorated with samplers, and the oak furniture, also by AH Christie, is austere and yet homely.<sup>127</sup>

The fact that she designed the embroidery on the bedspread and curtains is of no moment; rather he sees her contribution as consisting of only the decoration of the bed; whether he includes designing and making in this description is entirely unclear.

Thus, a cumulative description from these reviews, would be that the fourposter bedstead was made of iron, had twisted posts, and was painted blue with flowers. The bed canopy and the window curtains were embroidered in white on white muslin. The furniture consisted of a plain oak wardrobe and chest of drawers with inlaid decoration, and painted wooden chairs. Embroidered samplers were hung on the walls. Each review gave a few descriptive details, but eight reviews, plus the catalogue description, had to be read in order to patch together a complete description.

Both an anonymous critic in The Queen and 'NN' [Elizabeth Pennell] in the Nation preferred the uncluttered, proto-modernist decorative scheme presented by the Christies bedroom to the other bedrooms on display. The Queen found the room "more restful"<sup>128</sup> while Pennell wrote that the bedroom, along with the room of pottery and textiles designed by the Design and Industries Association, represented one of the few areas in the whole exhibition which were not overdecorated. She added, "It is a relief to take refuge in a tiny alcove furnished as a bedroom, with the plainest of plain furniture, simple white curtains, and white walls on which hang only a few

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Brangwyn, R.A. (1933, 1937), Guide to Cambridge. with illustrations of every college and important building (1936, 13<sup>th</sup> ed rev 1957). Rutter was also quite involved in the contemporary painting scene in London. He was secretary of the Allied Artists Association from its inception in 1908, organised the Post-Impressionist and Futurist Exhibition held at the Doré Galleries, London in the autumn of 1913, in addition to running the Adelphi Gallery ca1917.

<sup>127</sup> Frank Rutter, "The Galleries. Arts and Crafts at the Royal Academy," Sunday Times (15 October 1916) 5.

<sup>128</sup> "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition," The Queen (11 November 1916) 664.

quiet samplers.”<sup>129</sup> As a champion of Whistler and of modernism in fine art in general, these are not surprising comments from her.

Despite the many mentions of Grace Christie, no more information was to be found in these reviews about her contribution to the room, or the division of labour in its design or production. Her name appears in ten reviews without really saying much: most critics merely copied the catalogue description, reiterating that she designed and arranged the room along with her husband and FW Troup. She is allowed only a scant measure of agency, the agency of association. The press support her in the role of wife of AH Christie, and associate of FW Troup, rather than as a designer, teacher and author in her own right.

It would appear that a collaborative project such as this confounded the reviewers even in 1916. Archibald Christie received the most complete press coverage of the trio. He was named in ten reviews and from them we learn that he designed the wood furniture in the room, what it looked like, and that the critics liked it. Even Robert Christie was identified in two reviews as the maker of the furniture.<sup>130</sup> Francis W Troup, however, had a similar fate to Grace Christie. He was named in eight reviews but his exact contribution to the room, other than the oft-repeated share in designing and arranging, is not stated. The only concise mention of Troup’s work was in the Connoisseur, and has nothing to do with the country bedroom: “The Hall of Heroes, designed by Mr H Wilson and constructed by Mr FW Troup [...] is finely proportioned, and, if carried out in a permanent form, would afford fine scope for the commemoration of those who have taken part in the Great War.”<sup>131</sup> In his article on the 1916 ACES exhibition, Peter Rose states categorically that FW Troup designed the furniture in the country bedroom, however this is not correct.<sup>132</sup> Henry Wilson saw fit to include some words of thanks in the catalogue for Troup’s help in the organisation of the exhibition: “My own and the thanks of the Society are due in a very special

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<sup>129</sup> NN [Elizabeth Pennell], “The Arts & Crafts at the Royal Academy,” The Nation 103:2683 (30 November 1916) 526.

<sup>130</sup> This could have been either his brother Robert, or his father Robert, a professional cabinetmaker.

<sup>131</sup> “Current Art Notes,” The Connoisseur 46:184 (December 1916) 251.

<sup>132</sup> Peter Rose, “‘It Must Be Done Now’: The Arts and Crafts Exhibition at Burlington House, 1916,” DAS Journal 17 (1993) 8.

degree to Mr. FW Troup, architect or archangel, for his tireless labour, inexhaustible patience, and imperturbability during the whole time of preparation for the Exhibition.”<sup>133</sup> FW Troup was also one of the guarantors for the exhibition. His role was obviously far greater than simply arranging furniture; Troup was involved in organising, funding, and even building parts of the show, yet he was ignored in the same way that Grace Christie was, with his name printed and no information attached to it. Could it be the result of the dearth of information in the catalogue, or the critics’ difficulty in including the role of each person in a collaborative venture, or were critics beginning to manifest an ambivalence toward the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society?

#### Case Study 2: Phoebe Stabler

Phoebe Gertrude McLeish Stabler (1880-1955) received the most press coverage of the women in my sample, with fourteen mentions and many illustrations of her work. Elected a member of ACES in 1916, Phoebe Stabler exhibited twelve items that year, including lead sculptures, glazed earthenware and an enamel plaque. She was born in Handsworth, Staffordshire, just outside Birmingham, the youngest daughter of Mary P McLeish and James McLeish, a boiler inspector for an insurance company.<sup>134</sup> She had two older sisters, Minnie (b.1877) and Annie (b.1878), and possibly a younger brother, James, born in 1882. The 1901 British Census shows all four siblings living in Wavertree Garden Suburb, Liverpool. Minnie, the eldest, listed her occupation as ‘living on own means,’ Annie was an Artist, while Phoebe described herself as a Woodcarver, and James McLeish worked for the “electrical telephone.”<sup>135</sup>

Minnie McLeish later became a professional designer and founder member of the Design and Industries Association in 1915. In the 1920’s she designed dress and furnishing fabrics for

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<sup>133</sup> Henry Wilson, “Introduction,” in Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Eleventh Exhibition, 1916 (London: 1916) 27.

<sup>134</sup> Census of England and Wales, 1881.

<sup>135</sup> A James McLeish died at Guisborough in September 1884 aged 35. (Free BMD) The age is correct to be Phoebe’s father, which would explain why he was not included in the 1901 census. Mary P McLeish, born in Liverpool, does not show on the 1901 census either.

William Foxton Ltd,<sup>136</sup> painted tiles for Poole Pottery,<sup>137</sup> and designed posters.<sup>138</sup> She illustrated Winifred M Horton's Wooden Toy-Making (1936), and wrote two books on art education, Beginnings: Teaching Art to Children (1941) and Colour Cuts (1950).

Where Minnie studied art is unclear, but both Annie and Phoebe studied art in Liverpool. Annie's work was showcased in The Studio in 1902 along with the work of students at the Mount Street School of Art.<sup>139</sup> Phoebe McLeish studied art and design from 1901-1905 at the School of Applied Art, Liverpool University, also known as the 'Art Sheds.'<sup>140</sup> Opened in May 1895, the School of Applied Art was part of the School of Architecture of Liverpool University, one of the first university courses in architecture in England. Its first director, Roscoe Professor of Architecture Frederick Moore Simpson, was a strong proponent of Arts & Crafts ideals, and hired artists of reputation as professors, such as Augustus John, who taught drawing from 1901-3, Herbert McNair, who taught design from 1897-1905, and Frances Macdonald MacNair, who taught embroidery and textiles from 1899-1905.<sup>141</sup> When Simpson left in 1904 the courses were split, with applied art transferred to the Mount Street School of Art, and architecture courses taught at the University from 1905.<sup>142</sup> Phoebe studied modelling with Charles J Allen, drawing with Augustus John, painting with David Muirhead, and decorative design with Herbert MacNair.<sup>143</sup> Her

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<sup>136</sup> One of Minnie McLeish's designs for Foxton's was reproduced as a silk scarf to coincide with the recent Art Deco exhibition, and sells currently (summer 2004) in the V&A Shop, London for £49.95. <<http://www.vandashop.co.uk/index.php?f=itemdetl.php&p=63854>>.

<sup>137</sup> AW Coysh, British Art Pottery 1870-1940 Rutland, VT: Charles E Tuttle Co, 1976), 86;

<sup>138</sup> Jennifer Hawkins, The Poole Potteries (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1980) 72.

<sup>139</sup> The article included a description and two full page illustrations Annie McLeish's three Panels for Decoration of a Chamber Organ. All other illustrations were less than one quarter of a page, usually two to a page, with text. "Some Work by the Students of the Liverpool School of Art," The Studio 25 (1902) 177.

<sup>140</sup> The exhibition catalogue Mary Bennett, ed, The Art Sheds 1894-1905 (Liverpool: The Walker Art Gallery, 1981) gives an entry for Phoebe Stabler: "student at the Art Sheds, under CJ Allen and Augustus John, and in 1901-4 School register for classes in Life, modelling, and decorative design." Information via email from Adrian Allan, University Archivist, University of Liverpool, 6 August 2004.

<sup>141</sup> Hughes, 108. Other instructors of painting and drawing included Anning Bell and Herbert Jackson, who also taught ornament. Llewelyn Rathbone taught metalwork, and through his brother, Harold, involved the Della Robbia pottery firm in the University's teaching. Hughes, 107.

<sup>142</sup> See David Thistlewood, "Modernism with Ancestry," The Architects' Journal 201 (11 May 1995) 60-61; Quentin Hughes, "Before the Bauhaus: The Experiment at the Liverpool School of Architecture and Applied Arts," Architectural History 25 (1982) 102-113.

<sup>143</sup> HBB, "Studio-Talk Liverpool," The Studio 34:143 (February 1905) 68.

outstanding student work was the subject of an article in The Studio in February 1905, in which she was described as having

displayed incessant energy, with powers of concentration and a capacity and love for work which promises well for the future. [...] Sculpture, stained glass, metal work, furniture, jewellery, embroideries, black-and-white illustration, all show in her handling a strong personality combined with a fine and individual sense of appropriateness.<sup>144</sup>

The article included photographs of a modelled design for a cross, two charcoal figure sketches, and two embroideries, designed and made by McLeish.<sup>145</sup> McLeish's efforts were rewarded with £30 City Scholarships two years in a row (1903 and 1904), and a travelling scholarship of £60 in 1905. She later studied at the Royal College of Art, in London.<sup>146</sup>

Phoebe G. McLeish first exhibited an embroidered yoke at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition in 1906, likely a student work, for she did not exhibit embroidery again after this.<sup>147</sup> In 1910 she showed plaster sculptures, and in 1912 glazed earthenware. During her professional career she worked mainly as a sculptor and potter. She was an Associate member of the Royal British Sculptors, and exhibited regularly at the Royal Academy until 1946.<sup>148</sup> She also exhibited with the Society of Women Artists (1921-1955),<sup>149</sup> the Women's International Art Club, the Glasgow Institute, the Royal Miniature Society, the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool and many one-off exhibitions, such as the 1926 Exhibition of Prints & Pate-blanche Pottery, at the Mansard Gallery, Heal & Son,<sup>150</sup> and the Paris Exposition of Decorative Arts in 1925.<sup>151</sup> Major commissions include Durban War Memorial, a Fountain at the Bank of England, memorial for the Underground

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<sup>144</sup> HBB, 68-69.

<sup>145</sup> The embroideries are very linear in design, showing a clear influence of the Glasgow College of Art style of embroidery, imported by Frances Macdonald McNair.

<sup>146</sup> "Mrs Phoebe Stabler [McLeish]," Who's Who in Art (1934), cited in British Biographical Index, fiche II-1637:327.

<sup>147</sup> Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Catalogue of the Eighth Exhibition London, 1906. passim.

<sup>148</sup> "Mrs Phoebe Stabler [McLeish]," Who's Who in Art (1934), cited in British Biographical Index, fiche II-1637:327; Royal Academy Exhibitors 1905-1970 Vol II, 66-67.

<sup>149</sup> Charles Baile de Laperrière, ed, and Joanna Soderi, comp, The Society of Women Artists Exhibitors 1855-1996 (Calne, Wiltshire: Hilmarton Manor Press, 1996) 81.

<sup>150</sup> "Mansard Gallery at Heal & Son," The Times (24 February 1926) 9.

<sup>151</sup> "Paris Exposition. The British Pavilion," The Times (17 June 1925) 19.

Railway, and the trophy 'Speed' for the winner of the world speed record in motoring in 1929.<sup>152</sup> Her work is found in collections in Liverpool, Leicester Art Gallery, the Helsingfors Museum, and the Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

Her future husband, Harold Stabler (1872-1945) was born in Levens, Westmoreland (now Cumbria), the eldest of four children. His father, George Stabler, was the schoolmaster. Harold studied wood and stone carving with Arthur W. Simpson in the early 1890s in Kendal. From 1896 to 1898, the two men shared a teaching post at Keswick School of Industrial Art,<sup>153</sup> each taking alternate weeks. During this time, Stabler retained his post as apprentice woodcarver with Simpson's firm and also studied design at the Kendal Art School, where he received an Art Teacher's Certificate.<sup>154</sup> In October 1898 Stabler became the Keswick School's first full-time teacher, with a salary of £110 per year, but resigned in March 1900 due to the low salary and differences of opinion with the school's founders.<sup>155</sup> Stabler found a post teaching metalwork at the Liverpool School of Art, through Richard Llewellyn Rathbone, who contributed designs to the Keswick School, and also taught in Liverpool.<sup>156</sup> By 1901 Stabler described himself as an artist and designer in metals, and was living in Everton, Liverpool, a neighbourhood very close to the University.<sup>157</sup>

Harold Stabler met Phoebe McLeish in Liverpool, while she was a student at the School of Art and he was teaching metalwork. They married in 1906 and moved to London, where Stabler took up a teaching post at the John Cass Technical Institute, which he retained until 1937. He also

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<sup>152</sup> "Stabler, Phoebe, née McLeish," Chris Petteys et al, Dictionary of Women Artists. An International Dictionary of Women Artists Born before 1900 (Boston: GK Hall & Co, 1985) 664.

<sup>153</sup> The Keswick School of Industrial Art was begun at Keswick in the Lake District by Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley and his wife Edith in 1884. The School's specialism was hammered metalwork, particularly copper, which was exhibited both at the Home Arts & Industries Association and the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society. "Keswick School of Industrial Art," <<http://dspace.dial.pipex.com/oxton.decart/Keswick.htm>>.

<sup>154</sup> Jennie Brunton, The Arts & Crafts Movement in the Lake District: A Social History (Lancaster: Centre for North-West Regional Studies, University of Lancaster, 2001) 109.

<sup>155</sup> Brunton, 109. Apparently the gardener received almost the same pay as Stabler did as head teacher.

<sup>156</sup> Brunton, 111. Stabler may also have moved to Liverpool to study metalwork with Rathbone. (I forget where I read this)

<sup>157</sup> 1901 British Census online.

taught at the Royal College of Art in South Kensington from 1912-1926.<sup>158</sup> Stabler was elected to the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society in 1906, and was also a member of the Selection and Hanging Committee that year, and on the Executive committee in 1910. In the 1916 ACES exhibition, he was again on the Executive Committee, and exhibited a case of enamelled plaques, and other metalwork.

Stabler took a keen interest in the professional quality of modern design. In 1914 he visited the Deutsche Werkbund in Cologne, which inspired him and several business colleagues to found the Design and Industries Association in 1915.<sup>159</sup> He was also a founder member of the British Institute of Industrial Art, the “government-backed counterpart organization” to the DIA, in 1919. Stabler exhibited metalwork, enamels, and ceramics at the Royal Academy from 1906 to 1938,<sup>160</sup> in addition to contributing to exhibitions in Liverpool, Boston, Philadelphia, Berlin, Weimar, and Leipzig.<sup>161</sup> His contribution to design was recognised by the Royal Society of Arts when he was appointed the first Designer for Industry (RDI) in 1936.<sup>162</sup>

The Stablers established a joint studio practice in 1912 at their home, 34 Upper Mall, Hammersmith, London. Harold made silver jewellery, as well as designing tiles, glass and metalwork for the London Underground. They owned a kiln, where Phoebe Stabler produced her modelled figures. These found a market in several well-known potteries. Charles J Noke, the art director at the Royal Doulton’s Burslem factory asked her to “submit designs for small scale figure and animal sculptures for possible quantity reproduction in earthen ware and bone china.”<sup>163</sup> She accepted, and her figurines were sold by Doulton from 1913. Phoebe Stabler was a clever

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<sup>158</sup> “Harold Stabler,” in Jane Turner ed, The Dictionary of Art 29 (London: Macmillan Publishers Ltd. 1996) 484.

<sup>159</sup> Hawkins, 73.

<sup>160</sup> Royal Academy Exhibitors 1905-1970, 66.

<sup>161</sup> “The Studio” Year Book Of Decorative Art 1909. Designers Of Jewelry, Enamels, Metal And Leather Work (London: Studio Publications, 1909) 160.

<sup>162</sup> Dictionary of Art, 484.

<sup>163</sup> Louise Irvine, “Art and Industry. A Century of Co-operation Between Sculptors and the Doulton Potteries,” Connoisseur 201:810 (August 1979) 253.



businesswoman, selling reproduction rights of a design to one pottery, while producing the same figure under another name somewhere else. According to Jennifer Hawkins, Phoebe Stabler,

sold to Royal Doulton the reproduction rights of a figure which they first produced in 1913, entitled 'The Madonna of the Square'. Virtually this same figure was also cast and produced in quantity at Poole throughout the 1920s under the name 'The Lavender Woman.' [...] In 1911 she also sold the rights of 'The Picardy Peasant' figures to Doulton, which they began producing in 1913 and continued to make until 1938, selling them in competition with Poole casts under the same title.<sup>164</sup> (Figure 5.4)



Figure 5.4: Phoebe Stabler, *Lavender Woman*, 1911.  
[<http://www.aber.ac.uk/ceramics/jolan.htm>]

In 1923 Phoebe Stabler began designing for a new venture, the Ashstead Potteries, which was founded by Sir Lawrence Weaver to furnish employment for ex-servicemen. Phoebe Stabler was Ashstead's major designer until the factory closed in 1935.<sup>165</sup> In the 1930s her designs were also produced by the Worcester Royal Porcelain Company.<sup>166</sup>

During World War I, Charles Carter approached Harold Stabler for advice on continuing his family's business, the Poole Pottery, which his father had begun in 1873. They formed a partnership in 1921 with John Adams and his wife, the designer Truda Adams, called Carter, Stabler & Adams, and later as Carter & Co. Today it is known again as the Poole Pottery.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Hawkins, 71.

<sup>165</sup> [Ashtead Potters](http://www.studiopottery.com/potteries/ashteadpotters.html) <<http://www.studiopottery.com/potteries/ashteadpotters.html>>; Hawkins, 71.

<sup>166</sup> Hawkins, 71.

<sup>167</sup> The Poole Pottery was founded by Jesse Carter in 1873, in Poole, Dorset, UK. His three sons, Ernest, Charles and Owen joined him in the business. Charles was the last remaining son, after Owen's death in 1921. Carter, Stabler and Adams was originally a subsidiary of Poole Pottery. Coysh, 85.

Teamwork was the order of the day, with work being identified by initials alone. Among those who painted pottery there were Phoebe's sister Minnie McLeish, Dora M Batty, Eileen McGrath, and Marjorie Drawbell.<sup>168</sup>

Phoebe Stabler's cast and modelled figures were produced for Carter, Stabler and Adams from 1921 until the early 1930s, when they were gradually phased out.<sup>169</sup> While these figures were popular sellers, the Stabler's main contribution to the company was in faience tiles. Harold designed tiles for Carter & Co from 1921 until the mid-1930s.<sup>170</sup> Between the wars, they completed several joint commissions for modelled memorials such as the Rugby School War Memorial (1922), with figures modelled by both Harold and Phoebe, and the Durban War Memorial (1925) which stood over twenty feet tall, and used fourteen tons of clay. They also contributed small modelled figures for architectural purposes, and use in the garden, many of which were exhibited at the ACES.<sup>171</sup>

Carter, Stabler and Adams exhibited their wares at trade fairs and major international exhibitions, the first being the British Industries Fair at Olympia, London in 1921. Their wares were sold at Liberty's, as Carter & Co's had been before World War I. An annual exhibition was also held at the Gieves Gallery, London each September, with photographs of the gallery installation being used as the cover for the Carter, Stabler and Adams catalogue each year from 1921.<sup>172</sup> With such a great deal of exposure, it is not surprising that ceramic historian Moira Vincentelli wrote that Phoebe Stabler's "work was enormously popular, and was usually of figure subjects, especially women and children, modelled in a broad manner consistent with

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<sup>168</sup> Coysh, 86.

<sup>169</sup> Hawkins, 102.

<sup>170</sup> Moira Vincentelli, *Women and Ceramics: Gendered Vessels* (Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 2000) 239. The website *Poole Pottery Artists and Designers* however, says the Stabler's designs were produced from 1921 until their respective deaths, which is incorrect. <[http://www.cotswold-collectables.co.uk/artists\\_designers.htm](http://www.cotswold-collectables.co.uk/artists_designers.htm)> Accessed 5/10/2004.

<sup>171</sup> Hawkins, 111-117.

<sup>172</sup> Hawkins, 83-85.

contemporary sculptural techniques, with brightly coloured and glazed detailing in delicate blues, greens, and pinks.<sup>173</sup> (Figure 5.5)



Figure 5.5: Photo of Phoebe Stabler, 1920's  
[M Vincentelli, Women and Ceramics: Gendered Vessels, 240]

Although her work received the most press attention of all the women in the 1916 ACES exhibition, Phoebe Stabler enjoyed even greater reknown in later years, earning her a documented place in art history, with entries in several twentieth-century dictionaries of British artists, including Who's Who in Art (1934) and Petteys et al, Dictionary of Women Artists (1985).

In addition to receiving the most mentions in my sample, Phoebe Stabler's work was also the most illustrated, with six periodicals using photographs and line drawings to supplement their texts. This was rather advantageous for her reputation, for the illustrations supported the text

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<sup>173</sup> Moira Vincentelli, "Potters of the 1920s: Contemporary Criticism," in Gillian Elinor et al, eds Women and Craft (London: Virago Press Ltd, 1987) 78-79.

visually, and together they reinforced the 'author name' Phoebe Stabler. This invited the reader to quickly equate the visual representation with her author name.

Artists depended to a certain degree on critics in the creation of their 'author name' by such mentions in the press. Where women artists were concerned, this was tricky, especially if they were married, as the many ways critics identified Phoebe Stabler demonstrate. She is variously referred to as Phoebe Stabler (Queen), Mrs Phoebe Stabler (Burlington Magazine, Gentlewoman), Miss Phoebe Stabler (British Architect, Connoisseur), or simply Mrs Stabler (the Builder). While journalists were not confused by her surname, there was no concurrence on her exact title. She is nowhere referred to as 'Mrs Harold Stabler' which is significant; she retains her agency and her 'author-name' as 'Phoebe Stabler' whether she is identified as a Miss or a Mrs. References to them as a couple maintained her 'author-name' as Phoebe Stabler. The pair were called 'Harold and Phoebe Stabler' both in the Queen and the Studio's first review, but in the Studio's second article, they appear as "Mr and Mrs Phoebe Stabler."<sup>174</sup> This last version I find particularly interesting, as it was not noticed by the critic, WT Whitley, or his editor, Charles Holme. Whether it was intentional or an error, the published result reveals that Phoebe Stabler's name had enough agency, and authority, on its own, that it was not noticed. Moreover, her agency carried her husband along, as the diminutive 'Mr Phoebe Stabler.'

Getting the artist's name right was only part of the critic's challenge, however. The attribution of the Stablers' work was at time problematic. There was particular confusion in the reviews over exhibit 194.a-p, a case of sixteen enamel plaques and roundels, exhibited jointly by both Harold and Phoebe Stabler. (Figure 5.6) According to the catalogue, Harold Stabler designed and made fifteen of the enamels, and Phoebe designed and made one, 194.j, Dancing Faun. Given these details, it is interesting to note that both the Queen and the Studio attributed the whole case to both of them, which, although technically correct, may lead one to think that the roundels were a joint project. The British Architect discussed this case of enamels as Harold's work alone. While I hesitate to extrapolate from these comments that the art press and a women's magazine boosted a woman's contribution whilst the architectural journal erased it, this could be easily read into the

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<sup>174</sup> WT Whitley, "Arts & Crafts at the Royal Academy. Second Article," The Studio 69:285 (December 1916) 130.

reception of this work. This instance provides an example of how easy it is for women's work to be unwittingly omitted from the literature.



Figure 5.6: 'Cloisonné Enamels - Plaquette by Harold Stabler; Medallions by Harold and Phoebe Stabler' [*The Studio*, November 1916, 73]

The critics' reception of Phoebe Stabler's three types of sculpture (enamelled pottery, lead and cement) in the 1916 Arts & Crafts Exhibition reveal a range of commentary, however, which did in fact vary in vocabulary and content, depending on the class of periodical. Her modelled and enamelled earthenware sculptures, arguably the most feminine medium she used, were noticed in only three of the fourteen reviews, and were the only type of work to be treated with what approaches gendered language. Her *Children with Bull*, (Figure 5.7), was doubtless one of the works described as "Mrs Stabler's charming little figures"<sup>175</sup> in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*. And yet the use of the word 'charming' is not necessarily linked to the fact she was a woman; it may be redolent of the subject matter and its manner of portrayal, for a similar vocabulary was

<sup>175</sup> "Arts and Crafts," *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* 64:3338 (10 November 1916) 854.

used to describe Harold Stabler's enamel roundels, by the same critic in the British Architect who failed to mention that Phoebe had one piece in the case: "but we cannot pass over the case of enamels, 194, by Harold Stabler, without a remark on their charm and spirit. Nothing of the kind has been better done than some of these - note 'the children with bear'."<sup>176</sup> Indeed, the style of drawing in Harold's enamels is quite similar to Phoebe's enamelled figures, one sees immediately how the confusion may arise.



Figure 5.7: Phoebe Stabler, *Children with Bull*, glazed ceramic  
[The Studio, November 1916, 74]

The Connoisseur's comments about her modelled ceramic figures point out how well Stabler knows her medium and adapts her designs so they may be technically reproduced, admitting the eventuality that these items will be made in quantity and sold:

This artist thoroughly understands the capabilities of her material and her broadly modelled pieces, offering scope for decorative colour, are admirably adapted for the potter's craft, in which the fine detail and minute finish, which may be legitimately exemplified in bronze and marble, are altogether out of place as offering almost insuperable obstacles to perfect casting.<sup>177</sup>

Technical and artistic aspects were also discussed in reviews of Phoebe Stabler's lead sculptures work in the 1916 ACES exhibition, to which the critics paid the most attention, with seven reviews commenting on this type of work. Few women worked in lead thus the novelty

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<sup>176</sup> "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition-II," The British Architect (November 1916) 139.

<sup>177</sup> "Current Art Notes," Connoisseur 47:185 (January 1917) 57.

factor alone may account for the greater amount of attention to lead work in the press.<sup>178</sup> The subjects of Stabler's lead garden figures were very similar to her enamelled ceramic pieces, but it seems that their translation from ceramic to lead required a different sort of commentary.



Figure 5.8: Phoebe Stabler, *Bird Bath*  
[*The Studio*, November 1916, 72]

Laurence Weaver in *Country Life* referred to Phoebe's lead work as "gay little garden figures cast in lead"<sup>179</sup> which sounds patronising in the twenty-first century but at the time, "gay" was used simply to denote "happy." The women's press discussed her leadwork in a similar style. According to *The Gentlewoman*, her "jovial lead garden figures are particularly happy in their sense of architectural style and their quaint originality,"<sup>180</sup> The *Birdbath* (Figure 5.8) had been placed in the flow of traffic through the exhibition, where it was easily noticed by the critic in the *Queen*: "Just before entering this exhibit one pauses irresistibly at the admirably designed bird bath in lead by Phoebe Stabler, which its child figures instinct with life and mirth."<sup>181</sup>

The architectural periodicals were also complimentary, but their comments did not reflect the emotional impact of their viewing experience as the above set of comments did. Rather, they

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<sup>178</sup> Only three women in the 1916 ACES exhibition exhibited lead sculptures: Phoebe Stabler, Ruby Levick, and Jean Milne. *Catalogue of the 11<sup>th</sup> Exhibition, 1916*.

<sup>179</sup> Lawrence Weaver, "Arts and Crafts Exhibition at Burlington House," *Country Life* 40 (11 November 1916) 4\*.

<sup>180</sup> "Women's Work at the Arts & Crafts. Final Notice," *The Gentlewoman* (6 January 1917) 11.

<sup>181</sup> "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition," *The Queen* (11 November 1916) 664.

focused on technical and design aspects. The Builder wrote that “Mrs Stabler’s lead figures are convincing in style and execution,”<sup>182</sup> and the Journal of the RIBA added that “Mrs Stabler’s lead figures will be coveted by architects and clients possessing gardens, for they are symbolic in style and finished in execution.”<sup>183</sup> James Bone in the Manchester Guardian was also glowing with his praise: “Mrs Phoebe Stabler’s lead-work is attractively conceived and solidly based, as lead-work should be.”<sup>184</sup> WT Whitley in The Studio described Phoebe Stabler’s lead sculptures as “capital designs in lead for the adornment of gardens,” mentioning specifically “the little figure of a girl carrying a huge garland of fruit and flowers, and the ingeniously contrived Bird Bath.”<sup>185</sup> These critics were unanimous in their praise and enjoyment of Phoebe Stabler’s lead sculptures.

This reveals that decorative arts criticism, by 1916, was evolving into a similar ‘bifurcated’ state as that of fine arts criticism in the mid-nineteenth century. In the criticism of these lead garden sculptures, there is clear evidence of one set of ‘professional’ critics who used a more technical vocabulary, whose reviews were found in specialist journals, for an audience well-versed in such terminology. This group is represented by the group of art and architecture reviews noted above. A second set of critics, who wrote in women’s magazines, or more generalized publications such as Country Life, used a vocabulary more suited to their unprofessional readers, including description and emotional qualities of the work.

If a woman working in lead was unusual, a woman sculpting in fresh cement was even more so. Despite the innovative nature of this medium, Phoebe Stabler’s cement sculpture was mentioned in only three reviews. James Bone was the only critic to point out the fact that Stabler worked in a new medium: “A very interesting and novel work which is getting much attention is a draped head by this lady which was modelled and finished out of a block of concrete as it rapidly dried. It should set a new fashion in garden ornament.”<sup>186</sup> It was also referred to in the British

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<sup>182</sup> “The Arts and Crafts Exhibition,” The Builder (20 October 1916) 246.

<sup>183</sup> AE Richardson, “The Arts & Crafts Exhibition,” Journal of the RIBA 3<sup>rd</sup> series 24:1 (11 November 1916) 12.

<sup>184</sup> J[ames] B[one], “The Arrival of the Arts and Crafts,” Manchester Guardian (11 October 1916).

<sup>185</sup> WT Whitley, “Arts and Crafts at the Royal Academy. Second Article,” The Studio 69:285 (December 1916) 122.

<sup>186</sup> Bone, 1916.



Architect as a “broad and softly modelled head,”<sup>187</sup> while Weaver in Country Life included a photograph of it, and mentioned that Stabler had exhibited a sculpture done in the same technique at the 1916 Royal Academy exhibition earlier that year.<sup>188</sup> Indeed, the reviewer of the 1916 Royal Academy Summer Exhibition for Country Life (possibly Weaver) wrote a long paragraph about the technical difficulties and originality of Phoebe Stabler’s work, culminating with the comment “Despite these difficulties Mrs Stabler has created an altogether delightful thing, and it is to be hoped she will make further essays in a manner of which she is obviously a mistress and, as far as this writer knows, the inventor.”<sup>189</sup>

Phoebe Stabler’s lead sculptures received more press attention than her cement sculptures, although both media were rare for women to use. As we have seen in previous chapters, when women began working in new areas, their work was generally not supported in the press. However, several factors were in Phoebe Stabler’s favour for her lead garden-pieces to be well-received in 1916. Firstly, she had a reputation as a sculptor of enamelled earthenware figures, and was a familiar exhibitor at ACES exhibitions. Secondly, she chose to use lead, a material familiar to the critics in the architectural journals who were so enthusiastic about her work. Thirdly, the use of decorative leadwork for gardens and outdoor decoration was enjoying a resurgence amongst Arts & Crafts architects in the garden city movement, since students had been able to study decorative leadwork under FW Troup at the LCC Central School of Art since 1896.<sup>190</sup>

In her discussion of the critical response to women potters in the 1920s, Moira Vincentelli highlights the reception of Phoebe Stabler’s small modelled and enamelled figures as evidence of the critics’ “characteristically patronising attitude so often applied to women’s crafts.”<sup>191</sup> She notes that Stabler’s small modelled statuettes were subtly disparaged in The Studio and The Times, due to their small size and use as domestic decorative pieces. Sold in multiples, this sort of work was

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<sup>187</sup> “Our Illustrations,” The British Architect (November 1916) 144.

<sup>188</sup> Weaver’s admiration for Phoebe Stabler’s work very likely played a role in her becoming the chief designer for Weaver’s Ashtead Potteries in the 1920s. Weaver, 4\*.

<sup>189</sup> “Architecture and Sculpture at the Royal Academy,” Country Life (3 June 1916) 8\*.

<sup>190</sup> Gronberg, 21.

very popular and was obviously a 'bread and butter' sort of work for the Stablers. She quotes The Studio Yearbook of 1915:

There is a solidity and a compactness which give them much *charm* in silhouette [...] These *little* works make a human and often humorous appeal that constitutes an *attractive* feature apart from the considerable artistic merits they possess'.<sup>192</sup>  
(Vincentelli's italics )

However, in her emphasis on semantics, Vincentelli seems to ignore that Stabler's work is simultaneously described using rather masculine adjectives: it has 'a solidity and a compactness,' and 'considerable artistic merits,' which are not patronising. As I have been illustrating here, critics at the 1916 event also used this combination of masculine and feminine terminology to describe Phoebe Stabler's sculptures in lead, cement and ceramics. This was not the first time women's work was discussed with so many voices simultaneously. The work of exceptional women decorative artists since before the advent of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society have been the subjects of this sort of reception. As we have seen, Kate Faulkner's gesso work in 1883 and 1888, and May Morris's embroidery in 1890 were also complimented using this type of vocabulary which accords these women both their acceptable feminine qualities (by use of the 'feminised' terms) as well as the more masculine qualities, generally associated with the male genius in art. When used in combination, this was high praise indeed from the critics.

Most women in my reviews sample received only one mention of their work in 1916, making the critics' choice seem quite random. Despite being the most frequently named women in the reviews, the content of their reception could not have been more different. Grace Christie and Phoebe Stabler worked in very different mediums, and moved in different worlds: Grace Christie followed the more traditional Arts & Crafts career path, which included designing and making by hand, teaching, and writing both historical and technical treatises on her chosen medium of embroidery. Phoebe Stabler belonged to a newer generation of practitioner, educated at university and art school. Her career involved designing and producing figurative sculptures in a variety of

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<sup>191</sup> Moira Vincentelli, "Potters of the 1920s: Contemporary Criticism," in Gillian Elinor et al, eds Women and Craft (London: Virago Press Ltd, 1987) 78-79.

<sup>192</sup> Vintencelli, 1987, 79.

media, which could be reproduced in multiple copies by mechanical means, and exhibiting widely. She did not teach and she did not write.

What they had in common was a two-fold reputation: one on their own, and one with their husbands. As we have seen in the Gaskins' experience in Chapter 4, exhibiting as a couple was advantageous when both partners brought their previous reputations to their joint work. This works only for the more traditional ACES couple only in 1916: Grace Christie was named for her own work only once, but ten times for a collaborative venture as half of 'Mr and Mrs AH Christie.' Phoebe Stabler, on the other hand, received 12 mentions for her own work, and only two with her husband. The difference between collaborating and sharing a vitrine seemed to directly affect the richness of the comments: AH Christie received the attention for the collaborative work, leaving his wife as his supportive helpmeet.

The three preceding chapters have each terminated with case studies of the press reception of specific women's work, which foregrounded the issues relating to women designers at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society raised during those particular years. This chapter must end differently, though, for the major issue to arise in the 1916 ACES reviews is the lack of coverage of women's work. As previously noted, only 18% of the 413 women exhibiting received press notices of their work in 1916. This is the lowest of all four exhibitions in this study, and a massive reduction compared with 1903, when 61% of the 173 women exhibiting were named – even more than the men that year. Fewer men were named in 1916 as well, but the difference was not as great: 45% of men were named in 1903, compared to 30% in 1916.<sup>193</sup> The final section of this chapter will outline the issues which preoccupied the critics and contributed to women designers being edged out of the reviews in 1916: the murals, and the Design and Industries Association.

Critics of the 1916 Arts and Crafts exhibition wrote far more about the restructuring of the rooms of the Royal Academy than anything else, partly due to the novelty of the Royal Academy permitting another society to use its galleries, and partly because the advance press releases of the Society dwelt almost exclusively on this aspect of their upcoming exhibition. By including large

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<sup>193</sup> In 1903 a total of 564 men participated, 253 of whom were named in my reviews sample. In 1916, 430 men participated, and 124 were mentioned in my sample.

murals and completely reconstructed interiors in the separate rooms of the exhibition, Henry Wilson was trying to portray an example of civic decoration produced by a harmonious co-operation of painters, architects, and craftworkers. His audacity provoked responses from every review in my sample. Several noted the fantastic aspect of the difference, such as the critic in The Gentlewoman, who quoted Poynter's jokes, made at the opening of the exhibition:

One most interesting feature was the manner in which the somewhat sober building of the Academy had been transformed into something rich and strange, as if by the wand of one of the genii from the 'Arabian Nights,' which had caused an Aladdin's palace to spring up during the short interval since the closing of the summer exhibition, though he remembered that Aladdin awoke to a beautiful building complete in every detail. (Laughter)<sup>194</sup>

The laughter arose because the exhibition was not finished at all, and the joke was enlarged upon by other reviewers. The Architects' & Builders' Journal thought the Royal Academy looked as though "Pierrot had run amok in the State apartments;"<sup>195</sup> while the Gentlewoman's opinion was that "Aladdin and Alice had been there before you and changed every accustomed feature of architecture and furnishing into a strange, new and exhilarating waking dream."<sup>196</sup>

The Hall of Heroes, was designed as an example of potential war memorials by Henry Wilson and built by FW Troup. Opinion varied greatly about it, with only the Connoisseur thought that it was "finely proportioned, and, if carried out in a permanent form, would afford fine scope for the commemoration of those who have taken part in the Great War."<sup>197</sup> Whereas the other reviews focussed on the paintings, WT Whitley in the Studio merely named them, and described the architectural transformation of the room in some detail.<sup>198</sup>

Other periodicals thought the Hall of Heroes was not at all successful and the room was criticised for the absence of collaboration amongst the workers, evidenced by the different styles of

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<sup>194</sup> "Arts and Crafts. Exhibition Opened," The Daily Telegraph (10 October 1916) 7.

<sup>195</sup> Ubique, "Here and There," The Architects' & Builders' Journal (18 October 1916) 178.

<sup>196</sup> "Women's Work at the Arts & Crafts," The Gentlewoman (18 November 1916) 550.

<sup>197</sup> "The Lady in Society," The Lady (19 October 1916) 447.

<sup>198</sup> WT Whitley, "Arts and Crafts at the Royal Academy-First Article," The Studio 69:284 (November 1916) 72.

the murals, and an overall lack of aesthetic unity. The Athenaeum's critic found them courageous to try, though:

Great credit is due to the Society for an attempt, on an unprecedented scale, to co-ordinate painting and architecture, but in its most ambitious feature, the *Hall of Heroes*, painter and architect do not seem quite to have achieved collaboration, yet the evidence of available capacity commands respect.<sup>199</sup>

Sir Claude Phillips in the Daily Telegraph commented drily, "There are other decorations, too, in which it has been attempted, with no great measure of success, to make mural decoration out of the tremendous actualities of warfare."<sup>200</sup> The Architect was equally blunt: "In the 'Hall of Heroes' we are unable to recognise that harmony of the whole which we have postulated as essential to the satisfactory completion of a noble building."<sup>201</sup>

As measured by column inches, the mural paintings received the greatest amount of critical attention. It is highly significant that these fourteen murals should have had such an impact on the critics, so strong as to preclude discussion of ten galleries full of decorative art. It is clear their sympathies were not with the decorative arts; the question is, why?

'NN' [Elizabeth Pennell], writing in the New York weekly The Nation, discussed the murals and the redecoration of Burlington House for two pages before explaining that she had "written at length of these architectural and decorative features of the exhibition, not only because the Society has made a special point of them, but because I have found them of most interest."<sup>202</sup> Here Pennell shows her true colours, her preference for painting and the novelty of the redecorated Burlington House. She merely lists the smaller items:

The other exhibits are what they have always been at the Arts and Crafts, except perhaps that as much space is not given to textiles and wallpapers and table linen as in earlier years when Morris and Walter Crane and Lewis Day were the principal influences in the management. There is the usual display of pottery, glass, silverware, jewelry, printing, binding, prints, cartoons, embroideries, metalwork, occasional pieces of furniture.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> "Exhibitions," The Athenaeum 4611 (November 1916) 559;

<sup>200</sup> Sir Claude Phillips, "Royal Academy. Arts & Crafts Exhibition," The Daily Telegraph (7 October 1916) 11.

<sup>201</sup> "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition," The Architect (10 November 1916) 279.

<sup>202</sup> NN [E Pennell], "The Arts and Crafts at the Royal Academy," The Nation 103:2683 (30 November 1916) 526.

<sup>203</sup> NN [E Pennell], "The Arts and Crafts at the Royal Academy," The Nation 103:2683 (30 November 1916) 526.

Another reason given for writing about the murals was simply because they were there, or, as the critic in the Connoisseur put it, that murals were “especially strongly represented - a noteworthy achievement, when it is remembered how few have been the opportunities afforded to painters of producing decorative work on a large scale.”<sup>204</sup> Indeed, there had not been an exhibition of murals in London since 1912,<sup>205</sup> but does this justify skipping over the rest of the show?

The art critic for the Saturday Review, Charles Henry Collins Baker,<sup>206</sup> cheerfully admitted in the opening lines of his review that he had rather more prosaic reasons for writing about murals:

Following the line of least resistance, the art critic probably gravitates, in an exhibition as various and technical as the show of arts and crafts at Burlington House, to the mural decorations, concerning which he can “loose off” his existing supply of ammunition. To some extent he finds himself at sea, or at least unprepared, if he is expected to deal at once and intelligently with the less familiar mysteries of pots and table linen and altars and beds. In confessing to his liability to find himself at a disadvantage in such an emergency he should be conscious that his admission is a rather damning comment on all sorts of things, most notably the general implication that a hard, fast line divides art (ie, pictures and sculpture) from the everyday accessories of life.”<sup>207</sup>

Collins Baker brings up several rather worrying points by his comments. First of all, he states that he will write about the mural paintings, because that is his area of expertise. A brief look at his bibliography confirms this; a brilliant researcher and one of England’s first professional art historians, he wrote uniquely about paintings. Secondly, he openly admits a belief in the ‘hard and fast line’ which divides fine art from everyday objects - evidence that he was in no way sympathetic

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<sup>204</sup> “Current Art Notes,” Connoisseur 47:185 (January 1917) 56.

<sup>205</sup> This was the Exhibition of Murals held at Crosby Hall, Chelsea, London. Allan Powers, “Murals of the Arts & Crafts Movement at the 1916 Exhibition,” Craft History One (1988) 25.

<sup>206</sup> Charles Henry Collins Baker (1880-1959) was an art historian, critic, and painter. He studied painting at the Royal Academy Schools, and exhibited watercolours at the RA and with the New English Art Club (1909-1916). As an art historian, he wrote for Burlington Magazine (c.1908-1913), was art critic for the Saturday Review from 1911, and wrote several books and catalogues on British art, notably Lely and the Stuart Portrait Painters (1912). His several appointments include private assistant to Sir Charles Holroyd, director of the National Gallery, London 1911-1914; Keeper of the National Gallery, London (1914-1932), Surveyor of the King’s Pictures (1928-1934), and Senior Research Associate in British Art, Huntington Library and Art Gallery in San Marino, California (1932-1949). See Shelley M. Bennett, “Charles Henry Collins Baker: Biographical and Bibliographical Note,” Huntington Library Quarterly 64:3&4 (2001) 501-505.

<sup>207</sup> CH Collins Baker, “The Arts And Crafts,” Saturday Review 122:3184 (4 November 1916) 433.

with the original project of the ACES to eradicate this difference. It is clear that Collins Baker did not share Wilson's objectives for this exhibition.

Collins Baker was not alone in his preference for fine art. Daily papers, architectural journals, art journals, and weekly reviews, all directed their attention to the mural decoration of the exhibition, in some cases to the exclusion of all else. Augustus John's large mural *Galway Peasants*<sup>208</sup> received the most press attention of anyone in the exhibition, with sixteen reviews. It seems that large works of art required longer descriptions, and below I quote from several periodicals in order to show the difference between the richness of the critics' discussions of murals and the scant coverage that the decorative arts pieces in my case studies received. The difference is staggering.

*Galway Peasants* was described in the Glasgow Herald as "a broad, swiftly executed oblong said to have been 'rubbed in' by Mr Augustus John during the last week. In the centre is a group of those Galway fisherwomen, silhouetted (sic) against sea and distant hills which, uncouth a little in the lower part, is in design and grave mood impressive."<sup>209</sup> This was the shortest description of this work. JB in Burlington Magazine was quite verbose about all the murals, but dwelt particularly on that of Augustus John:

The signal work of the exhibition is Mr John's design on the rounded end of the gallery beyond the circular sculpture gallery. His subject is Ireland. He has shown nothing more expressive of his curious psychic force or more beautiful in colour, a notation of grey-greens and dead blacks, with cream-white and two notes of pink, which are the keys of the scheme. As usual with John, the colour is evocative of the theme. That is the one certainty in a John picture. His colour never expresses something emotionally different from his design. The composition falls into three parts, by a not quite happy device of intervening masses, like tree-trunks, which give a grotto-like and crowding effect to the whole. The centre group of shawled women, one almost writes a 'flight of women', like blackbirds, with their swathed heads and bare feet, rises in a mystic Irish landscape; beside them are a boy in pink with his mother. The women seem listening, the boy seems listening and seeing. It is the Ireland of legend and remote dreams. At one side is a scene at a fair with men

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<sup>208</sup> The mural was painted from a cartoon drawn after a trip John made to Galway City in 1915. It was first exhibited at the 1916 ACES exhibition, and presented to the Tate Gallery (now Tate Britain) by Sir Edmund Davis in 1917 (N03210 Galway (Cartoon For A Decoration) 1916). John retouched the work in 1920, and in 1948 the canvas was relined and put onto three stretchers. Although rarely exhibited, *Galway* was recently displayed in the staircase outside the exhibition, *Gwen John and Augustus John*, held at Tate Britain, 29 September 2004- 9 January 2005. Augustus John OM 1878-1961, "Galway 1916 and 1920" General Collection, Artist A-Z, Tate Britain. <<http://www.tate.org.uk/servlet/ViewWork?cgroupid=999999961&workid=7106&searchid=7922&roomid=false&tabview=text&texttype=8>>

<sup>209</sup> "A Metamorphosed Academy. Arts and Crafts in the Making." Glasgow Herald (7 October 1916) 9.

drinking and disputing, and on the other side groups of fisher men and workmen talking together. The essential effect is the Ireland of dreams, and the Ireland of the fairs and disputes and politics. It is no more didactic than that the centre of Ireland is her women, and that she is all of the people and concerned with her own affairs Mr John lives in a world where he middle-class and the upper-class are absentees.”<sup>210</sup>

A critic in The Times was even more hyperbolic, and thought it was “the best thing Mr John has ever done; it is, we think, the best piece of wall decoration ever done by an Englishman, since it combines decorative propriety with extreme vitality.”<sup>211</sup> Both reviews show evidence of a new vocabulary seeping into art criticism, in which the colour and the plastic qualities of the painting are becoming more important than the narrative or moral aspects.

Those that didn't like it were equally adamant and long-winded in their opinions. Below is Elizabeth Pennell's discussion in Nation:

John has had practical experience in mural decoration, while he seldom exhibits a large painting that is not extolled for its decorative qualities. But these are exactly the qualities which he does not bring to his present task. Perhaps he has taken it too lightly, under the impression that anything he might contribute should be gratefully received by the Arts and Crafts. His part of the frieze decorates one side of the room. The composition is divided into three sections, or panels, by the primitive device of placing his central group of figures between the ill-drawn trunks of two trees. This central group looks as if, in his haste, he had gathered together the women with shawls over their heads we have seen in more than one of his canvases, adding to them the small boy with whom by this time we are as familiar. On the right, a group of men, who may be workmen or fishermen, loafers or anarchists, are gathered, gesticulating with wooden aloofness; to the left, men, women, and children stand about a table on which there are bottles of wine and glasses; the three groups are posed against a pale blue-gray background at one end and a town dimly seen in the distance. The Arts and Crafts Society have not succeeded in having their catalogue ready even at the end of two weeks and, without it, I have not found it easy to understand what John was seeking to express, and my attention, consequently, was concentrated on his method of expressing it. As a composition I could see nothing in his decoration but a series of disjointed incidents, entirely wanting in decorative unity, apparently sketched in rapidly and left at that, slovenly in detail, meaningless in line. The color scheme of blues and grays, however, is not unpleasant, especially in the shadowy afternoon, when figures fade into the landscape and details are lost. I am not sure that it does not seem the pleasanter because of the contrast with the crudeness of Rothenstein's frieze on the other side of the room.<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> JB, “A Monthly Chronicle- The Arts and Crafts Exhibition,” Burlington Magazine 29:164 (November 1916) 341.

<sup>211</sup> “The Commercial Value of Art. An Academy Revelation,” The Times (7 October 1916) 10.

<sup>212</sup> Pennell, Nation, 525.



Pennell's smooth prose belies a desire to speak of John's mural with a more modern art critical language, but admits she is thwarted by the image in front of her. As a consequence, she is reduced to describing the picture to her readers in her attempt to find a narrative, keeping in mind that many of them would be in America and unable to view the work. She excuses her excessive description by blaming the ACES for not having catalogues on hand to help her; but does sneak in a few words of praise about the colouring of the work at the end. Hers is an example of art criticism in transition, with both the narrative and the plastic qualities being discussed.

CH Collins Baker was scathing in his lengthy explanation of how John had failed in his attempt at decoration, summing up,

I would not say that Mr John will ever redeem his fading promise: triviality and half measures may have become a settled habit with him. One would not be unreasonable in arguing that had he been capable of a sustained and serious effort on a large scale, he would have made it by now. [...] His failure springs from mental rather than technical causes. He has failed to understand the root principle of decorations.<sup>213</sup>

The Journal of Decorative Art's critic added that the juxtaposition of John's mural with that of William Rothenstein did not add anything to the room. "[John] has a fine sense of design, and is a master of tone, but it is unfortunate that he apparently finds it necessary to leave his work so very much in the rough, and we should suggest a happier combination of talents than is presented by the placing of his work against that of Mr Rothenstein."<sup>214</sup> In the Journal of the RIBA, EA Richardson also combined much description with new modernist terms. I quote the comments in their entirety, to show an example of their length and range:

In describing the wall decoration by Mr Augustus John a controversial subject is entered upon. As a realistic experiment it is a remarkable performance, being neither of the photographic nor idealistic variety. It is true to the life, almost brutally so, yet it is fresh in inspiration and cheerful in tone values. This product of Mr John's fertile imagination opens up a new vista, particularly concerning the decoration of public buildings; but all cannot be enthusiastic over this particular subject, for hard realities are seldom palatable. The chief merit of the design inheres in the simplicity of the conception and its dissociation from the formula of the great easel pictures of the past decade or so. The picture is divided into three parts. In the centre a group of Irish peasant women stand against a background of sea and rockgirt islands; to the right there is a group of fishermen; and to the left the market-place of a small seaport, with figures grouped round a stall. This design is a subtle representation of commonplace life, a plain statement of facts as they exist

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<sup>213</sup> CH Collins Baker, "The Arts And Crafts," The Saturday Review Of Politics, Literature, Science, and Art 122 :3184 (4 November 1916) 433.

<sup>214</sup> "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," The Journal of Decorative Art 36:432 (December 1916) 336.

to-day in out-of-the-way parts of the kingdom, particularly the east coast of Ireland and Cornwall.

In this design Mr Augustus John has endeavoured to emulate the works of the early fresco painters, and has imparted to his subject the naïve interest permeating the straightforward decorations of Della Robbia, but the costumes and the attitude of the figures grouped in the frieze err on the side of being too natural, and conventional grace is lacking.<sup>215</sup>

It seems the critics could not resist commenting about this painting, lending new credence to the cliché 'all press is good press.' The work was discussed for its decorative properties, its plastic qualities, and even its spiritual qualities, with such a volume of words that the cacophony reduced any comments about even the most popular women - Grace Christie and Phoebe Stabler – to a faint whisper.

In addition to murals and Augustus John, critics also raised their voices to sing the praises of the Design and Industries Association (DIA), which received the second largest number of mentions in the 1916 press sample for its industrially-produced pottery and fabrics.<sup>216</sup> The DIA was founded in May 1915 by a group of designers and businessmen, many from within the ranks of the ACES, "to harmonize right design and manufacturing efficiency."<sup>217</sup> Unlike the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, which looked to the past for its inspiration and work ethos, the DIA was firmly rooted in the present, and faced the future. A review of their first two publications put it this way: "It desires to guide and control, not to boycott, machinery; it means to unite designer, manufacturer, salesman, and consumer in the making and using of efficient and therefore beautiful things."<sup>218</sup> The phrase 'efficient and therefore beautiful' was used several times in the review, in an effort to equate the two terms in the mind of the reader. Equally important was the emphasis on the economic importance of the machine, and the inclusion of salesman and

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<sup>215</sup> [Sir] Albert Edward Richardson, "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," *Journal of the RIBA* 24:1 (11 November 1916) 10.

<sup>216</sup> The DIA is still in existence in the UK, based in Birmingham. According to their website, "Nowadays the DIA organises visits, events, competitions and bursaries, and welcomes anyone who has an interest in design." "About the DIA," *DIA* <<http://www.dia.org.uk/dia/>>.

<sup>217</sup> "Design and Industry" rev. of *The Beginnings of a Journal of the Design and Industries Association*, and A. Clutton-Brock, *A Modern Creed of Work*. *Times Literary Supplement* No.763 (31 August 1916) 414. A recent study of this association is Raymond Plummer, *Nothing Need by Ugly: The First 70 Years of the Design and Industries Association* (London: Design and Industries Association, 1985 and 1998).

<sup>218</sup> "Design and Industry," 414.

consumer in the full trajectory of the object's lifespan. Clearly, the goals of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society for the moral improvement of the art worker by hand-made decorative arts was no longer popular, nor even feasible in 1916. With the advent of the twentieth century, and especially with the impact of the First World War on British manufacturing, came a far greater necessity to accept the machine in the production of the decorative arts, if Britain was to maintain its superiority in the European markets. Several reviews made remarks to the effect that the ACES was old-fashioned in its view of hand-made decorative art, and quite simply out of touch.

The DIA had a small room for its display at the 1916 ACES exhibition. The products on view were all machine-made, in multiples. Lewis Hind's description gives an indication of his reaction to the display:

There were the beautiful and amusing stuffs hanging on the walls, of the 'Design and Industries Association's' exhibit of pottery in daily use. The name of the manufacturer of these stuffs is not given in the catalogue. I was told that they are made for savages, and are not obtainable in England. This is the first time that I have wanted to be a savage.<sup>219</sup>

Frank Rutter in the Sunday Times devotes half his second article on the 1916 ACES show to the DIA, and affords a good example of how he, a promoter of contemporary art, views their purpose and their products:

One of the most fascinating and highly educational sections of the arts & crafts exhibition at Burlington House is the collective exhibit arranged by the Design and Industries Association. This will be found in Room No. 10, a part of the old Watercolour Room just off the second gallery. The aim of this new association is to improve the quality and fitness of goods on sale to the general public through the usual channels.

For this reason the exhibits in this section are not for sale, but the maker's name is affixed to each so that they can be asked for at any ordinary shop. The exceptional interest and value of these articles is that while they are in themselves as beautiful and appropriate as any objects in other parts of the exhibition, all of them, without exception, have been selected from traders' stocks and have been made under ordinary industrial conditions.

These exhibits teach a tremendous lesson, namely, that if people buy bad and ugly things it is due to their own faulty taste, and not because the better things are unobtainable. Further, they prove that the best modern productions are not inferior in beauty and quality to the more famous wares of old. [...] one might point to the hand-printed fabrics of Mr W Foxton and Mr Charles Sixsmith and to many other exhibits here to emphasise the excellence of contemporary productions. But the point to dwell upon is the undoubted fact that most of us are ignorant of the very

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<sup>219</sup> Hind, 6.

existence of these beautiful things till some society shows them to us in an art exhibition.<sup>220</sup>

The Journal of the Royal Society of Arts felt that the exhibit of the DIA was the only one which justified the ACES holding an exhibition during wartime:

It has been said repeatedly that the justification for holding an exhibition of Arts and Crafts just now is the desire to show what English artists can do and to help British manufacturers to realise that, if they will but use the artists, they will in the future be able to meet with greater success foreign commercial competition. Still, in spite of the interesting little show arranged by the Art and Industries Association, (sic) consisting entirely of pottery produced under ordinary trade conditions, the present exhibition has, at first sight at any rate, very little bearing on this problem.<sup>221</sup>

This comment is particularly revealing of what many critics felt, and echoed in their reviews of the 1916 ACES show: that the DIA had a better grasp of the needs of the moment than did the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society. The Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society was passé.

This is hardly surprising. The world was a very different place in 1916 than it had been in the mid-1880s when the ACES was first begun. Designers – and to some extent, makers – had indeed risen in esteem in society, and now it was time for them to adapt to the twentieth century. While Grace Christie can be said to represent the old-style ACES practitioner, talented, professional, and combining head and hands in her chosen career, her work was sadly overlooked. Phoebe Stabler’s work and career, which blended good design with mechanical reproduction, is more endemic of the twentieth-century, which brings me to the connection between Phoebe Stabler and the Design and Industries Association, which will again allow me to end this chapter with one of the case studies.

I have already explained how Phoebe Stabler’s work received the most attention of any woman from critics at the 1916 ACES show, how it was completely in keeping with the DIA’s philosophy, and also how very popular the DIA’s exhibit was with the press. It may be just coincidence then, that Phoebe’s husband Harold Stabler had helped to organise the DIA the year before, and had also been on the ACES Executive Committee for the past three exhibitions, but I

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<sup>220</sup> Frank Rutter, “The Galleries. Arts and Crafts at the Royal Academy,” Sunday Times (17 December 1916).

<sup>221</sup> “Arts and Crafts,” Journal of the Royal Society of Arts 64:3335 (20 October 1916) 819.

would like to think otherwise. I would like to suggest that Phoebe Stabler's work and press reception can be used to exemplify the ideals of the DIA.

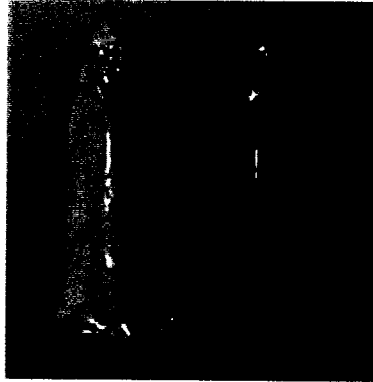


Figure 5.9: Phoebe Stabler *The Bath Towel*, 1914

It may also be coincidence that, Arthur Clutton-Brock, the DIA's propagandist, commented glowingly about her work in an article on wartime training for women, and giving examples of one of her pieces exhibited at the 1916 ACES show: "Miss Phoebe Stabler shows a number of figures skillfully modelled in earthenware with high glaze. A little statuette called 'The Bath Towel' is a spirited and promising piece of work."<sup>222</sup> (Figure 5.9) As the author of the early pamphlets of the Design and Industries Association, Clutton-Brock was involved in perpetuating the platform of the DIA, which wanted change in the design world, change that would benefit Britain in an economic way. The small modelled figures that Phoebe Stabler and many other women produced were indeed popular as items of home decoration. They could be mass-produced and they sold well, thus they were economically as well as artistically viable.<sup>223</sup> They met the criteria of the DIA for good design thus reveal practitioners like Stablers as exemplars of the modern woman designer.

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<sup>222</sup> A Correspondent [Arthur Clutton-Brock?], "Training for Women. XI. Pottery," Times Educational Supplement (16 November 1916) 212.

<sup>223</sup> Vintencelli, Women and Ceramics, 239.

## CONCLUSION

The critic of modern art is a central element in twentieth-century art practice, one who conditions the reception of works of art. It is through the discourse of critics, however, that ideology operates to protect the dominant system and stamp the work that women produce, even within radical art practices, with its stereotypes and values.<sup>1</sup>

This doctoral study was intended as a preliminary mapping of the critical reception of women practitioners of the decorative arts, as evidenced in the critical comments of women's work in reviews of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society between 1888 and 1916. Although women exhibited decorative arts in many venues during that time, I have based my study on reviews of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, because of its professional status, its catalogues, and its insistence on naming everyone who exhibited.<sup>2</sup> While I have chosen a wide range of reviews from different classes of periodicals, doubtless further comments about the exhibitions of 1888, 1890, 1903 and 1916 may be found in periodicals, newspapers, letters and books of the time. However, the reviews which I have located offer a great deal of information, as well as indications of areas that require further research.

### A Provisional Map

The preceding chapters give ample evidence of the variety of critical voices present in reviews of the exhibitions of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, voices which delivered varying opinions about the women who exhibited, the objects they presented, their skills as designers and makers, and the appropriateness of their work to their femininity. Despite the disparate nature of these comments, they can be aligned into a topography of criticism.

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<sup>1</sup> Roszika Parker & Griselda Pollock, *Old Mistresses: Women Art and Ideology* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981) 136.

<sup>2</sup> During these years, decorative arts by women were also exhibited in London at the Home Arts and Industries Association, the Society of Lady Artists, (renamed the Society of Women Artists in 1899), at students' exhibitions at the Central School of Arts and Crafts, and other art schools; and the exhibitions of National Competition winners. They also formed part of the exhibitions at the Women's International Art Club, the New Gallery, the Grosvenor Gallery, and various exhibitions at the commercial galleries.

Art criticism is a broad term, not lending itself to praise, yet the case studies of May Morris and Phoebe Stabler stand out for the generous amount of praise accorded to their exhibits. Other of the case studies did not fare so well. Not surprisingly, comments on Kate Faulkner's gesso decoration work in the first ACES exhibition in 1888 covered the widest range of styles and opinions of any of the case studies. While some critics praised both the work and the design, others employed the negative-comparison method to praise Faulkner's design and work, only to compare it to the superior work of a man. The vague review, characterised by a lack of detail and factual errors was also a popular reviewing style, easily written by inexperienced columnists unfamiliar with collaborative work. A few critics chose the gossipy social history approach, which allowed them to discuss issues outside the object. In Faulkner's case the critics speculated on the piano owner's taste, and what the rest of his house must look like with such a highly decorated piano. Rarely, critics only criticised the object, but the most common reaction was omission. This final category was generally the largest category of opinion about any women's work.

Faulkner's reception is interesting because her reputation as a designer in gesso, and her specialism of gessoed pianos, was well-known in the trade, thus her work was actually described, illustrated, and discussed with these varying responses, often encompassing laudatory and critical comments within the same review. If confusing to the reader, this demonstrates that critics in 1888 were not sure how to write about decorative arts in a fine art setting, or about women as designer-makers. As the years progressed, the repetition of these styles of comment, and their combinations, permutations and special vocabularies, revealed how decorative arts criticism of women's work evolved over time.

As a professional designer May Morris received the largest measure of positive press - as a designer, maker, and author - of all the women in my case studies. Fred Wedmore, whose reviews in the Standard were not generally that complimentary toward the Arts and Crafts aesthetic nor overly supportive of women's efforts, had advised his readers in his 1889 ACES review to read May Morris' catalogue essay in order "to properly appreciate the technical differences in much of the work exhibited,"<sup>3</sup> and in 1890, noted that Morris "has made herself not a little of an authority on

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<sup>3</sup> [Fred Wedmore], "Arts and Crafts at the New Gallery," The Standard (5 October 1889) 3.

the subject, as writer, designer, and actual worker.”<sup>4</sup> Significantly, Morris’s skill as a designer was praised the most frequently, with the architectural periodicals the Builder and the Building News analysing her use of mass, line, and space, and her originality of concept, one of the rare formal analyses of a design in any review. Other reviews were more descriptive, such as Home Art Work, the Illustrated London News, and The Queen, which gave reluctant praise to Morris’s ability as a designer as a skill inherited from her father. May Morris’s design skills were characterised in language that is gender-neutral, containing none of the condescending words often used to jointly describe both women and their work. Rather, the emphasis was placed on the originality of her work. The Saturday Review, one of the more critical and conservative of the periodicals, was the only review which did not discuss Morris’s designing or writing abilities, choosing rather to emphasise her stitching skills alone. May Morris’s press reception at the 1890 show was the anomaly amongst my case studies for the uniformity of its positive comments on all her skills, and one wonders how much her father’s lofty position in the worlds of decorative art, business and politics (not to mention his temper) entered into the critics’ consideration of her exhibits. Again, further research into the reception of Morris’ embroidery’ in other exhibits and in other years would flesh out this case study.

In 1916, Phoebe Stabler received accolades in the Manchester Guardian, The Studio, Country Life, The Queen, and several architectural journals for one of the several media she exhibited, her lead garden sculptures and bird bath. Lead was not a medium often employed by women, and Stabler’s clever use of it obviously impressed these critics. While the novelty factor may have augmented the amount of attention devoted to her lead work in the press, it was not the only reason, for she also sculpted portrait heads in freshly-poured cement, an even more unusual sculpting technique, which received far fewer comments in the reviews. When women decorative artists branched out to new media they were often received harshly by the press, as if overstepping the boundaries of their accepted behaviour; but if they were competent and professional, their work in these new media was warmly and honestly praised. In addition, halfway through the First

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<sup>4</sup> [Fred Wedmore], “Arts And Crafts At The New Gallery,” The Standard (4 October 1890) 3.



World War, the ever-widening range of women's activities also meant an ever-widening 'horizon of expectation' for critics of design and decorative arts.

A phenomenon experienced by several case studies was to have their names printed in the reviews without any serious consideration of their work. This phenomenon is similar to the experience of women painters in reviews of fine art exhibitions earlier in the nineteenth century, who were listed as having participated in the exhibition for the sake of printing their names in the paper, or to the fate of women novelists whose books were not assessed critically because they and the characters in their novels agreed with the critic's 'horizon of expectation.' As a style of reviewing decorative arts, this was particularly prevalent in the 1888 exhibition, when many of the reviewers were clearly struggling with the ACES's new concept of naming all those involved in a specific work. A common tactic was to list several women together in order to get as many names in print as possible. Despite Wedmore's inclusive support for the work of May Morris in later years, in his 1888 review he merely listed her name "among the contributions by ladies which must certainly be liked." They included three embroiderers (Mary Frances Crane, Una Taylor, Aglaia Coronio), a wallpaper designer (Charlotte Spiers), and two furniture designers (Agnes and Rhoda Garrett), who were grouped together by virtue of their gender, without any discussion or consideration of their abilities as designers or makers or the type of work they did.<sup>5</sup> The Court Circular also listed several women together, but it was their common medium of embroidery which linked them, rather than their gender: "the class of work proves the immense stride that women have made of late years in decorative capacity. Amongst the names are those of Mdmes Crane, A Heaton, Holiday, Coronio[,] Garrett, Carr, Una Taylor, Ernest Hart, &c."<sup>6</sup> Yet again, this list does not make clear why each was singled out, indicating the cumulative ambivalence of critics in 1888.

This type of reporting continued throughout the years of my study. Among the case studies, the reception of both Georgina Gaskin and Grace Christie suffered an incredible degree of ambivalence from the pens of critics. Although her name was printed in the reviews of the 1903

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<sup>5</sup> [Frederick Wedmore] "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition" The Standard (4 October 1888) 2.

<sup>6</sup> Celia, "Causerie," The Court Circular and Court News 61:1717 (13 October 1888) 339.

ACES more than any other woman's, Georgina Gaskin's press reception as a woman jeweller ranges from vague to descriptive, and falls easily under the rubric of uncritical assessment of women whose cultural productions conform to existing 'horizons of expectation' of their abilities. The number of nebulously-worded comments about Georgina Gaskin's jewellery meant that she was quietly conforming to the critics' ideal of how a woman should work in the Arts & Crafts Movement, alongside her husband, both designing and making, but always allowing her husband to take equal (or greater) credit opens up the possibility that her press reception was due to her husband's reputation in other areas. The non-critical reception may also be due to the fact that she was conforming to an acceptable artistic field for women, albeit one which was still emerging.

Grace Christie falls in this category as well. Despite having followed a professional career for fifteen years as an artist, author and teacher of embroidery, and contributing many pieces of her own work to the 1916 ACES show, Grace Christie's press recognition that year was limited to the collaborative work she showed with her husband Archibald Haswell Christie, and Francis W Troup. In a discussion of embroidery exhibited by students from the Royal College of Art, Grace Christie was named as their teacher, but her own embroideries were not even mentioned in the reviews in my selection. Her name appears in ten reviews yet critics seem to have copied the catalogue description, reiterating that she designed and arranged a country bedroom along with her husband and FW Troup. The press support her in the role of wife of AH Christie, and associate of FW Troup, rather than as a designer, teacher and author in her own right.

That both Gaskin and Christie received such empty press when they worked collaboratively with their husbands is highly significant, and related to the fact that they worked in embroidery and jewellery, two mediums thought to be perfectly suited to women. Further research into their careers and press reception in other venues, would help in drawing a complete picture, but from the evidence presented in reviews of the ACES exhibitions, it appears that when women work collaboratively with their husbands, performing accepted feminine activities, their wifely role as 'helpmeet' takes over, and their creative contributions are subsumed by those of their husbands.

But this explanation does not shed light on the case of Francis W Troup, who collaborated with Archibald and Grace Christie on the design and decoration of a country bedroom, for he had a similar fate to Grace Christie in the reviews of 1916. Although named in eight reviews, his exact

contribution to the room, other than the oft-repeated share in designing and arranging, is nowhere stated. However, in connection with the same room, the ten mentions of Archibald Christie describe the furniture he designed with approval. It may be the lack of information in the catalogue which led the critics to skim over the contributions of Grace Christie and Francis Troup to this project, but the lack of precision regarding the roles of each of the contributors indicates that critics clearly had difficulty discussing their three-way collaborative work.

Whether these inaccuracies were the result of human error, the critic's bias, editorial policy, or space restrictions, or various combinations of all these factors, is difficult to ascertain at this point. Further research into the editorial policies of the different periodicals towards the decorative arts, and some inkling of the critics' personal predilections on these topics would enable a more complete understanding of the system of decorative arts criticism during the late Victorian and Edwardian eras.

One area where the criticism of women's decorative arts differs from that of women's painting is in the critic's assignation of authorship to the work. Whereas critics of painting only had one person per painting to write about, critics of ACES exhibitions were indeed stymied by the concept of according both a designer and a producer equal attention, with the result that women were frequently credited with the production of a work rather than its design. Critics attempted valiantly to meet the challenge set by the ACES to name all designers and executants, but nevertheless in every exhibition there were instances where women's roles - usually when she was the designer - were incorrectly attributed. Whether these errors were intentional or innocent is difficult to tell, but in the majority of cases, the correct information was available in the catalogue, had the critic bothered to check.

The reception of Kate Faulkner's work in the inaugural Arts & Crafts Exhibition provides a good example, for the gesso-decoration which she designed and executed on a grand piano, whose shape was designed by Edward Burne-Jones, was arguably a complicated work for critics to discuss. Reviews in The Times, The Standard, and the Athenæum all referred to her contribution in a nebulous fashion, which would lead the reader to think that Burne-Jones designed the gesso

decoration and Faulkner executed it.<sup>7</sup> While the Athenaeum printed a letter from Burne-Jones correcting their error, the other publications did not. As noted in Chapter 2, such errors could be easily repeated in the secondary literature.

Women who designed embroidery at the 1890 ACES exhibition, where embroidery was one of two media showcased, also had a difficult time getting their work correctly attributed in the press. That critics seemed determined not to recognise women designers of embroidery is nowhere made clearer than in the Portfolio's comment that female designer-makers were rare. They named four women as "honourable exceptions to this rule" when over fifty women designed and made embroideries that year.<sup>8</sup> Even May Morris was subject to nebulous comments, such as the Saturday Review's statement that "Miss Morris is certainly a very skilful needlewoman."<sup>9</sup> This could easily be interpreted as Miss Morris only stitched embroidery. Yet misattributions did not always mean the designer being mistaken for maker, for May Morris was also credited in the feminist magazine Woman with "several specimens"<sup>10</sup> of designs for embroidered bookbindings, when she in fact only exhibited one. Her complicated role as designer, designer/maker, maker, and author of two catalogue essays did not facilitate the critics' task.

Georgina Gaskin's role as a jewellery designer was inaccurately reported in far more places than just the ACES reviews of her joint work with her husband, Arthur Gaskin. As detailed in Chapter 4, her reputation as a jewellery designer suffered at the hands of critics and chroniclers from 1899, the year she and her husband first exhibited their jewellery. In his discussion of the Gaskins' jewellery for The Studio Special Winter Number of 1901/1902, Aymer Vallance stated merely that Arthur had been "ably seconded by his wife,"<sup>11</sup> completely overlooking Georgina's role as the main designer of their joint jewellery. Both Laurence Hodson and Joseph Southall credit

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<sup>7</sup> "The New Gallery," The Times (29 September 1888) 6; [Frederick Wedmore] "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition" Standard (4 October 1888), 2; [FG Stephens or Wilfrid Meynell], "Fine Arts. The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," Athenaeum 3180 (6 October 1888) 454.

<sup>8</sup> Catalogue of the Third Exhibition, 1890, passim.

<sup>9</sup> "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," The Saturday Review 70:1824 (11 October 1890) 422.

<sup>10</sup> Marjorie, "D'you Know?" Woman (9 October 1890) 8.

<sup>11</sup> Aymer Vallance, "Modern British Jewellery and Fans" in Modern Design in Jewellery and Fans. The Studio Special Winter Number Charles Holme, ed. (1901-1902) 4-5.

Arthur Gaskin alone with the decision to produce jewellery, with no comment as to the possible input of his wife in the matter.<sup>12</sup>

It was not just her gender which complicated the issue, but her marital status, for art critics had difficulty discussing the work of a couple, and thus their jewellery was described in somewhat nebulous terms in many of the 1903 reviews as well.<sup>13</sup> For example, only two reviews provided details about the stones and metals they employed in their work.<sup>14</sup> Vallance's subsequent lengthy discussion of another of the Gaskins' joint exhibits, the *Sir Galahad Cup*, as Arthur Gaskin's work alone, not only writes out Georgina's input, but reveals a strong gender bias: for Vallance, enamelling requires genius and jewellery designing requires mere technical skill, hearkening back to Leader Scott's delineation of these tasks in 1884.<sup>15</sup> Vallance assigns values to these crafts, in which those with pictorial possibility rank higher than those which require mere technical expertise. These values are suspiciously akin to the higher ranking of fine art over crafts, the fallacy which the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society had been attempting to eradicate since 1888. It is also indicative of a double standard within decorative arts criticism with regards to gender and design, whereby women's design skills are praised far more when they do not stray from media which critics deem acceptable expressions of their femininity.

The ubiquity of misattribution of women's work is one area within my analysis which I feel would be clarified by a greater knowledge of the critic's personal beliefs and writings, as well as the editorial policy of the periodical in question. Such misinformation could then be traced to either the personal credo of the critic, the dictates of the editorial policy, or simply human error, and would mean less guess-work in the interpretation of the comments.

Equally unfathomable at times was the language used to describe women's work in the decorative arts, which varied considerably as critics came to terms with the challenges of writing

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<sup>12</sup> Laurence Hodson, "The Birmingham Group: Arthur J Gaskin and Joseph Southall," *The Studio* 79 (1920) 4; Joseph E Southall ARWS, Foreword, *Memorial Exhibition Arthur Joseph Gaskin, ARE (1862-1928)* (City of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery 1929).

<sup>13</sup> "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition - III," *The Builder* (14 February 1903) 156; "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition at the New Gallery. First Notice," *The Studio* 29:119 (February 1903) 40.

<sup>14</sup> "Art. The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," *The Court Circular and Court News* (17 January 1903) 97; A.M. [Alice Meynell?] "Arts And Crafts," *Pall Mall Gazette* 76:11,793 (20 January 1903) 3.

reviews of this type. As with women painters, the sex of the artist often overshadowed the work they were exhibiting, warranting a special, feminised vocabulary. The British Architect's response to Kate Faulkner's gesso decoration in the 1888 ACES exhibition provides one such instance. While this architectural journal devoted a considerable amount of letterpress to her work and career, the design and execution of her gesso decoration were described using somewhat feminised adjectives, which appear all the more so when compared to those used in the same journal used to describe Walter Crane's gesso work. This can be said to be a use of gendered language because the adjectives used to describe Faulkner's work may also be used to describe women themselves. Another glaring example was Aymer Vallance's discussion of Georgina Gaskin's design skills. The special vocabulary which he employed was highly gendered, and one he did not use to describe men's jewellery, or to discuss the work of her husband.

That being said, criticism of Phoebe Stable's work in 1916 contained instances of gendered language which did not follow this pattern. Rather, they pointed out the superiority of her designs for lead and cement sculptures using a combination of masculine and feminine terms. In both instances, the use of feminine language reveals the critic's tacit acknowledgment of the sex of the artist, and approval of the type of work as fit work for a woman. However, the addition of the masculine vocabulary, generally reserved for men and artists of genius, signals the critic's genuine praise for the quality of the work.

The nuanced nature of these comments is the confounding factor, for the critic may be speaking of the woman herself, her finished piece, or her skill as a designer or maker. Comments about the women themselves or about their work which were directly related to their femininity were found throughout the years of my study, and are equally disturbing whether from 1888 or 1916. As I have detailed in the chapters, several critics vented their spleen on the topic of women amateurs, often suggesting their work should not have been included in the show. At the 1888 exhibition, the Art Journal regretted the presence of the designs by 'gentlewomen with a mission,' which showed 'evidence of slavish copyism of the followers and leaders of capricious fashion' according to William Woodward; in 1890 Florence Fenwick Miller railed against the presence of

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<sup>15</sup> Vallance, "British Arts and Crafts in 1903 II," The Magazine of Art 1 ns (1903) 221-223; Leader Scott [Lucy E Baxter], Women at Work: Their Functions in Art, The Magazine of Art 7 (1884) 99.

samplers, equating them to child-labour; in 1903 Aymer Vallance decried the work of amateur women generally, especially if they were from outside London; and also reduced a professional watercolourist and glass artist to 'amateur' status because of her gender. In the same exhibition, women jewellers were accused by Joseph Pennell of posing, and by DS MacColl of following fashion simply to make money. And again in 1916 samplers came in for a tongue-lashing that would have made Fenwick Miller proud, insisting that the work of school-girls did not belong in a professional show. Decidedly, the entry of women into the ring of a professional exhibition was met with opposition from certain corners.

Embroidery in particular provoked comment in the reviews, because this was the most frequently exhibited medium by women at every ACES exhibition except 1903. However, in certain class periodicals, the presence or absence of comments on embroidery was indicative of rather selective coverage. As Laurel Brake has pointed out for journals of opinion,<sup>16</sup> the content of periodical articles is often directed toward a specific readership. Within class journalism, this concept is clear in exhibition reviews.

The architectural press, for example, frequently reviewed only those portions of the ACES show which pertained to architecture, such as furniture, architectural drawings or models. They did this overtly, stating as much at the outset of the review. In its review of the 1903 ACES exhibition, the British Architect advised its readers that "[t]he examples of architecture complete in the exhibition are not numerous, and they are chiefly of domestic work; but [...] they will have a special interest for our readers."<sup>17</sup> In 1888 the British Architect praised the work of Kate Faulkner, whose gesso decoration qualified as an architecture-related trade, but they did not support the many women who designed and produced embroidery in the 1890 ACES show, devoting only one sentence to the embroideries in the West Gallery.<sup>18</sup> While it is understandable that a magazine for architects would concentrate on the architectural items, the selectivity of their reviews of the ACES

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<sup>16</sup> Laurel Brake, Subjugated Knowledges. Journalism, Gender and Literature in the Nineteenth Century (Houndmills: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1994) 56.

<sup>17</sup> "Arts & Crafts Exhibition II," The British Architect 59:5 (30 January 1903) 73.

<sup>18</sup> "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition," The British Architect (10 October 1890) 262-3.

is problematic not only because the work omitted was generally women's, but because of the high proportion of architects involved in the ACES as committee members.

However, both the Builder and the Building News gave glowing reports of May Morris' embroidery in 1890. This suggests that the 'class' within class journalism is not consistently defined. Indeed, the readership of the two latter periodicals was far broader than that of the British Architect, including many types of craftsmen and their female family members. Accordingly, articles of interest to women appeared regularly, and coverage of ACES exhibitions was more complete.

Neither was the women's press a unified 'class' of journals, with some using a more selective approach to criticism of ACES shows than others. Whereas the British Architect told its readers its reviews were selective, and proceeded to dismiss embroidery, several women's magazines limited their comments on ACES shows to the embroidery. In 1888 this was especially evident in the Lady, and in Aurora's "Ladies' Column" which appeared in several local London papers. Although The Queen printed two articles on the embroidery in the first ACES show, they sagely catered to both conservative and non-conservative factions within their readership by including two further articles, one on the exhibition generally, and one on gesso and woodwork. In 1903, when the majority of reviews were waxing poetic about the jewellery, The Lady again only reviewed the needlework. One would never know that women worked in other media by reading this review. In 1916, The Queen and the Gentlewoman included long discussions of all the new media being used by women, the conservatism of The Lady was even more glaring, for its review of the ACES named yet again only women who embroidered.

While it seems obvious that both the architectural press and the women's press omitted certain types of women's work in reviews of ACES due to their editorial policies, the selective nature of reviews in The Lady is more invidious due to its lack of transparency. Their readers were not informed that much of the show was omitted, the information was merely presented. Further research into the editorial policies of class journals, both architectural and women's, will enable a clear understanding of why such variances occurred, and whether it was more prevalent in women's or men's periodicals.



Whilst some periodicals carried selective coverage of objects, others had selective coverage of women's roles in producing those objects. Women executants received significantly less press attention than women designers throughout the period of my study, with the exception of the 1890 exhibition, when 49% of women reviewed were makers and 51% were designers. With an emphasis on embroidery that year, this is not surprising. Producers of embroidery of the calibre of Mary Frances Crane and Catherine Holiday were reviewed consistently for stitching the designs of Walter Crane and William Morris respectively, but only once in my study did a maker receive enough press attention to warrant a case study. This honor went to Una Taylor, another producer of Walter Crane's embroidery designs, for her stitching of the Irish National Banner at the 1890 exhibition. This huge, solidly-worked silk banner was the 'hot potato' of the show, receiving many mentions, including some of the sharpest criticism of any work in this study. The negative comments on the Irish National Banner were not directed towards Taylor's contribution, however, but towards its design, and the concept of Irish Home Rule which it represented. The Court Chronicle, The Queen, and the Saturday Review criticised the politics which the banner represented, inferring that they did not agree with the concept of Irish Home Rule.<sup>19</sup> The British Architect criticised the design and the Artist criticised the colour.

Only two periodicals had genuine praise for the Banner. Taylor's skill as a producer of embroidery received accolades in the Dublin-based Irish Textile Journal, which also complimented the design and the colour of the Banner, and the feminist journal Woman foregrounded Taylor's work over Walter Crane's design.<sup>20</sup> Elsewhere, her talent for embroidery was discussed in terms of the patience required to produce such a large piece, rather than her colour sense or technical skill.<sup>21</sup> This pattern had been established in earlier ACES exhibitions, for in 1888 her stitching was remarked on in the reviews of her work, despite the fact that she also

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<sup>19</sup> "Notes," The Court Circular and Court News 65:1819 (11 October 1890) 337; "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition," The Queen (11 October 1890) 516; "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition," Saturday Review 70:1824 (11 October 1890) 423.

<sup>20</sup> Marjorie, "D'you Know?" Woman (9 October 1890) 8.

<sup>21</sup> ALB [Alfred Lys Baldry], "Arts & Crafts Exhibition," The Artist 11:133 (1 December 1890) 362; "The Arts & Crafts Exhibition," The Daily Graphic (6 October 1890) 4.

designed most of the work she exhibited, and her work as a designer for the Donegal Industrial Fund had been noticed in the women's and trade press.

Critics seemed hesitant to discuss Taylor's actual contribution to the work in any detail. Considering the amount of time necessary to embroidery a large work such as the Irish National Banner, and the fact that it was a connection of hers – the Irish MP Thomas P Gill - who gave Walter Crane the motifs for the design, Taylor's part in the Banner was overlooked to an astonishing degree. Unlike Faulkner and Morris, Taylor's professional activities in embroidery outside the ACES exhibition were not acknowledged in reviews in 1890. It is feasible that the work was seen as a manifestation of Taylor's political views, rather than her artistic talent, thus did not warrant discussion of her artistic skills, yet the press reaction to her embroidery at previous ACES exhibitions had been equally hollow. In the final analysis her contribution to this banner was reviewed in the same manner as Grace Christie's embroidery and Georgina Gaskin's jewellery, as the male designer's supportive helpmeet, whose technical expertise did not warrant any particular discussion. However, if the critics views on women involved in the Irish Home Rule debate were known, this may shed some light on the reason for such comments.

This also brings into question whether the ACES policy of naming all designers and makers actually had any benefit for the makers. Judging by the women's press reception, it was not of much help at all, despite the comments of certain critics stating that women were actually only fit to execute the designs of others. A closer look at the reception of men's exhibits would put the reception of women's work into better perspective.

However, the single most remarkable trend in the reception of women's work at the ACES between 1888 and 1916, is the dizzying drop in mentions of women's work between 1903 and 1916. It immediately suggested the title of both this thesis and Chapter 5, in which I have outlined several factors which I believe have contributed to this decline. One such factor was the emphasis in the advance publicity on the redecoration of Burlington House and the murals, which encouraged many critics to dwell on these issues in their reviews. On the press day, the disorder of the exhibition and lack of a catalogue also prevented critics from identifying the work with certainty. But while these factors may account for a few less names, it is indeed curious that the

decrease in attention to men's work was nowhere near that of the decrease in attention to women's exhibits.

This is a serious problem, considering that 61% of the women exhibiting were named in 1903 and only 18% in 1916. One thinks immediately of the impact of the masculinist manifestos of the Modernist painting groups on art criticism, but I am reluctant to accede another victory solely to the Modernists, as Janice Helland, Jane Beckett and Deborah Cherry have done. While this was likely a contributing factor, further clues to the erasure of women in the 1916 Arts & Crafts Exhibition may also be found beyond the world of art.

The obvious culprit is World War I, for the exhibition took place in the middle of a War which deeply affected the lives of Britons at the time, and continues to do so to this day. Nowhere was this fact more evident than in the pages of the periodical press. Periodicals could not fail to be affected by WWI, and the many long days I spent perusing periodicals in search of reviews of the 1916 ACES exhibition made this patently clear. Some class journals even prioritised the war effort above their regular interests.<sup>22</sup> Practical factors like the paper shortage, which meant smaller papers, can also be factored into the reduced number of reviews of the 1916 ACES show, particularly in papers that usually carried reviews.<sup>23</sup> For example, the Athenaeum and the British Architect, both weeklies during peacetime, were published monthly during the war to save paper. The French art magazines Art et décoration and Revue de l'art ceased publication altogether for the duration of the War. Of periodicals that usually reviewed women's work generously at ACES shows, some named fewer women than usual: the Manchester Guardian, the Studio, the Builder, the Queen, the Ladies Field, The Lady and the Lady's Pictorial; and others named none at all: the Building News, The Times, and the Daily Telegraph. A few named more women in 1916 than was

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<sup>22</sup> The Field was one such example: "When war was declared with Germany, [...] The Field concentrated upon the war, with sport [...] taking secondary place. During the campaign readers rallied to do whatever they could to help the troops. Bales of sheepskins were collected and sent to the trenches, ladies supplied old, long gloves to be fashioned into protective waistcoats, furs were supplied, overcoats, blankets, anything that could be utilized in emergency to provide war clothing for the front. For recreation behind the lines even hounds were forthcoming." Rose, 144.

<sup>23</sup> Reviews were not found in the Illustrated London News, the Birmingham Daily Post, the Pall Mall Gazette, and the Standard, all of which reviewed the ACES regularly until 1916.

their wont,<sup>24</sup> but this attention did not balance out the dearth of representation in the other periodicals. (See Appendix VII: Women & Case Studies Reviewed, 1888-1916)

With the majority of men away fighting, the British economy had to be maintained, and women were relied upon to do it. On 9 June 1915, the British Parliament passed the Ministry of Munitions Act, which created a new government office to encourage and regulate women's work during the rest of World War I. Women themselves were eager to serve, for on 17 July 1915, a protest was organised by the Women's Social and Political Union, in which 30,000 women marched through the streets of London, demanding war work for women.<sup>25</sup> The result of their efforts was the Women's "Right to Serve Act," and in October 1916 the War Office published Women's War Work in Maintaining the Industries and Export Trade of the United Kingdom, the official guidelines to trades open to women workers. The list was 93 pages long, including "the chemical, clothing, food, textile, brick, pottery, glass, leather, rubber, piano, linoleum and tobacco trades. Other occupations included clerical and post office work, portage, tram and bus driving and warehouse work."<sup>26</sup> Women were essentially being asked to carry on Britain's trades while men were overseas fighting, a responsibility which was not taken lightly by anyone.

It is no coincidence that periodicals were filled with articles about women's new roles and activities related to the War effort, displacing other less important news, such as art reviews. Reviews of ACES were usually found in the London Letter of the Birmingham Daily Post, but the week the ACES opened, the London Letter was filled with the latest statistics about women in the war:

The substitution of women in industry for men called to the colours is proceeding with growing rapidity. During the second quarter of this year the number of women enrolled was more than double what it was in the preceding three months, the figures being 87,000, as compared with 40,000, and of these the women directly replacing men were put at 50,000. [...] It is understood that, according to the latest

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<sup>24</sup> This group includes the Connoisseur, the Gentlewoman, the Journal of the Royal Society of Arts, and the Sunday Times.

<sup>25</sup> The WSPU was formed by Emmeline Pankhurst and her two daughters, Christabel and Sylvia, in 1903. Pankhurst received a government subsidy of £2,000 for this event. Margaret R Higgonnet, ed, Lines of Fire. Women Writers of World War I (New York: Penguin Putman Inc, 1999) xl.

<sup>26</sup> "Women and the War," Resources, World War I 1914-1918 State Library of Victoria (22 March 2002 ) <<http://www.statelibrary.vic.gov.au/slv/resources/ww1/womanatwar.html>>.

statistics, about 868,000 additional women have been drawn into various occupations since the outbreak of war.<sup>27</sup>

In the wake of the devastating loss of life at Somme - 420,000 British, 200,000 French and 450,000 Germans were killed between July and November 1916<sup>28</sup> - an increased demand for men for the British Army meant an greater demand for women to do their jobs at home than ever before. Another paper which regularly reviewed ACES shows, the Illustrated London News, pre-empted their coverage of ACES in 1916 in favour of an article on the desperate need for women munitions workers. It begins with a punch:

The Ministry of Munitions wants more women workers. What is more, it must have them -- not just a few here and there in half-dozens or tens; but in hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands, possibly hundreds of thousands, in order that the men who are fighting in their behalf on the various fronts may be kept adequately supplied with the munitions of war evolved by science and skill to kill Germans.<sup>29</sup>

This article was supplemented by three pages of drawings of women producing munitions at Battersea Polytechnic, and a short text explaining how women could train to be munitions workers.<sup>30</sup>

These two examples are but a drop in the sea of articles, such was the omnipotence of the First World War in Britain. Henry Wilson understood that any art exhibition must relate to the war, which is why the ACES advance publicity notices make specific references to the role artists could play in reconstruction after the war. Wilson designed the Hall of Heroes to showcase examples of possible war memorials, and several murals and smaller objects exhibited had war themes. This reference to the war ensured press coverage, but as pointed out in Chapter 5, the 1916 ACES was not seen by the critics to relate overly to the War.

My contention would be that the muted presence of women in reviews of the 1916 Arts & Crafts Exhibition was the result of a combination of factors. First of all, reviews of ACES were fewer than usual because news of the war in general overshadowed everything else. News of

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<sup>27</sup> "London Letter. Women, Work and the War," Birmingham Daily Post (10 October 1916) 2.

<sup>28</sup> Higgonet, xliii.

<sup>29</sup> "Women and Munitions. A National Need," The Illustrated London News (11 November 1916) 580.

<sup>30</sup> "Women Munion-Makers: Workers of Whom More are Needed," The Illustrated London News (11 November 1916) 573-577.

women's efforts in the war took precedence over all of women's other activities, due to their importance in the country's economy. There is no more masculine undertaking than a world war, and in combination with the new emphasis on masculinity in the art world, it's a wonder women were even mentioned at all. To support it adequately, this contention would require an investigation of both women's and men's reception in the three ACES exhibitions held in the intervening years between 1903 and 1916 (1906, 1910, 1912), more research into women's war work, and the huge impact of WWI on the British psyche. And of course, all these ideas would have to be supplemented with a commensurate study of the editorial policies of periodicals, and bios of editors and critics .

#### Future Mappings

The unifying thread woven throughout this study has been the working methods of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society. I have relied heavily on their records as source material, which have proved of enormous benefit for their provision of insight into how the Society operated behind the scenes. I have also made extensive use of their exhibition catalogues, which contain much valuable information about the women and men who exhibited, and the objects they produced. The information which I have collected during my research was not all presented in this thesis, though, and there is much which can still be done.

My research into members of the Society's various committees, who were all practicing designers, revealed that some were also writers and critics who signed reviews of ACES exhibitions. While it is difficult to believe that such reviews could be objective, these were also the critics who delivered the first serious critiques of the Society's progress. This sort of auto-critique may be seen as a normal stage of a group's development over time, but their critiques seemed to relate to women more often than not, a fact which is at once interesting and worrisome.

Lewis Foreman Day is one example. He signed reviews of the ACES in the Art Journal, (1893, 1896, 1903), and the Magazine of Art (1888), and wrote them anonymously in the Manchester Guardian. These and his copious articles on design and decorative arts in these and many other publications make clear that he had no patience for the woman amateur. As early as

1880 he wrote in the Magazine of Art that he was not convinced women could commit enough time to becoming a professional artist or designer.<sup>31</sup> Judging from his comments in reviews of the ACES, his views on women became even more entrenched over the years.

In 1903 Day's views on women designers were evident in his comments of three different media used by women. Their work was assessed with the extremely critical eye of a professional designer and South Kensington examiner, with the result that those women who designed their own embroidery were shown mild support, but women who designed glass or jewellery were quelled in their innovation and progress.<sup>32</sup> Day seemed far more comfortable with the idea of women producing embroidery, or making items to decorate her home, rather than designing for the trade. Clearly, Day's writings do not support women as professional designers. The question is, was this a personal bias on his part, or was this judgment based on his professional assessment of their work? Did he view women's and men's work in the same light, or did he see their gender first? These are questions which may be answered by a further analysis of his body of writing on decorative arts together with his art criticism of both men and women.

Also problematic was Day's mention of his own designs for three different companies in his 1903 review for the Art Journal, which he named "in justice to the manufacturers."<sup>33</sup> This can hardly be deemed disinterested criticism. In comparison, Alexander Fisher declined to point out individual works in his review of the jewellery section of the 1903 ACES, explaining that "he thought that "[i]t would be invidious for the present writer - who is also an exhibitor - to select any particular work for special blame or praise."<sup>34</sup> Day remained supportive of the trade's view of decorative arts production to the end of his life, an aspect of the Arts and Crafts Movement which has unfortunately been overlooked by later scholars of the Movement.<sup>35</sup> In addition, it appears that Day was openly critical of Lethaby's views on art education, and was not well liked by CR

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<sup>31</sup> Lewis F Day, "The Woman's Part in Domestic Decoration," The Magazine of Art 4 (1880-1881) 458.

<sup>32</sup> Lewis F Day, "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," The Art Journal (March 1903) 87.

<sup>33</sup> Lewis F Day, "The Arts and Crafts Exhibition," The Art Journal (March 1903) 92.

<sup>34</sup> Alexander Fisher, "Jewellery at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition," Art Workers' Quarterly 2 (1903) 55-56.

Ashbee, both of whom have been the subjects of extensive study. Nevertheless, given Day's involvement in so many facets of the design world at the time, a complete study of his life and work would be an important addition to our knowledge of the trade's perspective of the Arts and Crafts Movement.

Another member of the ACES who exhibited and also wrote signed reviews of ACES exhibitions was Aymer Vallance. In addition to writing several books, and contributing to many journals, Vallance signed reviews of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society in *The Studio* (1893, 1899) and the *Magazine of Art* (1903). As discussed in Chapter 4, Vallance's criticism was notable for its gendered view of Georgina Gaskin, as well as for his privileging of the pictorial art of enamelling above the more technical aspects of jewellery design. This would appear to oppose the ACES's goal of the eradication of the art/craft divide, to the particular detriment of women practitioners.

The tendency of ACES members towards auto-critique is significant. As early as 1890, critics had written that designs at the ACES were stale. At that time, Arts & Crafts Exhibitions were held annually, and several reviewers suggested the exhibitions be held less frequently. This advice was followed, and thereafter ACES shows were held ever three years, to rave reviews. In 1899 the first assessment of the progress of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society appeared, written by Aymer Vallance in *The Studio*. Then in 1903, at the height of the Arts & Crafts Movement's popularity, more severe criticisms of the Society appear, by both Vallance and DS MacColl. Vallance questioned whether the Society had fulfilled its mandate, and wondered whether too many lady amateurs was driving down the quality of the work, suggesting that the Society should formally disband, in order not be held responsible for the further disintegration of decorative art.<sup>36</sup> He was clearly unimpressed with the Society, for his name no longer appears on the members list in 1906.

And yet it was eventually a non-member of the Society, DS MacColl, who pointed out that reviewers of the ACES until 1903 had been staunch supporters of the Society, and were thus not objective. He also criticised the false opposition between 'commercial manufacture' and 'Arts &

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<sup>35</sup> Elizabeth Rycroft's unpublished MA thesis and her two short articles on Day make a good start. See her "Lewis Foreman Day, 1945-1910," *Journal of the Decorative Arts Society* 13 (1989) 19-26; and "Lewis Foreman Day, (1945-1910) and the Society of Arts," *RSA Journal* (April 1992) 333-336.

<sup>36</sup> Vallance, "British Arts and Crafts in 1903 I," 169-70.



Crafts manufacture' which formed the basis of ACES ideology, which no longer existed. Mervyn Macartney defended the ACES' lack of self-critique in response to MacColl's comments in 1903, aligning himself with those critics who chose only to say nice things about the Society. Indeed, by 1903 it was no longer commercially viable to design and produce one-off items, and very few Arts and Crafts acolytes actually did so. The moral high ground occupied by Walter Crane and William Morris had eroded away by 1903, and as a representative of the next generation of critics, MacColl recognised that there was a strong faction within this set of ACES members which was perfectly happy to design for multiple production using machinery, and turn a handsome profit.

However, MacColl's criticism circumvents the issue of women altogether by dwelling on the commercial versus artistic aspect of the ACES. Was this an ominous harbinger of women's treatment to come? Primarily a writer and a painter, DS MacColl exhibited designs for bookbindings from 1893 to 1903 at the ACES, which were produced by his sister, Elizabeth Matheson MacColl. Although forward-thinking in many ways, MacColl's comments, combined with his exhibition practice at the ACES, point towards the ideological camp of Vallance and Day, which supported women as producers of men's designs rather than designers in their own right.

None of these three critics supported women designers who exhibited at the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society. Moreover, their joint critiques of the ACES as a Society increased as more and more women designers exhibited there. These rather worrying trends were echoed in the general press reception of women exhibitors in this study, and indicate the necessity of further study into the thought and work of these critics. An analysis of the critical writings on decorative arts of Lewis F Day, and Aymer Vallance alone would doubtless further an understanding of women's reception in the decorative arts; the inclusion of others is dependent on their prior identification.

It may also be considered unusual for such criticism to come from within the ACES, particularly considering the continued efforts of the ACES to control its image in the periodical press. However, it is also healthy, and revelatory of the organic nature of the organisation as it changed over time. After all, the ACES was a splinter group of the Art Workers' Guild, and would itself engender another splinter group, the Design and Industries Association in 1915. Each group had its own agenda and views, with the newer groups evolving and changing with the times. The emphasis in the reviews of 1916 on the Design and Industries Association also indicates the

importance of the commercial aspect of the decorative arts. The ACES was rumoured to be out of step with the trade as early as 1903, and by 1916, business was no longer something to be swept under the carpet. When the DIA was formed on 19 May 1915, the marriage of business and design received official sanction from two government departments, the Board of Trade and the Board of Education.<sup>37</sup> From this date, the government was implicated in design and production issues, as European countries had been for some time. Further research into the DIA, their links with business, manufacturing, and the government, and their relation to women designers would be an interesting and welcome study.

The information in the ACES catalogues was really the backbone of my thesis, though, and from it stemmed the identities of the women whom became my case studies, and the numerous women I have referred to throughout these pages. Many of these women made their living in some aspect of the decorative arts, as designers, makers, teachers, critics, writers, or editors. Indeed, one of the more satisfying aspects of this research has been uncovering the variety of activities which women undertook outside their brief appearances at the ACES. One need only look the careers of May Morris, Charlotte Robinson, Grace Christie, or Blanche Conyers-Morrell to see that women often wore many hats to make a living in the decorative arts. The women's press is also replete with evidence of women's involvement in the business side of the decorative arts. But if the hesitancy with which ACES critics accepted women's work in new craft areas is any indication, women setting themselves up in businesses were bound to encounter obstacles.

These ideas, in concert with primary data which I have collected, invite further study on the women exhibitors of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society. While such a study could take many forms, I would undertake a more indepth investigation of women designers and their business careers outside the exhibition forum, because my research leads me to believe far more women took this path than the artistic one. I would use a similar approach to a study of women's design, production and business practices, as Harvey and Press used in their studies on Morris & Co.<sup>38</sup> A

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<sup>37</sup> "Art for Trade," *The Times* (20 May 1915) 11.

<sup>38</sup> Charles Harvey and Jon Press, *Art, Enterprise and Ethics: the Life and Work of William Morris*. (London & Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1996); and *William Morris. Design and Enterprise in Victorian Britain* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1991).

comparative study of several women, working in different crafts, would provide an useful insight into the contribution of women to the commercial aspects of decorative arts during the late Victorian and Edwardian periods. Existing literature on women and work as it relates to art during this time period will certainly shed some light on the issue with regards to women in the decorative arts,<sup>39</sup> but much more research would have to be done from periodical sources.

Which leads me to the final area requiring more research, to which I have referred several times in this conclusion already: the critics and the periodicals. If my thesis has shown anything new, it is that an understanding of editorial policies and of the backgrounds of individual art critics is invaluable in interpreting their art criticism. We can never hope to understand perfectly, but my attempt has certainly been worth the effort.

An understanding of our sources will only enhance the discipline of art history, providing insight into the people, the places, and the practices of the time. In my effort to understand why critics wrote about women as they did, knowledge about their lives and work has proved very helpful, for their opinions and experiences cannot help but affect their critical writing. It is difficult to know where to begin, so great is the need, but one obvious place would be with a study of those periodicals which are most used by historians of Victorian art: the Artist, the Art Journal, the Portfolio, and Magazine of Art, the Studio; and for historians of women's art I would need to add The Queen. The advent of digitised newspapers now makes researching from The Times very easy, so this newspaper also ought to be included. It would include background information on each periodical regarding ownership and editorial policy; and comprehensive biographies of editors and art critics. Preliminary research towards such a study is already contained within this thesis, which I can only hope will encourage other scholars in this direction.

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<sup>39</sup> See Ellen Jordan, The Women's Movement and Women's Employment in Nineteenth-Century Britain (London & New York: Routledge, 1999); Kristina Huneault, Difficult Subjects: Working Women and Visual Culture, Britain 1880-1914 (Ashgate, 2002).

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APPENDIX I 1888 ACES WOMEN REVIEWED shaded= maker only	TOTAL	FAULKNER, Kate	CRANE, Mary Frances	MORRIS, May	HEATON, Mrs Aldam	HOLIDAY, Catherine	GARRETT, Rhoda	TAYLOR, Una	ASHWORTH, Margaret	BUCKLE, Mary	MORRIS, Jane	BURDEN, Bessie	CORONIO, Aglata	GARRETT, Agnes	CARR, Miss	DE MORGAN, Mrs	HART, Alice	MOORE, EM	MORRIS, Jenny	BARRINGTON, Mrs R	BATEMAN, Mrs	GEMMELL, Mary	HOLMES, E A	
		ARCHITECT	2	X																				
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BIRMINGHAM DAILY POST	0																							
BRITISH ARCHITECT i	0																							
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BRIT ARCHITECT iii	1	X																						
BRIT ARCHITECT iv	0																							
BUILDER	5	X	X		X	X																		
CABINETMAKER	9	(X)	(X)	(X)	X	X	X			(X)			X	X			X	X	(X)					
COURT CIRCULAR	12	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X			X	X	X		X							
DAILY TELEGRAPH	0																							
GLASGOW HERALD	0																							
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QUEEN 3 Wood&Gesso	4	X																X						
QUEEN 4 Embroidery	3											X									X	X		
SATURDAY REVIEW	0																							
SOC ARCHS-PROC'GS	0																							
STANDARD (London)	9	X	X	X		X	X	X					X											
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APPENDIX I 1888 ACES WOMEN REVIEWED shaded= maker only	KEIDEL, Mrs A	LUCAS, Miss	NEWBOLD, A	ORRINSMITH, Lucy	PACE, Frances Edith	PRADEAU, Mrs A	SMITH, M A	SPIERS, Charlotte	STEADMAN, Ellen	STEWART, Dora	STEWART, M A	WHALL, Mrs	WYLIE, Mrs
ARCHITECT													X
ART JOURNAL													
ARTIST													
ATHENAEUM													
BIRM'M DAILY POST													
BRITISH ARCHITECT i													
BRIT ARCHITECT ii												X	
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BRIT ARCHITECT iv													
BUILDER								X					
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COURT CIRCULAR													
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35 WOMEN NAMED	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1



APPENDIX II 1890 ACES WOMEN REVIEWED shaded=maker	# women reviewed																												
	MORRIS, May	IRISH National Banner	TAYLOR, Una	JOPLING, Mrs	SMITH, Mary Augusta	TURNER, Mary E	CASELLA, Nellie	THURSFIELD, Mrs	VYVYAN, Caroline	WARDLE, Madeline	BROWN, Beatrice AM	CASELLA, Elia	CONYERS MORRELL, B	CRANE, Mrs Walter	HOLIDAY, Catherine	MARTYN, Ethyl K	MORRIS, Jane	PIKE, B	RAWNSLEY, Mrs H	VYVYAN, Mrs TS	WYLIE, Charlotte	YEATS, Lily	BARNBY, Mrs	BOWLEY, May	DAY, Clara	DELANO-OSBORNE, K	EMERY, Mrs		
ARCHITECT	2	1																											
ART JOURNAL	5	1																				1					1	1	
ARTIST	4		1	1				1															1						
ATHENAEUM	0																												
BIRMHAM DAILY POST	6		1	1						1																			
BRITISH ARCHITECT BUILDER	6	1	1		1					1																			
BUILDING NEWS	14	1	1	1	1	1	1	1						1								1			1		1	1	
COURT CIRCULAR	10	1	1	1	1	1												1	1								1	1	
DAILY CHRONICLE	1		1																										
DAILY GRAPHIC	18	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1				1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1						1			
DAILY TELEGRAPH	4	1	1	1	1	1																							
ENGLISHWOMEN'S REV	1		1																										
FURN&DECORATIO	1				1																								
GENTLEWOMAN	2				1																								
GLASGOW HERALD	2	1	1																										
HOME ART WORK	9	1										1									1		1	1					
ILLUS LONDON NEWS	7	1	1	1				1				1					1												
ILLUS LONDON NEWS Ladies' Column	0																												
IRISH TEXTILE JOUR	25		1	1		1	1	1	1	1			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1									
KENS'N&H'SMITH REP Ladies Column	0																												
LADY'S PICTORIAL	20	1				1	1	1		1		1	1	1							1	1		1					
MAGAZINE OF ART	0																												
MANCHESTER GUARD	5	1			1	1					1																		
PALL MALL	4	1	1					1																					
PORTFOLIO	10	1	1	1	1	1	1	1							1						1								
QUEEN	13	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1				1	1	1	1	1	1										
RIBA JOURNAL	0																												
SATURDAY REVIEW	4	1	1																										
STANDARD	6	1			1									1															
TIMES	0																												
WEST LONDON OBSERV Ladies Column	4					1				1																			
WOMAN	9	1	1	1	1		1		1		1										1								
TOTAL MENTIONS	18	16	10	7	7	7	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	

APPENDIX II 1890 ACES WOMEN REVIEWED shaded=maker	FRANCE, Georgina EC	GATTON, Miss	GEMMELL, Mary	HARRISON, Miss	HODDING, Miss	JACK, Annie	NORREGARD, Julie	NYSTROM, Miss	ROSCOE, Miss 1	ROSCOE, Miss 2	SMITH, Margaret	BLOXAM, Edith	BOYD, Agnes S	CAVE, Mrs W	CHAPMAN, Miss	CLAREMONT, Claudine	CLEVERLY, Mrs CFM	Cobden-Sanderson, Mrs	COMYNS-CARR, Frances	DAUBENY, Miss B	DAY, Ruth	DIXON, Mrs CW	DOWIE, Miss	FELIX-PALMER, Nancy	FELIX-PALMER, Dorothea	FICKLIN, Mrs Berney	FIELD, May	FULLER, Miss
	ARCHITECT																											
ART JOURNAL																												
ARTIST																												
ATHENAEUM																												
BIRMGHAM DAILY POST	1																											
BRITISH ARCHITECT			1																									
BUILDER	1						1																					
BUILDING NEWS			1	1																								
COURT CIRCULAR																												
DAILY CHRONICLE				1					1	1	1								1									
DAILY GRAPHIC																												
DAILY TELEGRAPH																												
ENGLISHWOMEN'S REV																												
FURN&DECORATIO																												
GENTLEWOMAN																			1									
GLASGOW HERALD																												
HOME ART WORK							1													1								
ILLUS LONDON NEWS								1																				
ILLUS LONDON NEWS Ladies' Column																												
IRISH TEXTILE JOUR									1	1	1											1						
KENS'N&H'SMITH REP Ladies Column																												
LADY'S PICTORIAL	1	1						1					1	1	1	1	1						1			1		
MAGAZINE OF ART																												
MANCHESTER GUARD				1																								
PALL MALL																												
PORTFOLIO												1																
QUEEN				1																		1						1
RIBA JOURNAL																												
SATURDAY REVIEW					1																							
STANDARD																												
TIMES																												
WEST LONDON OBSERV Ladies Column																								1	1			
WOMAN																												
TOTAL MENTIONS	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

APPENDIX II 1890 ACES WOMEN REVIEWED shaded=maker	GILBERT, CH	GILLET, Alice K	GILLETT, MH	GREEN, Mrs Edgar	HALL, Ethel	HALLWARD, Adelaide	HALSE, Emmeline	HUMPHREY, Marion	LAWLESS, Mrs	LOVIBOND, Phillis	McGAVIN, Edith	MORRIS, Jenny	NICHOLSON, Mrs	OWEN, Gertrude	PATMORE, Bertha	PARKER, Violet	PHILPOTTS, E S	REDFERN, Miss	REUTER, Mrs	ROGERS, Isobel	ROOTS, Gertrude	ROPE, EM	STEFAN, Mrs	STIFF, Miss	TWEEDIE, Mrs RW	WALKER, Miss
ARCHITECT																										
ART JOURNAL																							1			
ARTIST																										
ATHENAEUM																										
BIRMGHAM DAILY POST																1				1						
BRITISH ARCHITECT BUILDER						1		1																		
BUILDING NEWS																						1				
COURT CIRCULAR																										
DAILY CHRONICLE												1														
DAILY GRAPHIC																										
DAILY TELEGRAPH																										
ENGLISHWOMEN'S REV																										
FURN&DECORATIO																										
GENTLEWOMAN																										
GLASGOW HERALD																										
HOME ART WORK					1						1															
ILLUS LONDON NEWS																										
ILLUS LONDON NEWS Ladies' Column																										
IRISH TEXTILE JOUR	1	1		1						1		1	1				1	1								
KENS'N&H'SMITH REP Ladies Column																										
LADY'S PICTORIAL																									1	
MAGAZINE OF ART																										
MANCHESTER GUARD																										
PALL MALL																							1			
PORTFOLIO			1																							
QUEEN																										
RIBA JOURNAL																										
SATURDAY REVIEW															1											
STANDARD										1														1		1
TIMES																										
WEST LONDON OBSERV Ladies Column																										
WOMAN																						1				
TOTAL MENTIONS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

APPENDIX III 1903 ACES WOMEN REVIEWED shaded=maker	TOTAL WOMEN NAMED	TRAQUAIR, PHOEBE	GASKIN, GEORGIE	STEELE, FLORENCE	TAYLOR, UNA	CRANE, MRS WALTER	DAWSON, EDITH	GLEICHEN, FEODORA	HENSLEY, MRS PHILIP	MacCOLL, EM	SOUTHALL, MRS EM	COLLETT, MISS	GARNETT, MRS ANNIE	HALLE, ELINOR	HOUSTON, MARY G	KINGSFORD, FLORENCE	ROPE, ELLEN MARY	WARD, MRS	ADAMS, KATHERINE	BETHUNE, MRS	CARR, GERALDINE	FIELD, MAY	HILDERSHEIM, G	LAWRENCE, C	LUCAS, A	LUCAS, MATILDA	MOORE, ESTHER M	NEWILL, MARY J	
	ARCHITECTURAL REV	0																											
ART & DECORATION	9		1	1			1						1																
ART JOURNAL	12	1	1	1	1						1					1						1							
ART WORKERS QUARTERLY	37	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1		1		1			1					1		1	1	1	1	1	1
BIRMINGHAM DAILY POST	10		1	1	1	1	1	1														1							
BRITISH ARCHITECT BUILDER	0																1		1	1									
BUILDERS' JOURN	3	1				1																					1		
BUILDING NEWS	13	1	1											1									1						
COUNTRY LIFE	0																												
COURT CIRCULAR	5	1	1																										
DAILY CHRONICLE	0																												
DAILY NEWS	5	1						1				1						1											
DAILY TELEGRAPH	6	1		1	1					1		1																	
FURNITURE RECORD	0																												
GENTLEWOMAN	4																												
GLASGOW HERALD	6	1	1			1	1																						
HOME ART WORK	11					1												1											1
ILLUS LONDON NEWS	0																												
LADY	4	1				1						1																	
LADIES' FIELD	27	1	1	1			1	1	1	1				1	1	1	1		1	1	1			1	1	1	1	1	1
LADY'S PICTORIAL	13	1	1		1			1						1			1				1	1							
MAGAZINE OF ART	5		1								1							1											
MANCHESTER GUARDIAN	14	1	1	1	1		1			1	1				1	1			1			1							
PALL MALL	5	1	1					1					1																
QUEEN	8	1									1	1	1												1	1	1	1	1
SATURDAY REVIEW	1															1													
STANDARD	4	1	1						1																				
STUDIO I-IV	51	1	1	1						1	1		1		1		1				1		1	1					1
TIMES	3	1	1						1																				
TOTAL MENTIONS		17	16	8	8	7	6	6	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

APPENDIX III 1903 ACES WOMEN REVIEWED shaded=maker	Reynolds-Stephens, Mrs W	SERSHALL, Mrs Herbert	BAYES, JESSIE	BROWN, CHARLOTTE	BUTTON, KATE	CASELLA, NELIA	CAVE, LADY	CAVE, MRS WALTER	CHRISTIE, GRACE	DAWSON, MRS RA	DE GREY, MABEL	DELANO OSBORNE, K	GOFF, BERTHA	GOFF, BLANCHE	HILTON, DOROTHY	HOLDEN, EVELYN	HOLDEN, VIOLET	HUSSEY, MARGARET	LANGLEY, Helen	LETHABY, Mrs	LLOYD, GERALDINE	MACBETH, ANN	NEWTON, MISS Elizabeth	PATTINSON, ALICE	PHILPOTT, ROSAMUND	PISARRO, ESTHER	PRYCE, MISS M[au]de]	READ, MISS Lily	
	ARCHITECTURAL REV																												
ART & DECORATION				1					1												1		1						
ART JOURNAL						1				1																		1	
ART WORKERS QUARTERLY	1	1				1	1		1	1			1	1	1	1	1					1		1					
BIRMINGHAM DAILY POST				1																									
BRITISH ARCHITECT BUILDER																		1							1			1	
BUILDERS' JOURL BUILDING NEWS								1											1			1							
COUNTRY LIFE																													
COURT CIRCULAR																						1							
DAILY CHRONICLE																													
DAILY NEWS																													
DAILY TELEGRAPH																												1	
FURNITURE RECORD																													
GENTLEWOMAN																							1			1			
GLASGOW HERALD																						1							
HOME ART WORK					1							1			1	1													
ILLUS LONDON NEWS																													
LADY							1																						
LADIES' FIELD			1							1	1	1								1			1						1
LADY'S PICTORIAL	1	1																			1								
MAGAZINE OF ART																													
MANCHESTER GUARDIAN								1																					
PALL MALL																								1					
QUEEN																													
SATURDAY REVIEW																													
STANDARD																													
STUDIO I-IV	1	1		1	1						1	1			1	1	1	1								1			
TIMES																													
TOTAL MENTIONS	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

APPENDIX III 1903 ACES WOMEN REVIEWED shaded=maker	REED, DOROTHY K	STEEL, EVA	WADDINGTON, ALICE	WARD, EFFIE	WOOLRICH, MISS NELLY	WORTHINGTON, EDITH	WWDREY, MARGARET J.	BAKER, MISS YP	BARLOW, MISS	BENSON, Nellie	BENTLEY, CLARA	BLACK, J Lindsey	BOOTHBY, Lady	BRADLEY, MISS	BRANSON, MRS	BUNN, FANNY	CATLOW, ESTHER?	CHAMBERS, KITTY S	CHAPEL, HELEN K	CHAPLIN, ALICE MARY	CHRISTIE, ANNIE H	DAY, Mrs Lewis	DAY, Ruth	DE LISLE, MISS G	DICK, EDITH A	DOWNING, EDITH	FREEMAN, Winnifred	GLAZIER, L MARIAN
ARCHITECTURAL																												
REV																												
ART & DECORATION																												
ART JOURNAL						1																						
ART WORKERS																												
QUARTERLY	1	1			1	1	1				1														1			1
BIRMINGHAM DAILY																												
POST	1	1																										
BRITISH ARCHITECT																												
BUILDER																												
BUILDERS' JOURL																												
BUILDING NEWS										1												1	1					
COUNTRY LIFE																												
COURT CIRCULAR																												
DAILY CHRONICLE																												
DAILY NEWS																												1
DAILY TELEGRAPH																												
FURNITURE																												
RECORD																												
GENTLEWOMAN											1																	
GLASGOW HERALD															1													
HOME ART WORK	1											1	1															
ILLUS LONDON																												
NEWS																												
LADY																												
LADIES' FIELD																												
LADY'S PICTORIAL																												
MAGAZINE OF ART								1																				
MANCHESTER																												
GUARDIAN				1																	1							
PALL MALL																												
QUEEN																												
SATURDAY REVIEW																												
STANDARD																												
STUDIO I-IV			1	1	1				1					1		1	1	1	1	1				1		1		
TIMES																												
TOTAL MENTIONS	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

APPENDIX III 1903 ACES WOMEN REVIEWED shaded=maker	HARDING, Miss	HEWLETT, Mrs Maurice	HILLIAM, Julia	HOFFMANN, ELSE	HUNT, Miss Holman	KING, JESSIE	MacLAREN, OTTALIE	MANNING, CATHERINE M	Meingartner, Miss Louis	MOLLER, MURIEL	MORRIS, MAY	MUNN, Miss	PEARD, Miss M B	PESKETT, Lilian	Robertson, Janet S	RYE, FRANCES D	SISTER JUSTINE	SLEIGH, MRS BERNARD	SMITH, GERTRUDE	SWAINSON, Mary	TURNER, K Amy	WOODWARD, E C	LINNELL, MRS EM
ARCHITECTURAL REV																							
ART & DECORATION															1								
ART JOURNAL														1									
ART WORKERS QUARTERLY				1						1	1						1						1
BIRMINGHAM DAILY POST																							
BRITISH ARCHITECT BUILDER																							
BUILDERS' JOURL																							
BUILDING NEWS	1		1									1											
COUNTRY LIFE																							
COURT CIRCULAR		1			1																		
DAILY CHRONICLE																							
DAILY NEWS																							
DAILY TELEGRAPH																							
FURNITURE RECORD																							
GENTLEWOMAN							1																
GLASGOW HERALD																							
HOME ART WORK													1										
ILLUS LONDON NEWS																							
LADY																							
LADIES' FIELD																					1		1
LADY'S PICTORIAL									1													1	
MAGAZINE OF ART																	1						
MANCHESTER GUARDIAN																							
PALL MALL																							
QUEEN																							
SATURDAY REVIEW																							
STANDARD																							
STUDIO I-IV						1		1								1			1				
TIMES																							
TOTAL MENTIONS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

APPENDIX IV 1916 ACES WOMEN REVIEWED makers=shaded	# women named	STABLER, Phoebe	CHRISTIE, Mrs AH	POWELL, Louise	MACDONALD Margaret	MORRIS, May	ADAMS, Katherine	CASELLA, Nella	EADIE, Kate M	FULLEYLOVE, Joan	GASKIN, Georgie	KINGSFORD, Florence	LANE, Constance	MAIRET, Ethel	McNAUGHT, Elsie	NEWILL, Mary J	RICHARDS, Frances E	ROPE, Dorothy A	ADAMS, Cecilia	BAYES, Jessie	DeLaMARE, Gertrude	PIRRIE, Mrs Martin	RAMSAY, Frances	RAMSAY, Violet	RAYNER, E Ruth	ROPE, EM	ROPE, Margaret	SICKERT, Mrs Walter	SKRINE, Inez E	WHALL, Veronica	WHITE, Gwen		
		ARCHITECT	3	i								X																					
ARCHS & BLDRS JOURNAL	2		X	X																													
ATHENÆUM	0																																
BRITISH ARCHITECT BUILDER	7 5	X i			X			Xi										i				X											
BUILDING NEWS BURLINGTON MAGAZINE	0 3		X										X		X																		
CONNOISSEUR	10	X		X													X																
COUNTRY LIFE	2	X	i	X																													
DAILY CHRONICLE	2	X	X																														
DAILY TELEGRAPH	0																																
FURNITURE	2		X	X																													
GENTLEWOMAN	25	ix							i	X		X		X	X			Xi	X	Xi	Xi				i	X	X	Xi					
GLASGOW HERALD	3				X		X				X																						
JOUR DEC'VE ART	9		X		X	X			X				X	X	XX																		
JOURNAL RIBA	3	X	X		X																												
JOURNAL ROYAL SOCIETY ARTS	12	X		X			X				Xi	X		X		X								X?	X?			X	X				
LADIES' FIELD	3								Xi	Xi									i													X	
LADY	2																					X											
LADY'S PICTORIAL	1																															X	
MANCHESTER GUARDIAN	5	X	X	X									X		XX																		
NATION (NYC)	0																																
QUEEN I,II	4	Xi	X			X																											
SATURDAY REVIEW	0																																
STUDIO I-IV	32	1i, 2	2, 3	2, 3i	1, 23	3i	2	2, 4i	2, 4i			i		i		2		2	2, 4i	1, i2	2		2	2	2i		3i	2		2	2		
SUNDAY TIMES	8		X			X										X		X															
TIMES	0																																
TIMES ED Supp	2	X															X																
TOTAL	148	14	10	7	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	



APPENDIX IV 1916 ACES WOMEN REVIEWED makers=shaded	ADSHEAD, Kathleen	ALLPORT, C L	ASHER, Florence	BEDFORD, Helen	BEDINGTON, Maud	BENJAMIN, Louisa	BERGNER, Lucia B	BROWN, Margaret	CALKIN, Margaret B	CREW, CN	CYRIAX, Tony	ELMSLIE, Rosalie	ESPLIN, Mabel	EVERETT, Ethel	FORMAN, Elizabeth	FRAMPTON, Lola	GEORGE, Mrs AW	GILES, Margaret M	GRASSETT, Katherine	HALLWARD, Mrs	HALLWARD, Patience	HAYTHORNE, Margaret	HEDGES, Florence	JACK, Jessie	KIRKMAN, Miss	KIRKPATRICK, Ethel	LABROUSSE, JA	LINDQUIST, Edith	LOVIBOND, Catherine	LYNE, Ethel	MALTWOOD, Katherine						
	ARCHITECT																							X													
ARCHS & BLDRS JOURNAL																																					
ATHENÆUM																																					
BRITISH ARCHITECT													X																								
BUILDER																			I																		
BUILDING NEWS																																					
BURLINGTON MAGAZINE																																					
CONNOISSEUR			X					X				X												X				X									
COUNTRY LIFE																																					
DAILY CHRONICLE																																					
DAILY TELEGRAPH																																					
FURNITURE																																					
GENTLEWOMAN	I	xi													X		XI						XI						X	XI	X						
GLASGOW HERALD																																					
JOUR DEC'VE ART																																					
JOURNAL RIBA																																					
JOURNAL ROYAL SOCIETY ARTS																										X											
LADIES' FIELD																																					
LADY											X																										
LADY'S PICTORIAL																																					
MANCHESTER GUARDIAN																																					
NATION (NYC)																																					
QUEEN I,II																				X																	
SATURDAY REVIEW																																					
STUDIO I-IV	2, 4i						2	2		2i	2											2i	2i					3i	3								
SUNDAY TIMES				X	X									X		X																					
TIMES																																					
TIMES ED Supp																																					
TOTAL	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	

APPENDIX IV 1916 ACES WOMEN REVIEWED makers=shaded	MARTINDALE, Veronica	MOLL, Pauline	NEWBERRY, Mrs EW	PEGRAM, Mrs Mary	POCOCK, Liliane	POWELL, MISS	RICHTER, MRS	ROGERS, Gwladys	ROPE, MEA	SAUNDERS, Miss	SIMMONDS, MISS	STEWART, Edith	TOWNSHEND, Caroline	WEBB, Mildred	WHEELER, H
	ARCHITECT														
ARCHS & BLDRS															
JOURNAL															
ATHENÆUM															
BRITISH ARCHITECT															
BUILDER															
BUILDING NEWS															
BURLINGTON															
MAGAZINE															
CONNOISSEUR	X							X							
COUNTRY LIFE															
DAILY CHRONICLE															
DAILY TELEGRAPH															
FURNITURE															
GENTLEWOMAN				XI					X			I	X		
GLASGOW HERALD															
JOUR DEC'VE ART						X				X	X				
JOURNAL RIBA															
JOURNAL ROYAL															
SOCIETY ARTS			X												
LADIES' FIELD															
LADY															
LADY'S PICTORIAL															
MANCHESTER															
GUARDIAN															
NATION (NYC)															
QUEEN I,II															
SATURDAY REVIEW															
STUDIO I-IV															
SUNDAY TIMES		2i			4i		2							4i	2
TIMES															
TIMES ED Supp															
TOTAL	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

APPENDIX V  
PERIODICALS USED

TITLE	PERIODICITY	DATES PUBLISHED
<b>FINE ART</b>		
1. ART ET DECORATION (PARIS)	month	jan 1897-1914      july 1919-1938
2. BURLINGTON MAGAZINE	monthly	mar1903-date
3. CONNOISSEUR	monthly	jan 1902-date
4. THE ART JOURNAL	monthly	1849-1912
5. THE ARTIST	monthly	1880-1902
6. THE MAGAZINE OF ART	monthly	1878-1901 ns1902-1904
7. THE PORTFOLIO	monthly	1870-1893
8. THE STUDIO	monthly	1893-date
<b>DECORATIVE ART/ TRADES</b>		
9. ART WORKER'S QUARTERLY	1/4ly	jan 1902- nov 1906
10. The Art Designer for HOME ART WORK	1/4ly (monthly-1889)	1884-1912
11. JOURNAL OF DECORATIVE ART	monthly	1881-1954 Manchester
12. THE CABINET MAKER & Art Furnisher	weekly	July 1880- Jun 1889? check this!
13. FURNITURE & DECORATION cont'd FURNITURE RECORD and the FURNISHER	monthly	1890-1962; May 1899-Jan 1958
66. THE FURNITURE GAZETTE	weekly	1872-1884, ns 1884-1893
14. IRISH TEXTILE JOURNAL	monthly	jan 1886- 16 Dec 1912
15. WATCHMAKER JEWELER SILVERSMITH & OPTICIAN	monthly	1 June 1875 - Jan 1992
<b>ARCHITECTURE</b>		
16. BRITISH ARCHITECT	weekly	1874-1919
17. ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW (London)	mon thly	1896-pres
18. THE BUILDER	weekly	1842-1966
19. ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW (Boston)	monthly	
20. PROCEEDINGS/ JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS	monthly	13 nov 1888-Oct 1922
21. BUILDING NEWS	weekly	1857-1926
22. BUILDERS JOURNAL & ARCHITECTURAL RECORD	weekly	1895-date (as Architect's Journal)
23. THE ARCHITECT	monthly	1869-1926
24. JOURNAL OF THE RIBA	2 wks	1878-pres
<b>WOMEN'S</b>		
25. THE QUEEN	weekly, sat	7 Sept1861-1922
26. LADY'S PICTORIAL	weekly	1881 - 1921
27. THE LADY	weekly, thurs	1885 -date
28. the GENTLEWOMAN	weekly	12-7-1890- jan 1926
29. LADIES' FIELD	weekly	mar 1898-apr 1925
30. WOMAN	wkly thurs/ wed	3 jan 1890- 7 sept 1910
31. THE ENGLISHWOMAN'S REVIEW: A Journal of Woman's Work	1/4ly	1867-1910
32. the LADY OF THE HOUSE & DOMESTIC ECONOMIST	1/4ly	Dublin 1890-1923
33. IRISH SOCIETY	weekly	Dublin 1888 -1924

APPENDIX V  
PERIODICALS USED

GENERAL OR DEPARTMENT JOURNALS		
34. ATHENAEUM	weekly except WWI-monthly	1828--1921
35. The Court Circular and Court News	weekly	1856-1911
36. THE WORLD	weekly	8july1874 - 25mar1922
37. THE SATURDAY REVIEW	weekly	1855-1938
38. COUNTRY LIFE	weekly	1897-date
39. JOURNAL OF THE (ROYAL) SOCIETY OF ARTS	monthly	1852-1970
40. the NATION	weekly	NYC 1865-date
41. QUARTERLY REVIEW	1/4ly	London 1809-1967
42. NINETEENTH CENTURY (AND AFTER)		London 1877-1950
43. CENTURY GUILD HOBBY HORSE	monthly	1886-1892
NEWSPAPERS, LONDON		
44. TIMES	daily	1788- date
45. TIMES EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT	weekly	1910-date
46. TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT	weekly	1902-date
47. SUNDAY TIMES	wkly	1822-date
48. STANDARD	daily	1827-1916
49. THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS Ladies Column	weekly	1842-date
50. ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS	weekly	1842- date
51. DAILY GRAPHIC	daily	jan 1890- oct 1926
52. KENSINGTON & HAMMERSMITH REPORTER Ladies Column	weekly Sat	july 1879- dec 1906
53. FULHAM CHRONICLE	weekly Fri	1888-1997
54. PALL MALL GAZETTE	weekly	1866-1921
55. PALL MALL BUDGET	weekly Thurs	1868-1894
56. WEST LONDON OBSERVER Our Ladies' Column	weekly	1855 - 1984
57. DAILY CHRONICLE	daily	25nov1872 - 31may1931
58. DAILY NEWS	daily	21 Jan 1846-date
59. DAILY TELEGRAPH	daily	1856-1937
NEWSPAPERS PROVINCIAL		
60. GLASGOW HERALD	daily	1805- date
61. MANCHESTER GUARDIAN	daily	1828-1959+
62. BIRMINGHAM DAILY POST	daily	4dec 1857 - 20may 1918
63. BIRMINGHAM TELEGRAM	weekly sun	18apr1886 - 30jun1907
64. IRISH TIMES (Dublin)	daily	29mar1859-
65. NEWCASTLE CHRONICLE	daily	Newcastle-upon-Tyne

APPENDIX VI  
TECHNIQUES EXHIBITED BY WOMEN, 1888-1916

TECHNIQUE	1888	1890	1899	1903	1916
BEADWORK	0	0	0	3	19
BOOKBINDING	5	4	18	37	31
CLOTHING/COSTUME	0	0	0	1	8
DECORATIVE PTG/Murals	9	4	10	4	44
DESIGN -3D	0	0	0	1	5
DESIGN-2D(wallpaper, textiles, embroidery)	10	5	3	8	33
EMBROIDERY incl appliqué	46	127	70	87	249
ENAMEL	0	0	0	0	11
FURNITURE	4	0	0	0	5
GESSO (& gilding)	3	5	6	9	2
GLASS	0	7	1	4	3
ILLUMINATION	0	0	8	6	32
ILLUSTRATION	2	3	14	17	37
JEWELLERY (including enamelled pieces)	0	0	67	129	158
CERAMICS	7	9	14	17	105
LACE	3	12	7	1	17
LEATHERWORK	0	2	2	5	5
METALWORK (incl enamelled pieces)	3	7	26	30	21
PRINTMAKING	0	0	0	8	9
SCULPTURE INCL RELIEF	2	3	5	11	30
STAINED GLASS	0	0	4	7	30
TEXTILES-DYED	1	0	0	0	0
TEXTILES-PRINTED	0	3	3	1	0
TEXTILES-WOVEN (including tapestry)	1	0	1	15	43
TOYS	0	0	0	0	19
WOODCARVING	4	10	10	19	25
UNDISCERNABLE	0	2	5	3	26
TOTAL PIECES BY WOMEN (designed or made or both)	100	203	274	423	967
TOTAL PIECES DESIGNED BY WOMEN	64	120	189	299	834
TOTAL PIECES DESIGNED BY MEN & MADE BY WOMEN	23	51	43	66	30
TOTAL PIECES DESIGNED BY MEN&WOMEN TEAM	4	3	41	55	90
TOTAL PIECES IN SHOW	662	843	1179	1075+	2225+

APPENDIX VII  
WOMEN and CASE STUDIES REVIEWED, 1888-1916

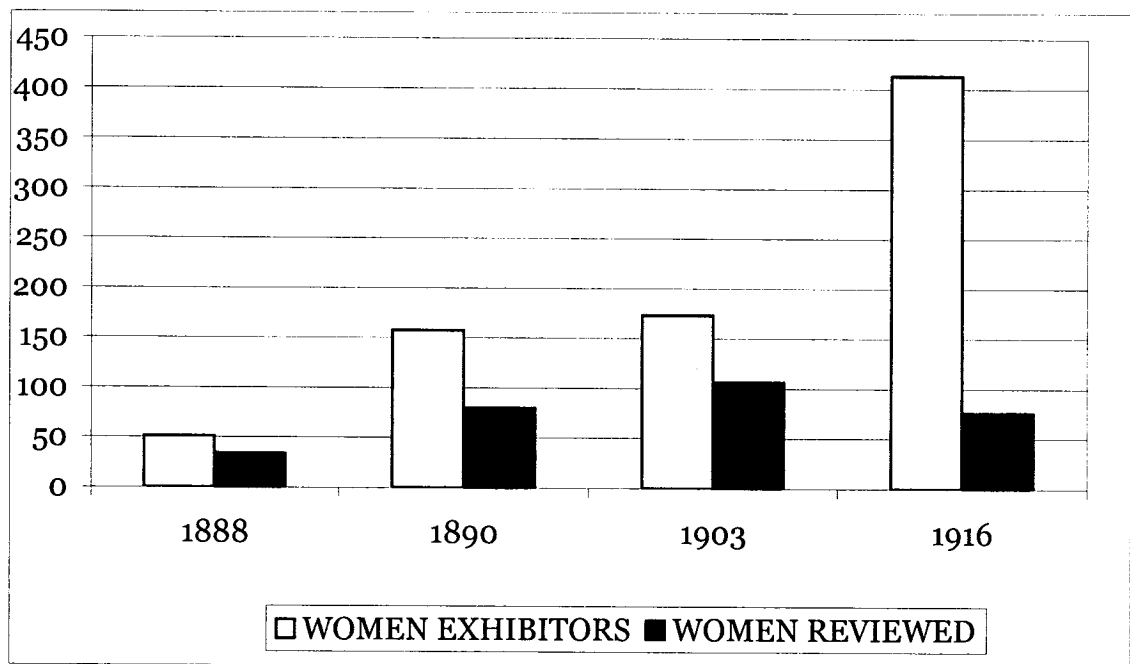
PERIODICAL	1888	KF	1890	UAT	MM	1903	GG	1916	PS	GC	#
BUILDER	5	X	14		X	13	X	5	XI	X	5
MANCHESTER GUARDIAN	1	X	5		X	14	X	5	X	X	5
QUEEN	21	X	12	X	X	8		4	XI	X	5
BRITISH ARCHITECT	2	X	6	[X]	X	0		7	XI		4
DAILY CHRONICLE	NR		18	X	X	0		2	X	X	4
BUILDING NEWS	NR		10	X	X	13	X	0			3
COURT CIRCULAR & COURT NEWS	12	X	1	[X]		5	X				3
GLASGOW HERALD	0		2	[X]	X	6	X	3			3
ILLUS LONDON NEWS	6	X	7	X	X	0		NR			3
LADY'S PICTORIAL	12	X	20		X	13	X	1			3
PALL MALL GAZETTE	2		2	[X]	X	5	X	NR			3
STANDARD	9	X	6		X	4	X	NR			3
STUDIO						42	X	36	XXI	XX	3
ARCHITECT	2	X	0			NR		3	I		2
ART JOURNAL	0		-5		[X]	12	X				2
BIRMINGHAM DAILY POST	0		6	X		10	X	NR			2
DAILY GRAPHIC			4	X	X	NR		NR			2
JOURNAL OF THE RIBA	NR		0			NR		3	X	X	2
NATION (NYC & London)	?		2	X	X	?		0			2
PORTFOLIO	4		10	X	X						2
SATURDAY REVIEW	0		3	[X]	X	1		0			2
TIMES	1	XX	0			3	X	0			2
WOMAN			8	X	X	NR					2
ARCHITECTS & BUILDERS JOURNAL						3		2		X	1
ART ET DECORATION						9	X				1
ART WORKER'S QUARTERLY						41	X				1
ARTIST	0		4	X							1
ATHENAEUM	2	X	0			NR		0			1
BURLINGTON MAGAZINE						NR		3	XI		1
CONNOISSEUR						NR		10	X		1
COUNTRY LIFE						0		2	X		1
DAILY TELEGRAPH	0		1	[X]		6		0			1
FURNITURE & DECORATION			1			0		2		X	1
GENTLEWOMAN			2			4		25	XI		1
HOME ART WORK	0		9		X	12					1
ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS Ladies	2	X	0			NR		NR			1
IRISH TEXTILE JOURNAL	NR		25	X		?					1
JOURNAL OF (ROYAL) SOCIETY OF ARTS	NR		NR			NR		12	X		1
JOURNAL OF DECORATIVE ART	NR		NR			?		9		X	1
KENSINGTON & HAMMERSMITH REPORTER Ladies Column	6	X	0			NR		NR			1
LADIES' FIELD						27	X	3			1
MAGAZINE OF ART	0		0			5	X				1
SUNDAY TIMES	0		NR			NR		8		X	1
TIMES EDUC SUPP								2	X		1
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW						0		NR			0
BIRMINGHAM DAILY MAIL	NR		?			?		?			0
BIRMINGHAM TELEGRAM	?		?			NR					0

APPENDIX VII  
WOMEN and CASE STUDIES REVIEWED, 1888-1916

PERIODICAL	1888	KF	1890	UAT	MM	1903	GG	1916	PS	GC	#
CABINET MAKER & ART FURNISHER	9		?			?		?			0
CENTURY GUILD HOBBY HORSE	0		NR								0
CHURCH BUILDER	NR		?			?		?			0
CORNHILL MAGAZINE	NR		?			?		?			0
DAILY NEWS	?		?			1[4]		?			0
ENGLISH ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE	NR		NR			NR					0
ENGLISHWOMAN'S REVIEW	NR		1			NR					0
FULHAM CHRONICLE	0		?			NR		NR			0
IRISH SOCIETY (Dublin)	?		NR			?		?			0
IRISH TIMES (Dublin)	?		NR			?		?			0
LADY	7		NR			4		2			0
LADY OF THE HOUSE			NR			?		?			0
NINETEENTH CENTURY	?		?			?		NR			0
PALL MALL BUDGET	1		?			?		?			0
PROCEEDINGS/SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS	0		NR			NR		NR			0
QUARTERLY REVIEW	?		?			?		NR			0
TIMES LITERARY SUPP						NR		NR			0
WATCHMAKER, JEWELER, SILVERSMITH & OPTICIAN	?		?			NR		?			0
WEST LONDON OBSERVER Our Ladies' Column	1		3			NR		NR			0
WORLD	1		?			?		?			0
<b># MENTIONS</b>		13		16	18		16		14	10	
<b># Reviews in Sample</b>	31		26			21		25			

KEY:	
Named	X
Work Illustrated	I
Work Described, but Woman not Named	[X]
Work Illustrated but Woman not Named	[I]
Not Checked	?
Not Reviewed	NR
Not Published	

APPENDIX VIII  
WOMEN EXHIBITORS VS WOMEN REVIEWED  
1888-1916





APPENDIX IX  
MEN and WOMEN  
EXHIBITORS VS REVIEWED 1888-1916

